

2 Kings

Elijah Confronts the King and His Commanders

1:1 After Ahab died, Moab rebelled against Israel.¹ **1:2** Ahaziah fell through a window lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria² and was injured. He sent messengers with these orders,³ “Go, ask⁴ Baal Zebub,⁵ the god of Ekron, if I will survive this injury.”

1:3 But the LORD’s angelic messenger told Elijah the Tishbite, “Get up, go to meet the messengers from the king of Samaria. Say this to them: ‘You must think there is no God in Israel! That explains why you are on your way to seek an oracle from Baal Zebub the god of Ekron.’” **1:4** Therefore this is what the LORD says, “You will not leave the bed you lie on, for you will certainly die!”⁶ So Elijah went on his way.

1:5 When the messengers returned to the king,⁷ he asked them, “Why have you returned?” **1:6** They replied,⁸ “A man came up to meet us. He told us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you and tell him, ‘This is what the LORD says: “You must think there is no God in Israel! That explains why you are sending for an oracle from Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron.’” Therefore you will not leave the bed you lie on, for you will certainly die.’”⁹ **1:7** The king¹⁰ asked them, “Describe the appearance¹¹

of this man who came up to meet you and told you these things.” **1:8** They replied,¹² “He was a hairy man¹³ and had a leather belt¹⁴ tied around his waist.” The king¹⁵ said, “He is Elijah the Tishbite.”

1:9 The king¹⁶ sent a captain and his fifty soldiers¹⁷ to retrieve Elijah.¹⁸ The captain¹⁹ went up to him, while he was sitting on the top of a hill.²⁰ He told him, “Prophet,²¹ the king says, ‘Come down!’” **1:10** Elijah replied to the captain,²² “If I am indeed a prophet, may fire come down from the sky and consume you and your fifty soldiers!” Fire then came down²³ from the sky and consumed him and his fifty soldiers.

1:11 The king²⁴ sent another captain and his fifty soldiers to retrieve Elijah. He went up and told him,²⁵ “Prophet, this is what the king says, ‘Come down at once!’”²⁶ **1:12** Elijah replied to them,²⁷ “If I am indeed a prophet, may fire come down from the sky and consume you and your fifty soldiers!” Fire from God²⁸ came down from

¹² **tn** *Heb* “said to him.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “an owner of hair.” This idiomatic expression indicates that Elijah was very hairy. For other examples where the idiom “owner of” is used to describe a characteristic of someone, see *HALOT* 143 s.v. בָּנֵל. For example, an “owner of dreams” is one who frequently has dreams (Gen 37:19) and an “owner of anger” is a hot-tempered individual (Prov 22:24).

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “belt of skin” (i.e., one made from animal hide).

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

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “officer of fifty and his fifty.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “to him.”

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

²⁰ **sn** The prophet Elijah’s position on the top of the hill symbolizes his superiority to the king and his messengers.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “man of God” (also in vv. 10, 11, 12, 13).

²² **tn** *Heb* “answered and said to the officer of fifty.”

²³ **tn** Wordplay contributes to the irony here. The king tells Elijah to “come down” (Hebrew יָרַד, *yarad*), but Elijah calls fire down (יָרַד) on the arrogant king’s officer.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁵ **tc** The MT reads, “he answered and said to him.” The verb “he answered” (וַיַּעַן, *vayya’an*) is probably a corruption of “he went up” (וַיַּעַל, *vayya’al*). See v. 9.

²⁶ **sn** In this second panel of the three-paneled narrative, the king and his captain are more arrogant than before. The captain uses a more official sounding introduction (“this is what the king says”) and the king adds “at once” to the command.

²⁷ **tc** Two medieval Hebrew MSS, the LXX, and the Syriac Peshitta have the singular “to him.”

²⁸ **tn** Or “intense fire.” The divine name may be used idiomatically to emphasize the intensity of the fire. Whether one translates אֱלֹהִים (*’elohim*) here as a proper name or idiomatically, this addition to the narrative (the name is omitted in the first panel, v. 10b) emphasizes the severity of the judgment and is appropriate given the more intense command delivered by the king to the prophet in this panel.

¹ **sn** This statement may fit better with the final paragraph of 1 Kgs 22.

² **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

³ **tn** *Heb* “and he sent messengers and said to them.”

⁴ **tn** That is, “seek an oracle from.”

⁵ **sn** Apparently *Baal Zebub* refers to a local manifestation of the god Baal at the Philistine city of Ekron. The name appears to mean “Lord of the Flies,” but it may be a deliberate scribal corruption of Baal Zebul, “Baal, the Prince,” a title known from the Ugaritic texts. For further discussion and bibliography, see *HALOT* 261 s.v. זְבוּב בָּגֵל and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 25.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “Is it because there is no God in Israel [that] you are going to inquire of Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron?” The translation seeks to bring out the sarcastic tone of the rhetorical question.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “to him.”

⁸ **tn** The narrative is elliptical and telescoped here. The account of Elijah encountering the messengers and delivering the Lord’s message is omitted; we only here of it as the messengers report what happened to the king.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “said to him.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “Is it because there is no God in Israel [that] you are sending to inquire of Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron?” The translation seeks to bring out the sarcastic tone of the rhetorical question. In v. 3 the messengers are addressed (in the phrase “you are on your way” the second person plural pronoun is used in Hebrew), but here the king is addressed (in the phrase “you are sending” the second person singular pronoun is used).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “What was the manner...?”

the sky and consumed him and his fifty soldiers.

1:13 The king¹ sent a third captain and his fifty soldiers. This third captain went up and fell² on his knees before Elijah. He begged for mercy, “Prophet, please have respect for my life and for the lives of these fifty servants of yours. **1:14** Indeed,³ fire came down from the sky and consumed the two captains who came before me, along with their men.⁴ So now, please have respect for my life.” **1:15** The LORD’s angelic messenger said to Elijah, “Go down with him. Don’t be afraid of him.” So he got up and went down⁵ with him to the king.

1:16 Elijah⁶ said to the king,⁷ “This is what the LORD says, ‘You sent messengers to seek an oracle from Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron. You must think there is no God in Israel from whom you can seek an oracle!⁸ Therefore you will not leave the bed you lie on, for you will certainly die.’”⁹

1:17 He died just as the LORD had prophesied through Elijah.¹⁰ In the second year of the reign of King Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat over Judah, Ahaziah’s brother Jehoram replaced him as king of Israel, because he had no son.¹¹ **1:18** The rest of the events of Ahaziah’s reign, including his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.¹²

Elijah Makes a Swift Departure

2:1 Just before¹³ the LORD took Elijah up to heaven in a windstorm, Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Gilgal. **2:2** Elijah told Elisha, “Stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Bethel.”¹⁴ But Elisha said, “As certainly as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. **2:3** Some members of the prophetic guild¹⁵ in Bethel came out to Elisha and said, “Do you know that today the LORD is going to take your master from you?”¹⁶ He answered, “Yes, I know. Be quiet.”

2:4 Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.”¹⁷ But he replied, “As certainly as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went to Jericho. **2:5** Some members of the prophetic guild in Jericho approached Elisha and said, “Do you know that today the LORD is going to take your master from you?” He answered, “Yes, I know. Be quiet.”

2:6 Elijah said to him, “Stay here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.” But he replied, “As certainly as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they traveled on together. **2:7** The fifty members of the prophetic guild went and stood opposite them at a distance, while Elijah and Elisha¹⁸ stood by the Jordan. **2:8** Elijah took his cloak, folded it up, and hit the water with it. The water divided, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

2:9 When they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, “What can I do for you,¹⁹ before I am taken away from you?” Elisha answered, “May I receive a double portion of the prophetic spirit that energizes you.”²⁰ **2:10** Elijah²¹ replied, “That’s a difficult request!²² If you see me taken from you, may it be so, but if you don’t, it will not happen.”

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

² **tn** *Heb* “went up and approached and kneeled.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “look.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “their fifty.”

⁵ **sn** In this third panel the verb “come down” (יָרַד, *yarad*) occurs again, this time describing Elijah’s descent from the hill at the Lord’s command. The moral of the story seems clear: Those who act as if they have authority over God and his servants just may pay for their arrogance with their lives; those who, like the third commander, humble themselves and show the proper respect for God’s authority and for his servants will be spared and find God quite cooperative.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Elijah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “him”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “Because you sent messengers to inquire of Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron, is there no God in Israel to inquire of his word?”

⁹ **sn** For the third time in this chapter we read the Lord’s sarcastic question to king and the accompanying announcement of judgment. The repetition emphasizes one of the chapter’s main themes. Israel’s leaders should seek guidance from their own God, not a pagan deity, for Israel’s sovereign God is the one who controls life and death.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “according to the word of the LORD which he spoke through Elijah.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “Jehoram replaced him as king...because he had no son.” Some ancient textual witnesses add “his brother,” which was likely added on the basis of the statement later in the verse that Ahaziah had no son.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “As for the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not recorded in the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?”

¹³ **tn** Or “when.”

¹⁴ **map** For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “the sons of the prophets.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “from your head.” The same expression occurs in v. 5.

¹⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-E3; Map10-A2; Map11-A1.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “the two of them.” The referents (Elijah and Elisha) have been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “Ask! What can I do for you...?”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “May a double portion of your spirit come to me.”

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

²² **tn** *Heb* “You have made difficult [your] request.”

2:11 As they were walking along and talking, suddenly a fiery chariot¹ pulled by fiery horses appeared.² They went between Elijah and Elisha,³ and Elijah went up to heaven in a windstorm. **2:12** While Elisha was watching, he was crying out, “My father, my father! The chariot and horse-men of Israel!”⁴ Then he could no longer see him. He grabbed his clothes and tore them in two. **2:13** He picked up Elijah’s cloak, which had fallen off him, and went back and stood on the shore of the Jordan. **2:14** He took the cloak that had fallen off Elijah,⁵ hit the water with it, and said, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” When he hit the water, it divided and Elisha crossed over.

2:15 When the members of the prophetic guild in Jericho,⁶ who were standing at a distance,⁷ saw him do this, they said, “The spirit that energized Elijah⁸ rests upon Elisha.” They went to meet him and bowed down to the ground before him. **2:16** They said to him, “Look, there are fifty capable men with your servants. Let them go and look for your master, for the wind sent from the LORD⁹ may have carried him away and dropped him on one of the hills or in one of the valleys.” But Elisha¹⁰ replied, “Don’t send them out.” **2:17** But they were so insistent, he became embarrassed. So he said, “Send them out.” They sent the fifty men out and they looked for three days, but could not find Elijah.¹¹ **2:18** When they came back, Elisha¹² was staying in Jericho. He said to them, “Didn’t I tell you, ‘Don’t go?’”

Elisha Demonstrates His Authority

2:19 The men of the city said to Elisha, “Look, the city has a good location, as our¹³ master can see. But the water is bad and the land doesn’t produce crops.”¹⁴ **2:20** Elisha¹⁵ said, “Get me a new jar and put some salt in it.” So they got it. **2:21** He went out to the spring and threw the salt in. Then he said, “This is what the LORD says, ‘I have purified¹⁶ this water. It will no longer cause death or fail to produce crops.’”¹⁷ **2:22** The water has been pure to this very day, just as Elisha prophesied.¹⁸

2:23 He went up from there to Bethel.¹⁹ As he was traveling up the road, some young boys²⁰ came out of the city and made fun of him, saying, “Go on up, baldy! Go on up, baldy!” **2:24** When he turned around and saw them, he called God’s judgment down on them.²¹ Two female bears came out of the woods and ripped forty-two of the boys to pieces. **2:25** From there he traveled to Mount Carmel and then back to Samaria.²²

Moab Fights with Israel

3:1 In the eighteenth year of King Jehoshaphat’s reign over Judah, Ahab’s son Jehoram became king over Israel in Samaria;²³ he ruled for twelve years. **3:2** He did evil in the sight of²⁴ the LORD, but not to the same degree as his father and mother. He did remove the sacred pillar of Baal that his father had made. **3:3** Yet he persisted in²⁵ the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat,

¹ **tn** Though the noun is singular here, it may be collective, in which case it could be translated “chariots.”

