

1 Kings

BEREAN STANDARD BIBLE

Chapter 1

ABISHAG CARES FOR DAVID

¹Now King David was old and well along in years, and though they covered him with blankets, he could not keep warm. ²So his servants said to him, “Let us search for a young virgin for our lord the king, to attend to him and care for him and lie by his side to keep him warm.” ³Then they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful girl, and they found Abishag the Shunammite and brought her to the king. ⁴The girl was unsurpassed in beauty; she cared for the king and served him, but he had no relations with her.

ADONIJAH USURPS THE KINGDOM

⁵At that time Adonijah, David’s son by Haggith, began to exalt himself, saying, “I will be king!” And he acquired chariots and horsemen and fifty men to run ahead of him. ⁶(His father had never once reprimanded him by saying, “Why do you act this way?” Adonijah was also very handsome, born next after Absalom.) ⁷So Adonijah conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest, who supported him. ⁸But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and David’s mighty men would not join Adonijah. ⁹And Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened calves near the stone of Zoheleth, which is next to En-rogel. He invited all his royal brothers and all the men of Judah who were servants of the king. ¹⁰But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or his brother Solomon.

NATHAN AND BATHSHEBA BEFORE DAVID

¹¹Then Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, “Have you not heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king, and our lord David does not know it? ¹²Now please, come and let me advise you. Save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. ¹³Go at once to King David and say, ‘My lord the king, did you not swear to your maidservant, “Surely your son Solomon will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne”? Why then has Adonijah become king?’ ¹⁴Then, while you are still there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words.” ¹⁵So Bathsheba went to see the king in his bedroom. Since the king was very old, Abishag the Shunammite was serving him. ¹⁶And Bathsheba bowed down in homage to the king,

who asked, “What is your desire?” ¹⁷“My lord,” she replied, “you yourself swore to your maidservant by the LORD your God: ‘Surely your son Solomon will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne.’” ¹⁸But now, behold, Adonijah has become king, and you, my lord the king, do not know it. ¹⁹And he has sacrificed an abundance of oxen, fattened calves, and sheep, and has invited all the other sons of the king, as well as Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of the army. But he has not invited your servant Solomon. ²⁰And as for you, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are upon you to tell them who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. ²¹Otherwise, when my lord the king rests with his fathers, I and my son Solomon will be counted as criminals.” ²²And just then, while Bathsheba was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet arrived. ²³So the king was told, “Nathan the prophet is here.” And Nathan went in and bowed facedown before the king. ²⁴“My lord the king,” said Nathan, “did you say, ‘Adonijah will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne’? ²⁵For today he has gone down and sacrificed an abundance of oxen, fattened calves, and sheep, and has invited all the sons of the king, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest. And behold, they are eating and drinking before him, saying, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’” ²⁶But me your servant he has not invited, nor Zadok the priest, nor Benaiah son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon. ²⁷Has my lord the king let this happen without informing your servant who should sit on the throne after my lord the king?”

DAVID RENEWS HIS OATH TO BATHSHEBA

²⁸Then King David said, “Call in Bathsheba for me.” So she came into the king’s presence and stood before him. ²⁹And the king swore an oath, saying, “As surely as the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress, ³⁰I will carry out this very day exactly what I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel: Surely your son Solomon will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place.” ³¹Bathsheba bowed facedown in homage to the king and said, “May my lord King David live forever!”

SOLOMON ANOINTED KING

³²Then King David said, “Call in for me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada.” So they came before the king. ³³“Take my servants with you,” said

the king. “Set my son Solomon on my own mule and take him down to Gihon. ³⁴There Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet are to anoint him king over Israel. You are to blow the ram’s horn and declare, ‘Long live King Solomon!’ ³⁵Then you shall go up with him, and he is to come and sit on my throne and reign in my place. For I have appointed him ruler over Israel and Judah.” ³⁶“Amen,” replied Benaiah son of Jehoiada. “May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, so declare it. ³⁷Just as the LORD was with my lord the king, so may He be with Solomon and make his throne even greater than that of my lord King David.” ³⁸Then Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, along with the Cherethites and Pelethites, went down and set Solomon on King David’s mule, and they escorted him to Gihon. ³⁹Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the ram’s horn, and all the people proclaimed, “Long live King Solomon!” ⁴⁰All the people followed him, playing flutes and rejoicing with such a great joy that the earth was split by the sound.

ADONIJAH LEARNS OF SOLOMON’S KINGSHIP

⁴¹Now Adonijah and all his guests were finishing their feast when they heard the sound of the ram’s horn. “Why is the city in such a loud uproar?” asked Joab. ⁴²As he was speaking, suddenly Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest arrived. “Come in,” said Adonijah, “for you are a man of valor. You must be bringing good news.” ⁴³“Not at all,” Jonathan replied. “Our lord King David has made Solomon king. ⁴⁴And with Solomon, the king has sent Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, along with the Cherethites and Pelethites, and they have set him on the king’s mule. ⁴⁵Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon, and they have gone up from there with rejoicing that rings out in the city. That is the noise you hear. ⁴⁶Moreover, Solomon has taken his seat on the royal throne. ⁴⁷The king’s servants have also gone to congratulate our lord King David, saying, ‘May your God make the name of Solomon more famous than your own name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne.’ And the king has bowed in worship on his bed, ⁴⁸saying, ‘Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel! Today He has provided one to sit on my throne, and my eyes have seen it.’” ⁴⁹At this, all the guests of Adonijah arose in terror and scattered. ⁵⁰But Adonijah, in fear of Solomon, got up and went to take hold of the horns of the altar. ⁵¹It was reported to Solomon: “Behold, Adonijah fears King Solomon, and he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, ‘Let King Solomon first swear to me not to put his servant to the sword.’” ⁵²And Solomon replied, “If

he is a man of character, not a single hair of his will fall to the ground. But if evil is found in him, he will die.” ⁵³So King Solomon summoned Adonijah down from the altar, and he came and bowed down before King Solomon, who said to him, “Go to your home.”

Chapter 2

DAVID INSTRUCTS SOLOMON

¹As the time drew near for David to die, he charged his son Solomon, ²“I am about to go the way of all the earth. So be strong and prove yourself a man. ³And keep the charge of the LORD your God to walk in His ways and to keep His statutes, commandments, ordinances, and decrees, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you turn, ⁴and so that the LORD may fulfill His promise to me: ‘If your descendants take heed to walk faithfully before Me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’ ⁵Moreover, you know what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me—what he did to Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether, the two commanders of the armies of Israel. He killed them in peacetime to avenge the blood of war. He stained with the blood of war the belt around his waist and the sandals on his feet. ⁶So act according to your wisdom, and do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace. ⁷But show loving devotion to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table, because they stood by me when I fled from your brother Absalom. ⁸Keep an eye on Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim who is with you. He called down bitter curses against me on the day I went to Mahanaim, but when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD: ‘I will never put you to the sword.’ ⁹Now therefore, do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man. You know what you ought to do to him to bring his gray head down to Sheol in blood.”

DAVID’S REIGN AND DEATH

¹⁰Then David rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. ¹¹The length of David’s reign over Israel was forty years—seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ¹²So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his kingdom was firmly established.

THE EXECUTION OF ADONIJAH

¹³Now Adonijah son of Haggith went to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, and she asked, “Do you come in peace?” “Yes, in peace,” he replied. ¹⁴Then he said, “I have something to tell you.” “Say it,” she answered. ¹⁵“You know that the kingship was mine,” he said. “All Israel expected

that I should reign, but the kingship has turned to my brother, for it has come to him from the LORD. ¹⁶So now I have just one request of you; do not deny me.” “State your request,” she told him. ¹⁷Adonijah replied, “Please speak to King Solomon, since he will not turn you down. Let him give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife.” ¹⁸“Very well,” Bathsheba replied. “I will speak to the king for you.” ¹⁹So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah. The king stood up to greet her, bowed to her, and sat down on his throne. Then the king had a throne brought for his mother, who sat down at his right hand. ²⁰“I have just one small request of you,” she said. “Do not deny me.” “Make your request, my mother,” the king replied, “for I will not deny you.” ²¹So Bathsheba said, “Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to your brother Adonijah as his wife.” ²²King Solomon answered his mother, “Why do you request Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Since he is my older brother, you might as well request the kingdom for him and for Abiathar the priest and for Joab son of Zeruiah!” ²³Then King Solomon swore by the LORD: “May God punish me, and ever so severely, if Adonijah has not made this request at the expense of his life. ²⁴And now, as surely as the LORD lives—the One who established me, who set me on the throne of my father David, and who founded for me a dynasty as He promised—surely Adonijah shall be put to death today!” ²⁵So King Solomon gave orders to Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and he struck down Adonijah and he died. ²⁶Then the king said to Abiathar the priest, “Go back to your fields in Anathoth. Even though you deserve to die, I will not put you to death at this time, since you carried the ark of the Lord GOD before my father David, and you suffered through all that my father suffered.” ²⁷So Solomon banished Abiathar from the priesthood of the LORD and thus fulfilled the word that the LORD had spoken at Shiloh against the house of Eli.

THE EXECUTION OF JOAB

²⁸When the news reached Joab, who had conspired with Adonijah but not with Absalom, he fled to the tent of the LORD and took hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹It was reported to King Solomon: “Joab has fled to the tent of the LORD and is now beside the altar.” So Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, saying, “Go, strike him down!” ³⁰And Benaiah entered the tent of the LORD and said to Joab, “The king says, ‘Come out!’” But Joab replied, “No, I will die here.” So Benaiah relayed the message to the king, saying, “This is how Joab answered me.” ³¹And the king replied, “Do just as he says. Strike him down and bury him, and so remove from me and from the house of my father the innocent blood that Joab shed. ³²The LORD will bring

his bloodshed back upon his own head, for without the knowledge of my father David he struck down two men more righteous and better than he when he put to the sword Abner son of Ner, commander of Israel’s army, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of Judah’s army. ³³Their blood will come back upon the heads of Joab and his descendants forever; but for David, his descendants, his house, and his throne, there shall be peace from the LORD forever.” ³⁴So Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up, struck down Joab, and killed him. He was buried at his own home in the wilderness. ³⁵And the king appointed Benaiah son of Jehoiada in Joab’s place over the army, and he appointed Zadok the priest in Abiathar’s place.

