



Unlocked Literal Bible

Jeremiah

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Version: 9

Published: 2017-02-17



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Jeremiah

Chapter 1

¹ This is the word of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah; he was one of the priests at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin. ² The word of Yahweh came to him in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. ³ It also came in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem were taken away as prisoners.

⁴ The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

⁵ "Before I formed you in the womb, I chose you;

before you came out from the womb I set you apart; I made you a prophet to the nations." ⁶ "Ah, Lord Yahweh!" I said, "I do not know how to speak, for I am too young."

⁷ But Yahweh said to me,

"Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go everywhere I send you,

and you must say whatever I command you!

⁸ Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to rescue you—this is Yahweh's declaration." ⁹ Then Yahweh reached out with his hand, touched my mouth, and said to me, "Now, I have placed my word in your mouth.

¹⁰ I am appointing you today over nations and over kingdoms,

to uproot and break down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and plant."

¹¹ The word of Yahweh came to me, saying, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "I see an almond branch." ¹² Yahweh said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to carry it out."

¹³ The word of Yahweh came to me a second time and said, "What do you see?" I said, "I see a heated pot, whose surface is churning, tipping away from the north."

¹⁴ Yahweh said to me, "Disaster will be opened up out of the north on all who live in this land. ¹⁵ For I am calling all the tribes of the northern kingdoms, declares Yahweh. They will come, and everyone will set his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, against all the walls that surround it, and against all the cities of Judah. ¹⁶ I will pronounce sentence against them for all their evil in forsaking me, in burning incense to other gods, and in worshiping what they made with their own hands. ¹⁷ Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be shattered before them, or I will shatter you before them! ¹⁸ See! Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. ¹⁹ They will fight against you, but they will not defeat you, for I will be with you to rescue you—this is Yahweh's declaration."

Chapter 2

¹ The word of Yahweh came to me and said,

² "Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem. Say, 'Yahweh says this:

I have called to mind on your behalf the covenant faithfulness in your youthfulness, your love at the time when we were engaged,

when you went after me in the wilderness, the land that was not sown.

³ Israel was set apart to Yahweh, the firstfruits of his harvest!

All who ate from the firstfruits were held guilty; disaster came upon them—this is Yahweh's declaration."

⁴ Hear the word of Yahweh, house of Jacob and every family in the house of Israel.

⁵ Yahweh says this, "What did your fathers find wrong with me, that they went far from following me?

That they went after useless idols and became useless themselves?

⁶ They did not say, 'Where is Yahweh, who brought us up from the land of Egypt?

Where is Yahweh, who led us to the wilderness, into the land of the Arabah and pits,

in a land of drought and deep darkness,

a land through which no one passes and where no one lives?'

⁷ But I brought you to the land of Carmel, to eat its fruit and other good things!

Yet when you came, you defiled my land, you made my inheritance an abomination!

⁸ The priest did not say, 'Where is Yahweh?' and the experts in the law did not care about me!

The shepherds transgressed against me. The prophets prophesied for Baal and walked after unprofitable things.

⁹ So I will still accuse you—this is Yahweh's declaration—and I will accuse your sons' sons.

¹⁰ For cross over to the coasts of Kittim and look. Send messengers out to Kedar and find out

and see if there has ever before been anything like this.

¹¹ Has a nation exchanged gods, even though they were not gods?

But my people have exchanged their glory for what cannot help them. ^a

¹² Shudder, heavens, because of this! Be shocked and horrified—this is Yahweh's declaration.

¹³ For my people have committed two evils against me: They have abandoned the springs of living waters by digging out cisterns for themselves,

broken cisterns that cannot hold water!

¹⁴ Is Israel a slave? Was he not born at home? So why has he become plunder?

¹⁵ Young lions roared against him. They made a lot of noise and made his land a horror.

His cities are destroyed without any inhabitants.

¹⁶ Also, the people of Memphis and Tapanhes will shave your skull.

¹⁷ Did you not do this to yourselves when you abandoned Yahweh your God, while he was leading you along the way?

¹⁸ So now, why take the road to Egypt and drink the waters of Shihor?

Why take the road to Assyria and drink the waters of the Euphrates River?

¹⁹ Your wickedness rebukes you, and your faithlessness punishes you. So think about it; understand that it is wicked and bitter

for you to abandon me, Yahweh your God, and to dread me no more—this is the declaration of Yahweh the Lord of hosts.

²⁰ For I broke your yoke that you had in ancient days; I tore your fetters off you. Still you said,

'I will not serve!' since you bowed down on every high hill and beneath every leafy tree, you adulterer.

²¹ But I myself had planted you as a choice vine, a completely true seed.

Yet how you have changed toward me, a disloyal one from a foreign vine!

²² For even if you clean yourself in the river or wash with strong soap,

your iniquity is a stain before me—this is the declaration the Lord Yahweh.

²³ How can you say, 'I am not defiled! I have not walked after the Baals?'

Look at your behavior in the valleys! Understand what you have done, you swift camel running its own way!

²⁴ You are a wild donkey, accustomed to the wilderness, longing for life and panting after the useless wind!

Who turns her around when she is in heat? Anyone seeking her does not tire himself. They go out to her in her month of heat.

²⁵ You must restrain your feet from becoming bare and your throat from being thirsty!

But you have said, 'It is hopeless! No, I love strangers and go after them!'

²⁶ Like the shame of a thief when he is found, so the house of Israel will be ashamed—

they, their kings, their princes, and their priests and prophets!

²⁷ These are the ones who say to the tree, 'You are my father,' and to the stone, 'You gave birth to me.'

For their back faces me and not their faces. Nevertheless, they say in the time of troubles, 'Arise and save us!'

²⁸ Yet where are the gods that you made for yourselves? Let them arise if

they wish to save you in your time of troubles,

for your idols equal your cities in number, Judah!

²⁹ So why do you accuse me of doing wrong? All of you have sinned against me—this is Yahweh's declaration.

³⁰ I have punished your people in vain. They would not accept discipline.

Your sword has devoured your prophets like a destructive lion!

³¹ You who belong to this generation! Pay attention to my word, the word of Yahweh! Have I been a wilderness to Israel?

Or a land of deep darkness? Why would my people say, 'Let us wander around, we will not go to you anymore?'

³² Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils?

Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!

³³ How well you make your way to look for love.

You have even taught your ways to wicked women.

³⁴ The blood that was the life of innocent, poor people has been found on your clothes.

These people were not discovered in acts of burglary.

³⁵ Instead, in spite of all these things, you keep saying, 'I am blameless. Surely Yahweh's anger will turn from me.'

But look! You will be judged since you say, 'I have not sinned.'

³⁶ Why do you treat so very lightly this change in your ways?

You will also be disappointed by Egypt, just as you were by Assyria.

³⁷ You will also go out from there dejected, with your hands on your head,

for Yahweh has rejected the ones whom you trusted, so you will not be helped by them.”

2:11 ^aInstead of *their glory*, some ancient copies have *my glory*.

Chapter 3

¹ ”They say, ’A man sends his wife away, so she goes from him and becomes another man’s wife.

Should he return to her again? Is she not completely unclean?’ That woman is this land!

You have acted like a whore with many companions, and now do you want to return to me?—this is Yahweh’s declaration.

² Lift up your eyes to the barren heights and look! Is there is any place where you have not had illicit sex?

By the roadsides you sat waiting for your lovers, as an Arab in the wilderness.

You have polluted the land with your prostitution and wickedness.

³ So the spring rains were withheld and the late rains did not come.

But your face is arrogant, like a promiscuous woman’s face. You refuse to feel shame.

⁴ Now will you not call out to me: ’My father! My closest friend even from my youth!

⁵ Will he be angry with me forever? Will you always keep your anger?’

Look! You have proclaimed you would commit evil, and you have committed it. So continue to do it!”

⁶ Then Yahweh said to me in the days of Josiah the king, ”Do you see how Israel is faithless to me? She goes to every high mountain and under every leafy tree, and there she acts like a promiscuous woman.

⁷ I said, ’After she does all these things, she will return to me,’ but she did not return. Then her faithless sister Judah saw what she did. ⁸ So I saw that for all these reasons she committed adultery. Apostate Israel! I sent her out and gave her a decree of divorce. But her treasonous sister Judah did not fear, and went out and also acted like a promiscuous woman! ⁹ It mattered nothing to her that she defiled the land, so they made idols from the stone and the tree. ¹⁰ Then after all of this, neither did her faithless sister Judah return to me with all her heart, but with a lie!—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

¹¹ Then Yahweh said to me, ”Faithless Israel has been more righteous than faithless Judah! ¹² Go and proclaim these words to the north. Say,

’Return, faithless Israel!—this is Yahweh’s declaration—I will not always be angry with you.

Since I am faithful—this is Yahweh’s declaration—I will not stay angry forever.

¹³ Acknowledge your iniquity, for you have transgressed against Yahweh your God;

you have shared your ways with strangers under every leafy tree!

For you have not listened to my voice!—this is Yahweh’s declaration.

¹⁴ Return, faithless people!—this is Yahweh’s declaration—for I have married you!

I will take you, one from a city, two from a clan, and I will bring you to Zion!
¹⁵ I will give you shepherds after my heart, and they will shepherd you with knowledge and insight. ¹⁶ Then it will happen that you will increase and bear fruit in the land in those days—this is Yahweh’s declaration. They will no longer say, “The ark of the covenant of Yahweh!” This matter will no longer come up in their hearts, for they will no longer think about it or pay attention to it. This statement will no longer be made.’ ¹⁷ In that time they will proclaim about Jerusalem, ‘This is Yahweh’s throne,’ and all the other nations will gather at Jerusalem in Yahweh’s name. They will no longer walk in the stubbornness of their wicked hearts.

¹⁸ In those days, the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel. They will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your ancestors as an inheritance.

¹⁹ As for me, I said, ‘How I want to honor you as my son and give you a pleasant land,

an inheritance more beautiful than what is in any other nation!’ I would have said, ‘You will call me “my father”.’

I would have said that you would not turn from following me.

²⁰ But like a woman faithless to her husband,

you have betrayed me, house of Israel—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

²¹ A voice is heard on the plains, the weeping and pleading of the people of Israel!

For they have changed their ways; they have forgotten Yahweh their God.

²² “Return, faithless people! I will heal you of treachery!”

”Behold! We will come to you, for you are Yahweh our God! ²³ Only lies come from the hills, from the many mountains.

Certainly the salvation of Israel is only in Yahweh our God.

²⁴ Yet shameful idols have consumed what our ancestors have worked for—

their flocks and cattle, their sons and daughters!

²⁵ Let us lie down in shame. May our shame cover us, for we have sinned against Yahweh our God!

We ourselves and our ancestors, from the time of our youthfulness to this present day, have not listened to the voice of Yahweh our God!”

Chapter 4

¹ ”If you return, Israel—this is Yahweh’s declaration—then it should be to me that you return.

If you remove your detestable things from before me and do not wander from me again,

² and if you swear, ‘Yahweh lives in truth, justice, and righteousness,’

the nations will ask for my blessing, and they will praise me.

³ For Yahweh says this to each person in Judah and Jerusalem:

’Plow your own ground,

and do not sow among thorns.

⁴ Be circumcised to Yahweh and remove the foreskins of your heart,

men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or else my fury will go out like fire and burn, with no one able to quench it.

This will happen because of the wickedness of your deeds. ⁵ Report in Judah and let it be heard in Jerusalem.

Say, "Blow the trumpet in the land."

Proclaim, "Gather together. Let us go to the fortified cities." ⁶ Lift up the signal flag and point it toward Zion, and run for safety!

Do not stay, for I am bringing disaster from the north and a great collapse. ⁷ A lion is coming out from his thicket and someone who will destroy nations is setting out.

He is leaving his place to bring horror to your land,

to turn your cities into ruins, where no one will live. ⁸ Because of this, wrap yourself in sackcloth, lament and wail. For the force of Yahweh's anger has not turned away from us. ⁹ Then it will happen in that day—this is Yahweh's declaration—that the hearts of the king and his officials will die. The priests will be appalled, and the prophets will be horrified." ¹⁰ So I said, "Ah! Lord Yahweh. Surely you have completely deceived this people and Jerusalem by saying, 'There will be peace for you.' Yet the sword is striking against their life."

¹¹ In that time it will be said of this people and Jerusalem, "A burning wind from the plains of the desert will make its way to the daughter of my people. It will not winnow or cleanse them. ¹² A wind far stronger than that will come at my command, and I will now pass sentence against them. ¹³ See, he is attacking like clouds, and his chariots are like a storm. His horses are faster than eagles. Woe to us, for we will be devastated! ¹⁴ Cleanse your heart from wickedness, Jerusalem, so that you might be saved. How long will your deepest thoughts be about how to sin? ¹⁵ For a voice is bringing news from

Dan, and the coming disaster is heard from the mountains of Ephraim. ¹⁶ Make the nations think about this: See, announce to Jerusalem that besiegers are coming from a distant land to shout in battle against the cities of Judah. ¹⁷ They will be like the watchmen of a cultivated field against her all around, since she has been rebellious against me—this is Yahweh's declaration— ¹⁸ and your conduct and your deeds have done these things to you. This will be your punishment. How terrible it will be! It will strike your very heart.

¹⁹ My heart! My heart! I am in anguish in my heart. My heart is turbulent within me. I cannot keep quiet for I hear the sound of the horn, an alarm for battle. ²⁰ Collapse after collapse is proclaimed, for all the land is suddenly devastated. They devastate my tabernacle and my tent abruptly. ²¹ How long will I see the standard? Will I hear the sound of the horn? ²² For the foolishness of my people—they do not know me. They are idiotic people and they have no understanding. They have skill at evil, but do not know to do good.

²³ I saw the land, and see! It was formless and empty. For there was no light for the heavens. ²⁴ I looked at the mountains. Behold, they were trembling, and all the hills were shaking about. ²⁵ I looked. Behold, there was no one, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. ²⁶ I looked. Behold, the orchards were a wilderness and all the cities had been pulled down before Yahweh, before the fury of his wrath." ²⁷ This is what Yahweh says, "All the land will become a devastation, but I will not completely destroy them. ²⁸ For this reason, the land will mourn, and the heavens above will darken. For I have declared my intentions; I will not hold back; I will not turn from carrying them out. ²⁹ Every city will flee from the noise of the cavalry and

the archers with a bow; they will run into the forests. Every city will climb up into the rocky places. The cities will be abandoned, for there will be no one to inhabit them. ³⁰ Now that you have been devastated, what will you do? For though you dress in scarlet, adorn yourself with gold jewelry, and make your eyes look bigger with paint, the men who lusted for you now reject you. Instead, they are trying to take away your life. ³¹ So I hear the sound of anguish, distress as in the birth of a firstborn child, the sound of the daughter of Zion. She is gasping for breath. She spreads out her hands, ‘Woe to me! I am fainting because of these murderers.’”

Chapter 5

¹ “Rush about through the streets of Jerusalem; search in her city squares, too. Then look and think about this:

If you can find a man or anyone who is acting justly and trying to act faithfully,

then I will forgive Jerusalem.

² Even if they are saying, ‘By the life of Yahweh,’ they are making false oaths.”

³ Yahweh, do your eyes not look for faithfulness? You struck the people, but they do not feel pain.

You have completely defeated them, but they still refuse to receive discipline. They make their faces harder than rock, for they refuse to repent.

⁴ So I said, “Surely these are only poor people.

They are foolish, for they do not know Yahweh’s ways, nor their God’s decrees.

⁵ I will go to the important people and declare God’s messages to them, for they at least know Yahweh’s ways,

the decrees of their God. But they all broke their yoke together; they all tore apart the chains that bound them to God.

⁶ So a lion from a thicket will attack them. A wolf from the Arabah will ruin them.

A lurking panther will come against their cities. Anyone who goes outside his city will be torn apart.

For their transgressions increase. Their acts of faithlessness are unlimited.

⁷ Why should I pardon these people?

Your sons have abandoned me and have made oaths by what are not gods.

I fed them fully, but they committed adultery and took on the marks of a house of prostitution.

⁸ They were horses in heat. They roamed about wanting to mate. Each man neighed to his neighbor’s wife.

⁹ So should I not punish them—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

and should I not avenge myself on a nation that is like this?

¹⁰ Go up onto her vineyards’ terraces and destroy. But do not bring complete destruction to them.

Trim their vines, since those vines do not come from Yahweh.

¹¹ For the houses of Israel and Judah have completely betrayed me—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

¹² and they have denied me. They say, ‘He is not real.

Evil will not come on us, nor will we see sword or famine.

¹³ For the prophets have become as useless as the wind and there is no one else to

declare Yahweh's messages to us. Let their threats come upon themselves.”

¹⁴ So Yahweh, the God of hosts says this, “Because you have said this, see,

I am about to place my word in your mouth. It will be like a fire, and this people will be like wood! For it will consume them.

¹⁵ See! I am about to bring a nation against you from far away, house of Israel—this is Yahweh's declaration—

it is a lasting nation, an ancient nation! It is a nation whose language you do not know,

nor will you understand what they say.

¹⁶ Its quiver is like an open tomb. They are all soldiers.

¹⁷ So your harvest will be consumed, your sons and daughters also, and your food.

They will eat your flocks and cattle; they will eat the fruit from your vines and fig trees.

They will batter down with a sword your fortified cities that you trusted in. ¹⁸ But even in those days—this is Yahweh's declaration—I do not intend to destroy you completely. ¹⁹ It will happen when you, Israel and Judah, say, ‘Why has Yahweh our God done all these things to us?’ that then you, Jeremiah, will say to them, ‘Just as you abandoned Yahweh and worshiped foreign gods in your land, so you will also serve strangers in a land that is not your own.’

²⁰ Report this to the house of Jacob and let it be heard in Judah. Say,

²¹ ‘Hear this, foolish people! For idols have no will;

there are eyes in them, but they cannot see. There are ears on them, but they do not hear.

²² Do you not fear me—this is Yahweh's declaration—or tremble before my face?

I have placed a border of sand against the sea, an ongoing decree that it does not violate—

even though the sea rises and falls, still it does not violate it. Even though its waves roar, they do not cross it.

²³ But this people has a stubborn heart. It turns away in rebellion and goes away.

²⁴ For they do not say in their hearts, “Let us fear Yahweh our God, the one who brings the rain

—the early rain and the late rains—in their right time, keeping the fixed weeks of the harvest for us.”

²⁵ Your iniquities kept these things from happening. Your sins have stopped good from coming to you.

²⁶ For wicked men are found with my people. They watch as someone crouches to capture birds;

they set a trap and catch people.

²⁷ Like a cage full of birds, their houses are full of deceit.

So they grow large and become rich.

²⁸ They have become fat; they shine with well-being. They crossed over all bounds of wickedness. They do not plead the cause of the people,

or the cause of the orphan. They prosper even though they have not given justice to the needy.

²⁹ Should I not punish them for these things—this is Yahweh's declaration—

and will I not take vengeance for myself on a nation like this?

³⁰ Atrocities and horrors have occurred in the land.

³¹ The prophets prophesy with deceit, and the priests rule with their own power.

My people love it this way, but what will happen in the end?

Chapter 6

¹ Find safety, people of Benjamin, by leaving Jerusalem. Blow a trumpet in Tekoa.

Raise up over Beth Hakerem a signal, since wickedness is appearing from the north; a great crushing is coming.

² The daughter of Zion, the beautiful and delicate woman, will be destroyed.

³ The shepherds and their flocks will go to them;

they will set up tents against her all around; each man will shepherd with his own hand.

⁴ "Dedicate yourselves to the gods for the battle. Arise, let us attack at noon.

It is too bad that the daylight is fading away, that the evening shadows are falling.

⁵ But let us attack at night and destroy her fortresses."

⁶ For Yahweh of hosts says this: Cut her trees, and heap up siegeworks against Jerusalem.

This is the right city to attack, because it is filled with oppression.

⁷ Just as a well keeps giving water, so this city keeps producing wickedness.

Violence and disorder are heard in her. Suffering and plague are continually before me.

⁸ Accept discipline, Jerusalem, or I will turn away from you

and make you into a ruin, an uninhabited land."

⁹ Yahweh of hosts says this, "They will certainly glean those who are left in Israel like a vineyard.

Reach out again with your hand to pick grapes from the vines.

¹⁰ To whom should I declare and warn so they will listen?

Look! Their ears are uncircumcised; they are not able to pay attention!

Look! The word of Yahweh has come to them to correct them, but they do not want it."

¹¹ But I am filled with Yahweh's fury. I am tired of holding it in. He said, to me, "Pour it out on the children in the streets

and on the groups of young men. For every man will be taken away with his wife;

and every old person heavy with years.

¹² Their houses will be turned over to others, both their fields and their wives together.

For I will attack the inhabitants of the land with my hand—this is Yahweh's declaration.

¹³ Yahweh declares that from their smallest to their greatest, each of them is greedy for dishonest gain.

Prophets to priest, everyone practices deceit.

¹⁴ But they have healed the wounds of my people lightly. They say, 'Peace! Peace!' when there is no peace.

¹⁵ Were they ashamed when they committed abominations? They were not ashamed at all. They had no shame.

So they will fall with those who fall at the time that I punish them. They will be overthrown," says Yahweh.

¹⁶ Yahweh says this, "Stand at the road crossing and look; ask for the ancient pathways.

'Where is this good way?' Then go on it and find a resting place for yourselves.

But the people say, 'We will not go.'

¹⁷ I appointed for you watchmen to listen for the trumpet.

But they said, 'We will not listen.'

¹⁸ Therefore, nations, listen! See, you witnesses, what will happen to them.

¹⁹ Hear, earth! See, I am about to bring disaster to this people—the fruit of their thoughts.

They paid no attention to my word or law, but they instead rejected it."

²⁰ "What does this frankincense going up from Sheba mean to me? Or these sweet smells from a distant land?

Your burnt offerings are not acceptable to me, nor are your sacrifices.

²¹ So Yahweh says this, 'See, I am about to place a stumbling block against this people.

They will stumble over it—fathers and sons together. Inhabitants and their neighbors will also perish.'

²² Yahweh says this, 'See, a people is coming from a northern land.

For a great nation has been stirred up to come from a distant land.

²³ They will pick up bows and spears. They are cruel and have no compassion. Their sound is like the sea roar,

and they are riding on horses in formation as fighting men, daughter of Zion."

²⁴ We have heard the news about them. Our hands fall limp in distress. Anguish seizes us as a woman bearing a child.

²⁵ Do not go out to the fields, and do not walk on the roads,

for the swords of the enemy and terror are all around.

²⁶ Daughter of my people, fasten on sackcloth and roll about in the dust of a funeral for an only child.

Perform a bitter funeral for yourself, for the destroyer will come suddenly upon us.