² **tn** *Heb* “look, a chariot of fire and horses of fire.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “and they made a division between the two of them.”

⁴ **sn** Elisha may be referring to the fiery chariot(s) and horses as the Lord’s spiritual army that fights on behalf of Israel (see 2 Kgs 6:15-17; 7:6). However, the juxtaposition with “my father” (clearly a reference to Elijah as Elisha’s mentor), and the parallel in 2 Kgs 13:14 (where the king addresses Elisha with these words), suggest that Elisha is referring to Elijah. In this case Elijah is viewed as a one man army, as it were. When the Lord spoke through him, his prophetic word was as powerful as an army of chariots and horses. See M. A. Beek, “The Meaning of the Expression ‘The Chariots and Horsemen of Israel’ (II Kings ii 12),” *The Witness of Tradition (OTS 17)*, 1-10.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “Elijah’s cloak, which had fallen off him.” The wording is changed slightly in the translation for the sake of variety of expression (see v. 13).

⁶ **map** For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-E3; Map10-A2; Map11-A1.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and the sons of the prophets who were in Jericho, [who were standing] opposite, saw him and said.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “the spirit of Elijah.”

⁹ **tn** Or “the spirit of the LORD.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “him”; the referent (Elijah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “my.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “miscarries” or “is barren.”

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

¹⁶ **tn** Or “healed.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “there will no longer be from there death and miscarriage [or, ‘barrenness’].”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.”

¹⁹ **map** For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

²⁰ **tn** The word נַעַר (*na’ar*), here translated “boy,” can refer to a broad age range, including infants as well as young men. But the qualifying term “young” (or “small”) suggests these youths were relatively young. The phrase in question (“young boy”) occurs elsewhere in 1 Sam 20:35; 1 Kgs 3:7 (used by Solomon in an hyperbolic manner); 11:17; 2 Kgs 5:14; and Isa 11:6.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “he cursed them in the name of the LORD.” A curse was a formal appeal to a higher authority (here the Lord) to vindicate one’s cause through judgment. As in chapter one, this account makes it clear that disrespect for the Lord’s designated spokesmen can be deadly, for it is ultimately rejection of the Lord’s authority.

²² **sn** The two brief episodes recorded in vv. 19-25 demonstrate Elisha’s authority and prove that he is the legitimate prophetic heir of Elijah. He has the capacity to bring life and blessing to those who recognize his authority, or death and judgment to those who reject him.

²³ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

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

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “in the eyes of.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “held tight,” or “clung to.”

who encouraged Israel to sin; he did not turn from them.¹

3:4 Now King Mesha of Moab was a sheep breeder.² He would send as tribute³ to the king of Israel 100,000 male lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. **3:5** When Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. **3:6** At that time King Jehoram left Samaria and assembled all Israel for war. **3:7** He sent⁴ this message to King Jehoshaphat of Judah: “The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you fight with me against Moab?” Jehoshaphat⁵ replied, “I will join you in the campaign; my army and horses are at your disposal.”⁶ **3:8** He then asked, “Which invasion route are we going to take?”⁷ Jehoram⁸ answered, “By the road through the Desert of Edom.” **3:9** So the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom⁹ set out together. They wandered around on the road for seven days and finally ran out of water for the men and animals they had with them. **3:10** The king of Israel said, “Oh no!¹⁰ Certainly the LORD has summoned these three kings so that he can hand them over to the king of Moab!” **3:11** Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no prophet of the LORD here that we might seek the LORD’s direction?”¹¹ One of the servants of the king of Israel answered, “Elisha son of Shapat is here; he used to be Elijah’s servant.”¹² **3:12** Jehoshaphat said, “The LORD speaks through him.”¹³ So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to visit him.

3:13 Elisha said to the king of Israel, “Why are you here?¹⁴ Go to your father’s prophets or your mother’s prophets!” The king of Israel replied to him, “No, for the LORD is the one who summoned these three kings so that he can hand them over to Moab.” **3:14** Elisha said, “As cer-

tainly as the LORD who rules over all¹⁵ lives (whom I serve),¹⁶ if I did not respect King Jehoshaphat of Judah,¹⁷ I would not pay attention to you or acknowledge you.¹⁸ **3:15** But now, get me a musician.”¹⁹ When the musician played, the LORD energized him,²⁰ **3:16** and he said, “This is what the LORD says, ‘Make many cisterns in this valley,’²¹ **3:17** for this is what the LORD says, ‘You will not feel²² any wind or see any rain, but this valley will be full of water and you and your cattle and animals will drink.’ **3:18** This is an easy task for the LORD;²³ he will also hand Moab over to you. **3:19** You will defeat every fortified city and every important²⁴ city. You must chop down²⁵ every productive²⁶ tree, stop up all the springs, and cover all the cultivated land with stones.”²⁷

3:20 Sure enough, the next morning, at the time of the morning sacrifice, water came flowing down from Edom and filled the land.²⁸ **3:21** Now all Moab had heard that the kings were attacking,²⁹ so everyone old enough to fight was mustered and placed at the border.³⁰ **3:22** When they got up early the next morning, the sun was shining on the water. To the Moabites, who were some distance away, the water looked red like blood. **3:23** The Moabites³¹ said, “It’s blood! The kings are totally destroyed!³² They have struck

¹⁵ tn Traditionally “the LORD of hosts.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “before whom I stand.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “if I did not lift up the face of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “I would not look at you or see you.”

¹⁹ tn The term used refers to one who plays a stringed instrument, perhaps a harp.

²⁰ tn Heb “the hand of the LORD came on him.” This may refer to what typically happened, “[for] when a musician played, the hand of the LORD would come upon him.”

²¹ tn Heb “making this valley cisterns, cisterns.” The Hebrew noun צַיִת (ṣayit) means “cistern” in Jer 14:3 (cf. Jer 39:10). The repetition of the noun is for emphasis. See GKC 396 §123.e. The verb (“making”) is an infinitive absolute, which has to be interpreted in light of the context. The translation above takes it in an imperatival sense. The command need not be understood as literal, but as hyperbolic. Telling them to build cisterns is a dramatic way of leading into the announcement that he would miraculously provide water in the desert. Some prefer to translate the infinitive as an imperfect with the LORD as the understood subject, “I will turn this valley [into] many pools.”

²² tn Heb “see.”

²³ tn Heb “and this is easy in the eyes of the LORD.”

²⁴ tn Heb “choice” or “select.”

²⁵ tn Elisha places the object first and uses an imperfect verb form. The stylistic shift may signal that he is now instructing them what to do, rather than merely predicting what would happen.

²⁶ tn Heb “good.”

²⁷ tn Heb “and ruin every good portion with stones.”

²⁸ tn Heb “and in the morning, when the offering is offered up, look, water was coming from the way of Edom, and the land was filled with water.”

²⁹ tn Heb “had come up to fight them.”

³⁰ tn Heb “and they mustered all who tied on a belt and up-wards, and they stood at the border.”

³¹ tn Heb “they”; the referent (the Moabites) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³² tn The translation assumes the verb is כָּרַב (kharav, “to be desolate”). The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb form for emphasis. (For another example of the Hophal infini-

¹ tc The Hebrew text has the singular, “it.” Some ancient witnesses read the plural, which seems preferable since the antecedent (“sins”) is plural. Another option is to emend the plural “sins” to a singular. One ancient Greek witness has the singular “sin.”

² tn For a discussion of the meaning of term (נֹקֵד, *noqed*), see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 43.

³ tn The vav + perfect here indicates customary action contemporary with the situation described in the preceding main clause. See *IBHS* 533-34 §32.2.3e.

⁴ tn Heb “went and sent.”

⁵ tn Heb “he”; the referent (Jehoshaphat) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁶ tn Heb “I will go up – like me, like you; like my people, like your people; like my horses; like your horses.”

⁷ tn Heb “Where is the road we will go up?”

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

⁹ tn Heb “the king of Israel and the king of Judah and the king of Edom.”

¹⁰ tn Or “ah.”

¹¹ tn Heb “that we might inquire of the LORD through him?”

¹² tn Heb “who poured water on the hands of Elijah.” This refers to one of the typical tasks of a servant.

¹³ tn Heb “the word of the LORD is with him.”

¹⁴ tn Or “What do we have in common?” The text reads literally, “What to me and to you?”

one another down! Now, Moab, seize the plunder!” 3:24 When they approached the Israelite camp, the Israelites rose up and struck down the Moabites, who then ran from them. The Israelites¹ thoroughly defeated² Moab. 3:25 They tore down the cities and each man threw a stone into every cultivated field until they were covered.³ They stopped up every spring and chopped down every productive tree.

Only Kir Hareseth was left intact,⁴ but the slingers surrounded it and attacked it. 3:26 When the king of Moab realized he was losing the battle,⁵ he and 700 swordsmen tried to break through and attack⁶ the king of Edom, but they failed. 3:27 So he took his firstborn son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him up as a burnt sacrifice on the wall. There was an outburst of divine anger against Israel,⁷ so they broke off the attack⁸ and returned to their homeland.

Elisha Helps a Widow and Her Sons

4:1 Now a wife of one of the prophets⁹ appealed¹⁰ to Elisha for help, saying, “Your servant, my husband is dead. You know that your servant was a loyal follower of the LORD.¹¹ Now

tive with a Niphal finite verb, see Lev 19:20. Cf. also *IBHS* 582 §35.2.1c.) Some prefer to derive the verb from a proposed homonym meaning “at HALOT 349 s.v. ורר and BDB 352 s.v. וררָה.”

¹ *tn* Heb “they.”

² *tc* The consonantal text (*Kethib*) suggests, “and they went, striking down,” but the marginal reading (*Qere*) is “they struck down, striking down.” For a discussion of the textual problem, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 46.

³ *tn* Heb “and [on] every good portion they were throwing each man his stone and they filled it.” The *vav* + perfect (“and they filled”) here indicates customary action contemporary with the situation described in the preceding main clause (where a customary imperfect is used, “they were throwing”). See the note at 3:4.

⁴ *tn* Heb “until he had allowed its stones to remain in Kir Hareseth.”

⁵ *tn* Heb “and the king of Moab saw that the battle was too strong for him.”

⁶ *tn* Heb “he took with him seven hundred men, who drew the sword, to break through against.”

⁷ *tn* Heb “there was great anger against Israel.”

sn The meaning of this statement is uncertain, for the subject of the anger is not indicated. Except for two relatively late texts, the noun *qetsef* (qetsef) refers to an outburst of divine anger. But it seems unlikely the Lord would be angry with Israel, for he placed his stamp of approval on the campaign (vv. 16-19). D. N. Freedman suggests the narrator, who obviously has a bias against the Omride dynasty, included this observation to show that the Lord would not allow the Israelite king to “have an undiluted victory” (as quoted in M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* [AB], 52, n. 8). Some suggest that the original source identified Chemosh the Moabite god as the subject and that his name was later suppressed by a conscientious scribe, but this proposal raises more questions than it answers. For a discussion of various views, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 47-48, 51-52.

⁸ *tn* Heb “they departed from him.”

⁹ *tn* Heb “a wife from among the wives of the sons of the prophets.”

¹⁰ *tn* Or “cried out.”

¹¹ *tn* Heb “your servant feared the LORD.” “Fear” refers here to obedience and allegiance, the products of healthy respect for the Lord’s authority.

the creditor is coming to take away my two boys to be his servants.” 4:2 Elisha said to her, “What can I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?” She answered, “Your servant has nothing in the house except a small jar of olive oil.” 4:3 He said, “Go and ask all your neighbors for empty containers.¹² Get as many as you can.¹³ 4:4 Go and close the door behind you and your sons. Pour the olive oil into all the containers;¹⁴ set aside each one when you have filled it.” 4:5 So she left him and closed the door behind her and her sons. As they were bringing the containers to her, she was pouring the olive oil. 4:6 When the containers were full, she said to one of her sons,¹⁵ “Bring me another container.” But he answered her, “There are no more.” Then the olive oil stopped flowing. 4:7 She went and told the prophet.¹⁶ He said, “Go, sell the olive oil. Repay your creditor, and then you and your sons can live off the rest of the profit.”