THE EXECUTION OF SHIMEI

³⁶Then the king summoned Shimei and said to him, “Build a house for yourself in Jerusalem and live there, but do not go anywhere else. ³⁷On the day you go out and cross the Kidron Valley, know for sure that you will die; your blood will be on your own head.” ³⁸“The sentence is fair,” Shimei replied. “Your servant will do as my lord the king has spoken.” And Shimei lived in Jerusalem for a long time. ³⁹After three years, however, two of Shimei’s slaves ran away to Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath. And Shimei was told, “Look, your slaves are in Gath.” ⁴⁰So Shimei saddled his donkey and set out to Achish at Gath in search of his slaves, and he brought them back from Gath. ⁴¹When Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had returned, ⁴²the king summoned Shimei and said to him, “Did I not make you swear by the LORD and warn you, ‘On the day you leave and go elsewhere, know for sure that you will die’? And you told me, ‘The sentence is fair; I will comply.’ ⁴³So why have you not kept your oath to the LORD and the command that I gave you?” ⁴⁴The king also said, “You know in your heart all the evil that you did to my father David. Therefore the LORD will bring your evil back upon your head. ⁴⁵But King Solomon will be blessed and David’s throne will remain secure before the LORD forever.” ⁴⁶Then the king commanded Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and he went out and struck Shimei down, and he died. Thus the kingdom was firmly established in the hand of Solomon.

Chapter 3

SOLOMON’S PRAYER FOR WISDOM

¹Later, Solomon formed an alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt by marrying his daughter. Solomon brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his palace and the house of the LORD, as well as the wall around

Jerusalem. ²The people, however, were still sacrificing on the high places because a house for the Name of the LORD had not yet been built. ³And Solomon loved the LORD and walked in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. ⁴Now the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for it was the great high place. Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on the altar there. ⁵One night at Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, “Ask, and I will give it to you!” ⁶Solomon replied, “You have shown much loving devotion to Your servant, my father David, because he walked before You in faithfulness, righteousness, and uprightness of heart. And You have maintained this loving devotion by giving him a son to sit on his throne this very day. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king in my father David’s place. But I am only a little child, not knowing how to go out or come in. ⁸Your servant is here among the people You have chosen, a people too numerous to count or number. ⁹Therefore give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people and to discern between good and evil. For who is able to govern this great people of Yours?” ¹⁰Now it pleased the Lord that Solomon had made this request. ¹¹So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this instead of requesting long life or wealth for yourself or death for your enemies—but you have asked for discernment to administer justice—¹²behold, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been another like you, nor will there ever be. ¹³Moreover, I will give you what you did not request—both riches and honor—so that during all your days no man in any kingdom will be your equal. ¹⁴So if you walk in My ways and keep My statutes and commandments, just as your father David did, I will prolong your days.” ¹⁵Then Solomon awoke, and indeed it had been a dream. So he returned to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Then he held a feast for all his servants.

SOLOMON JUDGES WISELY

¹⁶At that time two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. ¹⁷One woman said, “Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house, and I gave birth while she was in the house. ¹⁸On the third day after I gave birth, this woman also had a baby. We were alone, with no one in the house but the two of us. ¹⁹During the night this woman’s son died because she rolled over on him. ²⁰So she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from my side while I was asleep. She laid him in her bosom and put her dead son at my bosom. ²¹The next morning, when I got

up to nurse my son, I discovered he was dead. But when I examined him, I realized that he was not the son I had borne.” ²²“No,” said the other woman, “the living one is my son and the dead one is your son.” But the first woman insisted, “No, the dead one is yours and the living one is mine.” So they argued before the king. ²³Then the king replied, “This woman says, ‘My son is alive and yours is dead,’ but that woman says, ‘No, your son is dead and mine is alive.’” ²⁴The king continued, “Bring me a sword.” So they brought him a sword, ²⁵and the king declared, “Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other.” ²⁶Then the woman whose son was alive spoke to the king because she yearned with compassion for her son. “Please, my lord,” she said, “give her the living baby. Do not kill him!” But the other woman said, “He will be neither mine nor yours. Cut him in two!” ²⁷Then the king gave his ruling: “Give the living baby to the first woman. By no means should you kill him; she is his mother.” ²⁸When all Israel heard of the judgment the king had given, they stood in awe of him, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

Chapter 4

SOLOMON’S PRINCES

¹So King Solomon ruled over Israel, ²and these were his chief officials: Azariah son of Zadok was the priest; ³Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, were secretaries; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder; ⁴Benaiah son of Jehoiada was in charge of the army; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; ⁵Azariah son of Nathan was in charge of the governors; Zabud son of Nathan was a priest and adviser to the king; ⁶Ahishar was in charge of the palace; and Adoniram son of Abda was in charge of the forced labor.

SOLOMON’S TWELVE OFFICERS

⁷Solomon had twelve governors over all Israel to provide food for the king and his household. Each one would arrange provisions for one month of the year, ⁸and these were their names: Ben-hur in the hill country of Ephraim; ⁹Ben-deker in Makaz, in Shaalbim, in Beth-shemesh, and in Elon-beth-hanan; ¹⁰Ben-hesed in Arubboth (Socoh and all the land of Hepher belonged to him); ¹¹Ben-abinadab in Naphath-dor (Taphath, a daughter of Solomon, was his wife); ¹²Baana son of Ahilud in Taanach, in Megiddo, and in all of Beth-shean next to Zarethan below Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah and on past Jokmeam; ¹³Ben-geber in Ramoth-gilead (the villages of Jair son of Manasseh in Gilead belonged to him, as well as the region

of Argob in Bashan with its sixty great cities with walls and bronze bars); ¹⁴Ahinadab son of Iddo in Mahanaim; ¹⁵Ahimaaz in Naphtali (he had married Basemath, a daughter of Solomon); ¹⁶Baana son of Hushai in Asher and in Aloth; ¹⁷Jehoshaphat son of Paruah in Issachar; ¹⁸Shimei son of Ela in Benjamin; ¹⁹Geber son of Uri in the land of Gilead, including the territories of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan. There was also one governor in the land of Judah.

SOLOMON'S PROSPERITY

²⁰The people of Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand on the seashore, and they were eating and drinking and rejoicing. ²¹And Solomon reigned over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. These kingdoms offered tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life. ²²Solomon's provisions for a single day were thirty cors of fine flour, sixty cors of meal, ²³ten fat oxen, twenty range oxen, and a hundred sheep, as well as deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened poultry. ²⁴For Solomon had dominion over everything west of the Euphrates—over all the kingdoms from Tiphshah to Gaza—and he had peace on all sides. ²⁵Throughout the days of Solomon, Judah and Israel dwelt securely from Dan to Beersheba, each man under his own vine and his own fig tree. ²⁶Solomon had 4,000 stalls for his chariot horses and 12,000 horses. ²⁷Each month the governors in turn provided food for King Solomon and all who came to his table. They saw to it that nothing was lacking. ²⁸Each one also brought to the required place their quotas of barley and straw for the chariot horses and other horses.

SOLOMON'S WISDOM

²⁹And God gave Solomon wisdom, exceedingly deep insight, and understanding beyond measure, like the sand on the seashore. ³⁰Solomon's wisdom was greater than that of all the men of the East, greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹He was wiser than all men—wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and wiser than Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread throughout the surrounding nations. ³²Solomon composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five. ³³He spoke of trees, from the cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop growing in the wall, and he taught about animals, birds, reptiles, and fish. ³⁴So men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.

Chapter 5

PREPARATIONS FOR THE TEMPLE

¹Now when Hiram king of Tyre heard that Solomon had been anointed king in his father's place, he sent envoys to Solomon; for Hiram had always been a friend of David. ²And Solomon relayed this message to Hiram: ³"As you are well aware, due to the wars waged on all sides against my father David, he could not build a house for the Name of the LORD his God until the LORD had put his enemies under his feet. ⁴But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side, and there is no adversary or crisis. ⁵So behold, I plan to build a house for the Name of the LORD my God, according to what the LORD said to my father David: 'I will put your son on your throne in your place, and he will build the house for My Name.' ⁶Now therefore, order that cedars of Lebanon be cut down for me. My servants will be with your servants, and I will pay your servants whatever wages you set, for you know that there are none among us as skilled in logging as the Sidonians."

HIRAM'S REPLY TO SOLOMON

⁷When Hiram received Solomon's message, he rejoiced greatly and said, "Blessed be the LORD this day! He has given David a wise son over this great people!" ⁸Then Hiram sent a reply to Solomon, saying: "I have received your message; I will do all you desire regarding the cedar and cypress timber. ⁹My servants will haul the logs from Lebanon to the Sea, and I will float them as rafts by sea to the place you specify. There I will separate the logs, and you can take them away. And in exchange, you can meet my needs by providing my household with food." ¹⁰So Hiram provided Solomon with all the cedar and cypress timber he wanted, ¹¹and year after year Solomon would provide Hiram with 20,000 cors of wheat as food for his household, as well as 20,000 baths of pure olive oil. ¹²And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty.

SOLOMON'S LABOR FORCE

¹³Then King Solomon conscripted a labor force of 30,000 men from all Israel. ¹⁴He sent them to Lebanon in monthly shifts of 10,000 men, so that they would spend one month in Lebanon and two months at home. And Adoniram was in charge of the forced labor. ¹⁵Solomon had 70,000 porters and 80,000 stonecutters in the mountains, ¹⁶not including his 3,300 foremen who supervised the workers. ¹⁷And the king commanded them to quarry large, costly stones to lay the foundation of the temple with dressed stones. ¹⁸So Solomon's and Hiram's builders, along with

the Gebalites, quarried the stone and prepared the timber and stone for the construction of the temple.

Chapter 6

TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

¹In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD. ²The house that King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. ³The portico at the front of the main hall of the temple was twenty cubits long, extending across the width of the temple and projecting out ten cubits in front of the temple. ⁴He also had narrow windows framed high in the temple.

THE CHAMBERS

⁵Against the walls of the temple and the inner sanctuary, Solomon built a chambered structure around the temple, in which he constructed the side rooms. ⁶The bottom floor was five cubits wide, the middle floor six cubits, and the third floor seven cubits. He also placed offset ledges around the outside of the temple, so that nothing would be inserted into its walls. ⁷The temple was constructed using finished stones cut at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any other iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built. ⁸The entrance to the bottom floor was on the south side of the temple. A stairway led up to the middle level, and from there to the third floor. ⁹So Solomon built the temple and finished it, roofing it with beams and planks of cedar. ¹⁰He built chambers all along the temple, each five cubits high and attached to the temple with beams of cedar.

GOD'S PROMISE TO SOLOMON

¹¹Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying: ¹²"As for this temple you are building, if you walk in My statutes, carry out My ordinances, and keep all My commandments by walking in them, I will fulfill through you the promise I made to your father David. ¹³And I will dwell among the Israelites and will not abandon My people Israel."

THE TEMPLE'S INTERIOR

¹⁴So Solomon built the temple and finished it. ¹⁵He lined the interior walls with cedar paneling from the floor of the temple to the ceiling, and he covered the floor with cypress boards. ¹⁶He partitioned off the twenty cubits at the rear of the temple with cedar boards from floor to ceiling to form within the temple an inner sanctuary, the Most Holy Place.