²⁷ "I have made you, Jeremiah, one who tests my people like one would test metal, so you will inspect and test their ways.

²⁸ They are all the most stubborn of people, who go about slandering others.

All of them are bronze and iron, acting corruptly.

²⁹ The bellows are scorched by the fire that is burning them; the lead is consumed in the flames.

The refining continues among them, but it is useless, because the evil is not removed.

³⁰ They will be called rejected silver, for Yahweh has rejected them."

Chapter 7

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, ² "Stand at the gate of Yahweh's house and proclaim this word! Say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, all you of Judah, you who enter these gates to worship Yahweh. ³ Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Make your ways and practices good, and I will let you continue to live in this place. ⁴ Do not entrust yourself to deceitful words and say, "Temple of Yahweh! Temple of Yahweh! Temple of Yahweh!" ⁵ For if you actually make your ways and practices good; if you completely execute justice between a man and

his neighbor—⁶ if you do not exploit the one staying in the land, the orphan, or the widow and do not pour out innocent blood in this place, and do not walk after other gods to your own harm—⁷ then I will let you stay in this place, in the land that I gave to your ancestors from ancient times and forever.

⁸ Behold! You are trusting in deceitful words that do not help you. ⁹ Do you steal, kill, and commit adultery? Do you swear deceitfully and offer incense to Baal and walk after other gods whom you have not known? ¹⁰ Then do you come and stand before me in this house where my name is proclaimed and say, “We are saved,” so you can do all of these abominations? ¹¹ Is this house, which carries my name, a den of bandits in your eyes? But behold, I have seen it—this is Yahweh’s declaration.’

¹² ‘So go to my place that was in Shiloh, where I allowed my name to stay there in the beginning, and look at what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. ¹³ So now, on account of your doing all of these practices—this is Yahweh’s declaration—I spoke to you time and time again, but you did not listen. I summoned you, but you did not answer. ¹⁴ Therefore, what I did to Shiloh, I will also do to this house that is called by my name, the house in which you have trusted, this place that I gave to you and your ancestors. ¹⁵ For I will send you out from before me just as I had sent out all your brothers, all the descendants of Ephraim.’

¹⁶ As for you, Jeremiah, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up a lamenting wail or say a prayer on their behalf, and do not petition me, for I will not listen to you. ¹⁷ Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁸ The children are gathering wood and the fathers kindling the fire! The women are knead-

ing dough to make cakes for the queen of the heavens and pour out drink offerings for other gods so that they will provoke me. ¹⁹ Are they truly provoking me?—this is Yahweh’s declaration—is it not themselves whom they are provoking, so that shame is on them? ²⁰ Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, ‘See, my anger and wrath will gush out onto this place, on both man and beast, on the tree in the fields and the fruit on the ground. It will burn and never be extinguished.’

²¹ Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel says this, ‘Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and the meat from them. ²² For when I brought your ancestors out from the land of Egypt, I did not require anything from them. I gave them no command about matters of burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²³ I only gave them this command, “Listen to my voice, and I will be your God and you will be my people. So walk in all the ways that I am commanding you, so that it may go well with you.” ²⁴ But they did not listen or pay attention. They lived by their own stubborn plans of their wicked hearts, so they went backwards, not forward. ²⁵ Ever since the day when your ancestors went out from the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent every one of my servants, my prophets, to you. I persisted in sending them. ²⁶ But they did not listen to me. They paid no attention. Instead, they hardened their necks. They were more wicked than their ancestors.’

²⁷ So proclaim all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. Proclaim these things to them, but they will not answer you. ²⁸ Say to them This is a nation that does not listen to the voice of Yahweh its God and does not receive discipline. Truth is destroyed and cut off from their mouths.

²⁹ Cut off your hair and shave yourself, and throw away your hair. Sing a funeral

song over the open places.

For Yahweh has rejected and abandoned this generation in his rage. ³⁰ For the sons of Judah have done evil in my eye—this is Yahweh’s declaration—they have set their detestable things in the house where my name is proclaimed, in order to defile it. ³¹ Then they built the high place of Topheth that is in the Valley of Ben Hinnom. They did this to burn their sons and daughters in fire—something that I did not command, nor did it enter my mind. ³² So see, days are coming—this is Yahweh’s declaration—when it will no longer be called Topheth or Valley of Ben Hinnom. It will be the Valley of Slaughter; they will bury bodies in Topheth until there is no room left. ³³ The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the skies and the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away. ³⁴ I will put an end to the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, the sounds of exaltation and jubilation, the sounds of the groom and the bride; since the land will become a desolation.”

Chapter 8

¹ ”At that time—this is Yahweh’s declaration—they will bring out from the graves the bones of the kings of Judah and its officials, the bones of the priests and the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ² Then they will spread them out in the light of the sun and moon and all the stars of the skies; these things in the sky that they have followed and served, that they have walked after and sought, and that they have worshiped. The bones will not be gathered or buried again. They will be like dung on the surface of the earth. ³ In every remaining place where I have driven them,

they will choose death instead of life for themselves, all who are still left over from this evil nation—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.

⁴ So say to them, ’Yahweh says this: Does anyone fall and not get up? Does anyone get lost and not try to return?

⁵ Why has this people, Jerusalem, turned away in permanent faithlessness?

They hold on to treachery and refuse to repent.

⁶ I paid attention and listened, but they did not speak right; no one was sorry for his wickedness,

no one who says, “What have I done?” All of them go where they wish,

like a stallion rushing toward battle.

⁷ Even the stork in heaven knows the right times; and the doves, swifts, and cranes.

They go on their migrations at the right time, but my people do not know Yahweh’s decrees.

⁸ How can you say, “We are wise, for the law of Yahweh is with us”?

Indeed, see! The deceitful pen of the scribes has created deceit.

⁹ The wise men will be ashamed. They are dismayed and trapped.

See! They reject Yahweh’s word, so what use is their wisdom?

¹⁰ So I will give their wives to others, and their fields to those who will possess them,

for from the youngest to the greatest, all of them are exceedingly greedy! From the prophet to the priest, all of them practice deceit.

¹¹ For they treated the fracture of the daughter of my people as if it were a trivial thing.

They said, "Peace, Peace," but there was no peace.

¹² Were they ashamed when they practiced abominations? They were not ashamed. They had no humility. So they will fall at the time of their punishment, with those who have already fallen. They will be overthrown, says Yahweh.

¹³ I will remove them completely—this is Yahweh's declaration—there will be no grapes on the vine, nor will there be figs on the fig trees. For the leaf will wither, and what I have given to them will pass away.

¹⁴ Why are we sitting here? Come together; let us go to the fortified cities, and we will become silent there in death.

For Yahweh our God will silence us. He will make us drink poison, since we have sinned against him.

¹⁵ We are hoping for peace, but there will be nothing good.

We are hoping for a time of healing, but see, there will be terror. ¹⁶ The snorting of his stallions is heard from Dan. The whole earth shakes at the sound of the neighing of his strong horses.

For they will come and consume the land and its wealth, the city and the ones living in it.

¹⁷ For see, I am sending out snakes among you, vipers that you cannot charm.

They will bite you—this is Yahweh's declaration."

¹⁸ My sorrow has no end, and my heart is sick.

¹⁹ See! The screaming voice of the daughter of my people from a far distant land! Is not Yahweh in Zion?

Or is not her king in her? Why then would they offend me with their carved figures and foreign worthless idols?

²⁰ The harvest has passed on, summer is over. But we have not been saved.

²¹ I am hurt because of the hurt of the daughter of my people. I mourn at the horrible things that have happened to her; I am dismayed.

²² Is there no medicine in Gilead? Is there no healer there?

Why will the healing of the daughter of my people not happen?

Chapter 9

¹ If only my head could produce water, and my eyes be a fountain of tears!

For I wish to weep day and night for those among the daughter of my people who have been killed.

² If only someone would give me a place for travelers in the wilderness to stay, where I could go to abandon my people.

If only I could leave them, since all of them are adulterers, a band of traitors!

³ Yahweh declares, "They tread on their bows of lies with their tongues,

but it is not because of any faithfulness of theirs that they grow strong on the earth.

They go from wicked act to another. They do not know me."

⁴ Each of you, be on guard against your neighbor and do not trust in any brother.

For every brother is certainly a deceiver, and every neighbor walks in slander.

⁵ Each man mocks his neighbor and does not speak the truth.

Their tongues teach deceitful things. They are exhausted from committing iniquity.

⁶ Your dwelling is in the midst of deception; in their deceit they refuse to acknowledge me. This is Yahweh's declaration."

⁷ So Yahweh of hosts says this, "See, I am about to test them. I will examine them.

How else should I act for the daughter of my people?

⁸ Their tongues are sharpened arrows; they speak unfaithful things.

With their mouths they proclaim peace with their neighbors, but with their hearts they lie in wait for them.

⁹ Should I not punish them because of these things—this is Yahweh's declaration—

and should I not avenge myself on a nation that is like this?

¹⁰ I will sing a song of mourning and wailing for the mountains, and a funeral song will be sung for the meadows.

For they are burned so no one can pass through them. They will not hear the sound of any cattle.

The birds of the skies and the animals have all fled away.

¹¹ So I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for jackals.

I will make Judah's cities ruined places without inhabitants."

¹² Who is the wise man that understands this? What does Yahweh's mouth proclaim to him so he might report it?

Why has the land perished? It is destroyed like the wilderness, where there is no one to pass through it.

¹³ Yahweh says, "It is because they have abandoned my law that I set before them, because they do not listen to my voice or walk by it. ¹⁴ It is because they have walked by their stubborn hearts and have

followed the Baals as their fathers taught them to do. ¹⁵ Therefore Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says this, 'See, I am about to make this people eat wormwood and drink poisonous water. ¹⁶ Then I will scatter them among the nations that they have not known, neither they nor their ancestors. I will send out a sword after them until I have completely destroyed them.'"

¹⁷ Yahweh of hosts says this, "Think about this: Summon

funeral singers; let them come. Send out for women skilled at lamenting; let them come.

¹⁸ Let them hurry and sing a mournful song over us,

so our eyes may run with tears and our eyelids flow with water.

¹⁹ For the sound of wailing is heard in Zion, 'How we are devastated.

We are greatly ashamed, for we have abandoned the land since they tore down our houses.'

²⁰ So you women, hear Yahweh's word; pay attention to the messages that come from his mouth.

Then teach your daughters a mourning song, and each neighbor woman a funeral song.

²¹ For death has come through our windows; it goes into our palaces.

It destroys children from outside, and young men in the city squares.

²² Declare this, 'This Yahweh's declaration—the corpses of men will fall like dung in the fields,

and like grain stalks after the reapers, and there will be no one to gather them.'"

²³ Yahweh says this, "Do not let the wise man take pride in his wisdom,

or the warrior in his might. Do not let the wealthy man take pride in his riches.

²⁴ For if a man takes pride in anything, let it be in this, that he has insight and knows me.

For I am Yahweh, who acts with covenant loyalty, justice and righteousness on earth. For it is in these that I take pleasure

—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

²⁵ ”See, days are coming—this is Yahweh’s declaration—when I will punish all the circumcised who are such only in their body. ²⁶ I will punish Egypt and Judah, Edom, the people of Ammon, Moab, and all the people who cut the hair on their heads very short. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel has an uncircumcised heart.”

Chapter 10

¹ ”Hear the word that Yahweh is announcing to you, house of Israel.

² Yahweh says this, ’Do not learn the ways of the nations,

and do not be dismayed by the signs in the heavens, for the nations are dismayed by these.

³ For the customs of the peoples are worthless. For someone cuts a tree down in a forest; The hands of a craftsman do this with an ax.

⁴ Then they decorate it with silver and gold. They strengthen it with hammer and nails so it will not fall over.

⁵ These idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, for they can say nothing. They have to be carried, for they cannot take any steps at all.

Do not fear them, for they cannot bring about evil, nor are they able to do anything good.”

⁶ There is no one like you, Yahweh. You are great, and your name is great in power.

⁷ Who does not fear you, king of the nations? For this is what you deserve,

for there is no one like you among all the wise men of the nations or all their royal kingdoms.

⁸ They are all the same, they are brutish and stupid, disciples of idols that are nothing but wood.

⁹ They bring hammered silver from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz made by artificers,

the hands of refiners. Their clothes are blue and purple cloth. Their skillful men made all of these things.

¹⁰ But Yahweh is the true God. He is the living God and eternal king.

The earth quakes at his anger, and the nations cannot endure his anger.

¹¹ You will speak to them like this, ”The gods that did not make the heavens and earth

will perish from the earth and from under these heavens.”

¹² The maker of earth in his power established dry land in his wisdom and spread the heavens in his understanding.

¹³ His voice makes the roar of waters in the heavens, and he brings up the mists from the ends of the earth.

He makes lightning for the rain and sends out wind from his storehouse.

¹⁴ Every man has become ignorant, without knowledge. Every metalworker is put to shame by his idols.

For his cast poured images are frauds; there is no life in them.

¹⁵ They are useless, the work of mockers; they will perish at the time of their punishment.

¹⁶ But God, the portion of Jacob, is not like these, for he is the molder of all things.

Israel is the tribe of his inheritance; Yahweh of hosts is his name.

¹⁷ Gather your bundle and leave the land, you people who have been living under the siege.

¹⁸ For Yahweh says this, "See, I am about to throw the inhabitants of the land out this time.

I will cause them distress, and they will find it to be so."

¹⁹ Woe to me! Because of my broken bones, my wound is infected.

So I said, "Surely this is agony, but I must bear it."

²⁰ My tent is devastated, and all of my tent cords are cut in two.

They have taken my children away from me, so they no longer exist. There is no longer anyone to spread out my tent or to raise up my tent curtains.

²¹ For the shepherds have become stupid. They do not seek Yahweh.

so they have no success; all their flocks are scattered.

²² The report of news has arrived, "See! It is coming, a great earthquake is coming from the land of the north

To make the cities of Judah into ruins, hideouts for jackals."

²³ I know, Yahweh, that a man's path does not come from himself. No person walking directs his own steps.

²⁴ Discipline me, Yahweh, with justice, not in your anger or you would destroy me.

²⁵ Pour your fury on the nations that do not know you and on the families that do not call on your name.

For they have devoured Jacob and consumed him so as to completely destroy him and demolish his habitation.

Chapter 11

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, and he said, ² "Listen to the words of this covenant, and declare them to each man in Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³ Say to them, 'Yahweh, God of Israel says this: Cursed is anyone who does not listen to the words of this covenant. ⁴ This is the covenant that I commanded your ancestors to keep the day I brought them out from the land of Egypt, from the furnace for smelting iron. I said, "Listen to my voice and do all of these things just as I have commanded you, for you will be my people and I will be your God." ⁵ Obey me so that I may confirm the oath that I swore to your ancestors, the oath that I would give them the land flowing with milk and honey, where you live today.'" Then I, Jeremiah, answered and said, "Yes, Yahweh!"

⁶ Yahweh said to me, "Proclaim all these things in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. Say, 'Listen to the words of this covenant and carry them out. ⁷ For I have been giving solemn commands to your ancestors from the day I brought them up from the land of Egypt until this present time, persistently warning them and saying, "Listen to my voice."

⁸ But they did not listen or pay attention. Each person has been walking in the stubbornness of his wicked heart. So I brought

all the curses in this covenant that I commanded to come against them. But the people still did not obey.”

⁹ Next Yahweh said to me, “A conspiracy has been discovered among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

¹⁰ They have turned to the iniquities of their earliest ancestors, who refused to listen to my word, who instead walked after other gods to worship them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah broke my covenant that I established with their ancestors. ¹¹ Therefore Yahweh says this,

’See, I am about to bring disaster on them, disaster from which they will not be able to escape. Then they will call out to me, but I will not listen to them. ¹² The cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and call out to the gods to which they had given offerings, but they will certainly not be saved by them at the time of their disaster. ¹³ For you Judah, the number of your gods has increased to equal the number of your cities. You have made the number of shameful altars in Jerusalem, incense altars for Baal, equal to the number of her streets.

¹⁴ So you yourself, Jeremiah, must not pray for this people. You must not wail or pray on their behalf. For I will not be listening when they call on me in their disaster.

¹⁵ Why is my beloved one, the one who has had so many wicked intentions, in my house?

The meat of your sacrifices cannot help you. You rejoice because of your evil actions.

¹⁶ In the past Yahweh called you a leafy olive tree, beautiful with lovely fruit.

But he will light a fire on it that will sound like the roar of a storm; its branches will be broken. ¹⁷ For Yahweh of hosts, the one who planted you, has de-

creed disaster against you because of the wicked acts that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have committed—they have angered me by giving offerings to Baal.”

¹⁸ Yahweh made me know these things, so I know them. You, Yahweh, made me see their deeds. ¹⁹ I was like a gentle lamb being led to a butcher. I did not know that they had formed plans against me, “Let us destroy the tree with its fruit! Let us cut him off from the land of the living so his name will be no longer remembered.”

²⁰ Yet Yahweh of hosts is the righteous judge who examines the heart and the mind.

I will witness your vengeance against them, for I have presented my case to you.

²¹ Therefore Yahweh says this concerning the people of Anathoth who are seeking your life, “They say, ‘You must not prophesy in the name of Yahweh, or you will die by our hand.’ ²² Therefore Yahweh of hosts says this, ‘See, I am about to punish them. Their vigorous young men will die by the sword. Their sons and their daughters will die by famine. ²³ None of them will be left, because I am bringing disaster against the people of Anathoth, a year of their punishment.”

Chapter 12

¹ You are righteous, Yahweh, whenever I bring disputes to you.

I must certainly tell you of my reason to complain: Why do the ways of the wicked succeed? All the faithless people are successful.

² You planted them and they took root. They continue to produce fruit.

You are near to them in their mouths, but far away from their hearts. ³ Yet you yourself know me, Yahweh. You have seen me and have examined my heart.

Take them away like sheep to the slaughter. Set them apart for the day of slaughter.

⁴ How long will the land go on drying up, and the plants in every field wither because of the wickedness of its inhabitants?

Beasts and bird have been taken away. Indeed, the people say, "God does not know what will happen to us."

⁵ Yahweh said, "indeed, if you, Jeremiah, have run with foot soldiers and they have tired you out, how can you compete against horses?"

If you fall down in the safe countryside, how will you do in the thickets along the Jordan?

⁶ For even your brothers and your father's family have betrayed you and have loudly denounced you.

Do not trust in them, even if they say nice things to you.

⁷ I have abandoned my house; I have forsaken my inheritance.

I have given my own beloved people into the hands of her enemies.

⁸ My inheritance has become to me like a lion in a thicket;

she sets herself against me with her own voice, so I hate her.

⁹ My prized possession is a hyena, and birds of prey circle around her overhead.

Go, gather all the living creatures in the fields, and bring them in to eat them.

¹⁰ Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard. They have stomped all over my portion of land;

they turned my delightful portion into a wilderness, a desolation.

¹¹ They have made her a desolation. I mourn for her; she is desolate.

All the land has been made desolate, for there is no one who takes it to heart.

¹² Destroyers have come against all the bare places in the wilderness,

for Yahweh's sword is devouring from one end of the land to the other.

There is no safety in the land for any living creature.

¹³ They have sown wheat but harvest thornbushes. They are exhausted from work but have gained nothing.

So be ashamed of your gain because of Yahweh's anger."

¹⁴ Yahweh says this against all my neighbors, the wicked ones who strike at the possession that I made my people Israel inherit, "See, I am the one who is about to uproot them from their own ground, and I will pull up the house of Judah from among them. ¹⁵ Then after I uproot those nations, it will happen that I will have compassion on them and bring them back; I will return them—each man to his inheritance and his land. ¹⁶ It will come about that if those nations carefully learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name 'As Yahweh lives!' just as they have taught my people to swear by Baal, then they will be built up in the midst of my people. ¹⁷ But if any do not listen, then I will uproot that nation. It will certainly be uprooted and destroyed—this is Yahweh's declaration."

Chapter 13

¹ Yahweh said this to me, "Go and buy a linen undergarment and put it on around

your waist, but do not put it in water first.”
² So I bought an undergarment as Yahweh directed, and I put it on around my waist. ³ Then the word of Yahweh came to me a second time and said, ⁴ “Take the undergarment that you purchased that is around your waist, get up and travel to the Euphrates. Hide it there in a rock crevice.”
⁵ So I went and hid it in the Euphrates just as Yahweh had commanded me. ⁶ After many days, Yahweh said to me, “Get up and go back to the Euphrates. Take from there the undergarment that I had told you to hide.” ⁷ So I went back to the Euphrates and dug out the undergarment where I had hid it. But behold! The undergarment was destroyed; it was no good at all.

⁸ Then the word of Yahweh came to me again and said, ⁹ “Yahweh says this: In the same way I will destroy the great arrogance of Judah and Jerusalem. ¹⁰ This wicked people who refuses to listen to my word, who walk in the hardness of their heart, who go after other gods to worship them and bow down to them—they will be like this undergarment that is good for nothing. ¹¹ For just as an undergarment clings to someone’s hips, so I have made all the house of Israel and all the house of Judah cling to me—this is Yahweh’s declaration—to be my people, to bring me fame, praise, and honor. But they would not listen to me.

¹² So you must speak this word to them, ‘Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: Every jar will be filled with wine.’ They will say to you, ‘Do we not indeed know that every jar will be filled with wine?’ ¹³ So say to them, ‘Yahweh says this: See, I am about to fill with drunkenness every inhabitant of this land, the kings who sit on David’s throne, the priests, prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁴ Then I will smash each man against the other,

fathers and children together—this is Yahweh’s declaration—I will not pity them or have compassion, and I will not spare them from destruction.”

¹⁵ Listen and pay attention. Do not be arrogant, for Yahweh had spoken.

¹⁶ Give honor to Yahweh your God before he brings darkness,
 and before he causes your feet to stumble on the mountains at twilight.

For you are hoping for light, but he will turn the place into a deep darkness, into a dark cloud.

¹⁷ So if you will not listen, I will weep alone because of your arrogance.

My eyes will certainly weep and flow with tears, for Yahweh’s flock has been taken captive.

¹⁸ “Say to the king and to the queen mother, ‘Humble yourselves and sit down, for the crowns on your head, your pride and glory, have fallen off.’

¹⁹ The cities in the Negev will be shut up, with no one to open them. Judah will be taken captive, all of her into exile.

²⁰ Lift up your eyes and look at the ones coming from the north.

Where is the flock he gave to you, the flock that was so beautiful to you?

²¹ What will you say when God places over you those whom you had taught to be your friends?

Are these not the beginnings of the labor pains that will seize you just like a woman in childbirth?

²² Then you might say in your heart, ‘Why are these things happening to me?’

It will be for the multitude of your iniquities that your skirts are raised up and you have been violated.