Elisha Gives Life to a Boy

4:8 One day Elisha traveled to Shunem, where a prominent¹⁷ woman lived. She insisted that he stop for a meal.¹⁸ So whenever he was passing through, he would stop in there for a meal.¹⁹ 4:9 She said to her husband, “Look, I’m sure²⁰ that the man who regularly passes through here is a very special prophet.²¹ 4:10 Let’s make a small private upper room²² and furnish it with²³ a bed, table, chair, and lamp. When he visits us, he can stay there.”

4:11 One day Elisha²⁴ came for a visit; he went²⁵ into the upper room and rested.²⁶ 4:12 He told his servant Gehazi, “Ask the Shunammite woman to come here.”²⁷ So he did so and she came to him.²⁸ 4:13 Elisha said to Gehazi,²⁹ “Tell her, ‘Look, you have treated us with such great

¹² *tn* Heb “Go, ask for containers from outside, from all your neighbors, empty containers.”

¹³ *tn* Heb “Do not borrow just a few.”

¹⁴ *tn* Heb “all these vessels.”

¹⁵ *tn* Heb “to her son.”

¹⁶ *tn* Heb “man of God” (also in vv. 16, 22, 25, 27 [twice]).

¹⁷ *tn* Heb “great,” perhaps “wealthy.”

¹⁸ *tn* Or “she urged him to eat some food.”

¹⁹ *tn* Or “he would turn aside there to eat some food.”

²⁰ *tn* Heb “I know.”

²¹ *tn* Heb “holy man of God.”

²² *tn* Heb “a small upper room of a wall”; according to HALOT 832 s.v. חדר, this refers to “a fully walled upper room.”

²³ *tn* Heb “and let’s put there for him.”

²⁴ *tn* Heb “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁵ *tn* Heb “turned aside.”

²⁶ *tn* Or “slept there.”

²⁷ *tn* Heb “Call for this Shunammite woman.”

²⁸ *tn* Heb “and he called for her and she stood before him.”

²⁹ *tn* Heb “he said to him.”

respect.¹ What can I do for you? Can I put in a good word for you with the king or the commander of the army?" She replied, "I'm quite secure."² **4:14** So he asked Gehazi,³ "What can I do for her?" Gehazi replied, "She has no son, and her husband is old." **4:15** Elisha told him, "Ask her to come here."⁴ So he did so⁵ and she came and stood in the doorway.⁶ **4:16** He said, "About this time next year⁷ you will be holding a son." She said, "No, my master! O prophet, do not lie to your servant!" **4:17** The woman did conceive, and at the specified time the next year she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her.

4:18 The boy grew and one day he went out to see his father who was with the harvest workers.⁸ **4:19** He said to his father, "My head! My head!" His father⁹ told a servant, "Carry him to his mother." **4:20** So he picked him up and took him to his mother. He sat on her lap¹⁰ until noon and then died. **4:21** She went up and laid him down on the prophet's¹¹ bed. She shut the door behind her and left. **4:22** She called to her husband, "Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, so I can go see the prophet quickly and then return." **4:23** He said, "Why do you want to go see him today? It is not the new moon¹² or the Sabbath." She said, "Everything's fine."¹³ **4:24** She saddled the donkey and told her servant, "Lead on."¹⁴ Do not stop unless I say so."¹⁵

4:25 So she went to visit¹⁶ the prophet at Mount Carmel. When he¹⁷ saw her at a distance, he said to his servant Gehazi, "Look, it's the Shunammite woman. **4:26** Now, run to meet her and ask her, 'Are you well? Are your husband

and the boy well?'" She told Gehazi,¹⁸ "Everything's fine." **4:27** But when she reached the prophet on the mountain, she grabbed hold of his feet. Gehazi came near to push her away, but the prophet said, "Leave her alone, for she is very upset."¹⁹ The LORD has kept the matter hidden from me; he didn't tell me about it. **4:28** She said, "Did I ask my master for a son? Didn't I say, 'Don't mislead me?'" **4:29** Elisha²⁰ told Gehazi, "Tuck your robes into your belt, take my staff,²¹ and go! Don't stop to exchange greetings with anyone!²² Place my staff on the child's face." **4:30** The mother of the child said, "As certainly as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So Elisha²³ got up and followed her back.

4:31 Now Gehazi went on ahead of them. He placed the staff on the child's face, but there was no sound or response. When he came back to Elisha²⁴ he told him, "The child did not wake up." **4:32** When Elisha arrived at the house, there was²⁵ the child lying dead on his bed. **4:33** He went in by himself and closed the door.²⁶ Then he prayed to the LORD. **4:34** He got up on the bed and spread his body out over²⁷ the boy; he put his mouth on the boy's²⁸ mouth, his eyes over the boy's eyes, and the palms of his hands against the boy's palms. He bent down over him, and the boy's skin²⁹ grew warm. **4:35** Elisha³⁰ went back and walked around in the house.³¹ Then he got up on the bed again³² and bent down over him. The child sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. **4:36** Elisha³³ called to Gehazi and said, "Get the Shunammite woman." So he did so³⁴ and she came to him. He said to her, "Take your son." **4:37** She came in, fell at his feet, and bowed down. Then she picked up her son and left.

¹ **tn** *Heb* "you have turned trembling to us with all this trembling." The exaggerated language is probably idiomatic. The point seems to be that she has taken great pains or gone out of her way to be kind to them. Her concern was a sign of her respect for the prophetic office.

² **tn** *Heb* "Among my people I am living." This answer suggests that she has security within the context of her family.

³ **tn** *Heb* "and he said."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "Call for her."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and he called her."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and he called for her and she stood in the door."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "at this appointed time, at the time [when it is] reviving." For a discussion of the second phrase see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 57.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "to his father, to the harvesters."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "He"; the referent (the boy's father) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "knees."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "man of God's."

¹² **sn** The new moon was a time of sacrifice and special feasts (Num 28:14; 1 Sam 20:5). Apparently it was a convenient time to visit a prophet. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 57.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "peace."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "lead [the donkey on] and go."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "do not restrain for me the riding unless I say to you."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "went and came."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "the man of God." The phrase has been replaced by the relative pronoun "he" in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "she said." The narrator streamlines the story at this point, omitting any reference to Gehazi running to meet her and asking her the questions.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "her soul [i.e., 'disposition'] is bitter."

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

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "take my staff in your hand."

²² **tn** *Heb* "If you meet a man, do not greet him with a blessing; if a man greets you with a blessing, do not answer."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity. The referent must be Elisha here, since the following verse makes it clear that Gehazi had gone on ahead of them.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "to meet him."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "look."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and closed the door behind the two of them."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "he went up and lay down over."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "his" (also in the next two clauses).

²⁹ **tn** Or perhaps, "body"; *Heb* "flesh."

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "and he returned and went into the house, once here and once there."

³² **tn** *Heb* "and he went up."

³³ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and he called for her."

Elisha Makes a Meal Edible

4:38 Now Elisha went back to Gilgal, while there was famine in the land. Some of the prophets were visiting him¹ and he told his servant, “Put the big pot on the fire² and boil some stew for the prophets.”³ **4:39** Someone went out to the field to gather some herbs and found a wild vine.⁴ He picked some of its fruit,⁵ enough to fill up the fold of his robe. He came back, cut it up, and threw the slices⁶ into the stew pot, not knowing they were harmful.⁷ **4:40** The stew was poured out⁸ for the men to eat. When they ate some of the stew, they cried out, “Death is in the pot, O prophet!” They could not eat it. **4:41** He said, “Get some flour.” Then he threw it into the pot and said, “Now pour some out for the men so they may eat.”⁹ There was no longer anything harmful in the pot.

Elisha Miraculously Feeds a Hundred People

4:42 Now a man from Baal Shalisha brought some food for the prophet¹⁰ – twenty loaves of bread made from the firstfruits of the barley harvest, as well as fresh ears of grain.¹¹ Elisha¹² said, “Set it before the people so they may eat.” **4:43** But his attendant said, “How can I feed a hundred men with this?”¹³ He replied, “Set it before the people so they may eat, for this is what the LORD says, ‘They will eat and have some left over.’”¹⁴ **4:44** So he set it before them; they ate and had some left over, just as the LORD predicted.¹⁵

Elisha Heals a Syrian General

5:1 Now Naaman, the commander of the king of Syria’s army, was esteemed and re-

spected by his master,¹⁶ for through him the LORD had given Syria military victories. But this great warrior had a skin disease.¹⁷ **5:2** Raiding parties went out from Syria and took captive from the land of Israel a young girl, who became a servant to Naaman’s wife. **5:3** She told her mistress, “If only my master were in the presence of the prophet who is in Samaria!¹⁸ Then he would cure him of his skin disease.”

5:4 Naaman¹⁹ went and told his master what the girl from the land of Israel had said. **5:5** The king of Syria said, “Go! I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” So Naaman²⁰ went, taking with him ten talents²¹ of silver, six thousand shekels of gold,²² and ten suits of clothes. **5:6** He brought the letter to king of Israel. It read: “This is a letter of introduction for my servant Naaman,²³ whom I have sent to be cured of his skin disease.” **5:7** When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God? Can I kill or restore life? Why does he ask me to cure a man of his skin disease?²⁴ Certainly you must see that he is looking for an excuse to fight me!”²⁵

5:8 When Elisha the prophet²⁶ heard that the king had torn his clothes, he sent this message to the king, “Why did you tear your clothes? Send him²⁷ to me so he may know there is a prophet in Israel.” **5:9** So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood in the doorway of Elisha’s house. **5:10** Elisha sent out a messenger who told him, “Go and wash seven times in the Jordan; your skin will be restored²⁸ and you will be healed.” **5:11** Naaman went away angry. He said,

¹⁶ *tn* Heb “was a great man before his master and lifted up with respect to the face.”

¹⁷ *tn* For a discussion of מַצְרִיעַת (*m²tsora*), traditionally translated “leprous,” see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 63. Naaman probably had a skin disorder of some type, not leprosy/Hansen’s disease.

¹⁸ *map* For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

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

²⁰ *tn* Heb “he”; the referent (Naaman) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²¹ *tn* The Hebrew term כִּכְרָר (*kikkar*, “circle”) refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or to a standard unit of weight, generally regarded as a talent. Since the accepted weight for a talent of metal is about 75 pounds, this would have amounted to about 750 pounds of silver (cf. NCV, NLT, CEV).

²² *tn* Heb “six thousand gold [...]”. The unit of measure is not given in the Hebrew text. A number of English versions supply “pieces” (e.g., KJV, ASV, NAB, TEV) or “shekels” (e.g., NASB, NIV, NRSV).

²³ *tn* Heb “and now when this letter comes to you, look, I have sent to you Naaman my servant.”

²⁴ *tn* Heb “Am I God, killing and restoring life, that this one sends to me to cure a man from his skin disease?” In the Hebrew text this is one lengthy rhetorical question, which has been divided up in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁵ *tn* Heb “Indeed, know and see that he is seeking an occasion with respect to me.”

²⁶ *tn* Heb “man of God” (also in vv. 15, 20).

²⁷ *tn* Heb “Let him come.”

²⁸ *tn* Heb “will return to you.”

¹ *tn* Heb “the sons of the prophets were sitting before him.”

² *tn* The words “the fire” are added for clarification.

³ *tn* Heb “sons of the prophets.”

⁴ *tn* Heb “a vine of the field.”

⁵ *tn* Heb “[some] of the gourds of the field.”

⁶ *tn* Heb “he came and cut [them up].”

⁷ *tc* The Hebrew text reads, “for they did not know” (יָדָעוּ, *yada’u*) but some emend the final *shureq* (י, indicating a third plural subject) to *holem vav* (ו, a third masculine singular pronominal suffix on a third singular verb) and read “for he did not know it.” Perhaps it is best to omit the final *vav* as ditto-graphic (note the *vav* at the beginning of the next verb form) and read simply, “for he did not know.” See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 59.