¹⁷And the main hall in front of this room was forty cubits long. ¹⁸The cedar paneling inside the temple was carved with gourds and open flowers. Everything was cedar; not a stone could be seen. ¹⁹Solomon also prepared the inner sanctuary within the temple to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there. ²⁰The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid the inside with pure gold, and he also overlaid the altar of cedar. ²¹So Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold, and he extended gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, which was overlaid with gold. ²²So he overlaid with gold the whole interior of the temple, until everything was completely finished. He also overlaid with gold the entire altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary.

THE CHERUBIM

²³In the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim, each ten cubits high, out of olive wood. ²⁴One wing of the first cherub was five cubits long, and the other wing was five cubits long as well. So the full wingspan was ten cubits. ²⁵The second cherub also measured ten cubits; both cherubim had the same size and shape, ²⁶and the height of each cherub was ten cubits. ²⁷And he placed the cherubim inside the innermost room of the temple. Since their wings were spread out, the wing of the first cherub touched one wall, while the wing of the second cherub touched the other wall, and in the middle of the room their wingtips touched. ²⁸He also overlaid the cherubim with gold. ²⁹Then he carved the walls all around the temple, in both the inner and outer sanctuaries, with carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. ³⁰And he overlaid the temple floor with gold in both the inner and outer sanctuaries.

THE DOORS

³¹For the entrance to the inner sanctuary, Solomon constructed doors of olive wood with five-sided doorposts. ³²The double doors were made of olive wood, and he carved into them cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers and overlaid the cherubim and palm trees with hammered gold. ³³In the same way he made four-sided doorposts of olive wood for the sanctuary entrance. ³⁴The two doors were made of cypress wood, and each had two folding panels. ³⁵He carved into them cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and he overlaid them with gold hammered evenly over the carvings.

THE COURTYARD

³⁶Solomon built the inner courtyard with three rows of dressed stone and one row of trimmed cedar beams. ³⁷The foundation of the house of the LORD was laid in the fourth

year of Solomon's reign, in the month of Ziv. ³⁸In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, the eighth month, the temple was finished in every detail and according to every specification. So he built the temple in seven years.

Chapter 7

SOLOMON'S PALACE COMPLEX

¹Solomon, however, took thirteen years to complete the construction of his entire palace. ²He built the House of the Forest of Lebanon a hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, with four rows of cedar pillars supporting the cedar beams. ³The house was roofed with cedar above the beams that rested on the pillars—forty-five beams, fifteen per row. ⁴There were three rows of high windows facing one another in three tiers. ⁵All the doorways had rectangular frames, with the openings facing one another in three tiers. ⁶Solomon made his colonnade fifty cubits long and thirty cubits wide, with a portico in front of it and a canopy with pillars in front of the portico. ⁷In addition, he built a hall for the throne, the Hall of Justice, where he was to judge. It was paneled with cedar from floor to ceiling. ⁸And the palace where Solomon would live, set further back, was of similar construction. He also made a palace like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married. ⁹All these buildings were constructed with costly stones, cut to size and trimmed with saws inside and out from the foundation to the eaves, and from the outside to the great courtyard. ¹⁰The foundations were laid with large, costly stones, some ten cubits long and some eight cubits long. ¹¹Above these were costly stones, cut to size, and cedar beams. ¹²The great courtyard was surrounded by three rows of dressed stone and a row of trimmed cedar beams, as were the inner courtyard and portico of the house of the LORD.

THE PILLARS AND CAPITALS

¹³Now King Solomon sent to bring Hiram from Tyre. ¹⁴He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a craftsman in bronze. Hiram had great skill, understanding, and knowledge for every kind of bronze work. So he came to King Solomon and carried out all his work. ¹⁵He cast two pillars of bronze, each eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference. ¹⁶He also made two capitals of cast bronze to set on top of the pillars, each capital five cubits high. ¹⁷For the capitals on top of the pillars he made a network of lattice, with wreaths of chainwork, seven for each capital. ¹⁸Likewise, he made the pillars with two rows of pomegranates around each grating to cover each capital atop the pillars. ¹⁹And

the capitals atop the pillars in the portico were shaped like lilies, four cubits high. ²⁰On the capitals of both pillars, just above the rounded projection next to the network, were the two hundred pomegranates in rows encircling each capital. ²¹Thus he set up the pillars at the portico of the temple. The pillar to the south he named Jachin, and the pillar to the north he named Boaz. ²²And the tops of the pillars were shaped like lilies. So the work of the pillars was completed.

THE MOLTEN SEA

²³He also made the Sea of cast metal. It was circular in shape, measuring ten cubits from rim to rim, five cubits in height, and thirty cubits in circumference. ²⁴Below the rim, ornamental buds encircled it, ten per cubit all the way around the Sea, cast in two rows as a part of the Sea. ²⁵The Sea stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east. The Sea rested on them, with all their hindquarters toward the center. ²⁶It was a handbreadth thick, and its rim was fashioned like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom. It could hold two thousand baths.

THE TEN BRONZE STANDS

²⁷In addition, he made ten movable stands of bronze, each four cubits long, four cubits wide, and three cubits high. ²⁸This was the design of the stands: They had side panels attached to uprights, ²⁹and on the panels between the uprights were lions, oxen, and cherubim. On the uprights was a pedestal above, and below the lions and oxen were wreaths of beveled work. ³⁰Each stand had four bronze wheels with bronze axles and a basin resting on four supports, with wreaths at each side. ³¹The opening to each stand inside the crown at the top was one cubit deep, with a round opening like the design of a pedestal, a cubit and a half wide. And around its opening were engravings, but the panels of the stands were square, not round. ³²There were four wheels under the panels, and the axles of the wheels were attached to the stand; each wheel was a cubit and a half in diameter. ³³The wheels were made like chariot wheels; their axles, rims, spokes, and hubs were all of cast metal. ³⁴Each stand had four handles, one for each corner, projecting from the stand. ³⁵At the top of each stand was a circular band half a cubit high. The supports and panels were cast as a unit with the top of the stand. ³⁶He engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees on the surfaces of the supports and panels, wherever each had space, with wreaths all around. ³⁷In this way he made the ten stands, each with the same casting, dimensions, and shape.

THE TEN BRONZE BASINS

³⁸He also made ten bronze basins, each holding forty baths and measuring four cubits across, one basin for each of the ten stands. ³⁹He set five stands on the south side of the temple and five on the north, and he put the Sea on the south side, at the southeast corner of the temple.

COMPLETION OF THE BRONZE WORKS

⁴⁰Additionally, Hiram made the pots, shovels, and sprinkling bowls. So Hiram finished all the work that he had undertaken for King Solomon in the house of the LORD: ⁴¹the two pillars; the two bowl-shaped capitals atop the pillars; the two sets of network covering both bowls of the capitals atop the pillars; ⁴²the four hundred pomegranates for the two sets of network (two rows of pomegranates for each network covering both the bowl-shaped capitals atop the pillars); ⁴³the ten stands; the ten basins on the stands; ⁴⁴the Sea; the twelve oxen underneath the Sea; ⁴⁵and the pots, shovels, and sprinkling bowls. All the articles that Hiram made for King Solomon in the house of the LORD were made of burnished bronze. ⁴⁶The king had them cast in clay molds in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan. ⁴⁷Solomon left all these articles unweighed, because there were so many. The weight of the bronze could not be determined.

COMPLETION OF THE GOLD FURNISHINGS

⁴⁸Solomon also made all the furnishings for the house of the LORD: the golden altar; the golden table on which was placed the Bread of the Presence; ⁴⁹the lampstands of pure gold in front of the inner sanctuary, five on the right side and five on the left; the gold flowers, lamps, and tongs; ⁵⁰the pure gold basins, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, ladles, and censers; and the gold hinges for the doors of the inner temple (that is, the Most Holy Place) as well as for the doors of the main hall of the temple. ⁵¹So all the work that King Solomon had performed for the house of the LORD was completed. Then Solomon brought in the items his father David had dedicated—the silver, the gold, and the furnishings—and he placed them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

Chapter 8

THE ARK ENTERS THE TEMPLE

¹At that time Solomon assembled before him in Jerusalem the elders of Israel—all the tribal heads and family leaders of the Israelites—to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from Zion, the City of David. ²And all the men of Israel came together to King Solomon at the feast in the seventh month, the month of Ethanim. ³When all the el-

ders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark, ⁴and they brought up the ark of the LORD and the Tent of Meeting with all its sacred furnishings. So the priests and Levites carried them up. ⁵There, before the ark, King Solomon and the whole congregation of Israel who had assembled with him sacrificed so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. ⁶Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, beneath the wings of the cherubim. ⁷For the cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and overshadowed the ark and its poles. ⁸The poles extended far enough that their ends were visible from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are there to this day. ⁹There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD had made a covenant with the Israelites after they had come out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁰And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD ¹¹so that the priests could not stand there to minister because of the cloud. For the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

SOLOMON BLESSES THE LORD

¹²Then Solomon declared: “The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud. ¹³I have indeed built You an exalted house, a place for You to dwell forever.” ¹⁴And as the whole assembly of Israel stood there, the king turned around and blessed them all ¹⁵and said: “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has fulfilled with His own hand what He spoke with His mouth to my father David, saying, ¹⁶‘Since the day I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any tribe of Israel in which to build a house so that My Name would be there. But I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.’ ¹⁷Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Since it was in your heart to build a house for My Name, you have done well to have this in your heart. ¹⁹Nevertheless, you are not the one to build it; but your son, your own offspring, will build the house for My Name.’ ²⁰Now the LORD has fulfilled the word that He spoke. I have succeeded my father David, and I sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised. I have built the house for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ²¹And there I have provided a place for the ark, which contains the covenant of the LORD that He made with our fathers when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