²³ Can the people of Cush change their skin color, or a leopard change its spots?

If so, then you yourself, although accustomed to wickedness, would be able to do good.

²⁴ So I will scatter them like chaff that perishes in the desert wind.

²⁵ This is what I have given to you, the portion I have decreed for you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

because you have forgotten me and trusted in deceit.

²⁶ So also I myself will strip your skirts off you, and your private parts will be seen.

²⁷ Your adultery and neighing, the shamefulness of your promiscuous behavior on the hills and in the fields! I will cause them to be seen,

these detestable things! Woe to you, Jerusalem! You have not been clean. How long will this continue?”

Chapter 14

¹ This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah regarding the drought,

² “Let Judah mourn; let her gates fall apart. They are wailing for the land;

their cries for Jerusalem are going up.

³ Their mighty ones send out their servants for water.

When they go to the trenches, they cannot find water. They all return unsuccessful;

they cover their heads ashamed and dishonored.

⁴ Because of this the ground is cracked, for there is no rain in the land.

The plowmen are ashamed and cover their heads.

⁵ For even the doe leaves her young in the fields and abandons them, for there is no grass.

⁶ The wild donkeys stand on the bare plains and they pant in the wind like jackals.

Their eyes fail to work, for there is no vegetation.”

⁷ Even though our iniquities testify against us, Yahweh, act for the sake of your name.

For our faithless actions increase; we have sinned against you.

⁸ Hope of Israel, the one who saves him in the time of distress,

why will you be like a stranger in the land, like a foreign wanderer who stretches out and spends just one night?

⁹ Why will be you like a confused man, like a warrior who is not able to rescue anyone?

For you are in our midst, Yahweh! Your name has been proclaimed over us. Do not leave us.

¹⁰ Yahweh says this to this people: “Since they love to wander, they have not held back their feet from doing so.”

Yahweh is not pleased with them. Now he calls to mind their iniquity and has punished their sins. ¹¹ Yahweh said to me, “Do not pray for good on behalf of this people. ¹² For if they fast, I will not listen to their wailing, and if they offer up burnt offerings and food offerings, I will not take pleasure in them. For I will put an end to them by sword, famine, and plague.”

¹³ Then I said, “Oh, Lord Yahweh! See! The prophets are saying to the people, ‘You

will not see sword; there will be no famine for you, for I will give you true security in this place.’” ¹⁴ Yahweh said to me, “The prophets prophesy deceit in my name. I did not send them out, nor did I give them any command or speak to them. But deceitful visions and useless, deceitful divination coming from their own minds are what they are prophesying to you.” ¹⁵ Therefore Yahweh says this, “About the prophets prophesying in my name but whom I did not send out—those who say there will be no sword or famine in this land: These prophets will perish by sword and famine. ¹⁶ Then the people to whom they prophesied will be thrown out in the streets of Jerusalem because of famine and sword, for there will be no one to bury them—them, their wives, their sons, or their daughters—for I will pour out their wickedness on them.

¹⁷ Say this word to them: ‘Let my eyes flow with tears, night and day.

Do not let them stop, for there will be a great collapse of the virgin daughter of my people—

a great and incurable wound.

¹⁸ If I go out to the field, there are the ones who were killed by the sword!

If I come to the city, there are the diseases that are caused by famine.

Both the prophet and the priest wander about the land, and they do not know.”

¹⁹ Have you completely rejected Judah? Do you hate Zion?

Why will you afflict us when there is no healing for us? We hoped for peace, but there was nothing good—

and for a time of healing, but see, there is only terror.

²⁰ We admit, Yahweh, our offenses, the iniquity of our ancestors, for we have sinned against you.

²¹ Do not reject us! For the sake of your name, do not make your glorious throne a disgrace.

Remember and do not break your covenant with us.

²² Is there among the idols of the nations anyone who can make the heavens give the spring rain?

Are you not the one, Yahweh our God, who does this? We hope in you, for you have done all these things.

Chapter 15

¹ Then Yahweh said to me, “Even if Moses or Samuel were standing in front of me, I would still not be in favor of this people. Send them out from before me, for them to go away. ² It will happen that they will say to you, ‘Where should we go?’ Then you must say to them, ‘Yahweh says this:

Those destined for death should go to death; those destined for the sword should go to the sword.

Those destined for famine should go to famine; and those destined for captivity should go to captivity.’ ³ For I will assign them to four groups—this is Yahweh’s declaration—the sword to slaughter some, the dogs to drag some away, the birds of the skies and the beast of the earth to consume and destroy some. ⁴ I will make of them a horrifying thing to all the kingdoms of the earth, because of what Manasseh son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem.

⁵ For who will have compassion for you, Jerusalem? Who will grieve for you?

Who will turn to ask about your welfare?

⁶ You have forsaken me—this is Yahweh’s declaration—you have gone back

from me.

So I will strike you with my hand and destroy you. I am tired of having mercy on you.

⁷ So I will winnow them with a pitchfork at the gates of the land.

I will bereave them. I will destroy my people since they will not turn from their ways.

⁸ I will make their widows number more than the sands of the seashore. Against the mothers of young men I will send

the destroyer at noonday. I will make shock and horror suddenly fall on them.

⁹ The mother who has borne seven children will waste away. She will gasp. Her sun will set while it is still day.

She will be ashamed and embarrassed, for I will give those who remain to the sword in the presence of their enemies

—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

¹⁰ Woe to me, my mother! For you have borne me, I who am a man of controversy and argument through all the land.

I have not lent, nor has anyone lent to me, but they all curse me.

¹¹ Yahweh said: “Will I not rescue you for good?

I will certainly make your enemies beg for help in the time of calamity and distress.

¹² Can one smash iron? Especially iron from the north that is mixed with bronze?

¹³ I will give to your enemies your wealth and treasures as free plunder.

I will do this because of all your sins committed within all your borders.

¹⁴ Then I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you do not know,

for a fire will ignite, kindled in my wrath against you.”^a

¹⁵ You yourself know, Yahweh! Call me to mind and help me. Bring vengeance for me against my pursuers.

In your patience do not take me away. Acknowledge that I have suffered reproach for you.

¹⁶ Your words have been found, and I consumed them. Your words were a joy to me,

a joy to my heart, for your name is proclaimed on me, Yahweh God of hosts.

¹⁷ I did not sit in the circle of those who celebrated or rejoiced.

I sat in solitude because of your powerful hand, for you filled me with indignation.

¹⁸ Why is my pain ongoing and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?

Will you be like deceitful waters to me, waters that dry up?

¹⁹ Therefore Yahweh said this, “If you repent, Jeremiah, then I will restore you, and you will stand before me and serve me.

For if you separate the foolish things from the precious things, you will be like my mouth. The people will come back to you,

but you yourself must not go back to them.

²⁰ I will make you like an impenetrable bronze wall to this people, and they will wage war against you.

But they will not defeat you, for I am with you to save and rescue you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

²¹ for I will rescue you from the hand of the wicked and redeem you from the hand of the tyrant.”

15:14 ^aInstead of *Then I will make you serve your enemies*, some ancient copies have *Then I will make your enemies take you*.

Chapter 16

¹ Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying, ² "Do not take a wife for yourself, and do not have sons or daughters for yourself in this place. ³ For Yahweh says this to the sons and daughters who are born in this place, to the mothers who bear them, and to the fathers who caused them to be born in this land, ⁴ "They will die diseased deaths. They will not be mourned or buried. They will be like dung on the ground. For they will come to an end by sword and famine, and their corpses will be food for the birds of the skies and the beasts of the earth."

⁵ For Yahweh says this, "Do not enter any house where there is mourning. Do not go about lamenting, and do not sympathize for these people. For I have gathered up my peace, covenant faithfulness, and acts of tender mercy, from this people!—this is Yahweh's declaration— ⁶ so the great and the small will die in this land. They will not be buried, nor will anyone mourn for them. No one will cut themselves or shave their heads for them. ⁷ No one must share any food in mourning to comfort them because of the deaths, and none must give a comforting cup to his father or his mother in order to comfort them. ⁸ You must not go to a banquet house to sit with them in order to eat or drink." ⁹ For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, "See, before your eyes, in your days and in this place, I am about to put an end to the sound of joy and celebration, the voices of the groom and bride."

¹⁰ Then it will happen that you will report all these words to this people, and they will say to you, "Why has Yahweh decreed all this great disaster against us? What is our iniquity and sin that we sinned against Yahweh our God?" ¹¹ So say to them, "Because your ancestors abandoned me—this is Yahweh's declaration—and they went after other gods and worshiped and bowed down to them. They abandoned me and have not kept my law. ¹² But you yourselves have brought about more wickedness than your ancestors, for see, each person is walking by the stubbornness of his wicked heart; there is no one who listens to me. ¹³ So I will throw you from this land to a land that you have not known, neither you nor your ancestors, and you will worship other gods there by day and night, for I will not give any favor to you."

¹⁴ Therefore see! The days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when it will no longer be said, "As Yahweh lives, the one who brought up the people of Israel from the land of Egypt." ¹⁵ For as Yahweh lives, the one who brought up the people of Israel from the land of the north and from the lands where he had scattered them, I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their ancestors.

¹⁶ See! I will send for many fishermen—this is Yahweh's declaration—so they will fish the people out. After this I will send for many hunters so they will hunt for them among all the mountains and hills, and in rock crevices. ¹⁷ For my eye is on all their ways; they cannot be hidden from before me. Their iniquity cannot be concealed from before my eyes. ¹⁸ I will first pay back double for their iniquity and sin for their polluting of my land with their disgusting idol figures, and for their filling my inheritance with their disgusting idols."

¹⁹ Yahweh, you are my stronghold and my refuge, my place of safety in the day of distress.

The nations will go to you from the ends of the earth and say, "Surely our ancestors inherited deceit.

They are empty; there is no profit in them.

²⁰ Do people make gods for themselves? But they are not gods.

²¹ Therefore see! I will cause them to know in this time, I will cause them to know my hand and my power,

so they will know that Yahweh is my name."

Chapter 17

¹ "The sin of Judah is written with an iron stylus having a diamond point.

It is engraved on the tablet of their hearts and on the horns of your altars.

² Their children remember their altars and their Asherah poles by the leafy trees on the high hills.

³ My mountain in the open country and all your wealth along with all of your treasures,

I will give as plunder to others.

That is the price of your high places

and the sin that is throughout all your territories.

⁴ You will lose the inheritance that I gave to you.

I will enslave you to your enemies in a land that you do not know,

for you have ignited a fire in my wrath, which will burn forever."

⁵ Yahweh says, "The person who trusts in mankind is accursed;

he makes flesh his strength but turns his heart away from Yahweh.

⁶ For he will be like a small bush in the Arabah and will not see anything good coming.

He will stay in the stony places in the wilderness, barren land without inhabitants.

⁷ But the person who trusts in Yahweh is blessed, for Yahweh is his reason for confidence.

⁸ For he will be like a plant beside waters along the stream; his roots will spread out.

He will not see that heat is coming, for his leaves will be luxurious.

Then in the year of drought he will not be anxious, nor will he stop producing fruit.

⁹ The heart is more deceitful than anything else. It is sick; who can understand it?

¹⁰ I am Yahweh, the one who searches through the mind, who tests the kidneys.

I give to each person according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.

¹¹ A partridge hatches an egg that she did not lay. Someone may become rich unjustly,

but when half his days are over, those riches will abandon him, and in the end he will be a fool."

¹² "The place of our temple is a glorious throne, elevated from the beginning.

¹³ Yahweh is the hope of Israel. All who abandon you will be ashamed. Those in the land who turn away from you will be cut off.

For they are abandoning Yahweh, the fountain of living waters. ¹⁴ Heal me, Yahweh, and I will be healed! Rescue me, and I will be rescued. For you are my song of praise.

¹⁵ See, they are saying to me, ‘Where is the word of Yahweh? Let it come!’

¹⁶ As for me, I did not run from being a shepherd following you. I did not long for the day of disaster.

You know the proclamations that came from my lips. They were made in your presence.

¹⁷ Do not be a terror to me. You are my refuge on the day of calamity.

¹⁸ May my pursuers be ashamed, but do not let me be ashamed. May they be dismayed, but do not let me be dismayed.

Send the day of disaster against them and shatter them with a double share of destruction.”

¹⁹ Yahweh said this to me: “Go and stand in the gate of the people where the kings of Judah enter and where they exit, then in all the other gates of Jerusalem. ²⁰ Say to them, ‘Hear the word of Yahweh, kings of Judah and all you people of Judah, and every resident of Jerusalem who comes in through these gates. ²¹ Yahweh says this: “Be careful for the sake of your lives and do not carry a burden on the Sabbath day to bring it to the gates of Jerusalem. ²² Do not bring a load out from your house on the Sabbath day. Do not do any work, but set apart the Sabbath day, just as I commanded your ancestors to do.” ²³ They did not listen or pay attention, but stiffened their neck so they would not hear me nor accept discipline.

²⁴ It will happen that if you truly listen to me—this is Yahweh’s declaration—and do not bring a load to the gates of this city on the Sabbath day but instead set apart

the Sabbath day to Yahweh and not do any work on it, ²⁵ then kings, princes, and those who sit on David’s throne will come to the gates of this city in chariots and with horses, they and their leaders, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever. ²⁶ They will come from the cities of Judah and from all around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin and the lowlands, from the mountains, and from the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and frankincense, thanks offerings to the house of Yahweh. ²⁷ But if you do not listen to me—to set apart the Sabbath day and do not carry heavy loads and do not enter the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day—then I will light a fire in its gates, and it will consume the fortresses of Jerusalem, and it cannot be put out.”

Chapter 18

¹ This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah and said, ² “Arise and go out to the potter’s house, for I will have you hear my word there.” ³ So I went out to the potter’s house, and behold! The potter was working on the potter’s wheel. ⁴ But the object of clay that he was molding was ruined in his hand, so he changed his mind and made another object that seemed good in his eyes to do.

⁵ Then the word of Yahweh came to me and said, ⁶ “Should I not be able to act like this potter with you, house of Israel?—this is Yahweh’s declaration. See! Like clay in a potter’s hand—that is how you are in my hand, house of Israel. ⁷ At one moment, I may proclaim something about a nation or a kingdom, that I will drive it out, tear it down, or destroy it. ⁸ But if the nation about which I have made that proclamation turns from its evil, then I will relent

from the disaster that I was planning to bring upon it.

⁹ At another moment, I may proclaim something about a nation or a kingdom, that I will build it up or plant it. ¹⁰ But if it does evil in my eyes by not listening to my voice, then I will stop the good that I had said I would do for them. ¹¹ So now, speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and say, 'Yahweh says this: See, I am about to form disaster against you. I am about to devise a plan against you. Repent, each person from his wicked path, so your ways and your practices will bring good to you.' ¹² But they will say, 'This is no use. We will act according to our own plans. Each one of us will do what his evil, stubborn heart desires.'

¹³ Therefore Yahweh says this, 'Ask the nations, who has ever heard of such a thing as this?

The virgin Israel has committed a horrible act.

¹⁴ Does the snow in Lebanon ever leave the rocky hills on its sides?

Are the mountain streams coming from far away ever destroyed, those cold streams?

¹⁵ Yet my people have forgotten me. They have made offerings to useless idols and been made to stumble in their paths;

they have left the ancient paths to walk lesser paths.

¹⁶ Their land will become a horror, an object of everlasting hissing.

Everyone who passes by her will shudder and shake his head.

¹⁷ I will scatter them before their enemies like an eastern wind. I will show them my back, and not my face, on the day of their disaster.'"

¹⁸ So the people said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, since the law will never perish from the priests, or advice from the wise men, or words from the prophets. Come, let us attack him with our words and no longer pay attention to anything he proclaims."

¹⁹ Pay attention to me, Yahweh, and listen to the voice of my enemies.

²⁰ Will disaster from them really be my reward for being good to them? For they have dug a pit for me.

Remember how I stood before you to speak for their welfare, to cause your fury to turn away from them.

²¹ Therefore hand over their children to famine, and give them to the hands of those who use the sword.

So let their women become bereaved and widows, and their men be killed, and their young men killed by the sword in battle. ²² Let a distressed shout be heard from their houses, as you suddenly bring raiders against them.

For they have dug a pit to capture me and have hidden traps for my feet.

²³ But you, Yahweh, you know all of their plans against me to kill me.

Do not forgive their iniquities and sins. Do not wipe their sins away from you.

Instead, let them be overthrown before you. Act against them in the time of your wrath.

Chapter 19

¹ Yahweh said this, "Go and purchase a potter's clay flask while you are with the elders of the people and the priests. ² Then go out to the Valley of Ben Hinnom at the entry of the Broken Pottery Gate,

and there proclaim the words that I will tell you. ³ Say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, "See, and I am about to bring disaster on this place, and the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. ⁴ I will do this because they have abandoned me and profaned this place. In this place they offer sacrifices to other gods that they did not know. They, their ancestors, and the kings of Judah have also filled this place with innocent blood. ⁵ They built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to him—something that I did not command or mention, nor did it enter my mind.

⁶ Therefore, see, the days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when this place will no longer be called Topheth, the Valley of Ben Hinnom, for it will be the Valley of Slaughter. ⁷ In this place I will make the plans of Judah and Jerusalem useless. I will make them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hand of the ones seeking their lives. Then I will give their corpses as food to the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth. ⁸ Then I will make this city a ruin and the object of hissing, for everyone passing by it will shudder and hiss regarding all of its plagues. ⁹ I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and daughters; each man will consume the flesh of his neighbor in the siege and in the anguish brought on them by their enemies and the ones seeking their lives."

¹⁰ Then you will break the clay flask in the sight of the men who went with you. ¹¹ You will say to them, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: I will do this same thing to this people and this city—this is Yahweh's declaration—just as Jeremiah shattered the clay flask so that it could not be repaired again. People will bury the dead

in Topheth until there is no place left for any more dead. ¹² This is what I will do to this place and its inhabitants when I make this city like Topheth—this is Yahweh's declaration— ¹³ so the houses of Jerusalem and of the kings of Judah will become like Topheth—all the houses on whose rooftops the unclean people worship all the stars of the heavens and pour out drink offerings to other gods."

¹⁴ Then Jeremiah went from Topheth, where Yahweh had sent him to prophesy. He stood in the courtyard of Yahweh's house and he said to all the people, ¹⁵ "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'See, I am about to bring to this city and to all of its towns all the disaster that I have proclaimed against it, since they stiffened their neck and refused to listen to my words.'

Chapter 20

¹ Pashhur son of Immer the priest—he was a leading officer—heard Jeremiah prophesying these words before Yahweh's house. ² So Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet and then placed him in the stocks that were at the Upper Gate of Benjamin in Yahweh's house. ³ It happened on the next day that Pashhur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, "Yahweh has not called your name Pashhur, but you are Magor Missabib. ⁴ For Yahweh says this, 'Look, I will make you an object of horror, you and all of your loved ones, for they will fall by the sword of their enemies and your eyes will see it. I will give all of Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon. He will make them captives in Babylon or attack them with the sword. ⁵ I will give him all the wealth of this city and all of its riches, all of its precious items and all the treasures of the

kings of Judah. I will place these things in the hand of your enemies, and they will seize them. They will take them and bring them to Babylon. ⁶ But you, Pashhur, and all the inhabitants of your house will go into captivity. You will go to Babylon and die there. You and all of your loved ones to whom you prophesied deceitful things will be buried there.”

⁷ ”You deceived me, Yahweh. I was indeed deceived. You seized me and defeated me.

I have become a laughingstock. The people mock me every day, all the day.

⁸ For whenever I have spoken, I have called out and proclaimed, ‘Violence and destruction.’

Then Yahweh’s word has become for me reproach and mocking every day.

⁹ If I say, ‘I will not think about Yahweh anymore. I will no longer proclaim his name.’

Then it is like a fire in my heart, held within my bones. So I struggle to contain it but I cannot.

¹⁰ I have heard rumors of terror from many people all around. ‘Report! We must report it!’

Those who are close to me watch to see if I will fall. ‘Perhaps he can be tricked.

If so, we can overpower him and take our revenge on him.’

¹¹ But Yahweh is with me like a powerful warrior, so the ones pursuing me will stagger.

They will not defeat me. They will be greatly ashamed, because they will not succeed.

They will have unending shame, it will never be forgotten.

¹² But you, Yahweh of hosts, you who examine the righteous and who see the mind and the heart.

Let me see your vengeance on them since I have shown my case to you.

¹³ Sing to Yahweh! Praise Yahweh!

For he has rescued the lives of those who are oppressed from the hand of evil-doers.

¹⁴ Let the day when I was born be cursed.

Do not let the day that my mother bore me be blessed.

¹⁵ Let the man who informed my father be cursed,

the one who said, ‘A male child has been born to you,’ causing great joy.

¹⁶ Let that man be like the cities that Yahweh overthrew when he would not have mercy.

May he hear a call for help in the dawn and the shout of battle at noontime.

¹⁷ May this happen, since Yahweh did not kill me in the womb or make my mother my tomb,

a pregnant womb forever.

¹⁸ Why is it that I came out from the womb to see troubles and agony,

so that my days are filled with shame?”

Chapter 21

¹ This is the word that came from Yahweh to Jeremiah when King Zedekiah sent Pashhur son of Malkijah and Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest to him. They said to him, ² “Seek advice from Yahweh on our behalf, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is making war on us. Perhaps Yahweh will do miracles for us, as in times

past, and will make him withdraw from us.”

³ So Jeremiah said to them, “This is what you must say to Zedekiah, ⁴ ‘Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: See, I am about to turn back the instruments of war that are in your hand, with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who are closing you in from outside the walls! For I will gather them in the middle of this city. ⁵ Then I myself will fight against you with a raised hand and a strong arm, and with wrath, fury, and great anger. ⁶ For I will attack the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast They will die in a severe plague. ⁷ After this—this is Yahweh’s declaration—Zedekiah king of Judah, his servants, the people, and whoever remains in this city after the plague, the sword, and the famine, I will give them all into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those seeking their life. Then he will kill them with the edge of the sword. He will not pity them, spare them, or have compassion.’

⁸ Then to this people you must say, ‘Yahweh says this: See, I am about to place before you the way of life and the way of death. ⁹ Anyone staying in this city will die by the sword, famine, and plague; but anyone going out and falling on his knees before the Chaldeans who have closed in against you will live. He will escape with his life. ¹⁰ For I have set my face against this city in order to bring disaster and not to bring good—this is Yahweh’s declaration. It has been given into the hand of the king of Babylon and he will burn it.’

¹¹ Concerning the house of the king of Judah, listen to the word of Yahweh.

¹² House of David, Yahweh says, ‘Bring about justice in the morning.

Rescue the one who has been robbed by the hand of the oppressor,

or my fury will go out like fire and burn, and there is no one who can quench it, because of your evil deeds.