⁸ *tn* Heb “and they poured out [the stew].” The plural subject is probably indefinite.

⁹ *tn* Or “and let them eat.”

¹⁰ *tn* Heb “man of God.”

¹¹ *tn* On the meaning of the word זִיקְלוֹן (*ziqlon*), “ear of grain,” see HALOT 148 s.v. זִיקְלוֹן and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 59.

¹² *tn* Heb “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹³ *tn* Heb “How can I set this before a hundred men?”

¹⁴ *tn* The verb forms are infinitives absolute (Heb “eating and leaving over”) and have to be translated in light of the context.

¹⁵ *tn* Heb “according to the word of the Lord.”

“Look, I thought for sure he would come out, stand there, invoke the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the area, and cure the skin disease. 5:12 The rivers of Damascus, the Abana and Pharpar, are better than any of the waters of Israel!¹ Could I not wash in them and be healed?” So he turned around and went away angry. 5:13 His servants approached and said to him, “O master,² if the prophet had told you to do some difficult task,³ you would have been willing to do it.⁴ It seems you should be happy that he simply said, “Wash and you will be healed.”⁵ 5:14 So he went down and dipped in the Jordan seven times, as the prophet had instructed.⁶ His skin became as smooth as a young child’s⁷ and he was healed.

5:15 He and his entire entourage returned to the prophet. Naaman⁸ came and stood before him. He said, “For sure⁹ I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel! Now, please accept a gift from your servant.” 5:16 But Elisha¹⁰ replied, “As certainly as the LORD lives (whom I serve),¹¹ I will take nothing from you.” Naaman¹² insisted that he take it, but he refused. 5:17 Naaman said, “If not, then please give your servant a load of dirt, enough for a pair of mules to carry,¹³ for your servant will never again offer a burnt offering or sacrifice to a god other than the LORD.¹⁴ 5:18 May the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to worship, and he leans on my arm and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this.”¹⁵ 5:19 Elisha¹⁶ said to him,

¹ **tn** *Heb* “Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all of the waters of Israel?” The rhetorical question expects an emphatic “yes” as an answer.

² **tn** *Heb* “my father,” reflecting the perspective of each individual servant. To address their master as “father” would emphasize his authority and express their respect. See BDB 3 s.v. אב and the similar idiomatic use of “father” in 2 Kgs 2:12.

³ **tn** *Heb* “a great thing.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “would you not do [it]?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Of course you would.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “How much more [when] he said, ‘Wash and be healed.’ The second imperative (“be healed”) states the expected result of obeying the first (“wash”).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “according to the word of the man of God.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and his skin was restored, like the skin of a small child.”

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

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “look.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “before whom I stand.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Naaman) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “and [if] not, may there be given to your servant a load [for] a pair of mules, earth.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “for your servant will not again make a burnt offering and sacrifice to other gods, only to the LORD.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “When my master enters the house of Rimmon to bow down there, and he leans on my hand and I bow down [in] the house of Rimmon, when I bow down [in] the house of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this thing.”

^{sn} *Rimmon* was the Syrian storm god. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 65.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in

“Go in peace.”

When he had gone a short distance,¹⁷ 5:20 Gehazi, the prophet Elisha’s servant, thought,¹⁸ “Look, my master did not accept what this Syrian Naaman offered him.¹⁹ As certainly as the LORD lives, I will run after him and accept something from him.” 5:21 So Gehazi ran after Naaman. When Naaman saw someone running after him, he got down from his chariot to meet him and asked, “Is everything all right?”²⁰ 5:22 He answered, “Everything is fine.²¹ My master sent me with this message, ‘Look, two servants of the prophets just arrived from the Ephraimite hill country.²² Please give them a talent²³ of silver and two suits of clothes.’” 5:23 Naaman said, “Please accept two talents of silver.²⁴ He insisted, and tied up two talents of silver in two bags, along with two suits of clothes. He gave them to two of his servants and they carried them for Gehazi.²⁵ 5:24 When he arrived at the hill, he took them from the servants²⁶ and put them in the house. Then he sent the men on their way.²⁷

5:25 When he came and stood before his master, Elisha asked him, “Where have you been, Gehazi?” He answered, “Your servant hasn’t been anywhere.” 5:26 Elisha²⁸ replied, “I was there in spirit when a man turned and got down from his chariot to meet you.²⁹ This is not the proper time to accept silver or to accept clothes, olive groves, vineyards, sheep, cattle,

the translation for clarity.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and he went from him a distance of land.” The precise meaning of *קִיּוּחַ* (*kiyrah*) “distance,” is uncertain. See BDB 460 s.v. קִיּוּחַ, and HALOT 459-60 s.v. וּלְקִיּוּחָא, and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 65.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “said” (i.e., to himself).

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “Look, my master spared this Syrian Naaman by not taking from his hand what he brought.”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “Is there peace?”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “peace.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “Look now, here, two servants came to me from the Ephraimite hill country, from the sons of the prophets.”

²³ **tn** The Hebrew term *קִכָּר* (*kikkar*, “circle”) refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or to a standard unit of weight, generally regarded as a talent. Since the accepted weight for a talent of metal is about 75 pounds, this would have amounted to about 75 pounds of silver (cf. NCV, NLT, CEV).

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “Be resolved and accept two talents.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “before him.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “from their hand.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and he sent the men away and they went.”

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “Did not my heart go as a man turned from his chariot to meet you?” The rhetorical question emphasizes that he was indeed present in “heart” (or “spirit”) and was very much aware of what Gehazi had done. In the MT the interrogative particle has been accidentally omitted before the negative particle.

and male and female servants.¹ 5:27 Therefore Naaman's skin disease will afflict² you and your descendants forever!" When Gehazi³ went out from his presence, his skin was as white as snow.⁴

Elisha Makes an Ax Head Float

6:1 Some of the prophets⁵ said to Elisha, "Look, the place where we meet with you⁶ is too cramped⁷ for us. 6:2 Let's go to the Jordan. Each of us will get a log from there and we will build a meeting place for ourselves there." He said, "Go." 6:3 One of them said, "Please come along with your servants." He replied, "All right, I'll come." 6:4 So he went with them. When they arrived at the Jordan, they started cutting down trees. 6:5 As one of them was felling a log, the ax head⁸ dropped into the water. He shouted, "Oh no,⁹ my master! It was borrowed!" 6:6 The prophet¹⁰ asked, "Where did it drop in?" When he showed him the spot, Elisha¹¹ cut off a branch, threw it in at that spot, and made the ax head float. 6:7 He said, "Lift it out." So he reached out his hand and grabbed it.

Elisha Defeats an Army

6:8 Now the king of Syria was at war with Israel. He consulted his advisers, who said, "Invade¹² at such and such¹³ a place." 6:9 But the prophet sent this message to the king of Israel, "Make sure you don't pass through this place because Syria is invading there." 6:10 So the king of Israel sent a message to the place the prophet had pointed out, warning it¹⁴ to be on its

guard. This happened on several occasions.¹⁵ 6:11 This made the king of Syria upset.¹⁶ So he summoned his advisers¹⁷ and said to them, "One of us must be helping the king of Israel."¹⁸ 6:12 One of his advisers said, "No, my master, O king. The prophet Elisha who lives in Israel keeps telling the king of Israel the things you say in your bedroom." 6:13 The king¹⁹ ordered, "Go, find out where he is, so I can send some men to capture him."²⁰ The king was told, "He is in Dothan." 6:14 So he sent horses and chariots there, along with a good-sized army.²¹ They arrived during the night and surrounded the city.

6:15 The prophet's²² attendant got up early in the morning. When he went outside there was an army surrounding the city, along with horses and chariots. He said to Elisha,²³ "Oh no, my master! What will we do?" 6:16 He replied, "Don't be afraid, for our side outnumbers them."²⁴ 6:17 Then Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he can see." The LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw that²⁵ the hill was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 6:18 As they approached him,²⁶ Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike these people²⁷ with blindness." The LORD²⁸ struck them with blindness as Elisha requested.³⁰ 6:19 Then Elisha said to them, "This is not the right road or city. Follow me, and I will lead you to the man you're looking for." He led them to Samaria.³¹

6:20 When they had entered Samaria, Elisha said, "O LORD, open their eyes, so they can see." The LORD opened their eyes and they saw that they were in the middle of Samaria.³² 6:21 When

¹ tn In the MT the statement is phrased as a rhetorical question, "Is this the time...?" It expects an emphatic negative response.

² tn Heb "cling to."

³ tn Heb "he"; the referent (Gehazi) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴ tn Traditionally, "he went from before him, leprous like snow." But see the note at 5:1, as well as M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 66.

⁵ tn Heb "the sons of the prophets."

⁶ tn Heb "sit before you."

⁷ tn Heb "narrow, tight."

⁸ tn Heb "iron."

⁹ tn Or "ah."

¹⁰ tn Heb "man of God" (also in v. 9).

¹¹ tn Heb "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹² tc The verb form used here is difficult to analyze. On the basis of the form נָתַחַת (n^hkhitim) in v. 9 from the root נָתַחַת (nakhat), it is probably best to emend the verb to תִּנְחַחַת (tinkh^htu; a Qal imperfect form from the same root). The verb נָתַחַת in at least two other instances carries the nuance "go down, descend" in a military context. For a defense of this view, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 72.

¹³ sn The advisers would have mentioned a specific location, but the details are not significant to the narrator's purpose, so he simply paraphrases here.

¹⁴ tn The vav + perfect here indicates action contemporary with the preceding main verb ("sent"). See *IBHS* 533-34 §32.2.3e.

¹⁵ tn Heb "and the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God spoke to him, and he warned it and he guarded himself there, not once and not twice."

¹⁶ tn Heb "and the heart of the king of Syria was stirred up over this thing."

¹⁷ tn Heb "servants."

¹⁸ tn Heb "Will you not tell me who among us [is] for the king of Israel?" The sarcastic rhetorical question expresses the king's suspicion.

¹⁹ tn Heb "he" (also a second time in this verse); the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁰ tn Heb "Go and see where he [is] so I can send and take him."

²¹ tn Heb "heavy force."

²² tn Heb "man of God's."

²³ tn Heb "his young servant said to him."

²⁴ tn Heb "for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

²⁵ tn Heb "and he saw, and look."

²⁶ tn Heb "and they came down to him."

²⁷ tn Or "this nation," perhaps emphasizing the strength of the Syrian army.

²⁸ tn On the basis of the Akkadian etymology of the word, M. Cogan and H. Tadmor (*II Kings* [AB], 74) translate "blinding light." *HALOT* 761 s.v. כִּנְוִים suggests the glosses "dazzling, deception."

²⁹ tn Heb "he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³⁰ tn Heb "according to the word of Elisha."

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

³² tn Heb "and they saw, and look, [they were] in the middle of Samaria."

the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha, "Should I strike them down,¹ my master?"² **6:22** He replied, "Do not strike them down! You did not capture them with your sword or bow, so what gives you the right to strike them down?³ Give them some food and water, so they can eat and drink and then go back to their master." **6:23** So he threw a big banquet⁴ for them and they ate and drank. Then he sent them back⁵ to their master. After that no Syrian raiding parties again invaded the land of Israel.