SOLOMON'S PRAYER OF DEDICATION

²²Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven, ²³and said: "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth below, keeping Your covenant of loving devotion with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts. ²⁴You have kept Your promise to Your servant, my father David. What You spoke with Your mouth You have fulfilled with Your hand this day. ²⁵Therefore now, O LORD, God of Israel, keep for Your servant, my father David, what You promised when You said: 'You will never fail to have a man to sit before Me on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants guard their way to walk before Me as you have done.' ²⁶And now, O God of Israel, please confirm what You promised to Your servant, my father David. ²⁷But will God indeed dwell upon the earth? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain You, much less this temple I have built. ²⁸Yet regard the prayer and plea of Your servant, O LORD my God, so that You may hear the cry and the prayer that Your servant is praying before You today. ²⁹May Your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that You may hear the prayer that Your servant prays toward this place. ³⁰Hear the plea of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray toward this place. May You hear from heaven, Your dwelling place. May You hear and forgive. ³¹When a man sins against his neighbor and is required to take an oath, and he comes to take an oath before Your altar in this temple, ³²then may You hear from heaven and act. May You judge Your servants, condemning the wicked man by bringing down on his own head what he has done, and justifying the righteous man by rewarding him according to his righteousness. ³³When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and they return to You and confess Your name, praying and pleading with You in this temple, ³⁴then may You hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel. May You restore them to the land You gave to their fathers. ³⁵When the skies are shut and there is no rain because Your people have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and they turn from their sins because You have afflicted them, ³⁶then may You hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, so that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk. May You send rain on the land that You gave Your people as an inheritance. ³⁷When famine or plague comes upon the land, or blight or mildew or locusts or grasshoppers, or when their enemy besieges them in their cities, whatever plague

or sickness may come, ³⁸then may whatever prayer or petition Your people Israel make—each knowing his own afflictions and spreading out his hands toward this temple—³⁹be heard by You from heaven, Your dwelling place. And may You forgive and act, and repay each man according to all his ways, since You know his heart—for You alone know the hearts of all men—⁴⁰so that they may fear You all the days they live in the land that You gave to our fathers. ⁴¹And as for the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of Your name—⁴²for they will hear of Your great name and mighty hand and outstretched arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple, ⁴³then may You hear from heaven, Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You. Then all the peoples of the earth will know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel, and they will know that this house I have built is called by Your Name. ⁴⁴When Your people go to war against their enemies, wherever You send them, and when they pray to the LORD in the direction of the city You have chosen and the house I have built for Your Name, ⁴⁵then may You hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and may You uphold their cause. ⁴⁶When they sin against You—for there is no one who does not sin—and You become angry with them and deliver them to an enemy who takes them as captives to his own land, whether far or near, ⁴⁷and when they come to their senses in the land to which they were taken, and they repent and plead with You in the land of their captors, saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong; we have acted wickedly,' ⁴⁸and when they return to You with all their heart and soul in the land of the enemies who took them captive, and when they pray to You in the direction of the land that You gave to their fathers, the city You have chosen, and the house I have built for Your Name, ⁴⁹then may You hear from heaven, Your dwelling place, their prayer and petition, and may You uphold their cause. ⁵⁰May You forgive Your people who have sinned against You and all the transgressions they have committed against You, and may You grant them compassion in the eyes of their captors to show them mercy. ⁵¹For they are Your people and Your inheritance; You brought them out of Egypt, out of the furnace for iron. ⁵²May Your eyes be open to the pleas of Your servant and of Your people Israel, and may You listen to them whenever they call to You. ⁵³For You, O Lord GOD, have set them apart from all the peoples of the earth as Your inheritance, as You spoke through Your servant Moses when You brought our fathers out of Egypt."

SOLOMON'S BENEDICTION

⁵⁴Now when Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and petition to the LORD, he got up before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven. ⁵⁵And he stood and blessed the whole assembly of Israel in a loud voice, saying: ⁵⁶“Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel according to all that He promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises He made through His servant Moses. ⁵⁷May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He never leave us or forsake us. ⁵⁸May He incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways and to keep the commandments and statutes and ordinances He commanded our fathers. ⁵⁹And may these words with which I have made my petition before the LORD be near to the LORD our God day and night, so that He may uphold the cause of His servant and of His people Israel as each day requires, ⁶⁰so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God. There is no other! ⁶¹So let your heart be fully devoted to the LORD our God, as it is this day, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments.”

SACRIFICES OF DEDICATION

⁶²Then the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD. ⁶³And Solomon offered as peace offerings to the LORD 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the Israelites dedicated the house of the LORD. ⁶⁴On that same day the king consecrated the middle of the courtyard in front of the house of the LORD, and there he offered the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, since the bronze altar before the LORD was too small to contain all these offerings. ⁶⁵So at that time Solomon and all Israel with him—a great assembly of people from Lebo-hamath to the Brook of Egypt—kept the feast before the LORD our God for seven days and seven more days—fourteen days in all. ⁶⁶On the fifteenth day Solomon sent the people away. So they blessed the king and went home, joyful and glad in heart for all the good things that the LORD had done for His servant David and for His people Israel.

Chapter 9

THE LORD'S RESPONSE TO SOLOMON

¹Now when Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the royal palace, and had achieved all that he had desired to do, ²the LORD appeared to him a second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³And the LORD said to him: “I have heard your prayer and petition

before Me. I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting My Name there forever; My eyes and My heart will be there for all time. ⁴And as for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, with a heart of integrity and uprightness, doing all I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and ordinances, ⁵then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised your father David when I said, ‘You will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’ ⁶But if indeed you or your sons turn away from following Me and do not keep the commandments and statutes I have set before you, and if you go off to serve and worship other gods, ⁷then I will cut off Israel from the land that I have given them, and I will banish from My presence this temple I have sanctified for My Name. Then Israel will become an object of scorn and ridicule among all peoples. ⁸And when this temple has become a heap of rubble, all who pass by it will be appalled and will hiss and say, ‘Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?’ ⁹And others will answer, ‘Because they have forsaken the LORD their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—because of this, the LORD has brought all this disaster upon them.’”

SOLOMON'S ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

¹⁰Now at the end of the twenty years during which Solomon built these two houses, the house of the LORD and the royal palace, ¹¹King Solomon gave twenty towns in the land of Galilee to Hiram king of Tyre, who had supplied him with cedar and cypress logs and gold for his every desire. ¹²So Hiram went out from Tyre to inspect the towns that Solomon had given him, but he was not pleased with them. ¹³“What are these towns you have given me, my brother?” asked Hiram, and he called them the Land of Cabul, as they are called to this day. ¹⁴And Hiram had sent the king 120 talents of gold. ¹⁵This is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon imposed to build the house of the LORD, his own palace, the supporting terraces, and the wall of Jerusalem, as well as Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. ¹⁶Pharaoh king of Egypt had attacked and captured Gezer. He had set it on fire, killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and given it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife. ¹⁷So Solomon rebuilt Gezer, Lower Beth-horon, ¹⁸Baalath, and Tamar in the Wilderness of Judah, ¹⁹as well as all the store cities that Solomon had for his chariots and horses—whatever he desired to build in Jerusalem, Lebanon, and throughout the land of his dominion. ²⁰As for all the people who remained of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (the

people who were not Israelites)—²¹their descendants who remained in the land, those whom the Israelites were unable to devote to destruction—Solomon conscripted these people to be forced laborers, as they are to this day. ²²But Solomon did not consign any of the Israelites to slavery, because they were his men of war, his servants, his officers, his captains, and the commanders of his chariots and cavalry. ²³They were also the chief officers over Solomon's projects: 550 supervisors over the people who did the work. ²⁴As soon as Pharaoh's daughter had come up from the City of David to the palace that Solomon had built for her, he built the supporting terraces. ²⁵Three times a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar he had built for the LORD, burning incense with them before the LORD. So he completed the temple. ²⁶King Solomon also assembled a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea. ²⁷And Hiram sent his servants, sailors who knew the sea, to serve in the fleet with Solomon's servants. ²⁸They sailed to Ophir and imported gold from there—420 talents—and delivered it to Solomon.

Chapter 10

THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

¹Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with difficult questions. ²She arrived in Jerusalem with a very large caravan—with camels bearing spices, gold in great abundance, and precious stones. And she came to Solomon and spoke to him all that was on her mind. ³And Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too difficult for the king to explain. ⁴When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon, the palace he had built, ⁵the food at his table, the seating of his servants, the service and attire of his attendants, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he presented at the house of the LORD, it took her breath away. ⁶She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your words and wisdom is true. ⁷But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told to me. Your wisdom and prosperity have far exceeded the report I heard. ⁸How blessed are your men! How blessed are these servants of yours who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! ⁹Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel. Because of the LORD's eternal love for Israel, He has made you king to carry out justice and righteousness." ¹⁰Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, a great quantity of spices, and precious stones. Never again were spices in such abundance

brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. ¹¹(The fleet of Hiram that brought gold from Ophir also brought from Ophir a great cargo of almug wood and precious stones. ¹²The king made the almug wood into steps for the house of the LORD and for the king's palace, and into lyres and harps for the singers. Never before had such almug wood been brought in, nor has such been seen again to this day.) ¹³King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired—whatever she asked—besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty. Then she left and returned to her own country, along with her servants.

SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND SPLENDOR

¹⁴The weight of gold that came to Solomon each year was 666 talents, ¹⁵not including the revenue from the merchants, traders, and all the Arabian kings and governors of the land. ¹⁶King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. ¹⁷He also made three hundred small shields of hammered gold; three minas of gold went into each shield. And the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. ¹⁸Additionally, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁹The throne had six steps, and its back had a rounded top. There were armrests on both sides of the seat, with a lion standing beside each armrest. ²⁰Twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like this had ever been made for any kingdom. ²¹All King Solomon's drinking cups were gold, and all the utensils of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. There was no silver, because it was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. ²²For the king had the ships of Tarshish at sea with Hiram's fleet, and once every three years the ships of Tarshish would arrive bearing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks. ²³So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²⁴The whole world sought an audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom that God had put in his heart. ²⁵Year after year, each visitor would bring his tribute: articles of silver and gold, clothing, weapons, spices, horses, and mules. ²⁶Solomon accumulated 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem. ²⁷The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as abundant as sycamore in the foothills. ²⁸Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and Kue; the royal merchants purchased them from Kue. ²⁹A chariot could be imported from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty. Likewise, they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Aram.

Chapter 11

SOLOMON'S FOREIGN WIVES

¹King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh—women of Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Sidon, as well as Hittite women. ²These women were from the nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, “You must not intermarry with them, for surely they will turn your hearts after their gods.” Yet Solomon clung to these women in love. ³He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines—and his wives turned his heart away. ⁴For when Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and he was not wholeheartedly devoted to the LORD his God, as his father David had been. ⁵Solomon followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶So Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD; unlike his father David, he did not follow the LORD completely. ⁷At that time on a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁸He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

GOD'S ANGER AGAINST SOLOMON

⁹Now the LORD grew angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. ¹⁰Although He had warned Solomon explicitly not to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the LORD's command. ¹¹Then the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. ¹²Nevertheless, for the sake of your father David, I will not do it during your lifetime; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom away from him. I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.”