¹³ See, inhabitant of the valley! I am against you, rock of the plain—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

I am against anyone who is saying, “Who will come down to attack us?” or “Who will enter our houses?”

¹⁴ I have assigned the fruit of your practices to come against you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

and I will light a fire in the thickets, and it will consume everything around it.”

Chapter 22

¹ This is what Yahweh says, “Go down to the house of the king of Judah and proclaim this word there. ² Say, ‘King of Judah, listen to the word of Yahweh—you who sit on David’s throne—you, and your servants, and your people who come through these gates. ³ Yahweh says this, “Perform justice and righteousness, and anyone who has been robbed—rescue him from the hand of the oppressor. Do not mistreat any foreigner in your land, or any orphan or widow. Do not commit violence or pour out innocent blood in this place. ⁴ For if you truly do these things, then kings sitting on David’s throne will enter the gates of this house riding in a chariot and on horses, he, his servants, and his people! ⁵ But if you do not listen to these words from me that I have announced—this is Yahweh’s declaration—then this royal palace will become a ruin.”’ ⁶ For Yahweh says this concerning the palace of the king of Judah,

'You are like Gilead, or like the summit of Lebanon to me. Yet I will turn you into a wilderness,

into cities with no inhabitants.

⁷ For I have designated destroyers to come against you! Men with their weapons

will cut off the best of your cedars and let them fall into the fire. ⁸ Then many nations will pass by this city. Each person will say to the next, "Why has Yahweh acted in this way toward this great city?" ⁹ Then the other will answer, "Because they abandoned the covenant of Yahweh their God and bowed down to other gods and worshiped them."

¹⁰ Do not weep for the dead. Do not mourn for him. But you must certainly weep for anyone who goes into captivity,

for he will never return and see the land of his birth again.'

¹¹ For Yahweh says this about Jehoahaz son of Josiah king of Judah, who served as king instead of Josiah his father, 'He has gone from this place and will not come back. ¹² He will die there in the place to where they have exiled him, and he will never again see this land.'

¹³ Woe to anyone who is building his house in unrighteousness and his upper rooms in injustice;

for whom others work, but who does not pay them.

¹⁴ Woe to anyone who says, 'I will build for myself a house of great height and spacious upper rooms,

who constructs wide windows for himself, and panels with cedar, and paints it all red.' ¹⁵ Is this what makes you a good king, that you wanted to have boards of cedar?

Did not your father also eat and drink, yet do justice and righteousness? Then things went well for him.

¹⁶ He judged in favor of the poor and needy. It was good then. Is this not what it means to know me?—this is Yahweh's declaration. ¹⁷ But there is nothing in your eyes and heart except worry for your unjust profit and for pouring out innocent blood,

for producing oppression and crushing of others. ¹⁸ Therefore Yahweh says this about Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah: They will not lament for him with 'Woe, my brother!' or 'Woe, my sister!' They will not lament him with 'Woe, master!' or 'Woe, majesty!'

¹⁹ He will be buried with a donkey's burial,

dragged away and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

²⁰ Go up Lebanon's mountains and shout. Lift your voice in Bashan.

Shout from the Abarim mountains, for all of your friends will be destroyed.

²¹ I spoke to you when you were safe, but you said, 'I will not listen.'

This was your custom since your youth, for you have not listened to my voice.

²² The wind will shepherd away all your shepherds, and your friends will go into captivity.

Then you will certainly be ashamed and humiliated by all of your evil deeds.

²³ You king, you who live in the House of the Forest of Lebanon, you who nest among the cedars,

how you will be pitied when the labor pains of anguish come on you like childbirth."

²⁴ "As I live—this is Yahweh's declaration—even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim,

king of Judah, were the signet on my right hand, I would tear you off. ²⁵ For I have given you to the hand of the ones seeking your life and to the hand of those before whom you are afraid, even to the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Chaldeans. ²⁶ I will throw you and your mother who bore you into another land, a country where you were not born, and there you will die. ²⁷ About this land to which they will want to return, they will not come back here.

²⁸ Is this a despised and shattered vessel? Is this man Jehoiachin a pot that pleases no one?

Why have they thrown him and his descendants out, and have poured them out into a land that they did not know?

²⁹ Land, Land, Land! Hear the word of Yahweh!

³⁰ Yahweh says this, 'Write about this man Jehoiachin: He will be childless.

He will not prosper during his days, and no one among his descendants will achieve success

or ever again sit on David's throne and rule over Judah.'

Chapter 23

¹ "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture—this is Yahweh's declaration." ² Therefore Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this concerning the shepherds who are shepherding his people, "You are scattering my flock and driving them away. You have not cared for them at all. Know this! I will pay you back for the evil of your practices—this is Yahweh's declaration. ³ I myself will gather the remnant of my flock from all of the lands where I have driven them,

and I will return them to a grazing place, where they will be fruitful and increase. ⁴ Then I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them so they will no longer fear or be shattered. None of them will go missing—this is Yahweh's declaration.

⁵ See, the days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will raise up for David a righteous branch.

He will reign as king; he will act wisely and cause justice and righteousness in the land.

⁶ In his days Judah will be rescued, and Israel will live in security.

Then this is the name by which he will be called: Yahweh is our righteousness.

⁷ Therefore see, days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when they will no longer say, 'As Yahweh lives, who brought the people of Israel up from the land of Egypt.' ⁸ Instead they will say, 'As Yahweh lives, who brought up and who led back the descendants of the house of Israel from the northern land and all the lands where they had been driven.' Then they will live in their own land."

⁹ Regarding the prophets, my heart is broken in me, and all of my bones tremble. I have become like a drunk man,

like a man whom wine has overpowered, because of Yahweh and his holy words.

¹⁰ For the land is full of adulterers. Because of these the land is dried up.

The meadows in the wilderness dry up. These prophets' paths are wicked; their power is not used in a right manner.

¹¹ "For both the prophets and the priests are polluted. I even found their

wickedness in my house!—this is Yahweh's declaration—

¹² therefore their path will be like a slippery place in the darkness. They will be pushed down. They will fall in it.

For I will send disaster against them in the year of their punishment—this is Yahweh's declaration.

¹³ for I have seen offensiveness among the prophets in Samaria. They prophesied by Baal

and led my people Israel off the right path.

¹⁴ Among the prophets in Jerusalem I have seen horrible things:

They commit adultery and walk in deceit.

They strengthen the hands of evildoers; no one turns back from his evildoing.

All of them have become like Sodom to me and its inhabitants like Gomorrah!"

¹⁵ Therefore Yahweh of hosts says this concerning the prophets,

"Look, I am about to make them eat wormwood and drink poisonous water,

for pollution has gone out from the prophets of Jerusalem to all the land."

¹⁶ Yahweh of hosts says this, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you.

They have deluded you! They are announcing visions from their own minds, not from Yahweh's mouth.

¹⁷ They are constantly saying to those who dishonor me, 'Yahweh declares there will be peace for you.'

For everyone walking in the stubbornness of his own heart says, 'Disaster will not come upon you.'

¹⁸ Yet who has stood in Yahweh's council meeting? Who sees and hears his word?

Who pays attention to his word and listens?

¹⁹ See, there is a storm coming from Yahweh! His fury is going out, and a tempest is whirling about.

It is whirling around the heads of the wicked.

²⁰ Yahweh's wrath will not return until it has carried out and brought into being his heart's intentions.

In the final days, you will understand it.

²¹ I did not send out these prophets. They just appeared.

I did not proclaim anything to them, but they have still prophesied.

²² For if they had stood in my council meeting, they would have caused my people to hear my word;

they would have caused them to turn from their wicked words and corrupt practices.

²³ Am I only a God nearby—this is Yahweh's declaration—and not also a God far away?

²⁴ Can anyone hide in a secret place so I cannot see him?—this is Yahweh's declaration—

and do I not fill the heavens and the earth?—this is Yahweh's declaration.

²⁵ I have heard what the prophets have said, those who were prophesying deceit in my name. They said, 'I had a dream! I had a dream!' ²⁶ How long will this go on, prophets who prophesy lies from their minds, and who prophesy from the deceit in their hearts? ²⁷ They are planning on making my people forget my name with the dreams that they report, each one to

his neighbor, just as their ancestors forgot my name in favor of Baal's name.

²⁸ The prophet who has a dream, let him report the dream. But the one to whom I have declared something, let him declare my word truthfully. What does straw have to do with grain?—this is Yahweh's declaration—²⁹ Is not my word like fire?—this is Yahweh's declaration—and like a hammer that shatters a rock into pieces?³⁰ So see, I am against the prophets—this is Yahweh's declaration—anyone who steals words from another person and says they come from me. ³¹ See, I am against the prophets—this is Yahweh's declaration—who use their tongues to prophesy proclamations. ³² See, I am against the prophets who dream deceitfully—this is Yahweh's declaration—and then proclaim them and in this way mislead my people with their deceit and boasting. I am against them, for I have not sent them out nor given them commands. So they will certainly not help this people—this is Yahweh's declaration.

³³ When this people or a prophet or a priest asks you, 'What is Yahweh's declaration?' then you must say to them, 'What declaration? For I have abandoned you'—this is Yahweh's declaration. ³⁴ As for the prophets, priests, and people who are saying, 'This is Yahweh's declaration,' I will punish that man and his house. ³⁵ You continue to say, each person to his neighbor and each man to his brother, 'What did Yahweh answer?' and 'What did Yahweh declare?' ³⁶ But you must no longer talk about Yahweh's declaration, since each declaration from each man has become his own message, and you have perverted the words of the living God, Yahweh of hosts, our God. ³⁷ This is what you are asking the prophet, 'What did Yahweh answer you? What did Yahweh declare?' ³⁸ Then you report a declaration from Yah-

weh, but Yahweh says this, 'You say, "Here is a declaration of Yahweh," even though I sent a command to you and said, "Do not say: This is a declaration from Yahweh."'³⁹ Therefore, see, I am about to pick you up and throw you away from me, along with the city that I gave you and your ancestors. ⁴⁰ Then I will put everlasting shame and insult on you that will not be forgotten."

Chapter 24

¹ Yahweh showed me something. Behold, two baskets of figs were placed before Yahweh's temple. (This vision happened after Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took into exile Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, the officials of Judah, the craftsmen and the metalworkers from Jerusalem and brought them to Babylon.)

² One basket of figs was very good, like first ripe figs, but the other basket of figs was so very bad that they could not be eaten. ³ Yahweh said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "Figs. Figs that are very good and figs that are so very bad they cannot be eaten."

⁴ Then the word of Yahweh came to me and said, ⁵ "Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: I will look on the exiles of Judah for their benefit, just like these good figs, the exiles whom I have sent out from this place to the land of Chaldea. ⁶ I will set my eyes on them for good and restore them to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down. I will plant them, and not uproot them. ⁷ Then I will give them a heart to know me, for I am Yahweh. They will be my people and I will be their God, so they will turn to me with all their heart.

⁸ But like the bad figs that are too bad to be eaten—this is what Yahweh says—I will act in this way with Zedekiah, king of Ju-

dah, with his officials, and with the rest of Jerusalem who remain in this land or go to stay in the land of Egypt. ⁹ I will turn them into a frightening thing, a disaster, in the sight of all the kingdoms on earth, a disgrace and a subject for proverbs, taunts, and curses in every place where I will have driven them. ¹⁰ I will send out sword, famine, and plague against them they are finished off from the land that I gave them and their ancestors.”

Chapter 25

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah about all the people of Judah. It came in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah. That was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

² Jeremiah the prophet proclaimed this to all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³ He said, “For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah until this day, Yahweh’s words have been coming to me. I have been proclaiming them to you. I was eager to proclaim them, but you would not listen. ⁴ Yahweh sent out all his servants the prophets to you. They were eager to go out, but you would not listen or pay attention. ⁵ These prophets said, ‘Let each man turn from his wicked way and the corruption of his practices and return to the land that Yahweh gave in ancient times to your ancestors and to you, as a permanent gift. ⁶ So do not walk after other gods to worship them or bow down to them, and do not provoke him with the work of your hands so that he does you harm.’ ⁷

But you have not listened to me—this is Yahweh’s declaration—so you have provoked me with the work of your hands to do harm to you. ⁸ So Yahweh of hosts says this, ‘Because you did not listen to

my words, ⁹ see, I am about to send out a command to gather all the peoples of the north—this is Yahweh’s declaration—with Nebuchadnezzar my servant, king of Babylon, and bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all the nations around you. For I will set them apart for destruction. I will turn them into a horror, an object for hissing, and an unending desolation. ¹⁰ The sounds of joy and celebration—the voices of the bridegroom and bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamps—I will make all these things disappear from these nations. ¹¹ Then all of this land will become a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years.

¹² Then it will happen when seventy years have been completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans—this is Yahweh’s declaration—for their iniquity and make it an unending desolation. ¹³ Then I will carry out against that land all the words that I had spoken, and everything written in this book that Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. ¹⁴ For also many other nations and great kings will make slaves out of these nations. I will repay them for their deeds and the works of their hands.”

¹⁵ For Yahweh, God of Israel, said this to me, “Take this cup of the wine of fury from my hand and make all the nations to which I am sending you drink it. ¹⁶ For they will drink and then stumble about and rant madly before the sword that I am sending out among them.” ¹⁷ So I took the cup from Yahweh’s hand, and I made all the nations to which Yahweh had sent me drink it: ¹⁸ Jerusalem, the cities of Judah and her kings and officials—to turn them into ruins and something terrifying, and into an object for hissing and cursing, as

they are at this present day. ¹⁹ Other nations also had to drink it: Pharaoh king of Egypt and his servants; his officials and all his people; ²⁰ all people of mixed heritage and all the kings of the land of Uz; all the kings of the land of Philistia—Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; ²¹ Edom and Moab and the people of Ammon. ²² The kings of Tyre and Sidon, the kings of the coasts on the other side of the sea, ²³ Dedan, Tema, and Buz with all the ones who cut the hair on the sides of their heads, they also had to drink it. ²⁴ These people also had to drink it: all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of people of mixed heritage who live in the wilderness; ²⁵ all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes; ²⁶ all the kings of the north, the ones close by and the ones far away—everyone with his brother and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the surface of the earth. Finally the king of Babylon will drink after them all.

²⁷ Yahweh said to me, "Now you must say to them, 'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Drink and become drunk, then vomit, fall down, and do not rise before the sword that I am sending among you.' ²⁸ Then it will happen that if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, you will say to them, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: You must certainly drink it. ²⁹ For see, I am about to bring disaster on the city that is called by my name, and should you yourselves be free from punishment? You will not be free, for I am calling a sword against all the inhabitants of the land!—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.'

³⁰ So you yourself, Jeremiah, must prophesy to them all these words. You must say to them,

'Yahweh will roar from the heights

and will raise his voice from his holy dwelling,

and thunder from his holy dwelling place;

and he will shout like those who tread the grapes

against all those who live on the earth.

³¹ A noise comes to the ends of the land, for a dispute from Yahweh is going to bring a lawsuit against the nations. He will administer justice to all flesh.

He will hand over the wicked ones to the sword—this is Yahweh's declaration.'

³² Yahweh of hosts says this,

'See, disaster is going out from nation to nation,

and a great storm is beginning from the farthest parts of the earth.

³³ Then those killed by Yahweh will on that day extend from one end of the earth to the other;

they will not be mourned, gathered, or buried.

They will be like dung on the ground.

³⁴ Wail, shepherds, and shout for help!

Roll about on the ground,

you majestic people in the flock.

For your day to be slaughtered and scattered has come.

You will fall like chosen rams.

³⁵ Refuge for the shepherds is gone. There is no escape for the majestic ones in the flock.

³⁶ There are the distressed cries of the shepherds and the wails of the majestic ones in the flock,

for Yahweh is devastating their pastures.

³⁷ So the peaceful pastures will be devastated because of Yahweh's angry wrath.

³⁸ Like a young lion, he has left his den, for their land will become a horror because of the oppressor's anger, because of his angry wrath.”^a

25:38 ^aInstead of *the oppressor's anger*, some ancient copies and modern versions have *the oppressor's sword*.

Chapter 26

¹ In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from Yahweh and said, ² "Yahweh says this: Stand in the courtyard of my house and speak about all the cities of Judah who come to worship at my house. Proclaim all the words that I have commanded you to say to them. Do not cut short any word! ³ It may be that they will listen, that each man will turn from his wicked ways, so I will relent concerning the disaster that I am planning to bring on them because of the wickedness of their practices. ⁴ So you must say to them, 'Yahweh says this: If you do not listen to me so as to walk in my law that I have placed before you— ⁵ if you do not listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I am persistently sending to you—but you have not listened!— ⁶ then I will make this house like Shiloh; I will turn this city into a curse in the sight of all the nations on earth.'"

⁷ The priests, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah announcing these words in Yahweh's house. ⁸ So it happened that when Jeremiah had finished announcing all that Yahweh commanded him to say to all the people, the priests, prophets, and all the people seized him and said, "You will certainly die! ⁹ Why

have you prophesied in Yahweh's name and said that this house will become like Shiloh and this city will become desolate, with no inhabitant?" For all the people had formed a mob against Jeremiah in Yahweh's house.

¹⁰ Then the officials of Judah heard these words and went up from the king's house to Yahweh's house. They sat in the gateway at the New Gate of Yahweh's house. ¹¹ The priests and the prophets spoke to the officials and to all the people. They said, "It is right for this man to die, for he prophesied against this city, just as you heard with your own ears!" ¹² So Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people and said, "Yahweh has sent me out to prophesy against this house and this city, to say all the words that you have heard. ¹³ So now, improve your ways and your practices, and listen to the voice of Yahweh your God so that he will relent concerning the disaster that he has proclaimed against you. ¹⁴ I myself—look at me!—am in your hand. Do to me what is good and right in your eyes. ¹⁵ But you must surely know that if you kill me, then you are bringing innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and its inhabitants, for Yahweh has truly sent me to you to proclaim all these words for your ears."

¹⁶ Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and prophets, "It is not right for this man to die, for he has proclaimed things to us in the name of Yahweh our God." ¹⁷ Then men from the elders of the land rose up and spoke to the entire assembly of the people. ¹⁸ They said, "Micah the Morashite was prophesying in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah. He spoke to all the people of Judah and said, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, and the temple mount will become a hill overgrown with thick-

ets.’¹⁹ Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all of Judah put him to death? Did he not fear Yahweh and appease the face of Yahweh so that Yahweh would relent concerning the disaster that he proclaimed to them? So will we do greater evil against our own lives?”

²⁰ Meanwhile there was another man who prophesied in the name of Yahweh—Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath Jearim—he also prophesied against this city and this land, agreeing with all of Jeremiah’s words. ²¹ But when King Jehoiakim and all his soldiers and officials heard his word, then the king tried to put him to death, but Uriah heard and was afraid, so he ran away and went to Egypt. ²² Yet King Jehoiakim sent out men to Egypt—Elnathan son of Achbor and men with him to Egypt. ²³ They took Uriah out from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim. Then Jehoiakim killed him with a sword and sent his corpse out to the graves of the ordinary people. ²⁴ But the hand of Ahikam son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so he was not given into the hand of the people to be put to death.

Chapter 27

¹ In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh. ^a ² This is what Yahweh said to me, “Make fetters and a yoke for yourself. Place them on your neck. ³ Then send them out to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the people of Ammon, the king of Tyre, and to the king of Sidon. Send them by the hand of those kings’ ambassadors who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. ⁴ Give commands to them for their masters and say, ‘Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: This is what you

must say to your masters, ⁵ “I myself made the earth by my great strength and my raised arm. I also made the people and animals on the earth, and I give it to anyone who is right in my eyes. ⁶ So now, I myself am giving all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, my servant. Also, I am giving the living things in the fields to him to serve him. ⁷ For all the nations will serve him, his sons, and his grandsons until the time for his land to end comes. Then many nations and great kings will subdue him. ⁸ So the nation and the kingdom that does not serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and that does not put his neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon—I will punish that nation with sword, famine, and plague—this is Yahweh’s declaration—until I have destroyed them by his hand. ⁹ So do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your seers, soothsayers, and sorcerers who have been speaking to you and saying, ‘Do not serve the king of Babylon.’ ¹⁰ For they are prophesying deceit to you in order to send you far away from your lands, for I will drive you away, and you will die. ¹¹ But the nation that places its neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon and serves him, I will allow it to rest in its land—this is Yahweh’s declaration—and they will cultivate it and make their homes in it.”

¹² So I spoke to Zedekiah king of Judah and gave him this message, “Place your necks into the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him and his people, and you will live. ¹³ Why will you die—you and your people—by the sword, famine, and plague, just as I have declared about the nation that refuses to serve the king of Babylon? ¹⁴ Do not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you and say, ‘Do not serve the king of Babylon,’ for they are prophesying lies to you. ¹⁵ ‘For I have not sent them out—this is Yahweh’s

declaration—for they are prophesying deceit in my name so that I will drive you out and you will perish, both you and the prophets who are prophesying to you.”

¹⁶ I proclaimed this to the priests and all the people and said, “Yahweh says this: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you and say, ‘Look! The objects belonging to Yahweh’s house are being returned from Babylon now!’ They are prophesying lies to you. ¹⁷ Do not listen to them. You should serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should this city become a ruin? ¹⁸ If they are prophets, and if the word of Yahweh has truly come to them, let them beg Yahweh of hosts not to send to Babylon the objects that remain in his house, the house of the king of Judah, and Jerusalem. ¹⁹ For Yahweh of hosts is making a proclamation about the pillars, the sea, and the base, and the rest of the objects that remain in this city—²⁰ the objects that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take when he carried Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem. ²¹ Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel says this about the objects that remain in the house of Yahweh, the house of the king of Judah, and Jerusalem, ²² ‘They will be brought to Babylon, and they will remain there until the day I have set to come for them—this is Yahweh’s declaration—then I will bring them up and restore them to this place.’”

27:1 ^aAlthough most Hebrew copies have *Jehoiakim*, most modern versions have *Zedekiah*, because the events in this chapter occur during his reign.

Chapter 28

¹ It happened in that year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year and the fifth month, Hananiah son of Azzur the prophet, who was from Gibeon, spoke to me in Yahweh’s house in front of the priests and all the people. He said, ² “Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: I have broken the yoke imposed by the king of Babylon. ³ Within two years time I will bring back to this place all the objects belonging to Yahweh’s house that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took from this place and transported to Babylon. ⁴ Then I will bring back to this place Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the captives of Judah who were sent to Babylon—this is Yahweh’s declaration—for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.”