The Lord Saves Samaria

6:24 Later King Ben Hadad of Syria assembled his entire army and attacked⁶ and besieged Samaria.⁷ **6:25** Samaria's food supply ran out.⁸ They laid siege to it so long that⁹ a donkey's head was selling for eighty shekels of silver¹⁰ and a quarter of a kab¹¹ of dove's droppings¹² for five shekels of silver.¹³

6:26 While the king of Israel was passing by on the city wall, a woman shouted to him, "Help us, my master, O king!" **6:27** He replied, "No, let the LORD help you. How can I help you? The threshing floor and winepress are empty."¹⁴ **6:28** Then the king asked her, "What's your problem?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Hand over your son; we'll eat him today and then eat my son tomorrow.' **6:29** So we boiled my son and ate him. Then I said to her the next day, 'Hand over your son and we'll eat him.' But she hid her son!" **6:30** When the king heard what the woman said, he tore his clothes. As he was passing by on the wall, the people could see

he was wearing sackcloth under his clothes.¹⁵ **6:31** Then he said, "May God judge me severely¹⁶ if Elisha son of Shaphat still has his head by the end of the day!"¹⁷

6:32 Now Elisha was sitting in his house with the community leaders.¹⁸ The king¹⁹ sent a messenger on ahead, but before he arrived,²⁰ Elisha²¹ said to the leaders,²² "Do you realize this assassin intends to cut off my head?"²³ Look, when the messenger arrives, shut the door and lean against it. His master will certainly be right behind him."²⁴ **6:33** He was still talking to them when²⁵ the messenger approached²⁶ and said, "Look, the LORD is responsible for this disaster!²⁷ Why should I continue to wait for the LORD to help?" **7:1** Elisha replied, "Hear the word of the LORD! This is what the LORD says, 'About this time tomorrow a seah²⁸ of finely milled flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria.'"²⁹ **7:2** An officer who was the king's right-hand man²⁹ responded to the prophet,³⁰ "Look, even if the LORD made it rain by opening holes in the sky, could this happen so soon?"³¹ Elisha³² said, "Look, you will see it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of the food!"³³

7:3 Now four men with a skin disease³⁴ were sitting at the entrance of the city gate. They said to one another, "Why are we just sitting here waiting to die?³⁵ **7:4** If we go into the city, we'll die of starvation,³⁶ and if we stay here we'll die!

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the people saw, and look, [there was] sackcloth against his skin underneath."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "So may God do to me, and so may he add."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat stays on him today."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and the elders were sitting with him."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "sent a man from before him, before the messenger came to him."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²² **tn** *Heb* "elders."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "Do you see that this son of an assassin has sent to remove my head?"

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "Is not the sound of his master's footsteps behind him?"

²⁵ **tn** The Hebrew text also has "look" here.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "came down to him."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "Look, this is a disaster from the LORD."

²⁸ **sn** A seah was a dry measure equivalent to about 11 quarts (11 liters).

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the officer on whose hand the king leans."

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "man of God."

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "the LORD was making holes in the sky, could this thing be?" Opening holes in the sky would allow the waters stored up there to pour to the earth and assure a good crop. But, the officer argues, even if this were to happen, it would take a long time to grow and harvest the crop.

³² **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³³ **tn** *Heb* "you will not eat from there."

³⁴ **sn** See the note at 2 Kgs 5:1.

³⁵ **tn** *Heb* "until we die."

³⁶ **tn** *Heb* "If we say, 'We will enter the city,' the famine is in the city and we will die there."

¹ **tn** *Heb* "Should I strike them down? I will strike them down." In the Hebrew text the first person imperfect form is repeated; the first form has the interrogative *he* prefixed to it; the second does not. It is likely that the second form should be omitted as dittographic or that the first should be emended to an infinitive absolute.

² **tn** *Heb* "my father." The king addresses the prophet in this way to indicate his respect. See 2 Kgs 2:12.

³ **tn** *Heb* "Are [they] ones you captured with your sword or your bow (that) you can strike (them) down?"

⁴ **tn** Or "held a great feast."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "they went back."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "went up."

⁷ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and there was a great famine in Samaria."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and look, [they] were besieging it until."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "eighty, silver." The unit of measurement is omitted.

¹¹ **sn** A kab was a unit of dry measure, equivalent to approximately 2 quarts (2 liters).

¹² **tn** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) reads "dove dung" (כְּרִינִיּוֹת, *khareyonim*), while the marginal reading (*Qere*) has "discharge" (דִּיּוֹנִיּוֹת, *diyovnim*). Based on evidence from Akkadian, M. Cogan and H. Tadmor (*II Kings* [AB], 79) suggest that "dove's dung" was a popular name for the inedible husks of seeds.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "five, silver." The unit of measurement is omitted.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "From where can I help you, from the threshing floor or the winepress?" The rhetorical question expresses the king's frustration. He has no grain or wine to give to the masses.

So come on, let's defect¹ to the Syrian camp! If they spare us,² we'll live; if they kill us – well, we were going to die anyway."³ 7:5 So they started toward⁴ the Syrian camp at dusk. When they reached the edge of the Syrian camp, there was no one there. 7:6 The LORD had caused the Syrian camp to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a large army. Then they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has paid the kings of the Hittites and Egypt to attack us!" 7:7 So they got up and fled at dusk, leaving behind their tents, horses, and donkeys. They left the camp as it was and ran for their lives. 7:8 When the men with a skin disease reached the edge of the camp, they entered a tent and had a meal.⁵ They also took some silver, gold, and clothes and went and hid it all.⁶ Then they went back and entered another tent. They looted it⁷ and went and hid what they had taken. 7:9 Then they said to one another, "It's not right what we're doing! This is a day to celebrate, but we haven't told anyone.⁸ If we wait until dawn,⁹ we'll be punished.¹⁰ So come on, let's go and inform the royal palace." 7:10 So they went and called out to the gatekeepers¹¹ of the city. They told them, "We entered the Syrian camp and there was no one there. We didn't even hear a man's voice.¹² But the horses and donkeys are still tied up, and the tents remain up."¹³ 7:11 The gatekeepers relayed the news to the royal palace.¹⁴

7:12 The king got up in the night and said to his advisers,¹⁵ "I will tell you what the Syrians have done to us. They know we are starving, so they left the camp and hid in the field, thinking, 'When they come out of the city, we will capture them alive and enter the city.'" 7:13 One of his advisers replied, "Pick some men and have them take five of the horses that are left in the city. (Even if they are killed, their fate will be no different than that of all the Israelite people – we're all going to die!)"¹⁶ Let's send them out so

we can know for sure what's going on."¹⁷ 7:14 So they picked two horsemen and the king sent them out to track the Syrian army.¹⁸ He ordered them, "Go and find out what's going on."¹⁹ 7:15 So they tracked them²⁰ as far as the Jordan. The road was filled with clothes and equipment that the Syrians had discarded in their haste.²¹ The scouts²² went back and told the king. 7:16 Then the people went out and looted the Syrian camp. A seah²³ of finely milled flour sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, just as the LORD had said they would.²⁴

7:17 Now the king had placed the officer who was his right-hand man²⁵ at the city gate. When the people rushed out, they trampled him to death in the gate.²⁶ This fulfilled the prophet's word which he had spoken when the king tried to arrest him.²⁷ 7:18 The prophet told the king, "Two seahs of barley will sell for a shekel, and a seah of finely milled flour for a shekel; this will happen about this time tomorrow in the gate of Samaria." 7:19 But the officer replied to the prophet, "Look, even if the LORD made it rain by opening holes in the sky, could this happen so soon?"²⁸ Elisha²⁹ said, "Look, you will see it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of the food!"³⁰ 7:20 This is exactly what happened to him. The people trampled him to death in the city gate.

Elisha Again Helps the Shunammite Woman

8:1 Now Elisha advised the woman whose son he had brought back to life, "You and your family should go and live somewhere else for a

¹ tn Heb "fall."

² tn Heb "keep us alive."

³ tn Heb "we will die." The paraphrastic translation attempts to bring out the logical force of their reasoning.

⁴ tn Heb "they arose to go to."

⁵ tn Heb "they ate and drank."

⁶ tn Heb "and they hid [it]."

⁷ tn Heb "and they took from there."

⁸ tn Heb "this day is a day of good news and we are keeping silent."

⁹ tn Heb "the light of the morning."

¹⁰ tn Heb "punishment will find us."

¹¹ tn The MT has a singular form ("gatekeeper"), but the context suggests a plural. The pronoun that follows ("them") is plural and a plural noun appears in v. 11. The Syriac Peshitta and the Targum have the plural here.

¹² tn Heb "and, look, there was no man or voice of a man there."

¹³ tn Heb "but the horses are tied up and the donkeys are tied up and the tents are as they were."

¹⁴ tn Heb "and the gatekeepers called out and they told [it] to the house of the king."

¹⁵ tn Heb "servants" (also in v. 13).

¹⁶ tn Heb "Let them take five of the remaining horses that remain in it. Look, they are like all the people of Israel that have

come to an end." The MT is dittographic here; the words "that remain in it. Look they are like all the people of Israel" have been accidentally repeated. The original text read, "Let them take five of the remaining horses that remain in it. Look, they are like all the people of Israel that have come to an end."

¹⁷ tn Heb "and let us send so we might see."

¹⁸ tn Heb "and the king sent [them] after the Syrian camp."

¹⁹ tn Heb "Go and see."

²⁰ tn Heb "went after."

²¹ tn Heb "and look, all the road was full of clothes and equipment that Syria had thrown away in their haste."

²² tn Or "messengers."

²³ sn A seah was a dry measure equivalent to about 11 quarts (1.1 liters).

²⁴ tn Heb "according to the word of the LORD."

²⁵ tn Heb "the officer on whose hand he leans."

²⁶ tn Heb "and the people trampled him in the gate and he died."

²⁷ tn Heb "just as the man of God had spoken, [the word] which he spoke when the king came down to him."

²⁸ tn Heb "the LORD was making holes in the sky, could this thing be?" See the note at 7:2.

²⁹ tn Heb "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³⁰ tn Heb "you will not eat from there."

tn In the Hebrew text vv. 18-19a are one lengthy sentence, "When the man of God spoke to the king... the officer replied to the man of God, 'Look...so soon?'" The translation divides this sentence up for stylistic reasons.

while,¹ for the LORD has decreed that a famine will overtake the land for seven years.” **8:2** So the woman did as the prophet said.² She and her family went and lived in the land of the Philistines for seven years. **8:3** After seven years the woman returned from the land of the Philistines and went to ask the king to give her back her house and field.³ **8:4** Now the king was talking to Gehazi, the prophet’s⁴ servant, and said, “Tell me all the great things which Elisha has done.” **8:5** While Gehazi⁵ was telling the king how Elisha⁶ had brought the dead back to life, the woman whose son he had brought back to life came to ask the king for her house and field.⁷ Gehazi said, “My master, O king, this is the very woman and this is her son whom Elisha brought back to life!” **8:6** The king asked the woman about it, and she gave him the details.⁸ The king assigned an eunuch to take care of her request and ordered him,⁹ “Give her back everything she owns, as well as the amount of crops her field produced from the day she left the land until now.”

Elisha Meets with Hazael

8:7 Elisha traveled to Damascus while King Ben Hadad of Syria was sick. The king¹⁰ was told, “The prophet¹¹ has come here.” **8:8** So the king told Hazael, “Take a gift¹² and go visit the prophet. Request from him an oracle from the LORD. Ask him,¹³ ‘Will I recover from this sickness?’” **8:9** So Hazael went to visit Elisha.¹⁴ He took along a gift,¹⁵ as well as¹⁶ forty camel loads

of all the fine things of Damascus. When he arrived, he stood before him and said, “Your son,¹⁷ King Ben Hadad of Syria, has sent me to you with this question,¹⁸ ‘Will I recover from this sickness?’” **8:10** Elisha said to him, “Go and tell him, ‘You will surely recover,’¹⁹ but the LORD has revealed to me that he will surely die.” **8:11** Elisha²⁰ just stared at him until Hazael became uncomfortable.²¹ Then the prophet started crying. **8:12** Hazael asked, “Why are you crying, my master?” He replied, “Because I know the trouble you will cause the Israelites. You will set fire to their fortresses, kill their young men with the sword, smash their children to bits, and rip open their pregnant women.” **8:13** Hazael said, “How could your servant, who is as insignificant as a dog, accomplish this great military victory?”²² Elisha answered, “The LORD has revealed to me that you will be the king of Syria.”²³ **8:14** He left Elisha and went to his master. Ben Hadad²⁴ asked him, “What did Elisha tell you?” Hazael²⁵ replied, “He told me you would surely recover.” **8:15** The next day Hazael²⁶ took a piece of cloth, dipped it in water, and spread it over Ben Hadad’s²⁷ face until he died. Then Hazael replaced him as king.

1 tn Heb “Get up and go, you and your house, and live temporarily where you can live temporarily.”