HADAD'S RETURN

¹⁴Then the LORD raised up against Solomon an adversary, Hadad the Edomite, from the royal line of Edom. ¹⁵Earlier, when David was in Edom, Joab the commander of the army had gone to bury the dead and had struck down every male in Edom. ¹⁶Joab and all Israel had stayed there six months, until he had killed every male in Edom. ¹⁷But Hadad, still just a young boy, had fled to Egypt, along with some Edomites who were servants of his father. ¹⁸Hadad and his men set out from Midian and went to Paran. They took men from Paran with them and went to Egypt, to

Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food. ¹⁹There Hadad found such great favor in the sight of Pharaoh that he gave to him in marriage the sister of Queen Tahpenes, his own wife. ²⁰And the sister of Tahpenes bore Hadad a son named Genubath. Tahpenes herself weaned him in Pharaoh's palace, and Genubath lived there among the sons of Pharaoh. ²¹When Hadad heard in Egypt that David had rested with his fathers and that Joab, the commander of the army, was dead, he said to Pharaoh, “Let me go, that I may return to my own country.” ²²But Pharaoh asked him, “What have you lacked here with me that you suddenly want to go back to your own country?” “Nothing,” Hadad replied, “but please let me go.”

REZON'S HOSTILITY

²³And God raised up against Solomon another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his master, Hadadezer king of Zobah, ²⁴and had gathered men to himself. When David killed the Zobaites, Rezon captained a band of raiders and went to Damascus, where they settled and gained control. ²⁵Rezon was Israel's enemy throughout the days of Solomon, adding to the trouble caused by Hadad. So Rezon ruled over Aram with hostility toward Israel.

JEROBOAM'S REBELLION

²⁶Now Jeroboam son of Nebat was an Ephraimite from Zeredah whose mother was a widow named Zeruah. Jeroboam was a servant of Solomon, but he rebelled against the king, ²⁷and this is the account of his rebellion against the king. Solomon had built the supporting terraces and repaired the gap in the wall of the city of his father David. ²⁸Now Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor. So when Solomon noticed that the young man was industrious, he put him in charge of the whole labor force of the house of Joseph. ²⁹During that time, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met Jeroboam on the road as he was going out of Jerusalem. Now Ahijah had wrapped himself in a new cloak, and the two of them were alone in the open field. ³⁰And Ahijah took hold of the new cloak he was wearing, tore it into twelve pieces, ³¹and said to Jeroboam, “Take ten pieces for yourself, for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and I will give you ten tribes. ³²But one tribe will remain for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel. ³³For they have forsaken Me to worship Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites. They have not walked in My ways, nor done what is right in

My eyes, nor kept My statutes and judgments, as Solomon's father David did. ³⁴Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of David My servant, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and statutes. ³⁵But I will take ten tribes of the kingdom from the hand of his son and give them to you. ³⁶I will give one tribe to his son, so that My servant David will always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put My Name. ³⁷But as for you, I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your heart desires, and you will be king over Israel. ³⁸If you listen to all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight in order to keep My statutes and commandments as My servant David did, then I will be with you. I will build you a lasting dynasty just as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you. ³⁹Because of this, I will humble David's descendants—but not forever.” ⁴⁰Solomon therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, where he remained until the death of Solomon.

THE DEATH OF SOLOMON

⁴¹As for the rest of the acts of Solomon—all that he did, as well as his wisdom—are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon? ⁴²Thus the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. ⁴³And Solomon rested with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David. And his son Rehoboam reigned in his place.

Chapter 12

REBELLION AGAINST REHOBAM

¹Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone there to make him king. ²When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard about this, he was still in Egypt where he had fled from King Solomon and had been living ever since. ³So they sent for Jeroboam, and he and the whole assembly of Israel came to Rehoboam and said, ⁴“Your father put a heavy yoke on us. But now you must lighten the burden of your father's service and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you.” ⁵Rehoboam answered, “Go away for three days and then return to me.” So the people departed. ⁶Then King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon during his lifetime. “How do you advise me to respond to these people?” he asked. ⁷They replied, “If you will be a servant to these people and serve them this day, and if you will respond by speaking kind words to them, they will be your servants forever.” ⁸But Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders; instead, he

consulted the young men who had grown up with him and served him. ⁹He asked them, “What message do you advise that we send back to these people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke your father put on us?’” ¹⁰The young men who had grown up with him replied, “This is how you should answer these people who said to you, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must make it lighter.’ This is what you should tell them: ‘My little finger is thicker than my father's waist! ¹¹Whereas my father burdened you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. Whereas my father scourged you with whips, I will scourge you with scorpions.’” ¹²After three days, Jeroboam and all the people returned to Rehoboam, since the king had said, “Come back to me on the third day.” ¹³And the king answered the people harshly. He rejected the advice of the elders ¹⁴and spoke to them as the young men had advised, saying, “Whereas my father made your yoke heavy, I will add to your yoke. Whereas my father scourged you with whips, I will scourge you with scorpions.” ¹⁵So the king did not listen to the people, and indeed this turn of events was from the LORD, to fulfill the word He had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat through Ahijah the Shilonite.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

¹⁶When all Israel saw that the king had refused to listen to them, they answered the king: “What portion do we have in David, and what inheritance in the son of Jesse? To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, O David!” So the Israelites went home, ¹⁷but Rehoboam still reigned over the Israelites living in the cities of Judah. ¹⁸Then King Rehoboam sent out Adoram, who was in charge of the forced labor, but all Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam mounted his chariot in haste and escaped to Jerusalem. ¹⁹So to this day Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David.

SHEMAIAH'S PROPHECY

²⁰When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they summoned him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. Only the tribe of Judah followed the house of David. ²¹And when Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he mobilized the whole house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin—180,000 chosen warriors—to fight against the house of Israel and restore the kingdom to Rehoboam son of Solomon. ²²But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God: ²³“Tell Rehoboam son of Solomon king of Judah, all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and the rest of the people ²⁴that this is what the LORD says: ‘You are not to go up and fight against your brothers, the Israelites. Each of you must return home, for this is My doing.’” So

they listened to the word of the LORD and turned back according to the word of the LORD.

JEROBOAM'S IDOLATRY

²⁵Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there. And from there he went out and built Penuel. ²⁶Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom might revert to the house of David. ²⁷If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, their hearts will return to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah; then they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah." ²⁸After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves and said to the people, "Going up to Jerusalem is too much for you. Here, O Israel, are your gods, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." ²⁹One calf he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. ³⁰And this thing became a sin; the people walked as far as Dan to worship before one of the calves. ³¹Jeroboam also built shrines on the high places and appointed from every class of people priests who were not Levites. ³²And Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar; he made this offering in Bethel to sacrifice to the calves he had set up, and he installed priests in Bethel for the high places he had set up. ³³On the fifteenth day of the eighth month, a month of his own choosing, Jeroboam offered sacrifices on the altar he had set up in Bethel. So he ordained a feast for the Israelites, offered sacrifices on the altar, and burned incense.

Chapter 13

JEROBOAM'S HAND WITHERS

¹Suddenly, as Jeroboam was standing beside the altar to burn incense, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD. ²And he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, "O altar, O altar, this is what the LORD says: 'A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David, and upon you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense upon you, and human bones will be burned upon you.'" ³That day the man of God gave a sign, saying, "The LORD has spoken this sign: 'Surely the altar will be split apart, and the ashes upon it will be poured out.'" ⁴Now when King Jeroboam, who was at the altar in Bethel, heard the word that the man of God had cried out against it, he stretched out his hand and said, "Seize him!" But the hand he stretched out toward him withered, so that he could not pull it back. ⁵And the altar was split apart, and the ashes poured out, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word

of the LORD. ⁶Then the king responded to the man of God, "Intercede with the LORD your God and pray for me that my hand may be restored." So the man of God interceded with the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him as it was before. ⁷Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." ⁸But the man of God replied, "If you were to give me half your possessions, I still would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place. ⁹For this is what I was commanded by the word of the LORD: 'You must not eat bread or drink water or return by the way you came.'" ¹⁰So the man of God went another way and did not return by the way he had come to Bethel.

THE OLD PROPHET AND THE MAN OF GOD

¹¹Now a certain old prophet was living in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the deeds that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. They also told their father the words that the man had spoken to the king. ¹²"Which way did he go?" their father asked. And his sons showed him the way taken by the man of God, who had come from Judah. ¹³So the prophet said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." Then they saddled the donkey for him, and he mounted it ¹⁴and went after the man of God. He found him sitting under an oak tree and asked, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" "I am," he replied. ¹⁵So the prophet said to the man of God, "Come home with me and eat some bread." ¹⁶But the man replied, "I cannot go home with you, and I will not eat bread or drink water with you in this place. ¹⁷For I have been told by the word of the LORD: 'You must not eat bread or drink water there or return by the way you came.'" ¹⁸Then the prophet replied, "I too am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, so that he may eat bread and drink water.'" The old prophet was lying to him, ¹⁹but the man of God went back with him, ate bread in his house, and drank water. ²⁰While they were sitting at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back, ²¹and the prophet cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah, "This is what the LORD says: 'Because you have defied the word of the LORD and have not kept the commandment that the LORD your God gave you, ²²but you went back and ate bread and drank water in the place where He told you not to do so, your body shall never reach the tomb of your fathers.'" ²³And after the man of God had finished eating and drinking, the old prophet who had brought him back saddled the donkey for him. ²⁴As he went on his way, a lion met him on the road and killed him, and his body was left lying in the road, with the donkey and

the lion standing beside it. ²⁵And there were men passing by who saw the body lying in the road with the lion standing beside it, and they went and reported this in the city where the old prophet lived. ²⁶When the prophet who had brought him back from his journey heard this, he said, “It is the man of God who disobeyed the command of the LORD. Therefore the LORD has delivered him to the lion, and it has mauled him and killed him, according to the word that the LORD had spoken to him.” ²⁷Then the old prophet instructed his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” So they saddled it, ²⁸and he went and found the body lying in the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside it. The lion had not eaten the body or mauled the donkey. ²⁹So the old prophet lifted up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to his own city to mourn for him and bury him. ³⁰Then he laid the body in his own tomb, and they lamented over him, “Oh, my brother!” ³¹After he had buried him, the prophet said to his sons, “When I die, you must bury me in the tomb where the man of God is buried. Lay my bones beside his bones, ³²for the message that he cried out by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel and against all the shrines on the high places in the cities of Samaria will surely come to pass.” ³³Even after these events, Jeroboam did not repent of his evil ways, but again he appointed priests for the high places from every class of people. He ordained anyone who desired to be a priest of the high places. ³⁴And this was the sin of the house of Jeroboam that led to its extermination and destruction from the face of the earth.