⁵ So Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Hananiah the prophet in front of the priests and to all the people who stood in Yahweh’s house. ⁶ Jeremiah the prophet said, “May Yahweh do this! May Yahweh confirm the words that you prophesied and bring back to this place the objects belonging to Yahweh’s house, and all the captives from Babylon. ⁷ However, listen to the word that I am proclaiming in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. ⁸ The prophets who existed before me and you from long ago also prophesied about many nations and against great kingdoms, about war, famine, and plague. ⁹ So the prophet who prophesies that there will be peace—if his word comes true, then it will be known that he is indeed a prophet sent out by Yahweh.” ¹⁰ But Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet and broke it. ¹¹ Then Hananiah spoke in front of all the people and said, “Yahweh says this: Just

like this, within two years I will break from off the neck of every nation the yoke imposed by Nebuchanezzar king of Babylon.” Then Jeremiah the prophet went on his way.

¹² After Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah and said, ¹³ ”Go and speak to Hananiah and say, ‘Yahweh says this: you broke a yoke of wood, but I will make instead a yoke of iron.’ ¹⁴ For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: I have placed a yoke of iron on the neck of all of these nations to serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they will serve him. I have also given him the wild beasts in the fields to rule over.” ¹⁵ Next Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, ”Listen Hananiah! Yahweh has not sent you, but you yourself have caused this people to believe in lies. ¹⁶ So Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to send you out from the earth. You will die this year, since you proclaimed rebellion against Yahweh.” ¹⁷ In the seventh month of that same year, Hananiah the prophet died.

Chapter 29

¹ These are the words in the scroll that Jeremiah the prophet sent out from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the captives and to the priests, prophets, and all the people that Nebuchadnezzar exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon. ² This was after Jehoiachin the king, the queen mother, and the high officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen had been sent away from Jerusalem. ³ He sent this scroll by the hand of Elasah son of Shapan and Gemariah son of Hilkiyah whom Zedekiah, king of Judah, had sent to Nebuchadnezzar king of

Babylon. ⁴ The scroll said, ”Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this to all the captives whom I caused to be exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon, ⁵ ’Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their fruit. ⁶ Take wives and give birth to sons and daughters. Then take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands. Let them give birth to sons and daughters and increase there so you do not become too few. ⁷ Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be exiled, and intercede with me on its behalf since there will be peace for you if it is at peace.’ ⁸ For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, ’Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that you yourselves are having. ⁹ For they are prophesying deceitfully to you in my name. I did not send them out—this is Yahweh’s declaration.’

¹⁰ For Yahweh says this, ’When Babylon has ruled you for seventy years, I will help you and carry out my good word for you to bring you back to this place. ¹¹ For I myself know the plans that I have for you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—plans for peace and not for disaster, to give you a future and hope. ¹² Then you will call to me, and go and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ For you will seek me and find me, since you will seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ Then I will be found by you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—and I will bring back your fortunes; I will gather you from all the nations and places where I scattered you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—for I will bring you back to the place from where I caused you to be exiled.’

¹⁵ Since you said that Yahweh has raised up prophets for us in Babylon, ¹⁶ Yahweh says this to the king who sits on the throne of David and to all the people who are staying in that city, your brothers who have

not gone out with you into captivity—¹⁷ Yahweh of hosts says this, 'See, I am about to send sword, famine, and disease on them. For I will make them like rotten figs that are too bad to be eaten.¹⁸ Then I will pursue them with sword, famine, and plague and make them a horrible sight to all the kingdoms on earth—a horror, an object about curses and hissed words, and a shameful thing among all the nations where I scattered her.¹⁹ This is because they did not listen to my word—this is Yahweh's declaration—that I sent out to them through my servants the prophets. I repeatedly sent them, but you would not listen—this is Yahweh's declaration.'²⁰ So you yourselves listen to the word of Yahweh, all you exiles whom he has sent out from Jerusalem to Babylon,

²¹ 'I, Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, say this about Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who prophesy falsely to you in my name: See, I am about to put them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He will kill them before your eyes.²² Then a curse will be spoken about these persons by all the captives of Judah in Babylon. The curse will say: May Yahweh make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in fire.²³ This will happen because of the shameful things they did in Israel when they committed adultery with their neighbor's wives and declared false words in my name, things that I never commanded them to say. For I am the one who knows; I am the witness—this is Yahweh's declaration.'"

²⁴ "About Shemaiah the Nehelamite, say this:²⁵ 'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Because you sent out letters in your own name to all the people in Jerusalem, to Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, and said,²⁶ "Yahweh has made you priest instead of

Jehoiada the priest, for you to be in charge of Yahweh's house. You are in control of all the people who rave and make themselves into prophets. You should put them in stocks and chains.²⁷ So now, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, who makes himself into a prophet against you?²⁸ For he has sent out to us in Babylon and said, 'It will be a long time. Build houses and live in them, and plant gardens and eat their fruit.'"²⁹ Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet.³⁰ So the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah and said,³¹ "Send word to all the exiles and say, 'Yahweh says this about Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you when I myself did not send him; because he has led you to believe lies,³² therefore Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his descendants. There will not be a man for him to stay among this people. He will not see the good that I will do for my people—this is Yahweh's declaration—for he has proclaimed faithlessness against me, Yahweh.'"

Chapter 30

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh and said,² "This is what Yahweh, God of Israel, says, 'Write for yourself in a scroll all the words that I have declared to you in a scroll.³ For look, days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah. I, Yahweh, have said it. For I will bring them back to the land that I gave their ancestors, and they will possess it.'"

⁴ These are the words that Yahweh declared concerning Israel and Judah,⁵ "For Yahweh says this,

'We have heard a trembling voice of dread and not of peace.

⁶ Ask and see if a man bears a child. Why do I see every young man with his hand on his loins?

Like a woman bearing a child, why have all their faces become pale?

⁷ Woe! For that day will be great, with none like it.

It will be a time of anxiety for Jacob, but he will be rescued from it. ⁸ For it will be in that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—that I will break the yoke off your neck, and I will shatter your chains, so foreigners will no longer enslave you. ⁹ But they will worship Yahweh their God and serve David their king, whom I will make king over them.

¹⁰ So you, my servant Jacob, do not fear—this is Yahweh's declaration—and do not be dismayed, Israel.

For see, I am about to bring you back from far away, and your descendants from the land of captivity.

Jacob will return and be at peace; he will be secure, and there will be no more terror.

¹¹ For I am with you—this is Yahweh's declaration—to save you. Then I will bring a complete end

to all the nations where I have scattered you. But I will certainly not put an end to you,

though I discipline you justly and will certainly not leave you unpunished.'

¹² For Yahweh says this, 'Your injury is incurable; your wound is infected.

¹³ There is no one to plead your case; there is no remedy for your wound to heal you.

¹⁴ All of your lovers have forgotten you. They will not look for you,

for I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy and the discipline of a cruel master

because of your many iniquities and your innumerable sins.

¹⁵ Why do you call for help for your injury? Your pain is incurable.

Because of your many iniquities, your innumerable sins, I have done these things to you.

¹⁶ So everyone who consumes you will be consumed, and all of your adversaries will go into captivity.

For the ones who have plundered you will become plunder, and I will make all of the ones despoiling you a spoil.

¹⁷ For I will bring healing on you; I will heal you of your wounds—this is Yahweh's declaration—

I will do this because they called you: Outcast. No one cares for this Zion."

¹⁸ Yahweh says this, "See, I am about to bring back the fortunes of Jacob's tents and have compassion on his homes.

Then a city will be built on the heap of ruins, and a stronghold will exist again where it used to be.

¹⁹ Then a song of praise and a sound of merriment will go out from them,

for I will increase them and not diminish them; I will honor them so they will not be humbled.

²⁰ Then their people will be like before, and their assembly will be established before me

when I punish all the ones who are now tormenting them.

²¹ Their leader will come from among them. He will emerge from their midst

when I draw him near and when he approaches me.

If I do not do this, who would dare come close to me?—this is Yahweh’s declaration.

²² Then you will be my people, and I will be your God.

²³ See, the tempest of Yahweh, his fury, has gone out. It is a continual tempest.

It will whirl on the heads of the wicked people.

²⁴ Yahweh’s wrath will not return until it has carried out and brought into being his heart’s intentions.

In the final days, you will understand it.”

Chapter 31

¹ “At that time—this is Yahweh’s declaration—I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they will be my people.” ² Yahweh says this,

“The people who have survived the sword that came to slaughter Israel have found favor in the wilderness.”

³ Yahweh appeared to me in the past and said, “I have loved you, Israel, with everlasting love.

So I have drawn you toward myself with covenant faithfulness.

⁴ I will build you up again so you will be built, virgin Israel.

You will again pick up your tambourines and go out with happy dances.

⁵ You will plant vineyards again on the mountains of Samaria; the farmers will plant and put the fruit to good use.

⁶ For a day will come when the watchmen in the mountains of Ephraim will proclaim,

‘Arise, let us go up to Zion to Yahweh our God.’”

⁷ For Yahweh says this, “Shout for joy over Jacob! Shout in gladness for the chief people of the nations! Let praise be heard. Say, ‘Yahweh has rescued his people, the remnant of Israel.’

⁸ See, I am about to bring them from the northern lands. I will gather them from the farthest parts of the earth.

The blind and lame will be among them; pregnant women and those who are about to give birth will be with them.

A great assembly will return here.

⁹ They will come weeping; I will lead them as they make their pleas. I will have them journey to streams of water

on a straight road. They will not stumble on it, for I will be a father to Israel, and Ephraim will be my firstborn.”

¹⁰ “Hear the word of Yahweh, nations. Report along the coasts in the distance.

You nations must say, “The one who scattered Israel is gathering her up and keeping her as a shepherd keeps his sheep.”

¹¹ For Yahweh has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from the hand that was too strong for him.

¹² Then they will come and rejoice on the heights of Zion. They will rejoice over Yahweh’s goodness,

over the corn and the new wine, over the oil and the offspring of the flocks and herds.

For their lives will become like a watered garden, and they will never again feel any more sorrow.

¹³ Then virgins will rejoice with dancing, and young and old men will be together.

For I will change their mourning into celebration. I will have compassion on them and cause them to rejoice instead of sorrowing.

¹⁴ Then I will saturate the lives of the priests in abundance.

My people will fill themselves with my goodness—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

¹⁵ Yahweh says this: “A voice is heard in Ramah, wailing and bitter weeping.

It is Rachel weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted over them, for they live no longer.”

¹⁶ Yahweh says this, “Hold your voice back from weeping and your eyes from tears;

because there is a recompense for your suffering—this is Yahweh’s declaration—your children will return from the enemy’s land.

¹⁷ There is hope for your future—this is Yahweh’s declaration—your descendants will return inside their borders.”

¹⁸ “I have certainly heard Ephraim sorrowing, ‘You punished me, and I have been punished.

Bring me back like an untrained calf, and I will be brought back, for you are Yahweh my God.

¹⁹ For after I turned back to you, I was sorry; after I was trained, I slapped my thigh in grief.

I was ashamed and humiliated, for I have borne the guilt of my youth.’

²⁰ Is not Ephraim my precious child? Is he not my dear, delightful son?

For whenever I speak against him, I certainly still call him to my loving mind. In this way my heart longs for him.

I will certainly have compassion on him—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

²¹ Place road signs for yourself. Set up guideposts for yourself. Set your mind on the right path,

the way you should take. Come back, virgin Israel! Come back to these cities of yours.

²² How long will you continue to waver, faithless daughter?

For Yahweh has created something new on earth: women are surrounding strong men to protect them.

²³ Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, “When I bring back the people to their land, they will say this in the land of Judah and her cities, ‘May Yahweh bless you, you righteous place where he lives, you holy mountain.’” ²⁴ For Judah and all his cities will live together on her. Farmers and shepherds with their flocks be there. ²⁵ For I will give the weary ones water to drink, and I will fill everyone suffering from thirst.” ²⁶ After this I awoke, and I realized that my sleep had been refreshing.

²⁷ “Look, the days are coming—this is Yahweh’s declaration—when I will sow the houses of Israel and Judah with the descendants of man and beast. ²⁸ In the past, I kept them under surveillance in order to uproot them and to tear them down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring them harm. But in the coming days, I will watch over them, in order to build them up and to plant them—this is Yahweh’s declaration. ²⁹ In those days no one will say any longer,

‘Fathers have eaten sour grapes, but the children’s teeth are dulled.’” ³⁰ For each man will die in his own iniquity; everyone who eats sour grapes, his teeth will be dulled.

³¹ Look, the days are coming—this is Yahweh’s declaration—when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I established with

their fathers in the days when I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt. Those were the days when they broken my covenant, although I was a husband for them—this is Yahweh’s declaration. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after these days—this is Yahweh’s declaration: I will place my law within them and will write it on their heart, for I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ Then each man will no longer teach his neighbor, or a man teach his brother and say, ‘Know Yahweh!’ For all of them, from the smallest of them to the greatest, will know me—this is Yahweh’s declaration—for I will forgive their iniquity and will no longer call their sins to mind.”

³⁵ Yahweh says this—Yahweh, the one who makes the sun to shine by day and arranges the moon and stars to shine by night. He is the one who sets the sea in motion so that its waves roar. Yahweh of hosts is his name. He says this,

³⁶ “Only if these permanent things vanish from my sight—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

will Israel’s descendants ever stop from forever being a nation before me.”

³⁷ Yahweh says this, “Only if the highest heavens can be measured,

and only if the earth’s foundation below can be discovered, will I reject all of Israel’s descendants

because of all that they have done—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

³⁸ “Look, the days are coming—this is Yahweh’s declaration—when the city will be rebuilt for me, from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. ³⁹ Then the measuring line will go out again farther, to the hill of Gareb and around Goah. ⁴⁰ The entire Valley of burial and ashes, and all the fields to the Kidron Valley and to the corner of

the Horse Gate in the east, will be set apart for me, Yahweh. It will not be pulled up or overthrown ever again.”

Chapter 32

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. ² At that time, the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was imprisoned in the courtyard of the guard at the house of the king of Judah. ³ Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him and said, “Why do you prophesy and say, ‘Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to give over this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it. ⁴ Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, for he has indeed been given into the hand of the king of Babylon. His mouth will speak to the king’s mouth, and his eyes will see the king’s eyes. ⁵ For Zekediah will go to Babylon and he will be there until I do something with him—this is Yahweh’s declaration—since you fought the Chaldeans. You will not be successful.”

⁶ Jeremiah said, “The word of Yahweh came to me and said, ⁷ ‘Look, Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you and will say, “Buy my field that is in Anathoth for yourself, for the right to buy it belongs to you.”’ ⁸ Then, as Yahweh had declared, Hanamel, the son of my uncle, came to me in the courtyard of the guard, and he said to me, ‘Buy my field that is in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of inheritance is yours, and the right to buy it belongs to you. Buy it for yourself.’ Then I knew that this was Yahweh’s word. ⁹ So I bought the field in Anathoth from Hanamel, the son

of my uncle, and I weighed out for him the silver, seventeen shekels in weight. ¹⁰ Then I wrote in a scroll and sealed it, and had witnesses witness it. Then I weighed the silver in the scales. ¹¹ Next I took the deed of purchase that was sealed, following the command and the statutes, as well as the unsealed deed. ¹² I gave the sealed scroll to Baruch son of Neriah son of Machseiah in front of Hanamel, the son of my uncle, and the witnesses who had written in the sealed scroll, and in front of all the Judeans who sat in the courtyard of the guard. ¹³ So I gave a command to Baruch before them. I said, ¹⁴ 'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Take these scrolls with the receipt of this purchase that is sealed and this unsealed scroll. Place them in a new jar so they will last for a long time. ¹⁵ For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Houses, fields, and vineyards will be purchased again in this land.'

¹⁶ After I gave the receipt of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to Yahweh and said, ¹⁷ 'Woe, Lord Yahweh! Look! You alone have made the heavens and the earth by your great strength and with your raised arm. Nothing you say is too difficult for you to do. ¹⁸ You show covenant faithfulness to thousands and pour the guilt of men into the laps of their children after them. You are the great and mighty God; Yahweh of hosts is your name. ¹⁹ You are great in wisdom and mighty in deeds, for your eyes are open to all the ways of people, to give to each man what his conduct and deeds deserve. ²⁰ You did signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. To this present day here in Israel and among all mankind, you have made your name famous. ²¹ For you brought your people Israel out from the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand, with a raised arm, and with great terror. ²² Then you gave them

this land—which you had sworn to their ancestors to give to them—a land flowing with milk and honey. ²³ So they entered and took possession of it. But they did not obey your voice or live in obedience to your law. They did nothing of what you had commanded them to do, so you brought all this disaster on them. ²⁴ Look! The siege mounds have reached up to the city to capture it. For because of sword, famine, and plague, the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it. For what you have said would happen is happening, and see, you are watching. ²⁵ Then you yourself said to me, "Purchase a field for yourself with silver and have witnesses witness it, even though this city is being given into the hand of the Chaldeans."'"

²⁶ This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah and said, ²⁷ "Look! I am Yahweh, God of all mankind. Is anything too difficult for me to do? ²⁸ Therefore Yahweh says this, 'See, I am about to give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He will capture it. ²⁹ The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city will come and set fire to this city and burn it, along with the houses on the roofs of which the people worshiped Baal and poured out drink offerings to other gods in order to provoke me. ³⁰ For the people of Israel and Judah have certainly been people who have been doing evil before my eyes since their youth. The people of Israel have certainly offended me with the practices of their hands—this is Yahweh's declaration. ³¹ Yahweh declares that this city has been a provocation of my wrath and fury since the day that they built it. It has been that right up to this present day. So I will remove it from before my face ³² because of all the wickedness of the people of Israel and Judah, the things that they have done to provoke me—they, their kings, princes,

priests, prophets, and every person in Judah and inhabitant of Jerusalem. ³³ They turned their backs to me instead of their faces, though I had eagerly taught them. I tried to teach them, but not one of them listened in order to receive correction. ³⁴ Then they placed their detestable things in the house in order to pollute it, the house where my name was called. ³⁵ They built high places for Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom in order to put their sons and daughters in the fire for Molech. I did not command them. It never entered my mind that they should do this detestable thing and so cause Judah to sin.’

³⁶ So now therefore, I, Yahweh, the God of Israel, say this concerning this city, the city about which you are saying, ‘It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by sword, famine, and plague.’ ³⁷ See, I am about to gather them from every land where I had driven them in my wrath, fury, and great anger. I am about to bring them back to this place and enable them to live in security. ³⁸ Then they will be my people, and I will be their God. ³⁹ I will give them one heart and one way to honor me every day so it will be good for them and their descendants after them. ⁴⁰ Then I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. I will set honor for me in their hearts, so that they will never turn away from me. ⁴¹ Then I will rejoice in doing good to them. I will faithfully plant them in this land with all my heart and all my life.

⁴² For Yahweh says this, ‘Just as I have brought all this great disaster on this people, so I will bring on them all the good things that I have said I would do for them. ⁴³ Then fields will be bought in this land, about which you are saying, “This is a ruined land, which has neither man nor beast. It has been given into the hand of

the Chaldeans.” ⁴⁴ They will buy fields with silver and write in sealed scrolls. They will assemble witnesses in the land of Benjamin, all around Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, in the cities in the hill country and in the lowlands, and in the cities of the Negev. For I will bring back their fortunes—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

Chapter 33

¹ Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still shut within the courtyard of the guard, and he said, ² “Yahweh the maker, says this—Yahweh, who forms in order to establish—Yahweh is his name, ³ ‘Call to me, and I will answer you. I will demonstrate great things to you, mysteries that you do not understand.’ ⁴ For Yahweh, God of Israel, says this concerning the houses in this city and the houses of the kings of Judah that are torn down because of the siege ramps and the sword, ⁵ ‘The Chaldeans are coming to fight and to fill the houses with corpses of people whom I will kill in my wrath and fury, when I hide my face from this city because of all their wickedness. ⁶ But see, I am about to bring healing and a cure, for I will heal them and will bring to them abundance, peace, and faithfulness. ⁷ For I will bring back the fortunes of Judah and Israel; I will build them up as in the beginning. ⁸ Then I will purify them from all the iniquity that they have committed against me. I will pardon all the iniquities that they have done against me, and all the ways that they rebelled against me. ⁹ For this city will become for me an object of joy, a song of praise and honor for all the nations of the earth who will hear of all the good things that I am going to do for it. Then they will tremble because of all the good things and the peace that I will give

to it.’

¹⁰ Yahweh says this, ‘In this place about which you are now saying, “It is desolate. There is neither man nor beast in the cities of Judah, and the streets of Jerusalem are uninhabited, with neither man nor beast.”

¹¹ —Again there will be heard here sounds of rejoicing and celebration, sounds of bridegrooms and brides, sounds of people who say, “Give thanks to Yahweh of hosts, for he is good, and his covenant faithfulness is unending.” Bring an offering of thanksgiving to my house, for I will restore the fortunes of the land as in the beginning,’ says Yahweh.

¹² Yahweh of hosts says this: ‘In this desolate place, where now there is neither man nor beast, there will again be in all its cities a grazing place for shepherds who lead their flocks to lie down. ¹³ In the cities in the hill country, the lowlands, and the Negev—in the land of Benjamin and all around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah—the flocks will again pass under the hands of the ones counting them,’ says Yahweh.

¹⁴ ‘Look! Days are coming—this is Yahweh’s declaration—when I will do what I have promised for the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and in that time I will make a righteous branch to grow for David, and he will carry out justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in security, for this is what she will be called, “Yahweh is our righteousness.”’ ¹⁷ For Yahweh says this: ‘A man from David’s line will never be lacking to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, ¹⁸ nor will a man from the Levitical priests be lacking before me to raise burnt offerings, to burn food offerings, and to perform grain offerings all the time.’”

¹⁹ The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah and said, ²⁰ “Yahweh says this: ‘If you can

break my covenant with day and night so that there will no longer be day or night at their proper times, ²¹ then you will be able to break my covenant with David my servant, so that he will no longer have a son to sit on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests, my servants. ²² As the hosts of heaven cannot be counted, and as the sand of the seashores cannot be measured, it is like that I will increase the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who serve me.’”

²³ The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah and said, ²⁴ “Have you not considered what this people has declared when they said, ‘The two clans that Yahweh chose, now he has rejected them’? In this way they despise my people, saying that they are no longer a nation in their sight. ²⁵ I, Yahweh, say this, ‘If I have not established the covenant of day and night, and if I have not fixed the laws of heaven and earth, ²⁶ then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant, and not bring from them a person to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and show mercy to them.’”