2 tn Heb “and the woman got up and did according to the word of the man of God.”

3 tn Heb “and went out to cry out to the king for her house and her field.”

4 tn Heb “man of God’s.”

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

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

7 tn Heb “and look, the woman whose son he had brought back to life was crying out to the king for her house and her field.”

sn The legal background of the situation is uncertain. For a discussion of possibilities, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 87-88.

8 tn Heb “and the king asked the woman and she told him.”

9 tn Heb “and he assigned to her an official, saying.”

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

11 tn Heb “man of God” (also a second time in this verse and in v. 11).

12 tn The Hebrew text also has “in your hand.”

13 tn Heb “Inquire of the LORD through him, saying.”

14 tn Heb “him”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

15 tn The Hebrew text also has “in his hand.”

16 tn Heb “and.” It is possible that the conjunction is here explanatory, equivalent to English “that is.” In this case the forty camel loads constitute the “gift” and one should translate, “He took along a gift, consisting of forty camel loads of all the fine things of Damascus.”

17 sn The words “your son” emphasize the king’s respect for the prophet.

18 tn Heb “saying.”

19 tc The consonantal text (*Kethib*) reads, “Go, say, ‘Surely you will not (לֹא, *lo’*) recover” In this case the *vav* beginning the next clause should be translated, “for, because.” The marginal reading (*Qere*) has, “Go, say to him (לוֹ, *lo*), ‘You will surely recover.’” In this case the *vav* (ו) beginning the next clause should be translated, “although, but.” The *Qere* has the support of some medieval Hebrew mss and the ancient versions, and is consistent with v. 14, where Hazael tells the king, “You will surely recover.” It is possible that a scribe has changed לוֹ, “to him,” to לֹא, “not,” because he felt that Elisha would not lie to the king. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 90. Another possibility is that a scribe has decided to harmonize Elisha’s message with Hazael’s words in v. 14. But it is possible that Hazael, once he found out he would become the next king, decided to lie to the king to facilitate his assassination plot by making the king feel secure.

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

21 tn Heb “and he made his face stand [i.e., be motionless] and set [his face?] until embarrassment.”

22 tn Heb “Indeed, what is your servant, a dog, that he could do this great thing?” With his reference to a dog, Hazael is not denying that he is a “dog” and protesting that he would never commit such a dastardly “dog-like” deed. Rather, as Elisha’s response indicates, Hazael is suggesting that he, like a dog, is too insignificant to ever be in a position to lead such conquests.

23 tn Heb “The LORD has shown me you [as] king over Syria.”

24 tn Heb “he”; the referent (Ben Hadad) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

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

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

27 tn Heb “his”; the referent (Ben Hadad) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

Jehoram's Reign over Judah

8:16 In the fifth year of the reign of Israel's King Joram, son of Ahab, Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram became king over Judah.¹ **8:17** He was thirty-two years old when he became king and he reigned for eight years in Jerusalem.² **8:18** He followed in the footsteps of the kings of Israel, just as Ahab's dynasty had done, for he married Ahab's daughter.³ He did evil in the sight of⁴ the LORD. **8:19** But the LORD was unwilling to destroy Judah. He preserved Judah for the sake of⁵ his servant David to whom he had promised a perpetual dynasty.⁶

8:20 During his reign Edom freed themselves from Judah's control and set up their own king.⁷ **8:21** Joram⁸ crossed over to Zair with all his chariots. The Edomites, who had surrounded him, attacked at night and defeated him and his chariot officers.⁹ The Israelite army retreated to their homeland.¹⁰ **8:22** So Edom has remained free from Judah's control to this very day.¹¹ At that same time Libnah also rebelled.

8:23 The rest of the events of Joram's reign, including a record of his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the

Kings of Judah.¹² **8:24** Joram passed away¹³ and was buried with his ancestors in the City of David. His son Ahaziah replaced him as king.

Ahaziah Takes the Throne of Judah

8:25 In the twelfth year of the reign of Israel's King Joram, son of Ahab, Jehoram's son Ahaziah became king over Judah. **8:26** Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king and he reigned for one year in Jerusalem.¹⁴ His mother was Athaliah, the granddaughter¹⁵ of King Omri of Israel. **8:27** He followed in the footsteps of Ahab's dynasty and did evil in the sight of¹⁶ the LORD, like Ahab's dynasty, for he was related to Ahab's family.¹⁷

8:28 He joined Ahab's son Joram in a battle against King Hazael of Syria at Ramoth Gilead in which the Syrians defeated Joram. **8:29** King Joram returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds he received from the Syrians¹⁸ in Ramah when he fought against King Hazael of Syria. King Ahaziah son of Jehoram of Judah went down to visit¹⁹ Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel, for he was ill.

Jehu Becomes King

9:1 Now Elisha the prophet summoned a member of the prophetic guild²⁰ and told him, "Tuck your robes into your belt, take this container²¹ of olive oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead. **9:2** When you arrive there, look for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi and take him aside into an inner room.²² **9:3** Take the container of olive oil, pour it over his head, and say, 'This is what the LORD says, 'I have designated²³ you as king over Israel.'" Then open the door and run away quickly!"²⁴

¹ **tc** The Hebrew text reads, "and in the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, and [or, 'while?'] Jehoshaphat [was?] king of Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah became king." The first reference to "Jehoshaphat king of Judah" is probably due to a scribe accidentally copying the phrase from the later in the verse. If the Hebrew text is retained, the verse probably refers to the beginning of a coregency between Jehoshaphat and Jehoram.

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

³ **tn** *Heb* "he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew has only one sentence, "and the LORD was unwilling to destroy Judah for the sake of." The translation divides it for the sake of clarity.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "just as he had promised to give him and his sons a lamp all the days." The metaphorical "lamp" symbolizes the Davidic dynasty; this is reflected in the translation.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "in his days Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah and enthroned a king over them."

⁸ **sn** *Joram* is a short form of the name Jehoram.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and he arose at night and defeated Edom, who had surrounded him, and the chariot officers." The Hebrew text as it stands gives the impression that Joram was surrounded and launched a victorious night counterattack. It would then be quite natural to understand the last statement in the verse to refer to an Edomite retreat. Yet v. 22 goes on to state that the Edomite revolt was successful. Therefore, if the MT is retained, it may be better to understand the final statement in v. 21 as a reference to an Israelite retreat (made in spite of the success described in the preceding sentence). The translation above assumes an emendation of the Hebrew text. Adding a third masculine singular pronominal suffix to the accusative sign before Edom (reading אֶתְּוֹ [eto], "him," instead of just אֶתְּ [et]) and taking Edom as the subject of verbs allows one to translate the verse in a way that is more consistent with the context, which depicts an Israelite defeat, not victory. There is, however, no evidence for this emendation.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and the people fled to their tents."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah until this day."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the acts of Joram and all which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?"

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

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

¹⁵ **tn** Hebrew בַּת (bat), "daughter," can refer, as here to a granddaughter. See HALOT 166 s.v. בַּת.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and he walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did evil in the eyes of the LORD like the house of Ahab, for he was a relative by marriage of the house of Ahab." For this use of אֶתְּ (khatan), normally "son-in-law," see HALOT 365 s.v. אֶתְּ. Ahab was Ahaziah's grandfather on his mother's side.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "which the Syrians inflicted [on] him."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "to see."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "one of the sons of the prophets."

²¹ **tn** Or "flask."

²² **tn** *Heb* "and go and set him apart from his brothers and bring him into an inner room in an inner room."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "anointed."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and open the door and run away and do not delay."

9:4 So the young prophet¹ went to Ramoth Gilead. 9:5 When he arrived, the officers of the army were sitting there.² So he said, "I have a message for you, O officer."³ Jehu asked, "For which one of us?"⁴ He replied, "For you, O officer." 9:6 So Jehu⁵ got up and went inside. Then the prophet⁶ poured the olive oil on his head and said to him, "This is what the LORD God of Israel says, 'I have designated you as king over the LORD's people Israel. 9:7 You will destroy the family of your master Ahab.⁷ I will get revenge against Jezebel for the shed blood of my servants the prophets and for the shed blood of all the LORD's servants.⁸ 9:8 Ahab's entire family will die. I⁹ will cut off every last male belonging to Ahab in Israel, including even the weak and incapacitated.¹⁰ 9:9 I will make Ahab's dynasty¹¹ like those of Jeroboam son of Nebat and Baasha son of Ahijah. 9:10 Dogs will devour Jezebel on the plot of ground in Jezreel; she will not be buried."¹² Then he opened the door and ran away.

9:11 When Jehu rejoined¹³ his master's servants, they¹⁴ asked him, "Is everything all right?"¹⁵ Why did this madman visit you?" He replied, "Ah, it's not important. You know what kind of man he is and the kinds of things he says."¹⁶ 9:12 But they said, "You're lying! Tell

us what he said." So he told them what he had said. He also related how he had said,¹⁷ "This is what the LORD says, 'I have designated you as king over Israel.'" 9:13 Each of them quickly took off his cloak and they spread them out at Jehu's¹⁸ feet on the steps.¹⁹ The trumpet was blown²⁰ and they shouted, "Jehu is²¹ king!" 9:14 Then Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram.

Jehu the Assassin

Now Joram had been in Ramoth Gilead with the whole Israelite army,²² guarding against an invasion by King Hazael of Syria. 9:15 But King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds he received from the Syrians²³ when he fought against King Hazael of Syria.²⁴ Jehu told his supporters,²⁵ "If you really want me to be king,²⁶ then don't let anyone escape from the city to go and warn Jezreel." 9:16 Jehu drove his chariot²⁷ to Jezreel, for Joram was recuperating²⁸ there. (Now King Ahaziah of Judah had come down to visit²⁹ Joram.)

9:17 Now the watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel and saw Jehu's troops approaching.³⁰ He said, "I see troops!"³¹ Jehoram ordered,³² "Send a rider out to meet them and have him ask, 'Is everything all right?'"³³ 9:18 So the horseman³⁴ went to meet him and said, "This is

¹ **tc** *Heb* "the young man, the young man, the prophet." The MT is probably dittographic, the phrase "the young man" being accidentally repeated. The phrases "the young man" and "the prophet" are appositional, with the latter qualifying more specifically the former.

² **tn** *Heb* "and he arrived and look, the officers of the army were sitting."

³ **tn** *Heb* "[there is] a word for me to you, O officer."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "To whom from all of us?"

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

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

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "strike down the house of Ahab your master."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "I will avenge the shed blood of my servants the prophets and the shed blood of all the servants of the LORD from the hand of Jezebel."

⁹ **tc** The LXX has the second person, "you."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and I will cut off from Ahab those who urinate against a wall, [including both those who are] restrained and let free [or, 'abandoned'] in Israel." On the phrase *וְיָצוּר וְיָצוּר* (*v^eatsur v^eazur*, translated here "weak and incapacitated") see the note at 1 Kgs 14:10.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "house."

¹² **sn** Note how the young prophet greatly expands the message Elisha had given to him. In addition to lengthening the introductory formula (by adding "the God of Israel") and the official declaration that accompanies the act of anointing (by adding "the LORD's people"), he goes on to tell how Jehu will become king (by a revolt against Ahab's dynasty), makes it clear that Jehu will be an instrument of divine vengeance, and predicts the utter annihilation of Ahab's family and the violent death of Jezebel.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "went out to."

¹⁴ **tc** The MT has the singular, "he said," but many witnesses correctly read the plural.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Is there peace?"

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "He said, 'You, you know the man and his thoughts.'" Jehu tries to deflect their question by reminding them that the man is an eccentric individual who says strange things. His reply suggests that the man said nothing of importance. The translation seeks to bring out the tone and intent of Jehu's reply.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "So he said, 'Like this and like this he said to me, saying.'" The words "like this and like this" are probably not a direct quote of Jehu's words to his colleagues. Rather this is the narrator's way of avoiding repetition and indicating that Jehu repeated, or at least summarized, what the prophet had said to him.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent (Jehu) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and they hurried and took, each one his garment, and they placed [them] beneath him on the bone [?] of the steps." The precise nuance of *גֵּרֶם* (*gerem*), "bone," is unclear. Some suggest the nuance "bare" here; it may be a technical architectural term in this context.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "they blew the trumpet." This has been translated as a passive to avoid the implication that the same ones who shouted had all blown trumpets.