Chapter 14

AHIJAH’S PROPHECY AGAINST JEROBOAM

¹At that time Abijah son of Jeroboam became ill, ²and Jeroboam said to his wife, “Now get up, disguise yourself so they will not recognize you as my wife, and go to Shiloh. For Ahijah the prophet is there; it was he who spoke about my kingship over this people. ³Take with you ten loaves of bread, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will become of the boy.” ⁴Jeroboam’s wife did as instructed; she arose and went to Shiloh and arrived at Ahijah’s house. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age. ⁵But the LORD had said to Ahijah, “Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to ask you about her son, for he is ill. You are to say such and such to her, because when she arrives, she will be disguised.” ⁶So when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet entering the door, he said, “Come in, wife of Jeroboam! Why are you disguised? For I have been sent to you with bad news. ⁷Go, tell Jeroboam that this is what the LORD, the God of Israel,

says: ‘I raised you up from among the people and appointed you ruler over My people Israel. ⁸I tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you. But you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and followed Me with all his heart, doing only what was right in My eyes. ⁹You have done more evil than all who came before you. You have proceeded to make for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke Me, and you have flung Me behind your back. ¹⁰Because of all this, behold, I am bringing disaster on the house of Jeroboam: I will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both slave and free, in Israel; I will burn up the house of Jeroboam as one burns up dung until it is gone! ¹¹Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city will be eaten by dogs, and anyone who dies in the field will be eaten by the birds of the air.’ For the LORD has spoken. ¹²As for you, get up and go home. When your feet enter the city, the child will die. ¹³All Israel will mourn for him and bury him. For this is the only one belonging to Jeroboam who will receive a proper burial, because only in him has the LORD, the God of Israel, found any good in the house of Jeroboam. ¹⁴Moreover, the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam. This is the day—yes, even today! ¹⁵For the LORD will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land that He gave their fathers, and He will scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their Asherah poles, provoking the LORD to anger. ¹⁶So He will give Israel over on account of the sins Jeroboam has committed and has caused Israel to commit.” ¹⁷Then Jeroboam’s wife got up and departed for Tirzah, and as soon as she stepped over the threshold of the house, the boy died. ¹⁸And they buried him, and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word that the LORD had spoken through His servant Ahijah the prophet.

NADAB SUCCEEDS JEROBOAM

¹⁹As for the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he waged war and how he reigned, they are indeed written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. ²⁰And the length of Jeroboam’s reign was twenty-two years, and he rested with his fathers, and his son Nadab reigned in his place.

REHOBOAM REIGNS IN JUDAH

²¹Meanwhile, Rehoboam son of Solomon reigned in Judah. He was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel in which to put His Name. His mother’s name was Naamah the Ammonite. ²²And Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and by the sins they committed they provoked Him to jealous anger

more than all their fathers had done. ²³They also built for themselves high places, sacred pillars, and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. ²⁴There were even male shrine prostitutes in the land. They imitated all the abominations of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites.

SHISHAK RAIDS JERUSALEM

²⁵In the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem. ²⁶He seized the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the royal palace. He took everything, including all the gold shields that Solomon had made. ²⁷Then King Rehoboam made bronze shields in their place and committed them to the care of the captains of the guard on duty at the entrance to the royal palace. ²⁸And whenever the king entered the house of the LORD, the guards would bear the shields, and later they would return them to the guardroom. ²⁹As for the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, along with all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ³⁰There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam throughout their days. ³¹And Rehoboam rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the City of David; his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. And his son Abijam reigned in his place.

Chapter 15

ABIJAM REIGNS IN JUDAH

¹In the eighteenth year of the reign of Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam became king of Judah, ²and he reigned in Jerusalem three years. His mother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. ³And Abijam walked in all the sins that his father before him had committed, and his heart was not as fully devoted to the LORD his God as the heart of David his forefather had been. ⁴Nevertheless, for the sake of David, the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem by raising up a son to succeed him and to make Jerusalem strong. ⁵For David had done what was right in the eyes of the LORD and had not turned aside from anything the LORD commanded all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. ⁶And there was war between the houses of Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of Abijam's life. ⁷As for the rest of the acts of Abijam, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. ⁸And Abijam rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David, and his son Asa reigned in his place.

ASA REIGNS IN JUDAH

⁹In the twentieth year of Jeroboam's reign over Israel, Asa became king of Judah, ¹⁰and he reigned in Jerusalem forty-one years. His grandmother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. ¹¹And Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done. ¹²He banished the male shrine prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. ¹³He also removed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother because she had made a detestable Asherah pole. Asa chopped down the pole and burned it in the Kidron Valley. ¹⁴The high places were not removed, but Asa's heart was fully devoted to the LORD all his days. ¹⁵And he brought into the house of the LORD the silver and gold and the articles that he and his father had dedicated.

WAR BETWEEN ASA AND BAASHA

¹⁶Now there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel throughout their days. ¹⁷Baasha king of Israel went to war against Judah and fortified Ramah to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa king of Judah. ¹⁸So Asa withdrew all the silver and gold that remained in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the royal palace. He entrusted it to his servants and sent them with this message to Ben-hadad son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, the king of Aram, who was ruling in Damascus: ¹⁹"Let there be a treaty between me and you as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you a gift of silver and gold. Now go and break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me." ²⁰And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, conquering Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and the whole land of Naphtali, including the region of Chinnereth. ²¹When Baasha learned of this, he stopped fortifying Ramah and withdrew to Tirzah. ²²Then King Asa summoned all the men of Judah, with no exceptions, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and the timbers Baasha had used for building. And with these materials King Asa built up Geba of Benjamin, as well as Mizpah.

JEHOSHAPHAT SUCCEEDS ASA

²³Now the rest of the acts of Asa, along with all his might, all his accomplishments, and the cities he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? In his old age, however, he became diseased in his feet. ²⁴And Asa rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of his father David, and his son Jehoshaphat reigned in his place.

NADAB REIGNS IN ISRAEL

²⁵In the second year of Asa's reign over Judah, Nadab son of Jeroboam became king of Israel, and he reigned two years. ²⁶And he did evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit. ²⁷Then Baasha son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against Nadab, and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon of the Philistines while Nadab and all Israel were besieging the city. ²⁸In the third year of Asa's reign over Judah, Baasha killed Nadab and reigned in his place. ²⁹As soon as Baasha became king, he struck down the entire household of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam anyone who breathed, but destroyed them all according to the word that the LORD had spoken through His servant Ahijah the Shilonite, ³⁰because of the sins Jeroboam had committed and had caused Israel to commit, and because he had provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger. ³¹As for the rest of the acts of Nadab, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ³²And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel throughout their days.

BAASHA REIGNS IN ISRAEL

³³In the third year of Asa's reign over Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah became king of all Israel, and he reigned in Tirzah twenty-four years. ³⁴And Baasha did evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit.

Chapter 16

JEHU'S PROPHECY AGAINST BAASHA

¹Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha, saying: ²"Even though I lifted you out of the dust and made you ruler over My people Israel, you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have caused My people Israel to sin and to provoke Me to anger by their sins. ³So now I will consume Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat: ⁴Anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the city will be eaten by dogs, and anyone who dies in the field will be eaten by the birds of the air." ⁵As for the rest of the acts of Baasha, along with his accomplishments and might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ⁶And Baasha rested with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and his son Elah reigned in his place. ⁷Moreover, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, because of all the evil he had done in the sight of the

LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of his hands and becoming like the house of Jeroboam, and also because Baasha had struck down the house of Jeroboam.

ELAH REIGNS IN ISRAEL

⁸In the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign over Judah, Elah son of Baasha became king of Israel, and he reigned in Tirzah two years. ⁹However, while Elah was in Tirzah getting drunk in the house of Arza the steward of his household there, Elah's servant Zimri, the commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. ¹⁰So in the twenty-seventh year of Asa's reign over Judah, Zimri went in, struck Elah down, and killed him. And Zimri reigned in his place. ¹¹As soon as Zimri began to reign and was seated on the throne, he struck down the entire household of Baasha. He did not leave a single male, whether a kinsman or friend. ¹²So Zimri destroyed the entire household of Baasha, according to the word that the LORD had spoken against Baasha through Jehu the prophet. ¹³This happened because of all the sins Baasha and his son Elah had committed and had caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their worthless idols. ¹⁴As for the rest of the acts of Elah, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

ZIMRI REIGNS IN ISRAEL

¹⁵In the twenty-seventh year of Asa's reign over Judah, Zimri reigned in Tirzah for seven days. Now the troops were encamped against Gibbethon of the Philistines, ¹⁶and the people in the camp heard that Zimri had conspired against the king and struck him down. So there in the camp that very day, all Israel proclaimed Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel. ¹⁷Then Omri and all the Israelites marched up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah. ¹⁸When Zimri saw that the city was captured, he entered the citadel of the royal palace and burned it down upon himself. So he died ¹⁹because of the sins he had committed, doing evil in the sight of the LORD and following the example of Jeroboam and the sin he had committed and had caused Israel to commit. ²⁰As for the rest of the acts of Zimri and the treason he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

OMRI REIGNS IN ISRAEL

²¹At that time the people of Israel were divided: Half of the people supported Tibni son of Ginath as king, and half supported Omri. ²²But the followers of Omri proved stronger than those of Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri became king. ²³In the thirty-first year of Asa's reign over Judah, Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned twelve

years, six of them in Tirzah. ²⁴He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver and built a city there, calling it Samaria after the name of Shemer, who had owned the hill. ²⁵But Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD and acted more wickedly than all who were before him. ²⁶For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and in his sins, which he caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their worthless idols. ²⁷As for the rest of the acts of Omri, along with his accomplishments and the might he exercised, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ²⁸And Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria, and his son Ahab reigned in his place.

AHAB REIGNS IN ISRAEL, MARRIES JEZEBEL

²⁹In the thirty-eighth year of Asa's reign over Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria twenty-two years. ³⁰However, Ahab son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. ³¹And as if it were not enough for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, he even married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and he then proceeded to serve and worship Baal. ³²First, Ahab set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he had built in Samaria. ³³Then he set up an Asherah pole. Thus Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel before him. ³⁴In Ahab's days, Hiel the Bethelite rebuilt Jericho. At the cost of Abiram his firstborn he laid its foundation, and at the cost of Segub his youngest he set up its gates, according to the word that the LORD had spoken through Joshua son of Nun.

Chapter 17

THE RAVENS FEED ELIJAH

¹Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was among the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there will be neither dew nor rain in these years except at my word!" ²Then a revelation from the LORD came to Elijah: ³"Leave here, turn eastward, and hide yourself by the Brook of Cherith, east of the Jordan. ⁴And you are to drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." ⁵So Elijah did what the LORD had told him, and he went and lived by the Brook of Cherith, east of the Jordan. ⁶The ravens would bring him bread and meat in the morning and evening, and he would drink from the brook. ⁷Some time later, however, the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land.

THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: ⁹"Get up and go to Zarephath of Sidon, and stay there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." ¹⁰So Elijah got up and went to Zarephath. When he arrived at the city gate, there was a widow gathering sticks. Elijah called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, so that I may drink." ¹¹And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a piece of bread." ¹²But she replied, "As surely as the LORD your God lives, I have no bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. Look, I am gathering a couple of sticks to take home and prepare a meal for myself and my son, so that we may eat it and die." ¹³"Do not be afraid," Elijah said to her. "Go and do as you have said. But first make me a small cake of bread from what you have, and bring it out to me. Afterward, make some for yourself and your son, ¹⁴for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be exhausted and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD sends rain upon the face of the earth.'" ¹⁵So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and there was food every day for Elijah and the woman and her household. ¹⁶The jar of flour was not exhausted and the jug of oil did not run dry, according to the word that the LORD had spoken through Elijah.