Chapter 34

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh. This word came when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all of his army, together with all the kingdoms of the earth, the domains under his power, and all their people were waging war against Jerusalem and all of her cities. This word said, ² ‘Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and say to him, “Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon. He will burn it. ³ You will not escape from his

hand, for you will certainly be seized and given into his hand. Your eyes will look at the eyes of the king of Babylon; he will speak directly to you as you go to Babylon.’⁴ Listen to the word of Yahweh, Zedekiah king of Judah! Yahweh says this concerning you, ‘You will not die by the sword.’⁵ You will die in peace. As in the funeral burning of your ancestors, the kings who were before you, they will burn your body. They will say, “Woe, master!” They will lament for you. Now I have spoken—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

⁶ So Jeremiah the prophet proclaimed to Zedekiah king of Judah all these words in Jerusalem.⁷ The army of the king of Babylon made war against Jerusalem and all the remaining cities of Judah: Lachish and Azekah. These cities of Judah remained as fortified cities.

⁸ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem, to proclaim freedom to them—⁹ that each man must free his Hebrew servants, both male and female. No one is to make a slave of a Jew, who is his brother.¹⁰ So all the leaders and people entered into the covenant that each person would free his male and female servants so that they would not be enslaved any longer. They obeyed and set them free.¹¹ But after this they changed their minds. They brought back the servants whom they had freed. They forced them to become slaves again.

¹² So the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah and said,¹³ “Yahweh, God of Israel, says this, ‘I myself made a covenant with your ancestors on the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt, out from the house of slavery. That was when I said,¹⁴ “At the end of every seven years, each man must send away his brother, his fellow Hebrew who had

sold himself to you and served you for six years. Send him away in freedom.” But your ancestors did not listen to me and or pay attention.¹⁵ Now you yourselves repented and began to do what is right in my eyes. You proclaimed freedom, each man to his neighbor, and you made a covenant before me in the house that is called by my name.¹⁶ But then you turned and polluted my name; you caused each man to bring back his male and female servants, the ones whom you had sent out to go where they wished. You forced them to become your servants again.’

¹⁷ Therefore Yahweh says this, ‘You yourselves have not listened to me. You should have proclaimed freedom, every one of you, to your brothers and fellow Israelites. So look! I am about to proclaim freedom to you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—freedom for the sword, the plague, and famine, for I am going to make you a horrible thing in the sight of every kingdom on earth.¹⁸ Then I will deal with the people who have broken my covenant, who did not keep the words of the covenant that they established before me when they cut a bull in two and walked between its parts,¹⁹ and then the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the eunuchs and the priests, and all the people of the land walked between the parts of the bull.²⁰ I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who are seeking their lives. Their bodies will be food for the birds of the skies and the beasts on the earth.²¹ So I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his leaders into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who are seeking their life, and into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon that has risen up against you.²² Look, I am about to give a command—this is Yahweh’s declaration—and will bring them back to this city to wage war against it and take it, and to

burn it. For I will turn the cities of Judah into ruined places in which there will be no inhabitants.”

Chapter 35

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, and he said, ² “Go to the clan of the Rechabites and speak with them. Then bring them to my house, into one of the rooms there and give them wine to drink.” ³ So I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah son of Habazziniah and his brothers, all his sons, and all the clan of the Rechabites. ⁴ I took them to the house of Yahweh, into the rooms of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the man of God. These rooms were beside the room of the leaders which was above the room of Maa-seiah son of Shallum, the gatekeeper. ⁵ Then I placed bowls and cups full of wine in front of the Rechabites and said to them, “Drink some wine.” ⁶ But they said, “We will not drink any wine, for our ancestor, Jonadab son of Rechab, commanded us, ‘Do not drink any wine, neither you nor your descendants, forever.’ ⁷ Also, do not build any houses, sow any seeds, or plant any vineyards; this is not for you. For you must live in tents all your days, so that you might live many days in the land where you are staying as foreigners.” ⁸ We have obeyed the voice of Jonadab son of Rechab, our ancestor, in all that he commanded us, to never drink wine all of our days, we, our wives, our sons, and our daughters. ⁹ We will never build houses to live in, and there will be no vineyard, field, or seed in our possession. ¹⁰ We have lived in tents and we have obeyed and done all that Jonadab our ancestor commanded us. ¹¹ But when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked the land, we said, ‘Come, we must go to Jerusalem to escape

from the Chaldean and Aramean armies.’ So we are living in Jerusalem.”

¹² Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah and said, ¹³ “Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, ‘Go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “Will you not receive correction and listen to my words? —this is Yahweh’s declaration. ¹⁴ The words of Jonadab son of Rechab that he gave to his sons as a command, not to drink any wine, have been observed to this very day. They have obeyed their ancestor’s command. But as for me, I myself have been making persistent proclamations to you, but you do not listen to me. ¹⁵ I sent out to you all my servants, the prophets. I was persistent in sending them to say, ‘Let each person turn from his wicked way and do good deeds; let no one walk any longer walk after other gods and worship them. Instead, come back to the land that I gave to you and your ancestors.’ Yet you will not listen to me or pay attention to me. ¹⁶ For the descendants of Jonadab son of Rechab have observed the commands of their ancestor that he gave them, but this people refuses to listen to me.” ¹⁷ So Yahweh, God of hosts and God of Israel, says this, ‘Look, all the disasters that I have proclaimed against them—I am about to bring these disasters on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, because I have made proclamations to them, but they refused to listen. I called to them, but they did not answer.’”

¹⁸ Jeremiah said to the family of the Rechabites, “Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: You have listened to the commands of Jonadab your ancestor and have kept them all—you have obeyed all that he commanded you to do— ¹⁹ so Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, ‘There will always be someone descended from Jonadab son of Rechab to serve me.’”

Chapter 36

¹ It came about in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, and he said, ² "Take a scroll for yourself and write on it all the words that I have told you concerning Israel and Judah, and every nation. Do this for everything I have told from the days of Josiah until this very day. ³ Perhaps the people of Judah will listen to all the disasters that I intend to bring on them. Perhaps everyone will turn away from his wicked path, so I can forgive their iniquity and their sin."

⁴ Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote in a scroll, at Jeremiah's dictation, all the words of Yahweh spoken to him. ⁵ Next Jeremiah gave a command to Baruch. He said, "I am in prison and cannot go to Yahweh's house. ⁶ So you must go and read from the scroll that you wrote at my dictation. On the day of the fast, you must read Yahweh's words in the hearing of the people in his house, and also in the hearing of all of Judah who have come from their cities. Proclaim these words to them. ⁷ Perhaps their pleas for mercy will come before Yahweh. Perhaps each person will turn from his wicked way, since the wrath and fury that Yahweh has proclaimed against this people are severe." ⁸ So Baruch son of Neriah did everything that Jeremiah the prophet had commanded him to do. He read aloud the words of Yahweh in house of Yahweh.

⁹ It came about in the fifth year and ninth month of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, that all the people in Jerusalem and the people who came to Jerusalem from the cities of Judah proclaimed a fast in honor of Yahweh. ¹⁰ Baruch read aloud Jeremiah's words in the house of Yahweh, from the room of Gemariah son of

Shaphan the scribe, in the upper courtyard, by the gate of the entrance to the house of Yahweh. He did this in the hearing of all the people.

¹¹ Now Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan heard all of Yahweh's words in the scroll. ¹² He went down to the house of the king, to the secretary's room. Look, all the officials were sitting there: Elishama the scribe, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the officials. ¹³ Then Micaiah reported to them all the words that he had heard that Baruch read aloud in the people's hearing. ¹⁴ So all the officials sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah son of Shelemiah son of Cushi, to Baruch. Jehudi said to Baruch, "Take the scroll in your hand, the scroll from which you were reading in the people's hearing and come." So Baruch son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and went to the officials. ¹⁵ Then they said to him, "Sit down and read this in our hearing." So Baruch read the scroll. ¹⁶ It happened that when they heard all these words, each man turned in fear to the one next to him and said to Baruch, "We must certainly report all of these words to the king." ¹⁷ Then they asked Baruch, "Tell us, how did you come to write all these words at Jeremiah's dictation?" ¹⁸ Baruch said to them, "He dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them in ink on this scroll." ¹⁹ Then the officials said to Baruch, "Go, hide yourself, and Jeremiah, too. Do not let anyone know where you are."

²⁰ Then they went to the king's court and reported these words to him. But first they deposited the scroll in the room of Elishama the secretary. ²¹ Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll. Jehudi took it from the room of Elishama the secretary. Then he read it aloud to the king and all the officials who were standing be-

side him. ²² Now the king was staying in the winter house in the ninth month, and a brazier was burning in front of him. ²³ It happened that as Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut it off with a knife and throw it into the fire in the brazier until all of the scroll was destroyed. ²⁴ But neither the king nor any of his servants who heard all these words were frightened, nor did they tear their clothes. ²⁵ Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah had even urged the king not to burn the scroll, but he did not listen to them. ²⁶ Then the king commanded Jerahmeel, a relative, Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but Yahweh had hidden them.

²⁷ Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the scroll and the words that Baruch had written at Jeremiah's dictation, and he said, ²⁸ "Go back, take another scroll for yourself, and write in it all the words that were on the original scroll, the one that Jehoiakim king of Judah burned. ²⁹ Then you must say this to Jehoiakim king of Judah: 'You burned that scroll, saying, "Why have you written on it, "The king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, for he will destroy both man and beast in it?"'" ³⁰ Therefore Yahweh says this concerning you, Jehoiakim king of Judah: "No descendant of yours will ever sit on the throne of David. As for you, your corpse will be thrown out into the heat of day and the frost of night. ³¹ For I will punish you, your descendants, and your servants for the iniquity of you all. I will bring on you, on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on every person in Judah all the disasters with which I have threatened you with, but to which you paid no attention." ³² So Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch son of Neriah the scribe. Baruch wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation all the

words that had been in the scroll burned by Jehoiakim king of Judah. Furthermore, many other similar words were added to this scroll.

Chapter 37

¹ Now Zedekiah son of Josiah reigned as king instead of Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had made Zedekiah king over the land of Judah. ² But Zedekiah, his servants, and the people of the land did not listen to the words of Yahweh that he proclaimed by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet.

³ So King Zedekiah, Jehucal son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah son of Maa-seiah the priest sent a message to Jeremiah the prophet. They said, "Pray on our behalf to Yahweh our God." ⁴ Now Jeremiah was coming and going among the people, for he had not yet been put in prison. ⁵ Pharaoh's army came out from Egypt, and the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard the news about them and left Jerusalem.

⁶ Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet and said, ⁷ "Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: This is what you will say to the king of Judah, because he has sent you to seek advice from me, 'See, Pharaoh's army, which came to help you, is about to go back to Egypt, its own land. ⁸ The Chaldeans will return. They will fight against this city, capture it, and burn it.' ⁹ Yahweh says this: Do not deceive yourselves by saying, 'Surely the Chaldeans are leaving us,' for they will not leave. ¹⁰ Even if you had defeated the entire Chaldean army that is fighting you so that only wounded men were left in their tents, they would get up and burn this city."

¹¹ So it was when the Chaldean army

had left Jerusalem as Pharaoh's army was coming,¹² then Jeremiah went out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin. He wanted to take possession of a tract of land there among his people.¹³ As he was in the Benjamin Gate, a chief guard was there. His name was Jeriah son of Shelemiah son of Hananiah. He grabbed hold of Jeremiah the prophet and said, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans."¹⁴ But Jeremiah said, "That is not true. I am not deserting to the Chaldeans." But Jeriah did not listen to him. He took Jeremiah and brought him to the officials.¹⁵ The officials were angry with Jeremiah. They beat him and put him in prison, which had been the house of Jonathan the scribe, for they had turned it into a prison.

¹⁶ So Jeremiah was put into an underground cell, where he stayed for many days. ¹⁷ Then King Zedekiah sent someone who brought him to the palace. In his house, the king asked him privately, "Is there any word from Yahweh?" Jeremiah answered, "There is a word: You will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon."¹⁸ Then Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "How have I sinned against you, your servants, or this people so that you have placed me in prison?" ¹⁹ Where are your prophets, the ones who prophesied for you and said the king of Babylon will not come against you or against this land? ²⁰ But now listen, my master the king! Let my pleas come before you. Do not return me to the house of Jonathan the scribe, or I will die there."²¹ So King Zedekiah gave an order. His servants confined Jeremiah in the courtyard of the guard. A loaf of bread was given him every day from the street of the bakers, until all the bread in the city was gone. So Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the guard.

Chapter 38

¹ Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jehucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malkijah heard the words that Jeremiah was declaring to all the people. He was saying,² "Yahweh says this: Anyone staying in this city will be killed by sword, famine, and plague. But anyone who goes out to the Chaldeans will survive. He will escape with his own life, and live."³ Yahweh says this: This city will be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it."⁴ So the officials said to the king, "Let this man die, for in this way he is weakening the hands of the fighting men who remain in this city, and the hands of all the people. He is proclaiming these words, for this man is not working for safety for this people, but disaster."⁵ So King Zedekiah said, "Look, he is in your hand since there is no king able to resist you."⁶ Then they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Malkijah, son of the king. The cistern was in the courtyard of the guard. They lowered Jeremiah down on ropes. There was no water in the cistern, but it was muddy, and he sank down into the mud.

⁷ Now Ebed Melech the Cushite was one of the eunuchs in the king's house. He heard that they had placed Jeremiah in the cistern. Now the king was sitting at the Benjamin Gate.⁸ So Ebed Melech went from the king's house and spoke with the king. He said,⁹ "My master the king, these men have done evil with the way they have treated Jeremiah the prophet. They threw him into a cistern for him to die in it from hunger, since there is no more food in the city."¹⁰ Then the king gave a command to Ebed Melech the Cushite. He said, "Take command of thirty men from here and take Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies."¹¹ So Ebed Melech

took command of those men and went to the king's house, to a storeroom for clothing under the house. From there he took rags and worn-out clothing and then let them down by ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern. ¹² Ebed Melech the Cushite said to Jeremiah, "Put the rags and worn-out clothing under your arms and on top of the ropes." So Jeremiah did so. ¹³ Then they pulled Jeremiah by the ropes. In this way they brought him up from the cistern. So Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the guard.

¹⁴ Then King Zedekiah sent word and brought Jeremiah the prophet to himself, to the third entrance in Yahweh's house. The king said to Jeremiah, "I want to ask you something. Do not keep the answer from me." ¹⁵ Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I answer you, will you not certainly kill me? But if I give you advice, you will not listen to me." ¹⁶ But King Zedekiah swore to Jeremiah in private and said, "As Yahweh lives, the one who made us, I will not kill you or give you into the hand of those men who are seeking your life."

¹⁷ So Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Yahweh, God of hosts, God of Israel, says this: If you indeed go out to the officials of the king of Babylon then you will live, and this city will not be burned. You and your family will live. ¹⁸ But if you do not go out to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city will be given into the hand of the Chaldeans. They will burn it, and you will not escape from their hand." ¹⁹ King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "But I am afraid of the people of Judah who have deserted to the Chaldeans, because I might be given over into their hand, for them to treat me badly." ²⁰ Jeremiah said, "They will not give you over to them. Obey the message from Yahweh that I am telling you, so that things will go well for you, and so that you will live. ²¹ But if you refuse to

go out, this is what Yahweh has shown me. ²² Look! All the women who are left in your house, king of Judah, will be brought out to the officials of the king of Babylon. These women will say to you,

'You have been deceived by your friends; they have ruined you.

Your feet are now sunk into the mud, and your friends will run away.'

²³ For all of your wives and children will be brought out to the Chaldeans, and you yourself will not escape from their hand. You will be captured by the hand of the king of Babylon, and this city will be burned."

²⁴ Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Do not inform anyone about these words, so that you do not die. ²⁵ If the officials hear that I have talked with you, and if they come and say to you, 'Tell us what you said to the king and do not hide it from us, or we will kill you,' ²⁶ then you must say to them, 'I made a humble plea before the king that he would not return me to the house of Jonathan to die there.'" ²⁷ Then all the officials came to Jeremiah and questioned him, so he answered them as the king had instructed him. So they stopped talking with him, because they had not heard the conversation between Jeremiah and the king. ²⁸ So Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard until the day Jerusalem was captured.

Chapter 39

¹ In the ninth year and tenth month of Zedekiah king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem and besieged it. ² In the eleventh year and fourth month of Zedekiah, on the ninth day of the month, the city was broken into. ³ Then all the of-

officials of the king of Babylon came and sat in the middle gate: Nergal Sharezer, Samgar Nebo, and Sarsechim, an important official. Nergal Sharezer was a high official and all the rest were the officials of the king of Babylon.

⁴ It happened that when Zedekiah, king of Judah, and all his fighting men saw them, they fled. They went out at night from the city by the king's garden path, through the gate between the two walls. The king went out in the direction of the Arabah. ⁵ But the army of Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of the Jordan River valley near Jericho. Then they captured him and brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where Nebuchadnezzar passed sentence on him. ⁶ The king of Babylon slaughtered Zedekiah's sons before his own eyes at Riblah. He also slaughtered all the noblemen of Judah. ⁷ Then he put out Zedekiah's eyes and bound him in bronze chains in order to take him to Babylon. ⁸ Then the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the people's houses. They also tore down the walls of Jerusalem. ⁹ Nebuzaradan, captain of the king's bodyguards, took into exile the rest of the people who were left in the city. This included the people who had deserted to the Chaldeans and the rest of the people who were left in the city. ¹⁰ But Nebuzaradan the captain of the king's bodyguards allowed the poorest people who had nothing for themselves to remain in the land of Judah. He gave them vineyards and fields on that same day.

¹¹ Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had given an order about Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the king's bodyguards. He had said, ¹² "Take him and care for him. Do not harm him. Do for him anything he tells you." ¹³ So Nebuzaradan

captain of the king's bodyguards, Nebuzaradan the high eunuch, Nergal Sharezer the high official, and all the most important officials of the king of Babylon sent men out. ¹⁴ Their men took Jeremiah from the courtyard of the guard and entrusted him to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, to take him home, so Jeremiah stayed among the people.

¹⁵ Now the word of Yahweh had come to Jeremiah while he was under arrest in the courtyard of the guard, and he said, ¹⁶ "Speak to Ebed Melech the Cushite and say, 'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: See, I am about to carry out my words against this city for disaster and not for good. For they will all come true before you on that day. ¹⁷ But I will rescue you on that day—this is Yahweh's declaration—and you will not be given into the hand of the men whom you fear. ¹⁸ For I will certainly rescue you. You will not fall by the sword. You will escape with your life, since you trust in me—this was Yahweh's declaration.'"

Chapter 40

¹ This was the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh after Nebuzaradan, the captain of the king's bodyguard, had sent him away from Ramah. That was where Jeremiah had been taken to, and where he had been bound with chains. He had been among all the exiles of Jerusalem and Judah who were to be exiled to Babylon. ² The chief guard took Jeremiah and said to him, "Yahweh your God decreed this disaster against this place. ³ So Yahweh brought it about. He did just as he had decreed, since you people sinned against him and did not obey his voice. That is why this thing has happened to you people. ⁴ But now look! I have released you

today from the chains that were on your hands. If it is good in your eyes to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will take care of you. But if it is not good in your eyes to come with me to Babylon, then do not do so. Look at all the land before you. Go where it is good and right in your eyes to go.”⁵ When Jeremiah did not reply, Nebuzaradan said, “Go to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has put in charge of the cities of Judah. Stay with him among the people or go wherever it is good in your eyes to go.” The commander of the king’s bodyguards gave him food and a gift, and then sent him away.⁶ So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. He stayed with him among the people who were left behind in the land.

⁷ Now some commanders of Judean soldiers who were still in the countryside—they and their men—heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah son of Ahikam, governor over the land. They also heard that he had put him in charge of the men, women, and children who were the poorest people in the land, those who had not been exiled to Babylon.⁸ So they went to Gedaliah at Mizpah. These men were Ishmael son of Nethaniah; Johanan and Jonathan, sons of Kareah; Seraiah son of Tanhumeth; the sons of Ephai the Netophathite; and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite—they and their men.⁹ Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, took an oath to them and to their men, and said to them, “Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldean officials. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you.”¹⁰ Look, I am living in Mizpah to meet with the Chaldeans who came to us. So harvest wine, summer fruit, and oil and store them in your containers. Live in the cities that you have occupied.”¹¹ Then all the Judeans in Moab, among the people of Ammon, and

in Edom, and in every land heard that the king of Babylon had allowed a remnant of Judah to stay, that he had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan over them.¹² So all the Judeans returned from every place where they had been scattered. They came back to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah. They harvested wine and summer fruit in great abundance.

¹³ Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders in the countryside came to Gedaliah at Mizpah.¹⁴ They said to him, “Do you realize that Baalis king of the people of Ammon sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to murder you?” But Gedaliah son of Ahikam did not believe them.¹⁵ So Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah in Mizpah and said, “Allow me to go kill Ishmael son of Nethaniah. No one will suspect me. Why should he kill you? Why allow all of Judah that has been gathered to you to be scattered and the remnant of Judah destroyed?”¹⁶ But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, “Do not do this thing, for you are telling lies about Ishmael.”

Chapter 41

¹ But it happened that in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, from the royal family, and some officers of the king, came—ten men were with him—to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. They ate food together there in Mizpah.² But Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and the ten men who were with him rose up and attacked Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, with the sword. Ishmael killed Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the land.³ Then Ishmael killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah in Mizpah and the Chaldean fighting men found there.

⁴ Then it was the second day after the killing of Gedaliah, but no one knew. ⁵ Some men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria—eighty men who had shaved their beard, torn their clothes, and cut themselves—with food offerings and frankincense in their hands to go to Yahweh’s house. ⁶ So Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them as they went, walking and weeping. Then it happened that as he encountered them, he said to them, “Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam!” ⁷ It came about that when they came into the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah slaughtered them and threw them into a pit, he and the men who were with him. ⁸ But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, “Do not kill us, for there are provisions of ours in a field: wheat and barley, oil and honey.” So he did not kill them with their other companions. ⁹ The cistern where Ishmael threw all the dead bodies that he and Gedaliah had struck down, was the same cistern that King Asa dug when he was being attacked by King Baasha of Israel. Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it those who were killed. ¹⁰ Next Ishmael captured all the other people who were in Mizpah, the king’s daughters and all the people who were left in Mizpah whom Nebuzaradan the chief guard had assigned to Gedaliah son of Ahikam. So Ishmael son of Nethaniah captured them and went to cross over to the people of Ammon.

¹¹ But Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders with him heard of all the harm that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had done. ¹² So they took all their men and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They found him at the great pool of Gibeon. ¹³ Then it happened that when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders who were with him, they

were very happy. ¹⁴ So all the people whom Ishmael had captured at Mizpah turned around and went to Johanan son of Kareah.

¹⁵ But Ishmael son of Nethaniah fled with eight men from Johanan. He went to the people of Ammon. ¹⁶ Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders with him took from Mizpah all the people who had been rescued from Ishmael son of Nethaniah. This was after Ishmael had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Johanan and his companions took the strong men, the fighting men, the women and children, and the eunuchs who had been rescued at Gibeon. ¹⁷ Then they went and stayed for a while in Geruth Chimham, which is near Bethlehem. They were going to go to Egypt ¹⁸ because of the Chaldeans. They were afraid of them since Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the land.