²¹ **tn** Or "has become."

²² **tn** *Heb* "he and all Israel."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "which the Syrians inflicted [on] him."

²⁴ **sn** See 2 Kgs 8:28-29a.

²⁵ **tn** The words "his supporters" are added for clarification.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "If this is your desire." *נֶפֶשׁ* (*nefesh*) refers here to the seat of the emotions and will. For other examples of this use of the word, see BDB 660-61 s.v.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "rode [or, 'mounted'] and went."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "lying down."

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "to see."

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the quantity [of the men] of Jehu, when he approached." Elsewhere *שִׁפְתָּה* (*shif'ah*), "quantity," is used of a quantity of camels (Isa 60:6) or horses (Ezek 26:10) and of an abundance of water (Job 22:11; 38:34).

³¹ **tn** The term *שִׁפְתָּה* (*shif'ah*) appears to be a construct form of the noun, but no genitive follows.

³² **tn** *Heb* "said."

³³ **tn** *Heb* "Get a rider and send [him] to meet him and let him ask, 'Is there peace?'"

³⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the rider of the horse."

what the king says, ‘Is everything all right?’¹ Jehu replied, ‘None of your business!² Follow me.’ The watchman reported, ‘The messenger reached them, but hasn’t started back.’³ **9:19** So he sent a second horseman out to them³ and he said, ‘This is what the king says, ‘Is everything all right?’⁴ Jehu replied, ‘None of your business! Follow me.’ **9:20** The watchman reported, ‘He reached them, but hasn’t started back. The one who drives the lead chariot drives like Jehu son of Nimshi,⁵ he drives recklessly.’ **9:21** Jehoram ordered, ‘Hitch up my chariot.’⁶ When his chariot had been hitched up,⁷ King Jehoram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah went out in their respective chariots⁸ to meet Jehu. They met up with him⁹ in the plot of land that had once belonged to Naboth of Jezreel.

9:22 When Jehoram saw Jehu, he asked, ‘Is everything all right, Jehu?’ He replied, ‘How can everything be all right as long as your mother Jezebel promotes idolatry and pagan practices?’¹⁰ **9:23** Jehoram turned his chariot around and took off.¹¹ He said to Ahaziah, ‘It’s a trap,¹² Ahaziah!’ **9:24** Jehu aimed his bow and shot an arrow right between Jehoram’s shoulders.¹³ The arrow went through¹⁴ his heart and he fell to his knees in his chariot. **9:25** Jehu ordered¹⁵ his officer Bidkar, ‘Pick him up and throw him into the part of the field that once belonged to Naboth of Jezreel. Remember, you and I were riding together behind his father Ahab, when the LORD pronounced this judgment on him, **9:26** “Know for sure that I saw the shed blood of Naboth and his sons yesterday,” says the LORD, “and that I will give you what you

deserve right here in this plot of land,”¹⁶ says the LORD.’ So now pick him up and throw him into this plot of land, just as the LORD said.’¹⁷

9:27 When King Ahaziah of Judah saw what happened, he took off¹⁸ up the road to Beth Haggan. Jehu chased him and ordered, ‘Shoot him too.’ They shot him while he was driving his chariot up the ascent of Gur near Ibleam.¹⁹ He fled to Megiddo²⁰ and died there. **9:28** His servants took his body²¹ back to Jerusalem²² and buried him in his tomb with his ancestors in the City of David. **9:29** Ahaziah had become king over Judah in the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab.

9:30 Jehu approached Jezebel. When Jezebel heard the news, she put on some eye liner,²³ fixed up her hair, and leaned out the window. **9:31** When Jehu came through the gate, she said, ‘Is everything all right, Zimri, murderer of his master?’²⁴ **9:32** He looked up at the window and said, ‘Who is on my side? Who?’ Two or three²⁵ eunuchs looked down at him. **9:33** He said, ‘Throw her down!’ So they threw her down, and when she hit the ground,²⁶ her blood splattered against the wall and the horses, and Jehu drove his chariot over her.²⁷ **9:34** He went inside and had a meal.²⁸ Then he said, ‘Dispose of this accursed woman’s corpse. Bury her, for

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “and I will repay you in this plot of land.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “according to the word of the LORD.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “and Ahaziah king of Judah saw and fled.”

¹⁹ **tn** After Jehu’s order (“kill him too”), the MT has simply, “to the chariot in the ascent of Gur which is near Ibleam.” The main verb in the clause, “they shot him” (יָדְדוּ, *vayyikkhu*), has been accidentally omitted by virtual haplography/homoioteleuton. Note that the immediately preceding form הִדְדוּ (*hakkahu*), “shoot him,” ends with the same suffix.

²⁰ **map** For location see Map1-D4; Map2-C1; Map4-C2; Map5-F2; Map7-B1.

²¹ **tn** Heb “drove him.”

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

²³ **tn** Heb “she fixed her eyes with antimony.” Antimony (פִּיךָ, *pukh*) was used as a cosmetic. The narrator portrays her as a prostitute (see Jer 4:30), a role she has played in the spiritual realm (see the note at v. 22).

²⁴ **sn** Jezebel associates Jehu with another assassin, Zimri, who approximately 44 years before had murdered King Elah, only to meet a violent death just a few days later (1 Kgs 16:9-20). On the surface Jezebel’s actions seem contradictory. On the one hand, she beautifies herself as if to seduce Jehu, but on the other hand, she insults and indirectly threatens him with this comparison to Zimri. Upon further reflection, however, her actions reveal a clear underlying motive. She wants to retain her power, not to mention her life. By beautifying herself, she appeals to Jehu’s sexual impulses; by threatening him, she reminds him that he is in the same precarious position as Zimri. But, if he makes Jezebel his queen, he can consolidate his power. In other words through her actions and words Jezebel is saying to Jehu, “You desire me, don’t you? And you need me!”

²⁵ **tn** Heb “two, three.” The narrator may be intentionally vague or uncertain here, or the two numbers may represent alternate traditions.

²⁶ **tn** The words “when she hit the ground” are added for stylistic reasons.

²⁷ **tn** Heb “and he trampled her.”

²⁸ **tn** Heb “and he went and ate and drank.”

¹ **tn** Heb “Is there peace?”

² **tn** Heb “What concerning you and concerning peace?” That is, “What concern is that to you?”

³ **tn** Heb “and he came to them.”

⁴ **tc** The MT has simply “peace,” omitting the prefixed interrogative particle. It is likely that the particle has been accidentally omitted; several ancient witnesses include it or assume its presence.

⁵ **tn** Heb “and the driving is like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi.”

⁶ **tn** The words “my chariot” are added for clarification.

⁷ **tn** Heb “and he hitched up his chariot.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “each in his chariot and they went out.”

⁹ **tn** Heb “they found him.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “How [can there be] peace as long as the adulterous acts of Jezebel your mother and her many acts of sorcery [continue]?” In this instance “adulterous acts” is employed metaphorically for idolatry. As elsewhere in the OT, worshipping other gods is viewed as spiritual adultery and unfaithfulness to the one true God. The phrase “many acts of sorcery” could be taken literally, for Jezebel undoubtedly utilized pagan divination practices, but the phrase may be metaphorical, pointing to her devotion to pagan customs in general.

¹¹ **tn** Heb “and Jehoram turned his hands and fled.” The phrase “turned his hands” refers to how he would have pulled on the reins in order to make his horses turn around.

¹² **tn** Heb “Deceit, Ahaziah.”

¹³ **tn** Heb “and Jehu filled his hand with the bow and he struck Jehoram between his shoulders.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “went out from.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “said to.”

after all, she was a king's daughter."¹ **9:35** But when they went to bury her, they found nothing left but² the skull, feet, and palms of the hands. **9:36** When they went back and told him, he said, "The LORD's word through his servant, Elijah the Tishbite, has come to pass. He warned,³ 'In the plot of land at Jezreel, dogs will devour Jezebel's flesh. **9:37** Jezebel's corpse will be like manure on the surface of the ground in the plot of land at Jezreel. People will not be able to even recognize her."⁴

Jehu Wipes Out Ahab's Family

10:1 Ahab had seventy sons living in Samaria.⁵ So Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria to the leading officials of Jezreel and to the guardians of Ahab's dynasty. This is what the letters said,⁶ **10:2** "You have with you the sons of your master, chariots and horses, a fortified city, and weapons. So when this letter arrives,⁷ **10:3** pick the best and most capable⁸ of your master's sons, place him on his father's throne, and defend⁹ your master's dynasty."⁷

10:4 They were absolutely terrified¹⁰ and said, "Look, two kings could not stop him!¹¹ How can we?"¹² **10:5** So the palace supervisor,¹³ the city commissioner,¹⁴ the leaders,¹⁵ and the guardians sent this message to Jehu, "We are your subjects!¹⁶ Whatever you say, we will do. We will not make anyone king. Do what you consider proper."¹⁷

10:6 He wrote them a second letter, saying, "If you are really on my side and are willing to obey me,¹⁸ then take the heads of your master's

sons and come to me in Jezreel at this time tomorrow."¹⁹ Now the king had seventy sons, and the prominent²⁰ men of the city were raising them. **10:7** When they received the letter, they seized the king's sons and executed all seventy of them.²¹ They put their heads in baskets and sent them to him in Jezreel. **10:8** The messenger came and told Jehu,²² "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." Jehu²³ said, "Stack them in two piles at the entrance of the city gate until morning."²⁴ **10:9** In the morning he went out and stood there. Then he said to all the people, "You are innocent. I conspired against my master and killed him. But who struck down all of these men? **10:10** Therefore take note that not one of the judgments the LORD announced against Ahab's dynasty has failed to materialize. The LORD had done what he announced through his servant Elijah."²⁴ **10:11** Then Jehu killed all who were left of Ahab's family in Jezreel, and all his nobles, close friends, and priests. He left no survivors.

10:12 Jehu then left there and set out for Samaria.²⁵ While he was traveling through Beth Eked of the Shepherds, **10:13** Jehu encountered²⁶ the relatives²⁷ of King Ahaziah of Judah. He asked, "Who are you?" They replied, "We are Ahaziah's relatives. We have come down to see how²⁸ the king's sons and the queen mother's sons are doing."²⁸ **10:14** He said, "Capture them alive!" So they captured them alive and then executed all forty-two of them in the cistern at Beth Eked. He left no survivors.

10:15 When he left there, he met²⁹ Jehonadab, son of Rekab, who had been looking for him.³⁰ Jehu greeted him and asked,³¹ "Are you as committed to me as I am to you?"³² Jeho-

¹ tn Heb "Attend to this accursed woman and bury her for she was the daughter of a king."

² tn Heb "they did not find her, except for."

³ tn Heb "It is the word of the LORD, which he spoke by the hand of his servant, Elijah the Tishbite, saying."

⁴ tn Heb "so that they will not say, 'This is Jezebel.'"

⁵ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

⁶ tn Heb "to the officers of Jezreel, the elders, and to the guardians of Ahab, saying." It is not certain why the officials of Jezreel would be in Samaria. They may have fled there after they heard what happened to Joram and before Jehu entered the city. They would have had time to flee while Jehu was pursuing Ahaziah.

⁷ tn Heb "And now when this letter comes to you - with you are the sons of your master and with you are chariots and horses and a fortified city and weapons."

⁸ tn Hebrew *yashar* (יָשָׁר) does not have its normal moral/ethical nuance here ("upright"), but a more neutral sense of "proper, right, suitable." For the gloss "capable," see HALOT 450 s.v. יָשָׁר.

⁹ tn Or "fight for."

¹⁰ tn Heb "they were very, very afraid." The term *me'ud* (me'ud) "very," is repeated for emphasis.

¹¹ tn Heb "did not stand before him."

¹² tn Heb "How can we stand?"