ELIJAH RAISES THE WIDOW'S SON

¹⁷Later, the son of the woman who owned the house became ill, and his sickness grew worse and worse, until no breath remained in him. ¹⁸"O man of God," said the woman to Elijah, "what have you done to me? Have you come to remind me of my iniquity and cause the death of my son?" ¹⁹But Elijah said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰Then he cried out to the LORD, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on this widow who has opened her home to me, by causing her son to die?" ²¹Then he stretched himself out over the child three times and cried out to the LORD, "O LORD my God, please let this boy's life return to him!" ²²And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah, and the child's life returned to him, and he lived. ²³Then Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. "Look, your son is alive," Elijah declared. ²⁴Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is truth."

Chapter 18

ELIJAH'S MESSAGE TO AHAB

¹After a long time, in the third year of the drought, the word of the LORD came to Elijah: "Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the face of the earth."

²So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. The famine was severe in Samaria, ³and Ahab summoned Obadiah, who was in charge of the palace. (Now Obadiah greatly feared the LORD, ⁴for when Jezebel had slaughtered the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty men per cave, providing them with food and water.) ⁵Then Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go throughout the land to every spring and every valley. Perhaps we will find grass to keep the horses and mules alive so that we will not have to destroy any livestock." ⁶So they divided the land to explore. Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went the other way by himself. ⁷Now as Obadiah went on his way, Elijah suddenly met him. When Obadiah recognized him, he fell facedown and said, "Is it you, my lord Elijah?" ⁸"It is I," he answered. "Go tell your master, 'Elijah is here!'" ⁹But Obadiah replied, "How have I sinned, that you are handing your servant over to Ahab to put me to death? ¹⁰As surely as the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my lord has not sent someone to search for you. When they said, 'He is not here,' he made that kingdom or nation swear that they had not found you. ¹¹And now you say, 'Go tell your master that Elijah is here!'" ¹²I do not know where the Spirit of the LORD may carry you off when I leave you. Then when I go and tell Ahab and he does not find you, he will kill me. But I, your servant, have feared the LORD from my youth. ¹³Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel slaughtered the prophets of the LORD? I hid a hundred prophets of the LORD, fifty men per cave, and I provided them with food and water. ¹⁴And now you say, 'Go tell your lord that Elijah is here!' He will kill me!" ¹⁵Then Elijah said, "As surely as the LORD of Hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will present myself to Ahab today."

ELIJAH ON MOUNT CARMEL

¹⁶So Obadiah went to inform Ahab, who went to meet Elijah. ¹⁷When Ahab saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" ¹⁸"I have not troubled Israel," Elijah replied, "but you and your father's house have, for you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals. ¹⁹Now summon all Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel, along with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel's table." ²⁰So Ahab summoned

all the Israelites and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. ²¹Then Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him. But if Baal is God, follow him." But the people did not answer a word. ²²Then Elijah said to the people, "I am the only remaining prophet of the LORD, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. ²³Get two bulls for us. Let the prophets of Baal choose one bull for themselves, cut it into pieces, and place it on the wood but not light the fire. And I will prepare the other bull and place it on the wood but not light the fire. ²⁴Then you may call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The God who answers by fire, He is God." And all the people answered, "What you say is good." ²⁵Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Since you are so numerous, choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first. Then call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire." ²⁶And they took the bull that was given them, prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, shouting, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no sound, and no one answered as they leaped around the altar they had made. ²⁷At noon Elijah began to taunt them, saying, "Shout louder, for he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or occupied, or on a journey. Perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened!" ²⁸So they shouted louder and cut themselves with knives and lances, as was their custom, until the blood gushed over them. ²⁹Midday passed, and they kept on raving until the time of the evening sacrifice. But there was no response; no one answered, no one paid attention. ³⁰Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people approached him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been torn down. ³¹And Elijah took twelve stones, one for each tribe of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come and said, "Israel shall be your name." ³²And with the stones, Elijah built an altar in the name of the LORD. Then he dug a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. ³³Next, he arranged the wood, cut up the bull, placed it on the wood, ³⁴and said, "Fill four waterpots and pour the water on the offering and on the wood." "Do it a second time," he said, and they did it a second time. "Do it a third time," he said, and they did it a third time. ³⁵So the water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

ELIJAH'S PRAYER

³⁶At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet approached the altar and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and have done all these things at Your command. ³⁷Answer me, O LORD!

Answer me, so that this people will know that You, the LORD, are God, and that You have turned their hearts back again.” ³⁸Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and it licked up the water in the trench. ³⁹When all the people saw this, they fell facedown and said, “The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!” ⁴⁰Then Elijah ordered them, “Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let a single one escape.” So they seized them, and Elijah brought them down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered them there.

THE LORD SENDS RAIN

⁴¹And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain.” ⁴²So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah climbed to the summit of Carmel, bent down on the ground, and put his face between his knees. ⁴³“Go and look toward the sea,” he said to his servant. So the servant went and looked, and he said, “There is nothing there.” Seven times Elijah said, “Go back.” ⁴⁴On the seventh time the servant reported, “There is a cloud as small as a man’s hand rising from the sea.” And Elijah replied, “Go and tell Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’” ⁴⁵Meanwhile, the sky grew dark with clouds and wind, and a heavy rain began to fall. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. ⁴⁶And the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah, and he tucked his cloak into his belt and ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

Chapter 19

ELIJAH FLEES FROM JEZEBEL

¹Now Ahab told Jezebel everything that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ²So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “May the gods deal with me, and ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I have not made your life like the lives of those you killed!” ³And Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴while he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness. He sat down under a broom tree and prayed that he might die. “I have had enough, LORD,” he said. “Take my life, for I am no better than my fathers.” ⁵Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.” ⁶And he looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again. ⁷A second time the angel of the LORD returned and touched him, saying, “Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you.” ⁸So he got up and ate and drank. And

strengthened by that food, he walked forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

THE LORD SPEAKS TO ELIJAH AT HOREB

⁹There Elijah entered a cave and spent the night. And the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁰“I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of Hosts,” he replied, “but the Israelites have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I am the only one left, and they are seeking my life as well.” ¹¹Then the LORD said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD. Behold, the LORD is about to pass by.” And a great and mighty wind tore into the mountains and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. ¹²After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a still, small voice. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁴“I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of Hosts,” he replied, “but the Israelites have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I am the only one left, and they are seeking my life as well.” ¹⁵Then the LORD said to him, “Go back by the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you arrive, you are to anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶You are also to anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel and Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel-meholah to succeed you as prophet. ¹⁷Then Jehu will put to death whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death whoever escapes the sword of Jehu. ¹⁸Nevertheless, I have reserved seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.”

THE CALL OF ELISHA

¹⁹So Elijah departed and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve teams of oxen, and he was with the twelfth team. Elijah passed by him and threw his cloak around him. ²⁰So Elisha left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and mother goodbye, and then I will follow you.” “Go on back,” Elijah replied, “for what have I done to you?” ²¹So Elisha turned back from him, took his pair of oxen, and slaughtered them. Using the oxen’s equipment for fuel, he cooked the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow and serve Elijah.

Chapter 20

BEN-HADAD ATTACKS SAMARIA

¹Now Ben-hadad king of Aram assembled his entire army. Accompanied by thirty-two kings with their horses and chariots, he marched up, besieged Samaria, and waged war against it. ²Then he sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel, ³saying, “This is what Ben-hadad says: ‘Your silver and gold are mine, and your best wives and children are mine!’” ⁴And the king of Israel replied, “Just as you say, my lord the king: I am yours, along with all that I have.” ⁵The messengers came back and said, “This is what Ben-hadad says: ‘I have sent to you to demand your silver, your gold, your wives, and your children. ⁶But about this time tomorrow I will send my servants to search your palace and the houses of your servants. They will seize and carry away all that is precious to you.’” ⁷Then the king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land and said, “Please take note and see that this man is looking for trouble, for when he demanded my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold, I did not deny him.” ⁸And the elders and the people all said, “Do not listen to him or consent to his terms.” ⁹So Ahab answered the messengers of Ben-hadad, “Tell my lord the king, ‘All that you demanded of your servant the first time I will do, but this thing I cannot do.’” So the messengers departed and relayed the message to Ben-hadad. ¹⁰Then Ben-hadad sent another message to Ahab: “May the gods deal with me, and ever so severely, if enough dust remains of Samaria for each of my men to have a handful.” ¹¹And the king of Israel replied, “Tell him: ‘The one putting on his armor should not boast like one taking it off.’” ¹²Ben-hadad received this message while he and the kings were drinking in their tents, and he said to his servants, “Take your positions.” So they stationed themselves against the city.

AHAB DEFEATS BEN-HADAD

¹³Meanwhile a prophet approached Ahab king of Israel and declared, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Do you see this entire great army? Behold, I will deliver it into your hand this very day, and you will know that I am the LORD.’” ¹⁴“By whom?” Ahab asked. And the prophet replied, “This is what the LORD says: ‘By the young officers of the district governors.’” “Who will start the battle?” asked Ahab. “You will,” answered the prophet. ¹⁵So Ahab assembled the young officers of the district governors, and there were 232 men. And after them, he assembled the rest of the Israelite troops, 7,000 in all. ¹⁶They marched out at noon while Ben-hadad and the 32 kings allied with him were in their tents getting drunk. ¹⁷And the young officers of the district gov-

ernors marched out first. Now Ben-hadad had sent out scouts, who reported to him, “Men are marching out of Samaria.” ¹⁸“If they have marched out in peace,” he said, “take them alive. Even if they have marched out for war, take them alive.” ¹⁹Meanwhile, these young officers of the district governors marched out of the city, with the army behind them, ²⁰and each one struck down his opponent. So the Arameans fled, with the Israelites in pursuit. But Ben-hadad king of Aram escaped on horseback with the cavalry. ²¹Then the king of Israel marched out and attacked the horses and chariots, inflicting a great slaughter on the Arameans. ²²Afterward, the prophet approached the king of Israel and said, “Go and strengthen your position, and take note what you must do, for in the spring the king of Aram will come up against you.” ²³Meanwhile, the servants of the king of Aram said to him, “Their gods are gods of the hills. That is why they prevailed over us. Instead, we should fight them on the plains; surely then we will prevail.” ²⁴So do this: Dismiss all the kings from their positions and replace them with other officers. ²⁵And you must raise an army like the one you have lost—horse for horse and chariot for chariot—so we can fight the Israelites on the plain, where we will surely prevail.” And the king approved their plan and acted accordingly.