Chapter 42

¹ Then all the army commanders and Johanan son of Kareah, Jezaniah son of Hoshai, and all the people from the least to the greatest approached Jeremiah the prophet. ² They said to him, “Let our pleas come before you. Pray for us to Yahweh your God for these people who remain since we are so few in number, as you see. ³ Ask Yahweh your God to tell us the way we should go and what we should do.” ⁴ So Jeremiah the prophet said to them, “I have heard you. Look, I will pray to Yahweh your God as you have requested. Whatever Yahweh answers, I will tell you. I will keep nothing back from you.” ⁵ They said to Jeremiah, “May Yahweh be a true and faithful witness against us, if we do not do everything that Yahweh your God tells us to do. ⁶ Whether

it is good or if it is bad, we will obey the voice of Yahweh our God, to whom we are sending you, so that it may be well with us when we obey the voice of Yahweh our God.”

⁷ It happened that after ten days, the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah. ⁸ So Jeremiah called to Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders with him, and to all the people from the least to the greatest. ⁹ Then he said to them, “Yahweh, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me so I might lay your pleas before him. Yahweh says this, ¹⁰ ‘If you go back and live in this land, then I will build you and not tear you down; I will plant you and not pull you up, for I will turn back the disaster that I have brought on you. ¹¹ Do not fear the king of Babylon, whom you are fearing. Do not fear him—this is Yahweh’s declaration—since I am with you to save you and rescue you from his hand. ¹² For I will give you mercy. I will have compassion on you, and I will bring you back to your land. ¹³ But suppose that you say, “We will not stay in this land”—if you do not listen to my voice, the voice of Yahweh your God. ¹⁴ Suppose that you say, “No! We will go to the land of Egypt, where we will not see any war, where we will not hear the sound of the trumpet, and we will not go hungry for food. We will live there.” ¹⁵ Now listen to this word of Yahweh, you remnant of Judah. Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, ‘If you actually set out to go to Egypt, to go and live there, ¹⁶ then the sword that you fear will overtake you there in the land of Egypt. The famine that you are worrying about will pursue you to Egypt, and you will die there. ¹⁷ So it will happen that all the men who set out to go to Egypt to live there will die by sword, famine, or plague. There will be no survivor of them, no one to escape the disaster that I will bring on them.

¹⁸ For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Just as my wrath and my fury were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in the same way my fury will be poured out on you if you go to Egypt. You will become an object of cursing and a horror, an object for speaking curses, and something dishonorable, and you will not see this place again.” ¹⁹ Then Jeremiah said, “Yahweh has spoken concerning you—the remnant of Judah. Do not go to Egypt! You certainly know that I have been a witness against you today. ²⁰ For you fatally deceived yourselves when you sent me to Yahweh your God and said, ‘Pray to Yahweh our God for us. Everything that Yahweh our God says, tell us, and we will carry it out.’ ²¹ For I have reported to you today, but you have not listened to the voice of Yahweh your God or to anything about which he sent me to you. ²² So now, you should certainly know that you will die by sword, famine, and plague in the place where you desired to go to live.”

Chapter 43

¹ It happened that Jeremiah finished proclaiming to all the people all the words of Yahweh their God that Yahweh their God had told him to say. ² Azariah son of Hoshai, Johanan son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, “You are telling lies. Yahweh our God has not sent you to say, ‘Do not go to Egypt to live there.’ ³ For Baruch son of Neriah is inciting you against us to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, for you to cause our death and to make us captives in Babylon.” ⁴ So Johanan son of Kareah, all the princes of the army, and all the people refused to listen to Yahweh’s voice to live in the land of Judah. ⁵ Johanan son of Kareah and all the army comman-

ders took away all the remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations where they had been scattered to live in the land of Judah. ⁶ They took the men and women, the children and the king's daughters, and every person whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the king's bodyguards, had let remain with Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan. They also took Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch son of Neriah. ⁷ They went to the land of Egypt, to Tahpanhes, because they did not listen to Yahweh's voice.

⁸ So the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes and said, ⁹ "Take some large stones in your hand, and, in the sight of the people of Judah, hide them in the mortar in the pavement at the entrance to Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes." ¹⁰ Then say to them, "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'See, I am about to send messengers to take Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon as my servant. I will place his throne over these stones that you, Jeremiah, have buried. Nebuchadnezzar will place his pavilion over them. ¹¹ For he will come and attack the land of Egypt. Anyone who is assigned to death will be given to death. Anyone who is assigned to captivity will be taken captive. Anyone who is assigned to the sword will be given to the sword. ¹² Then I will light a fire in the temples of Egypt's gods. Nebuchadnezzar will burn them or capture them. He will clean out the land of Egypt just as shepherds clean vermin off their clothes. He will go out from that place in victory. ^a ¹³ He will break the stone pillars at Heliopolis in the land of Egypt. He will burn the temples of Egypt's gods.'"

43:12 ^aInstead of *I will light a fire*, some ancient and modern versions have *he will light a fire*.

Chapter 44

¹ This was the word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who lived in the land of Egypt, the ones staying in Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, and in the land of Patros. ² "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: You yourselves have seen all the disasters that I brought on Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah. See, they are ruins today. There is no one to live in them. ³ This is because of the wicked things they did to offend me by going to burn incense and to worship other gods. These were gods that neither they themselves, nor you, nor your ancestors knew. ⁴ So I repeatedly sent all of my servants the prophets to them. I sent them to say, 'Stop doing these abominable things that I hate.' ⁵ But they did not listen. They refused to pay attention or turn from their wickedness in burning incense to other gods. ⁶ So my fury and my wrath were poured out and kindled a fire in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. So they became ruins and devastations, as at this present day." ⁷ So now Yahweh, the God of hosts and the God of Israel, says this, "Why are you doing great wickedness against yourselves? Why are you causing yourselves to be cut off from among Judah—men and women, children and babies? No remnant of you will be left. ⁸ By your wickedness you have offended me with the deeds of your hands, by burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt, where you have gone to live. You have gone there so that you will be destroyed, so that you will be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth. ⁹ Have you forgotten the wickedness committed by your ancestors and the wickedness committed by the kings of Judah and their wives? Have you forgotten the evil committed by yourselves and your wives in the land of Judah and the streets of

Jerusalem? ¹⁰ To this day, they still are not humbled. They do not honor my law or decrees that I placed before them and their ancestors, nor do they walk in them.”

¹¹ Therefore Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, “See, I am about to set my face against you to bring disaster to you and to destroy all of Judah. ¹² For I will take the remnant of Judah that has set out to go to the land of Egypt to live there. I will do this so that they will all perish in the land of Egypt. They will fall by sword and famine. From the least to the greatest they will perish by sword and famine. They will die and will become an object of swearing, cursing, reproaching, and a horrible thing. ¹³ For I will punish the people inhabiting the land of Egypt just as I punished Jerusalem with sword, famine, and plague. ¹⁴ No fugitive or survivor of the remnant of Judah who are going to live there in the land of Egypt will return to the land of Judah, even though they want to go back and live there. None of them will return, except for a few who will escape from here.”

¹⁵ Then all the men who knew that their wives were burning incense to other gods, and all the women who were in the great assembly, and all the people who were living in the land of Egypt in Pathros answered Jeremiah. ¹⁶ They said, “About the word that you have told us in Yahweh’s name: We will not listen to you. ¹⁷ For we will certainly do all the things that we said we would do: burn incense to the Queen of Heaven and pour out drink offerings to her just as we, our ancestors, our kings, and our leaders did in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. Then we will be filled with food and will prosper, without experiencing any disaster. ¹⁸ When we refrained from doing these things, not offering incense to the Queen of Heaven and not pouring out drink offer-

ings to her, we were all suffering poverty and were dying by sword and famine.” ¹⁹ The women said, “When we were making incense offerings before the Queen of Heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, did we do these things without our husbands knowing about it?”

²⁰ Then Jeremiah said to all the people—to the men and women, and all the people who answered him—he proclaimed and said, ²¹ “Did not Yahweh remember the incense that you burned in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem—you and your ancestors, your kings and leaders, and the people of the land? For Yahweh calls this to mind; it comes to his thoughts. ²² Then he was no longer able to bear it because of your wicked practices, because of the abominations that you did. Then your land became a desolation, a horror, and a curse so there was no longer an inhabitant as at this present day. ²³ Because you burned incense and sinned against Yahweh, and because you would not listen to his voice, his law, his statutes, or his covenant decrees, this disaster against you has happened as at this present day.”

²⁴ Then Jeremiah said to all the people and all the women, “Hear the word of Yahweh, all of Judah who are in the land of Egypt. ²⁵ Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, ‘You and your wives both have said with your mouths and carried out with your hands what you said, “We will certainly carry out the vows that we made to worship the Queen of Heaven, to pour out drink offerings to her.” Now fulfill your vows; carry them out.’ ²⁶ So then, hear the word of Yahweh, all of Judah who are staying in the land of Egypt, ‘See, I have sworn by my great name—says Yahweh. My name will no longer be called upon by the mouths of any of the men of Judah in all the land of Egypt, you who now say, “As the Lord Yahweh

lives.”²⁷ See, I am watching over them for disaster and not for good. Every person of Judah in the land of Egypt will perish by sword and famine until they are all finished.²⁸ Then the survivors of the sword will return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, only a small number of them. So all the remnant of Judah who went to the land of Egypt to live there will know whose word will come true: mine or theirs.²⁹ This will be the sign for you—this is Yahweh’s declaration—that I am setting against you in this place, so that you will know that my words will certainly attack you with disaster.’³⁰ Yahweh says this, ‘Look, I am about to give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek to kill him. It will be the same as when I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life.’”

Chapter 45

¹ This is the word that Jeremiah the prophet told Baruch son of Neriah. This happened when he wrote in a scroll these words at Jeremiah’s dictation—this was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, and he said,² “Yahweh, God of Israel, says this to you, Baruch: ³ You have said, ‘Woe is me, for Yahweh has added agony to my pain. My groaning has wearied me; I find no rest.’ ⁴ This is what you must say to him: ‘Yahweh says this: See, what I built, I am now tearing down. What I planted, I am now pulling up. This is true over all the earth. ⁵ But are you hoping for great things for yourself? Do not hope for that. For see, disaster is coming on all humanity—this is Yahweh’s declaration—but I am giving you your life as your plunder everywhere you will go.’”

Chapter 46

¹ This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations. ² For Egypt: “This is about the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt that was at Carchemish by the Euphrates river. This was the army that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah:

³ Get the small shields and the large shields ready, and go forward to fight.

⁴ Harness the stallions and get on them, you riders. Take your places, with your helmets on your heads.

Polish the spears and put on your armor.

⁵ What am I seeing here? They are filled with terror and are running away, for their soldiers are defeated.

They are running for safety and are not looking back. Terror is all around—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

⁶ the swift cannot run away, and the soldiers cannot escape.

They stumble in the north and fall beside the Euphrates River.

⁷ Who is this who rises like the Nile, whose waters toss up and down like the rivers?

⁸ Egypt rises like the Nile, and its waters toss up and down like the rivers.

It says, ‘I will go up; I will cover the earth. I will destroy cities and their inhabitants.

⁹ Go up, horses. Be angry, you chariots. Let the soldiers go out,

Cush and Put, men skillful with a shield, and Ludim, men skillful at bending their bows.’

¹⁰ That day will be the day of vengeance for the Lord Yahweh of hosts, and he will avenge himself on his foes.

The sword will devour and be satisfied. It will drink its fill of their blood. For there will be a sacrifice

to the Lord Yahweh of hosts in the northern land by the Euphrates River.

¹¹ Go up to Gilead and obtain medicine, virgin daughter of Egypt.

It is useless that you put much medicine on yourself. There is no cure for you.

¹² The nations have heard of your disgrace. The earth is filled with your laments,

for soldier stumbles against soldier; both of them fall together.”

¹³ This is the word that Yahweh told Jeremiah the prophet when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came and attacked the land of Egypt:

¹⁴ ”Report to Egypt and let it be heard in Migdol and Memphis.

In Tahpanhes they have said, ’Station yourself and take a stand, for the sword is devouring all around you.

¹⁵ Why has your god Apis run away? Why is your bull-god not standing? Yahweh has thrown him down.

¹⁶ He increases the numbers of those who stumble. Each soldier falls against the next one. They are saying, ”Get up. Let us go home.

Let us go back to our own people, to our native land. Let us leave this sword that is beating us down.”

¹⁷ They proclaimed there, ”Pharaoh the king of Egypt is only a noise, one who has let his opportunity slip away.”

¹⁸ ”As I live—this is the king’s declaration—Yahweh of hosts by name,

someone will come who is like Mount Tabor and Mount Carmel by the sea.

¹⁹ Pack for yourselves bags to carry into exile, you daughters who live in Egypt.

For Memphis will become a waste, a ruin. No one will live there.

²⁰ Egypt is a very beautiful young cow, but a stinging insect is coming from the north. It is coming.

²¹ The hired soldiers in her midst are like a fattened bull, but they will also turn away and run away.

They will not stand together, for the day of their disaster is coming against them, the time of their punishment.

²² Egypt hisses like a snake and crawls away, for her enemies are marching against her.

They are going toward her like woodcutters with axes.

²³ They will cut down the forests—this is Yahweh’s declaration—although it is very dense.

For the enemies will be more numerous than locusts, unable to be counted.

²⁴ The daughter of Egypt will be made ashamed. She will be given into the hand of people from the north.”

²⁵ Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says, ”See, I am about to punish Amon of Thebes, Pharaoh, Egypt and her gods, her kings the Pharaohs, and those who trust in them. ²⁶ I am giving them into the hand of the ones seeking their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his servants. Then after this Egypt will be inhabited as in previous days—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

²⁷ ”But you, my servant Jacob, do not fear. Do not be dismayed, Israel, for see, I am about to bring you back from far away, and your offspring from the land of their

captivity. Then Jacob will return, find peace, and be secure, and there will be no one to terrify him. ²⁸ You, my servant Jacob, do not fear—this is Yahweh’s declaration—for I am with you, so I will bring complete destruction against all the nations where I scattered you. But I will not destroy you completely. Yet I will discipline you justly and will certainly not leave you unpunished.”

Chapter 47

¹ This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines. This word came to him before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

² “Yahweh says this: See, floods of water are rising in the north. They will be like an overflowing river!

Then they will overflow the land and everything in it, its cities and its inhabitants! So everyone will shout for help,

and all the inhabitants of the land will lament.

³ At the sound of the stamping of their strong horses’ hooves,

at the roar of their chariots and the noise of their wheels,

fathers will not help their children because of their own weakness.

⁴ For the day is coming that will devastate all of the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre and Sidon

every survivor who wants to help them. For Yahweh is devastating the Philistines,

those who remain from the island of Caphtor. ⁵ Baldness will come upon Gaza. As for Ashkelon, the people who are left in their valley will be made silent. How long will you cut yourself in mourning? ⁶ Woe,

sword of Yahweh! How long will it be until you become silent?

Go back to your scabbard! Stop and be silent.

⁷ How can you be quiet, for Yahweh has commanded you.

He has summoned you to attack Ashkelon and against the coastlands along the sea.”

Chapter 48

¹ To Moab, Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this,

“Woe to Nebo, for it has been devastated. Kiriathaim has been captured and humiliated.

Her fortress has been crushed and disgraced.

² The honor of Moab is no more. Their enemies in Heshbon plotted disaster against her.

They said, ‘Come and let us destroy her as a nation. Madmen will also perish—a sword will go after you.’

³ Listen! A sound of screaming is coming from Horonaim, where there is ruin and great destruction.

⁴ Moab has been destroyed. Her children have made their cries heard.

⁵ They go up the hill of Luhith weeping, for on the way down to Horonaim, screams are heard because of the destruction.

⁶ Flee! Save your lives and become like a juniper bush in the wilderness.

⁷ For because of your trust in your practices and your wealth, you also will be captured.

Then Chemosh will go away into captivity, together with his priests and leaders.

⁸ For the destroyer will come to every city; no city will escape.

So the valley will perish and the plain will be devastated, as Yahweh has said.

⁹ Give wings to Moab, for she must certainly fly away.

Her cities will become a wasteland, where there is no one to live in them. ¹⁰ May anyone who is lazy in doing Yahweh's work be cursed! May anyone who keeps his sword back from shedding blood be cursed!

¹¹ Moab has felt secure since he was young. He is like his wine

that has never been poured from pot to pot. He has never gone into captivity.

Therefore he tastes as good as ever; his flavor remains unchanged. ¹² So see, the days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will send him those who will tip him over and pour out all his pots and shatter his jars. ¹³ Then Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh just as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their object of trust.

¹⁴ How can you say, 'We are soldiers, powerful fighting men'?

¹⁵ Moab will be devastated and its cities attacked. For its finest young men have gone down

to the place of slaughter.

This is the king's declaration! Yahweh of hosts is his name.

¹⁶ Moab's disaster is soon to happen; calamity is hurrying quickly.

¹⁷ All you who are around Moab, wail; and all you who know its fame,

shout this, 'Woe, the strong staff, the honored rod, has been broken.'

¹⁸ Come down from your honored place and sit on the dry ground, you daughter living in Dibon.

For the one who will destroy Moab is attacking you, the one who will destroy your strongholds.

¹⁹ Stand on the road and watch, you people who live in Aroer.

Ask the ones who are fleeing and escaping. Say, 'What has happened?'

²⁰ Moab has been shamed, for it has been shattered. Howl and lament; shout for help.

Tell it to people by the Arnon River that Moab has been devastated.

²¹ Now punishment has come to the hill country,

to Holon, Jachzah, and Mephaath,

²² to Dibon, Nebo, and Beth Diblathaim,

²³ to Kiriathaim, Beth Gamul, and Beth Meon,

²⁴ To Kerioth and Bozrah,

and to all the cities in the land of Moab—the farthest and the closest cities.

²⁵ The horn of Moab has been hacked off; its arm has been broken—this is Yahweh's declaration.

²⁶ Make him drunk, for he acted proudly against me, Yahweh. Now Moab claps his hands in disgust at his own vomit, so he also has become an object for laughter. ²⁷ For did Israel not become an object for laughter to you? Was he found among thieves, that you shook your head at him as often as you spoke about him?

²⁸ Abandon the cities and camp on the cliffs, inhabitants of Moab.

Become like a dove that is nesting over the mouth of a hole in the rocks.

²⁹ We have heard of Moab's pride—his arrogance,

his haughtiness, his pride, his self-glory and the conceit in his heart. ³⁰ This is Yahweh's declaration—I myself know his defiant speech, which amounts to nothing, like his deeds.

³¹ So I will howl a lament for Moab, and I will shout in sorrow for all of Moab.

I will lament for the people of Kir Heresh.

³² I will weep for you more than I did for Jazer, vine of Sibmah! Your branches passed across the Salt Sea and reached

as far as Jazer. The destroyers have attacked your summer fruit and your wine.

³³ So celebration and rejoicing have been taken away from the fruit trees and the land of Moab.

I have put an end to the wine from their winepresses. They will not tread with joyful shouts. Any shouts will not be shouts of joy.

³⁴ From the shouts at Heshbon as far as Elealeh, their sound is heard at Jahaz, from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath Shelishiyah, since even the waters of Nimrim have dried up. ³⁵ For I will put an end to anyone in Moab who makes sacrifices on the high places and burns incense to his gods—this is Yahweh's declaration. ³⁶ So my heart is lamenting for Moab like a flute. My heart is lamenting like flutes for the people of Kir Heres. The riches they gained are gone. ³⁷ For every head is bald and every beard shaved. Incisions are on every hand, and sackcloth is around their waists. ³⁸ There is mourning everywhere, on every flat roof of Moab and in Moab's plazas. For I have destroyed Moab like pots that no one wants—this is Yahweh's declaration.

³⁹ How it has been shattered! How they howl in their lamenting! Moab turns it back in shame! So Moab will become an

object of derision and a terror to all those who are around him." ⁴⁰ For Yahweh says this, "See, the enemy will come flying like an eagle, spreading out his wings over Moab.

⁴¹ Kerioth has been captured, and its strongholds have been seized.

For in that day the hearts of Moab's soldiers will be like the hearts of women in birth labor.

⁴² So Moab will be destroyed as a people, since they became arrogant against me, Yahweh.

⁴³ Terror and the pit, and a trap are coming on you, inhabitant of Moab—this is Yahweh's declaration.

⁴⁴ Anyone who flees because of terror will fall into the pit,

and anyone who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the trap, for I will bring this on them

in the year of my vengeance against them—this is Yahweh's declaration.

⁴⁵ The ones who flee will stand in the shadow of Heshbon without any strength, for fire will go out from Heshbon,

flame from the middle of Sihon. It will devour the forehead of Moab and the top of the heads of the boastful people.

⁴⁶ Woe to you, Moab! Chemosh's people are destroyed,

For your sons are taken as captives and your daughters into captivity.

⁴⁷ But I will restore the fortunes of Moab in later days—this is Yahweh's declaration."

The judgment on Moab ends here.

Chapter 49

¹ About the people of Ammon, Yahweh says this,

”Does Israel have no children? Is there no one to inherit anything in Israel?

Why does Molech occupy Gad, and his people live in its cities? ^a

² So look, the days are coming—this is Yahweh’s declaration—when I will sound the signal for battle

against Rabbah among the people of Ammon, so it will become a deserted heap and its daughters will light fires.

For Israel will possess those who possessed him,” says Yahweh.

³ ”Howl in lament, Heshbon, for Ai will be devastated! Shout out, daughters of Rabbah! Put on sackcloth.

Lament and run about in futility, for Molech is going into captivity,

together with his priests and leaders.

⁴ Why are you proud of your strength? Your strength will flow away, faithless daughter,

you who trust in your wealth. You say, ‘Who will come against me?’

⁵ See, I am about to bring terror on you—this is the declaration of Yahweh, the Lord of hosts—

this terror will come from all those who surround you. Each one of you will be scattered before it.

There will be no one to gather those running away.

⁶ But after this I will restore the fortunes of the people of Ammon—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

⁷ About Edom, Yahweh of hosts says this, ”Is there no longer any wisdom to be found in Teman?

Has good advice disappeared from those who have understanding? Has their wisdom become corrupted?

⁸ Flee! Turn back! Stay in holes in the ground, inhabitants of Dedan.

For I am bringing the disaster of Esau on him at the time that I punish him.

⁹ If grape harvesters came to you, would they not leave a little bit behind?

If thieves came in the night, would they not steal only as much as they wanted?

¹⁰ But I have stripped Esau bare. I have revealed his hiding places.

So he will not be able to hide himself. His children, his brothers, and his neighbors are destroyed, and he is gone.

¹¹ Leave your orphans behind. I will take care of their lives, and your widows can trust in me.”

¹² For Yahweh says this, ”See, those who did not deserve it must certainly drink some of the cup. Do you yourself think you will go without punishment? You will not, for you will certainly drink. ¹³ For I have sworn by myself—this is Yahweh’s declaration—that Bozrah will become a horror, a disgrace, a devastation, and an object for cursing. All of its cities will become devastations forever.

¹⁴ I have heard news from Yahweh, and a messenger has been sent out to the nations,

‘Gather together and attack her. Get ready for battle.’

¹⁵ ”For see, I have made you small compared to the other nations, despised by people.

¹⁶ As for your fearsomeness, your heart’s pride has deceived you, inhabitants of places on the cliff,

you who have occupied the highest hills so that you may make your nest high like an eagle.

I will bring you down from there—this is Yahweh's declaration.

¹⁷ Edom will become a horror to everyone passing by it.

Every such person will tremble and hiss because all of its disasters.

¹⁸ Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors," says Yahweh,

"no one will live there; no person will stay there.

¹⁹ See, he will go up like a lion from the forests of the Jordan to the green pasturelands.

For I will quickly make Edom run from it, and I will put someone who will be chosen in charge of it.

For who is like me, and who will summon me? What shepherd is able to resist me?"

²⁰ "So listen to the plans that Yahweh has decided against Edom,

the plans that he has formed against the inhabitants of Teman.

They will certainly be dragged away, even the smallest flock.

Their pasturelands will be turned into ruined places.

²¹ At the sound of their falling the earth shakes. The sound of distressed shouts is heard at the Sea of Reeds.

²² See, someone will attack like an eagle, and swoop down and spread his wings over Bozrah.

Then on that day, the hearts of Edom's soldiers will become like the heart of a woman in birth labor."

²³ About Damascus: "Hamath and Arpad will be ashamed, for they have heard news of disaster.

They melt away! They become as troubled as the sea, which cannot stay calm.

²⁴ Damascus has become very weak. It turns away to flee; terror seizes it.

Distress and pain seize it, like the pain of a woman giving birth.

²⁵ Its people say, 'How is the famous city, the city over which I have rejoiced, not yet evacuated?'

²⁶ Therefore its young men will fall in its plazas,

and all the fighting men will perish on that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts."

²⁷ "For I will light a fire on the wall of Damascus, and it will devour the strongholds of Ben Hadad."

²⁸ About Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor, Yahweh says this to Nebuchadnezzar (now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon was going to attack these places):

"Arise and attack Kedar and destroy those people of the east.

²⁹ His army will take their tents and their flocks, their tent hangings, and all of their equipment.

They will take their camels from the people of Kedar and call out to them, 'Terror is all around!'

³⁰ Flee! Wander far away! Stay in holes in the ground, inhabitants of Hazor—this is Yahweh's declaration—

for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has devised a plan against you. Flee! Turn back!

³¹ Arise! Attack the nation at ease, who live in safety," says Yahweh.

”They have no gates or bars in them, and its people live by themselves.

³² For their camels will become plunder, and the abundance of their property will become war plunder.

Then I will scatter to every wind those who cut the corners of their hair,

and I will bring disaster on them from every side—this is Yahweh’s declaration.

³³ Hazor will become a lair of jackals, a permanent wasteland.

No one will live there; no human being will stay there.”

³⁴ This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet about Elam. This happened at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, and he said, ³⁵ ”Yahweh of hosts says this: See, I am about to break the bowmen of Elam, the main part of their power.

³⁶ For I will bring the four winds from the four corners of the heavens,

and I will scatter the people of Elam to all of those winds. There is no nation

to which those scattered from Elam will not go.

³⁷ So I will shatter Elam before their enemies and before those who seek their lives.

for I will bring disaster against them, the fury of my wrath—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

and I will send the sword after them until I have annihilated them.

³⁸ Then I will put my throne in Elam and will destroy its king and leaders from there—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

³⁹ and it will happen in later days that I will bring back the fortunes of Elam—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

49:1 ^a Instead of *Molech*, some modern versions have *their king*.

Chapter 50

¹ This is the word that Yahweh declared about Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet,

² ”Report to the nations and cause them to listen. Lift up a signal and cause them to listen. Do not conceal it.

Say, ‘Babylon is taken. Bel is made ashamed. Merodach is dismayed. Its idols are put to shame; its images are dismayed.’

³ A nation from the north will arise against it, in order to make her land a desolation.

No one, neither man or beast, will live in it. They will flee away.

⁴ In those days and at that time—this is Yahweh’s declaration—the people of Israel and the people of Judah

will come together to go with weeping and seek Yahweh their God.

⁵ They will ask the way to Zion and will set off toward it, saying,

We will go and join ourselves to Yahweh in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten.”

⁶ My people have been a lost flock. Their shepherds have led them astray in the mountains;

they have turned them around from hill to hill. They went, they forgot the place where they had lived.

⁷ Everyone who went out to them devoured them. Their adversaries said, ‘We are not guilty,’

because they sinned against Yahweh, their true home—Yahweh, the hope of their ancestors.’

⁸ Leave from the midst of Babylon; go out from the land of the Chaldeans;

be like male goats that leave before the rest of the flock does.

⁹ For see, I am about to set in motion and raise up an group of great nations from the north against Babylon.

They will arrange themselves against her. Babylon will be captured from there.

Their arrows are like a skilled warrior who does not return empty-handed.

¹⁰ Chaldea will become plunder. All those who plunder it will be satisfied—this is Yahweh’s declaration.

¹¹ You rejoice, you celebrate the plundering of my inheritance;

you jump around like a calf stamping in its pasture;

you neigh like a powerful horse.

¹² So your mother will be greatly ashamed; the one who bore you will be embarrassed.

See, she will be the least of nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

¹³ Because of Yahweh’s anger, Babylon will not be inhabited, but will be a complete devastation.

Everyone who passes by will shudder because of Babylon and will hiss because all of its wounds.

¹⁴ Arrange yourselves against Babylon all around her. Everyone who bends a bow must shoot at her.

Do not keep back any of your arrows, for she has sinned against Yahweh.

¹⁵ Shout in victory against her all around her. She has surrendered her power; her towers have fallen.

Her walls are torn down, for this is Yahweh’s vengeance. Take vengeance on her!

Do to her just as she had done to other nations!

¹⁶ Destroy both the farmer who sows seed and the one who uses a sickle at the time of harvest in Babylon.

Let each person turn back to his own people from the oppressor’s sword; let them flee to their own land.

¹⁷ Israel is a sheep scattered and driven away by lions. First the king of Assyria devoured him;

then after this, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon broke his bones. ¹⁸ Therefore Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says this: See, I am about to punish the king of Babylon and his land, just as I punished the king of Assyria.

¹⁹ I will restore Israel to his homeland; he will graze on Carmel and Bashan.

Then he will be satisfied in the hill country of Ephraim and Gilead.

²⁰ In those days and at that time, says Yahweh, iniquity will be looked for in Israel,

but none will be found. I will inquire about the sins of Judah, but none will be found, for I will forgive the remnant that I spare.”

²¹ ”Arise against the land of Merathaim, against it and the ones inhabiting Pekod.

Put them to the sword and set them apart for destruction—this is Yahweh’s declaration—do everything

that I am commanding you.

²² The sounds of battle and enormous destruction are in the land.

²³ How the hammer of all the lands has been cut apart and destroyed.

How Babylon has become a horror among the nations.

²⁴ I have set a trap for you. You were captured, Babylon, and you did not know it!

You were found and seized, since you challenged me, Yahweh.

²⁵ Yahweh has opened his armory and is bringing out the weapons for carrying out his anger.

There is work for the Lord Yahweh of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.

²⁶ Attack her from far away. Open her granaries and pile her up like heaps of grain.

set her apart for destruction. Leave no remnant of her.

²⁷ Kill all her bulls. Send them down to the place of slaughter.

Woe to them, for their day has come—the time for their punishment.

²⁸ There is the sound of those fleeing, of those who are survivors, from the land of Babylon.

These will report the vengeance of Yahweh our God for Zion, and vengeance for his temple.”

²⁹ ”Summon the archers against Babylon—all those who bend their bows.

Camp against her, and let no one escape.

Repay her for what she has done.

Do to her by the measure she has used.

For she had defied Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel. ³⁰ So her young men will fall in the city squares, and all her fighting men will be destroyed on that day—this is Yahweh’s declaration.”

³¹ ”See, I am against you, proud one—this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts—

for your day has come, proud one, the time when I will punish you.

³² So the proud ones will stumble and fall. No one will raise them up.

I will light a fire in their cities; it will devour everything around him.

³³ Yahweh of hosts says this: The people of Israel are oppressed, together with the people of Judah.

All the ones who captured them still hold them; they refuse to let them go.

³⁴ The one who rescues them is strong. Yahweh of hosts is his name. He will truly plead their case,

in order to bring rest to the land, and to bring strife to the ones inhabiting Babylon.

³⁵ A sword is against the Chaldeans—this is Yahweh’s declaration—

and against the inhabitants of Babylon, her leaders, and her wise men.

³⁶ A sword is coming against those who say words for divination, so that they reveal themselves as fools.

A sword is coming against her soldiers, so they will be filled with terror.

³⁷ A sword is coming against their horses, their chariots and all of the people who are in the midst of Babylon,

so they will become like women. A sword is coming against her storerooms, and they will be plundered.

³⁸ A drought is coming on her waters, so they will become dry.

For she is a land of worthless idols, and they act like people made insane by their dreadful idols.

³⁹ So desert beasts with the jackals will inhabit there, and the young of ostriches will live in her.

For all time, she will no longer be inhabited. From generation to generation, she will not be lived in.

⁴⁰ Just as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors—this is Yahweh's declaration—

no one will live there; no person will stay in her."

⁴¹ "See, a people is coming from the north, for a great nation and many kings

have been stirred up from a distant land.

⁴² They will pick up bows and spears. They are cruel and have no compassion.

Their sound is like the sea roar, and they are riding on horses in formation as fighting men,

against you, daughter of Babylon.

⁴³ The king of Babylon has heard their report and his hands have fallen limp in distress.

Anguish seizes him like a woman in labor.

⁴⁴ Behold! He goes up like a lion from the heights of the Jordan to the enduring grazing place

For I will quickly cause them to run from it, and I will put someone who will be chosen in charge of it.

For who is like me, and who will summon me? What shepherd is able to resist me?

⁴⁵ So listen to the plans that Yahweh has decided against Babylon,

the plans that he has planned against the land of the Chaldeans. They will certainly be dragged away,

even the smallest flock. Their pasturelands will be turned into ruined places.

⁴⁶ At the sound of conquered Babylon the earth shakes, and their shout of distress is heard among the nations."

Chapter 51

¹ "Yahweh says this: See, I am about to stir up a wind of destruction against Babylon

and against those who live in Leb Kamai.

² I will send foreigners to Babylon. They will scatter her and devastate her land,

for they will come against her from all around on the day of disaster.

³ Do not let the archers bend their bows; do not let them put on armor.

Do not spare her young men; set her whole army apart for destruction.

⁴ For the wounded people will fall in the land of the Chaldeans; those who are killed will fall in her streets.

⁵ For Israel and Judah are not forsaken by their God, by Yahweh of hosts,

although their land is filled with offenses committed against the Holy One of Israel.

⁶ Flee from the midst of Babylon; let each man save himself. Do not perish in her iniquity.

For it is the time of Yahweh's vengeance. He will repay all of it to her.

⁷ Babylon was a golden cup in the hand of Yahweh that made all the land drunk;

nations drank her wine and became insane.

⁸ Babylon will fall suddenly and be destroyed.

Wail for her! Give her medicine for her pain; perhaps she can be healed.

⁹ 'We wished to heal Babylon, but she is not healed. Let us all leave her and go away,

to our own land. For her guilt reaches up to the heavens; it is piled up to the clouds.

¹⁰ Yahweh has declared our innocence. Come, let us tell in Zion

the deeds of Yahweh our God.'

¹¹ Sharpen the arrows and take up the shields. Yahweh is stirring up

the spirit of the king of the Medes in a plan to destroy Babylon.

This is for Yahweh's vengeance, vengeance for the destruction of his temple.

¹² Raise the banner over Babylon's walls; post the guards.

Place the sentinels; hide soldiers to catch anyone running from the city, for Yahweh will do what he has planned.

He will do what he has announced against Babylon's inhabitants.

¹³ You people who live by many streams of water, you people who are rich with treasures,

your end has come. The thread of your life is now cut short.

¹⁴ Yahweh of hosts has sworn by his own life, 'I will fill you with your enemies, like a locust plague;

they will raise a battle cry against you.'

¹⁵ He has made the earth by his power; he set in place the world by his wisdom.

By his understanding he stretched out the heavens.

¹⁶ When he thunders, there is the roar of waters in the heavens, for he brings up the mist from the ends of the earth.

He makes lightning for rain and sends out wind from his storehouses.

¹⁷ Every man becomes like an animal without knowledge; every metalworker is put to shame by his idols.

For his cast poured images are frauds; there is no life in them.

¹⁸ They are useless, the work of mockers; they will perish at the time of their punishment.

¹⁹ But God, the portion of Jacob, is not like these, for he is the molder of all things. Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;

Yahweh of hosts is his name.

²⁰ You are my war hammer, my weapon for battle.

With you I will smash nations and destroy kingdoms.

²¹ With you I will smash horses and their riders; with you I will smash chariots and their drivers.

²² With you I will smash each man and woman; with you I will smash the old and the young.

With you I will smash the young men and the virgin girls.

²³ With you I will smash the shepherds and their flocks; with you I will smash the plowmen and their teams.

With you I will smash the governors and officials.

²⁴ For in your sight I will pay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea

for all of the evil that they did in Zion—this is Yahweh's declaration.

²⁵ See, I am against you, you mountain, you who destroy other people—this is

Yahweh's declaration—destroying all the earth.

I will strike you with my hand and roll you down from the cliffs.

Then I will make you a mountain burned completely through.

²⁶ So they will not take from you any stone to construct a building's corner or foundation;

for you will become an everlasting devastation—this is Yahweh's declaration.

²⁷ Lift up a banner over the earth. Blow the trumpet over the nations. Call the nations to attack her:

Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz.

Appoint a commander to attack her; bring up horses like swarming locusts.

²⁸ Prepare the nations to attack her: the kings of the Medes and his governors,

all of his officials and all the lands under his rule.

²⁹ For the land will shake and be in anguish, since Yahweh's plans continue against Babylon,

to make the land of Babylon a wasteland where there is no inhabitant.

³⁰ The soldiers in Babylon have stopped fighting; they stay in their strongholds.

Their strength has failed; they have become women—her homes are on fire, the bars of her gates are broken.

³¹ A messenger runs to proclaim to another messenger, and a runner tells another runner

to report to the king of Babylon that his city has been taken from end to end.

³² So the fords over the river are seized; the enemy is burning the reed marshes,

and Babylon's fighting men are confused.

³³ For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor.

It is time to trample her down. In a little while the time of harvest will come to her.

³⁴ Jerusalem says, 'Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has devoured me. He has drained me dry

and has made me into an empty pot. He has swallowed me like a dragon.

He filled his stomach with my good food. He has rinsed me out.'

³⁵ The inhabitants of Zion will say, 'May the violence done to me and my flesh be on Babylon.'

Jerusalem will say, 'May my blood be on the inhabitants of Chaldea.'

³⁶ Therefore Yahweh says this: See, I am about to plead your case and bring about vengeance for you.

For I will dry up Babylon's waters and make her springs run dry.

³⁷ Babylon will become heaps of rubble, a den of jackals, a horror,

an object of hissing, where there are no inhabitants.

³⁸ The Babylonians will roar together like young lions. They will growl like lion cubs.

³⁹ When they become hot with greed, I will make a feast for them; I will make them drunk so they become happy,

and then sleep an unending sleep and not wake up—this is Yahweh's declaration—

⁴⁰ I will send them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with male goats.

⁴¹ How Babylon has been captured! So the praise of all the earth is seized.

How Babylon has become a ruined place among the nations.

⁴² The sea has come up over Babylon! She is covered with its roaring waves.

⁴³ Her cities have become a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness,

a land that no one inhabits, and no human being passes through.

⁴⁴ So I will punish Bel in Babylon; I will bring out from his mouth what he swallowed,

and the nations will no longer flow to him with their offerings. The walls of Babylon will fall.

⁴⁵ Go out from her midst, my people. Let each of you save his own life from the fury of my wrath.

⁴⁶ Do not let your hearts be timid or fear the news that is heard in the land,

for the news will come one year. After it in the next year there will be news,

and violence will be in the land. Ruler will be against ruler.

⁴⁷ Therefore, see, days are coming when I will punish the carved idols of Babylon.

All of her land will be ashamed, and all of her slaughtered ones will fall in her midst.

⁴⁸ Then the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them will rejoice over Babylon.

For destroyers will come for her from the north—this is Yahweh's declaration.

⁴⁹ "As Babylon has made the killed of Israel fall,

so the killed of all her land will fall in Babylon.

⁵⁰ Survivors of the sword, go away! Do not stay still.

Call Yahweh to mind from far away; let Jerusalem come to mind.

⁵¹ We are ashamed, for we have heard insults; reproach has covered our faces,

for foreigners have entered the holy places of Yahweh's house.

⁵² Therefore, see, days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will punish her carved idols,

and the wounded people will groan in all of her land.

⁵³ For even if Babylon went up to the heavens or fortified her highest fortresses,

destroyers would come from me to her—this is Yahweh's declaration.

⁵⁴ A shout of distress came from Babylon, a great collapse from the land of the Chaldeans.

⁵⁵ For Yahweh is destroying Babylon. He is causing her loud voice to perish.

Their enemies roar like the waves of many waters; their noise becomes very strong.

⁵⁶ For the destroyers have come against her—against Babylon!—and her warriors have been captured.

Their bows are broken, for Yahweh is the God of vengeance; he will surely carry out this repayment.

⁵⁷ For I will make her princes, her sages, her officials, and her soldiers drunk,

and they will sleep in an unending sleep and never wake up

—this is the King’s declaration: Yahweh of hosts is his name.

⁵⁸ Yahweh of hosts says this: The thick walls of Babylon will be completely demolished,

and her high gates will be burned.

Then the peoples coming to her aid will labor uselessly; everything that the nations try to do for her will be burned up.”

⁵⁹ This is the word that Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah son of Neriah

son of Machseiah when he went with Zedekiah king of Judah to Babylon

in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was a chief officer. ⁶⁰ For Jeremiah had written in a scroll about all the disaster that was going to come on Babylon—all these words that were written about Babylon. ⁶¹ Jeremiah said to Seraiah, “When you go to Babylon, then you will see and you will read these words aloud. ⁶² Then you will say, ‘Yahweh, you yourself have declared that you would destroy this place, and that no man or animal will live in it, and it will be desolate forever.’ ⁶³ Then when you have finished reading this scroll, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates. ⁶⁴ Say, ‘Babylon will sink like this. It will not arise because of the disaster that I am sending against it, and they will fall.’” Jeremiah’s words end here.

Chapter 52

¹ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of

Jeremiah from Libnah. ² He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did everything that Jehoiakim had done. ³ Through Yahweh’s anger, all these events happened in Jerusalem and Judah, until he drove them from before himself. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. ⁴ It happened that in the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah, in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came with all his army against Jerusalem. They camped opposite it, and they built a siege wall around it. ⁵ So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah’s reign. ⁶ In the fourth month, on the ninth day of that year, the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. ⁷ Then the city was broken into, and all the fighting men fled and went out of the city at night by the way of the gate that was between the two walls, by the king’s garden, although the Chaldeans were all around the city. So they went in the direction of the Arabah. ⁸ But the army of Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of the Jordan River valley near Jericho. All his army was scattered away from him. ⁹ They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he passed sentence on him. ¹⁰ The king of Babylon slaughtered Zedekiah’s sons before his own eyes, and at Riblah he also slaughtered all the leaders of Judah. ¹¹ Then he put out Zedekiah’s eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and brought him to Babylon. The king of Babylon put him in prison until the day of his death.

¹² Now in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan came to Jerusalem. He was the commander of the king’s bodyguards and a servant of the

king of Babylon. ¹³ He burned the house of Yahweh, the king's palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem; also every important building in the city he burned. ¹⁴ As for the walls around Jerusalem, all the army of the Babylonians who were with the commander of the bodyguard destroyed them. ¹⁵ As for the poorest people, the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen—Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, took some of them away into exile. ¹⁶ But Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, left some of the poorest of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

¹⁷ As for the bronze pillars that belonged to the house of Yahweh, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of Yahweh, the Chaldeans broke them into pieces and carried all the bronze back to Babylon. ¹⁸ The pots, shovels, lamp trimmers, bowls, and all the utensils of bronze with which the priests had served in the temple—the Chaldeans took them all away. ¹⁹ The basins and the incense burners, the bowls, pots, lampstands, pans, and basins that were made of gold, and those made of silver—the captain of the king's guard took them away as well. ²⁰ The two pillars, the sea, and the twelve bronze bulls that were under the stands, things that Solomon had made for the house of Yahweh, contained more bronze than could be weighed. ²¹ The pillars were eighteen cubits high each, and a line around each one measured twelve cubits. Each was four fingers thick and hollow. ²² A capital of bronze was on top of it. The capital was five cubits high, with latticework and pomegranates all around. It was all made of bronze. The other pillar and its pomegranates were the same as the first. ²³ So there were ninety-six pomegranates on the capital's sides, and

one hundred pomegranates above the surrounding latticework.

²⁴ The commander of the bodyguard took prisoner Seraiah, the high priest, together with Zephaniah, the second priest, and the three gatekeepers. ²⁵ From the city he took prisoner an officer who was in charge of soldiers, and seven men of those who advised the king, who were still in the city. He also took prisoner the king's army officer responsible for drafting men into the army, along with sixty important men from the land who were in the city. ²⁶ Then Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²⁷ The king of Babylon put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. In this way, Judah went out of its land into exile.

²⁸ These were the people who Nebuchadnezzar exiled: in the seventh year, 3,023 Judeans. ²⁹ In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he took 832 people from Jerusalem. ³⁰ In the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, the commander of the king's bodyguard, exiled 745 Judean people. All the exiled people totaled 4,600.

³¹ It happened later in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, that Evil-Merodach, king of Babylon released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. This happened in the year that Evil-Merodach began to reign. ³² He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat more honorable than that of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. ³³ Evil-Merodach removed Jehoiachin's prison clothes, and Jehoiachin ate regularly at the king's table for the rest of his life, ³⁴ and a regular food allowance was given to him every day for the rest of his life until his death.