ANOTHER WAR WITH BEN-HADAD

²⁶In the spring, Ben-hadad mobilized the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. ²⁷The Israelites also mobilized, gathered supplies, and marched out to meet them. The Israelites camped before them like two small flocks of goats, while the Arameans covered the countryside. ²⁸Then the man of God approached the king of Israel and said, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Because the Arameans have said that the LORD is a god of the hills and not of the valleys, I will deliver all this great army into your hand. Then you will know that I am the LORD.’” ²⁹For seven days the armies camped opposite each other, and on the seventh day the battle ensued, and the Israelites struck down the Arameans—a hundred thousand foot soldiers in one day. ³⁰The rest of them fled into the city of Aphek, where the wall fell on twenty-seven thousand of the remaining men. Ben-hadad also fled to the city and hid in an inner room.

AHAB SPARES BEN-HADAD

³¹Then the servants of Ben-hadad said to him, “Look now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful. Let us go out to the king of Israel with sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads. Perhaps he will spare your life.” ³²So with sackcloth around their waists and ropes around their heads, they went to the king

of Israel and said, “Your servant Ben-hadad says, ‘Please spare my life.’” And the king answered, “Is he still alive? He is my brother.” ³³Now the men were looking for a sign of hope, and they quickly grasped at this word and replied, “Yes, your brother Ben-hadad.” “Go and get him!” said the king. Then Ben-hadad came out, and Ahab had him come up into his chariot. ³⁴Ben-hadad said to him, “I will restore the cities my father took from your father; you may set up your own marketplaces in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria.” “By this treaty I release you,” Ahab replied. So he made a treaty with him and sent him away.

A PROPHET REPROVES AHAB

³⁵Meanwhile, by the word of the LORD, one of the sons of the prophets said to his companion, “Strike me, please!” But the man refused to strike him. ³⁶Then the prophet said to him, “Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, as soon as you depart from me a lion will kill you.” And when he left, a lion found him and killed him. ³⁷Then the prophet found another man and said, “Strike me, please!” So the man struck him and wounded him, ³⁸and the prophet went and waited on the road for the king, disguising himself with a bandage over his eyes. ³⁹As the king passed by, he cried out to the king: “Your servant had marched out into the middle of the battle, when suddenly a man came over with a captive and told me, ‘Guard this man! If he goes missing for any reason, your life will be exchanged for his life, or you will weigh out a talent of silver.’” ⁴⁰But while your servant was busy here and there, the man disappeared.” And the king of Israel said to him, “So shall your judgment be; you have pronounced it on yourself.” ⁴¹Then the prophet quickly removed the bandage from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. ⁴²And the prophet said to the king, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Because you have let slip from your hand the man I had devoted to destruction, your life will be exchanged for his life, and your people for his people.’” ⁴³Sullen and angry, the king of Israel went home to Samaria.

Chapter 21

NABOTH’S VINEYARD

¹Some time after these events, Naboth the Jezreelite owned a vineyard in Jezreel next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. ²So Ahab said to Naboth, “Give me your vineyard to use as a vegetable garden, since it is next to my palace. I will give you a better vineyard in its place—or if you prefer, I will give you its value in silver.” ³But Naboth replied, “The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my

fathers.” ⁴So Ahab went to his palace, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had told him, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” He lay down on his bed, turned his face away, and refused to eat. ⁵Soon his wife Jezebel came in and asked, “Why are you so sullen that you refuse to eat?” ⁶Ahab answered, “Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and told him, ‘Give me your vineyard for silver, or if you wish, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ And he replied, ‘I will not give you my vineyard!’” ⁷But his wife Jezebel said to him, “Do you not reign over Israel? Get up, eat some food, and be cheerful, for I will get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

JEZEHEL’S PLOT

⁸Then Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab’s name, sealed them with his seal, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived with Naboth in his city. ⁹In the letters she wrote: “Proclaim a fast and give Naboth a seat of honor among the people. ¹⁰But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them testify, ‘You have cursed both God and the king!’ Then take him out and stone him to death.” ¹¹So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth’s city did as Jezebel had instructed in the letters she had written to them. ¹²They proclaimed a fast and gave Naboth a seat of honor among the people. ¹³And the two scoundrels came in and sat opposite Naboth, and these men testified against him before the people, saying, “Naboth has cursed both God and the king!” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. ¹⁴Then they sent word to Jezebel: “Naboth has been stoned to death.” ¹⁵When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, who refused to give it to you for silver. For Naboth is no longer alive, but dead.” ¹⁶And when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

ELIJAH DENOUNCES AHAB AND JEZEHEL

¹⁷Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ¹⁸“Get up and go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria. See, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession of it. ¹⁹Tell him that this is what the LORD says: ‘Have you not murdered a man and seized his land?’ Then tell him that this is also what the LORD says: ‘In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, there also the dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’” ²⁰When Elijah arrived, Ahab said to him, “So you have found me out, my enemy.” He replied, “I have found you out because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD. ²¹This is what the LORD says: ‘I will bring calamity on you and consume your descendants; I

will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both slave and free. ²²I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked My anger and caused Israel to sin.’ ²³And the LORD also speaks concerning Jezebel: ‘The dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.’ ²⁴Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city will be eaten by dogs, and anyone who dies in the field will be eaten by the birds of the air.”

AHAB’S REPENTANCE

²⁵(Surely there was never one like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, incited by his wife Jezebel. ²⁶He committed the most detestable acts by going after idols, just like the Amorites whom the LORD had driven out before the Israelites.) ²⁷When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and fasted. He lay down in sackcloth and walked around meekly. ²⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: ²⁹“Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity during his days, but I will bring it upon his house in the days of his son.”

Chapter 22

AHAB AND THE FALSE PROPHETS

¹Then three years passed without war between Aram and Israel. ²However, in the third year, Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to visit the king of Israel, ³who said to his servants, “Do you not know that Ramoth-gilead is ours, but we have failed to take it from the hand of the king of Aram?” ⁴So he asked Jehoshaphat, “Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth-gilead?” Jehoshaphat answered the king of Israel, “I am as you are, my people are your people, and my horses are your horses.” ⁵But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, “Please inquire first for the word of the LORD.” ⁶So the king of Israel assembled the prophets, about four hundred men, and asked them, “Should I go to war against Ramoth-gilead, or should I refrain?” “Go up,” they replied, “and the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king.” ⁷But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there not still a prophet of the LORD here of whom we can inquire?” ⁸The king of Israel answered, “There is still one man through whom we can inquire of the LORD, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good for me, but only bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.” “The king should not say that!” Jehoshaphat replied. ⁹So the king of Israel called one of his officials and said, “Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once.” ¹⁰Dressed in royal attire, the king of

Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets prophesying before them. ¹¹Now Zedekiah son of Chenaanah had made for himself iron horns and declared, “This is what the LORD says: ‘With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are finished off.’” ¹²And all the prophets were prophesying the same, saying, “Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph, for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king.”

MICAIAH PROPHECIES AGAINST AHAB

¹³Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah instructed him, “Behold now, with one accord the words of the prophets are favorable to the king. So please let your words be like theirs, and speak favorably.” ¹⁴But Micaiah said, “As surely as the LORD lives, I will speak whatever the LORD tells me.” ¹⁵When Micaiah arrived, the king asked him, “Micaiah, should we go to war against Ramoth-gilead, or should we refrain?” “Go up and triumph,” Micaiah replied, “for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king.” ¹⁶But the king said to him, “How many times must I make you swear not to tell me anything but the truth in the name of the LORD?” ¹⁷So Micaiah declared: “I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said, ‘These people have no master; let each one return home in peace.’” ¹⁸Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he never prophesies good for me, but only bad?” ¹⁹Micaiah continued, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left. ²⁰And the LORD said, ‘Who will entice Ahab to march up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one suggested this, and another that. ²¹Then a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD, and said, ‘I will entice him.’ ‘By what means?’ asked the LORD. ²²And he replied, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets.’ ‘You will surely entice him and prevail,’ said the LORD. ‘Go and do it.’ ²³So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has pronounced disaster against you.” ²⁴Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah went up, struck Micaiah in the face, and demanded, “Which way did the Spirit of the LORD go when He departed from me to speak with you?” ²⁵Micaiah replied, “You will soon see, on that day when you go and hide in an inner room.” ²⁶And the king of Israel declared, “Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son, ²⁷and tell them that this is what the king says: ‘Put this man in prison and feed him only bread and water until I return safely.’” ²⁸But Micaiah replied, “If you ever return

safely, the LORD has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Take heed, all you people!”

AHAB’S DEFEAT AND DEATH

²⁹So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. ³⁰And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your royal robes.” So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. ³¹Now the king of Aram had ordered his thirty-two chariot commanders, “Do not fight with anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel.” ³²When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “Surely this is the king of Israel!” So they turned to fight against him, but Jehoshaphat cried out. ³³And when the chariot commanders saw that he was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him. ³⁴However, a certain man drew his bow without taking special aim, and he struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. So the king said to his charioteer, “Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am badly wounded!” ³⁵The battle raged throughout that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans. And the blood from his wound ran out onto the floor of the chariot, and that evening he died. ³⁶As the sun was setting, the cry rang out in the army: “Every man to his own city, and every man to his own land!” ³⁷So the king died and was brought to Samaria, where they buried him. ³⁸And the chariot was washed at the pool of Samaria where the prostitutes bathed, and the dogs licked up Ahab’s blood, according to the word that the LORD had spoken. ³⁹As for the rest of the acts of Ahab, along with all his accomplishments and the ivory palace and all the cities he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ⁴⁰And Ahab rested with his fathers, and his son Ahaziah reigned in his place.

JEHOSHAPHAT REIGNS IN JUDAH

⁴¹In the fourth year of Ahab’s reign over Israel, Jehoshaphat son of Asa became king of Judah. ⁴²Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother’s name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi. ⁴³And Jehoshaphat walked in all the ways of his father Asa; he did not turn away from them, but did what was right in the eyes of the LORD. The high places, however, were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. ⁴⁴Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel. ⁴⁵As for the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, along with the might he exercised and how he waged war, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ⁴⁶He banished from the land the male shrine prostitutes who remained from the days of his father Asa. ⁴⁷And there was no king in Edom; a deputy served as king. ⁴⁸Jehoshaphat built ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they never set sail, because they were wrecked at Ezion-geber. ⁴⁹At that time Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “Let my servants sail with your servants,” but Jehoshaphat refused. ⁵⁰And Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of his father David. And his son Jehoram reigned in his place.

AHAZIAH REIGNS IN ISRAEL

⁵¹In the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat’s reign over Judah, Ahaziah son of Ahab became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria two years. ⁵²And he did evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the ways of his father and mother and of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. ⁵³Ahaziah served and worshiped Baal, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger, just as his father had done.