¹³ tn Heb "the one who was over the house."

¹⁴ tn Heb "the one who was over the city."

¹⁵ tn Or "elders."

¹⁶ tn Heb "servants."

¹⁷ tn Heb "Do what is good in your eyes."

¹⁸ tn Heb "If you are mine and you are listening to my voice."

¹⁹ sn Jehu's command is intentionally vague. Does he mean that they should bring the guardians (those who are "heads" over Ahab's sons) for a meeting, or does he mean that they should bring the literal heads of Ahab's sons with them? (So LXX, Syriac Peshitta, and some mss of the Targum) The city leaders interpret his words in the literal sense, but Jehu's command is so ambiguous he is able to deny complicity in the executions (see v. 9).

²⁰ tn Heb "great," probably in wealth, position, and prestige.

²¹ tn Heb "and when the letter came to them, they took the sons of the king and slaughtered seventy men."

²² tn Heb "him"; the referent (Jehu) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

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

²⁴ tn Heb "Know then that there has not fallen from the word of the LORD to the ground that which the LORD spoke against the house of Ahab. The LORD has done that which he spoke by the hand of his servant Elijah."

²⁵ tn Heb "and he arose and went and came to Samaria."

²⁶ tn Heb "found."

²⁷ tn Or "brothers."

²⁸ tn Heb "for the peace of."

²⁹ tn Heb "found."

³⁰ tn Heb "and he went from there and found Jehonadab son of Rekab [who was coming] to meet him."

³¹ tn Heb "and he blessed him and said to him."

³² tn Heb "Is there with your heart [what is] right, as my heart [is] with your heart?"

nadab answered, “I am!” Jehu replied, “If so, give me your hand.”¹ So he offered his hand and Jehu² pulled him up into the chariot. **10:16** Jehu³ said, “Come with me and see how zealous I am for the LORD’s cause.”⁴ So he⁵ took him along in his chariot. **10:17** He went to Samaria and exterminated all the members of Ahab’s family who were still alive in Samaria,⁶ just as the LORD had announced to Elijah.⁷

Jehu Executes the Prophets and Priests of Baal

10:18 Jehu assembled all the people and said to them, “Ahab worshiped⁸ Baal a little; Jehu will worship⁹ him with great devotion.¹⁰ **10:19** So now, bring to me all the prophets of Baal, as well as all his servants and priests.¹¹ None of them must be absent, for I am offering a great sacrifice to Baal. Any of them who fail to appear will lose their lives.” But Jehu was tricking them¹² so he could destroy the servants of Baal. **10:20** Then Jehu ordered, “Make arrangements for¹³ a celebration for Baal.” So they announced it. **10:21** Jehu sent invitations throughout Israel, and all the servants of Baal came; not one was absent. They arrived at the temple of Baal and filled it up from end to end.¹⁴ **10:22** Jehu ordered the one who was in charge of the wardrobe,¹⁵ “Bring out robes for all the servants of Baal.” So he brought out robes for them. **10:23** Then Jehu

and Jehonadab son of Rekab went to the temple of Baal. Jehu¹⁶ said to the servants of Baal, “Make sure there are no servants of the LORD here with you; there must be only servants of Baal.”¹⁷ **10:24** They went inside to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had stationed eighty men outside. He had told them, “If any of the men inside get away, you will pay with your lives!”¹⁸

10:25 When he finished offering the burnt sacrifice, Jehu ordered the royal guard¹⁹ and officers, “Come in and strike them down! Don’t let any escape!” So the royal guard and officers struck them down with the sword and left their bodies lying there.²⁰ Then they entered the inner sanctuary of the temple of Baal.²¹ **10:26** They hauled out the sacred pillar of the temple of Baal and burned it. **10:27** They demolished²² the sacred pillar of Baal and²³ the temple of Baal; it is used as²⁴ a latrine²⁵ to this very day. **10:28** So Jehu eradicated Baal worship²⁶ from Israel.

A Summary of Jehu’s Reign

10:29 However, Jehu did not repudiate the sins which Jeroboam son of Nebat had encouraged Israel to commit; the golden calves remained in Bethel²⁷ and Dan.²⁸ **10:30** The LORD said to Jehu, “You have done well. You have accomplished my will and carried out my wishes with regard to Ahab’s dynasty. Therefore four generations of your descendants will rule over

¹ **tc** Heb “Jehonadab said, ‘There is and there is. Give your hand.’” If the text is allowed to stand, there are two possible ways to understand the syntax of וַיֵּשׁ (vayesh), “and there is”: (1) The repetition of יֵשׁ (yesh, “there is and there is”) could be taken as emphatic, “indeed I am.” In this case, the entire statement could be taken as Jehonadab’s words or one could understand the words “give your hand” as Jehu’s. In the latter case the change in speakers is unmarked. (2) וַיֵּשׁ begins Jehu’s response and has a conditional force, “if you are.” In this case, the transition in speakers is unmarked. However, it is possible that וַיֵּשׁ (vayesh), “and he said,” or וַיֵּאמֶר (vayomer yehu), “and Jehu said,” originally appeared between יֵשׁ and וַיֵּשׁ and has accidentally dropped from the text by homoiarcton (note that both the proposed וַיֵּאמֶר and וַיֵּשׁ begin with vav, ו). The present translation assumes such a textual reconstruction; it is supported by the LXX, Syriac Peshitta, and Vulgate.

² **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Jehu) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Jehu) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴ **tn** Heb “and see my zeal for the LORD.”

⁵ **tc** The MT has a plural form, but this is most likely an error. The LXX, Syriac Peshitta, and Vulgate all have the singular.

⁶ **tn** Heb “and he struck down all the remaining ones to Ahab in Samaria until he destroyed him.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “according to the word of the LORD which he spoke to Elijah.”

⁸ **tn** Or “served.”

⁹ **tn** Or “serve.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “much” or “greatly.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “and now, all the prophets of Baal, all his servants and all his priests summon to me.”

¹² **tn** Heb “acted with deception [or, ‘trickery’].”

¹³ **tn** Heb “set apart”; or “observe as holy.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “and the house of Baal was filled mouth to mouth.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “and he said to the one who was over the wardrobe.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Jehu) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “Search carefully and observe so that there are not here with you any servants of the LORD, only the servants of Baal.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “The man who escapes from the men whom I am bringing into your hands, [it will be] his life in place of his life.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “runners.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “and they threw.” No object appears. According to M. Cogan and H. Tadmor (*II Kings* [AB], 116), this is an idiom for leaving a corpse unburied.

²¹ **tn** Heb “and they came to the city of the house of Baal.” It seems unlikely that a literal city is meant. Some emend *גֵּיזָר* (*ir*, “city,” to *דְּבִיר* (*d^lvir*) “holy place,” or suggest that *גֵּיזָר* is due to dittography of the immediately preceding *גֵּיזָר* (“ad”) “to.” Perhaps *גֵּיזָר* is here a technical term meaning “fortress” or, more likely, “inner room.”

²² **tn** Or “pulled down.”

²³ **tn** The verb “they demolished” is repeated in the Hebrew text.

²⁴ **tn** Heb “and they made it into.”

²⁵ **tn** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has the *hapax legomenon* מַכְחָרוֹת (*makhara’ot*), “places to defecate” or “dung houses” (note the related noun *כְּחָר* (*khri*)/*כְּחָרִי* (*khri*), “dung,” HALOT 348-49 s.v. *כְּחָרִי*). The marginal reading (*Qere*) glosses this, perhaps euphemistically, as מוֹצְאוֹת (*moisa’ot*), “outhouses.”

²⁶ **tn** Heb “destroyed Baal.”

²⁷ **map** For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

²⁸ **tn** Heb “Except the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat which he caused Israel to commit, Jehu did not turn aside from after them – the golden calves which [were in] Bethel and which [were] in Dan.”

Israel.¹ **10:31** But Jehu did not carefully and wholeheartedly obey the law of the LORD God of Israel.² He did not repudiate the sins which Jeroboam had encouraged Israel to commit.³

10:32 In those days the LORD began to reduce the size of Israel's territory.⁴ Hazael attacked their eastern border.⁵ **10:33** He conquered all the land of Gilead, including the territory of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh, extending all the way from the Arero in the Arnon Valley through Gilead to Bashan.⁶

10:34 The rest of the events of Jehu's reign, including all his accomplishments and successes, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.⁷ **10:35** Jehu passed away⁸ and was buried in Samaria.⁹ His son Jehoahaz replaced him as king. **10:36** Jehu reigned over Israel for twenty-eight years in Samaria.

Athaliah is Eliminated

11:1 When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she was determined to destroy the entire royal line.¹⁰ **11:2** So Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram and sister of Ahaziah, took Ahaziah's son Joash and sneaked¹¹ him away from the rest of the royal descendants who were to be executed. She hid him and his nurse in the room where the bed covers were stored.¹² So he was hidden from

¹ **tn** *Heb* "Because you have done well by doing what is proper in my eyes – according to all which was in my heart you have done to the house of Ahab – sons of four generations will sit for you on the throne of Israel." In the Hebrew text the Lord's statement is one long sentence (with a parenthesis). The translation above divides it into shorter sentences for stylistic reasons.

sn Jehu ruled over Israel from approximately 841-814 B.C. Four of his descendants (Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, and Zechariah) ruled from approximately 814-753 B.C. The dynasty came to an end when Shallum assassinated Zechariah in 753 B.C. See 2 Kgs 15:8-12.

² **tn** *Heb* "But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart."

³ **tn** *Heb* "He did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam which he caused Israel to commit."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "began to cut off Israel."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Hazael struck them down in all the territory of Israel, from the Jordan on the east." In the Hebrew text the phrase "from the Jordan on the east" begins v. 33.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassehites, from Arero which is near the Arnon Valley, and Gilead, and Bashan."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Jehu, and all which he did and all his strength, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?"

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

⁹ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "she arose and she destroyed all the royal offspring." The verb *qum* ("arise," is here used in an auxiliary sense to indicate that she embarked on a campaign to destroy the royal offspring. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 125.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "stole."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "him and his nurse in an inner room of beds." The verb is missing in the Hebrew text. The parallel passage in 2 Chr 22:11 has "and she put" at the beginning of the clause. M. Cogan and H. Tadmor (*II Kings* [AB], 126) regard the Chronicles passage as an editorial attempt to clarify the difficulty of the original text. They prefer to take "him and his

Athaliah and escaped execution.¹³ **11:3** He hid out with his nurse in the LORD's temple¹⁴ for six years, while Athaliah was ruling over the land.

11:4 In the seventh year Jehoiada summoned¹⁵ the officers of the units of hundreds of the Carians¹⁶ and the royal bodyguard.¹⁷ He met with them¹⁸ in the LORD's temple. He made an agreement¹⁹ with them and made them swear an oath of allegiance in the LORD's temple. Then he showed them the king's son. **11:5** He ordered them, "This is what you must do. One third of the unit that is on duty during the Sabbath will guard the royal palace. **11:6** Another third of you will be stationed at the Foundation²⁰ Gate. Still another third of you will be stationed at the gate behind the royal guard.²¹ You will take turns guarding the palace.²² **11:7** The two units who are off duty on the Sabbath will guard the LORD's temple and protect the king.²³ **11:8** You must surround the king. Each of you must hold his weapon in his hand. Whoever approaches

nurse" as objects of the verb "stole" and understand "in the bedroom" as the place where the royal descendants were executed. The phrase *בְּחֵדָר הַחַמִּיטוֹת* (*bakhadar hammittot*), "an inner room of beds," is sometimes understood as referring to a bedroom (*HALOT* 293 s.v. *חֵדָר*), though some prefer to see here a "room where the covers and cloths were kept for the beds (*HALOT* 573 s.v. *בִּמְצֵה*). In either case, it may have been a temporary hideout, for v. 3 indicates that the child hid in the temple for six years.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "and they hid him from Athaliah and he was not put to death." The subject of the plural verb ("they hid") is probably indefinite.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and he was with her [in] the house of the LORD hiding."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Jehoiada sent and took."

¹⁶ **sn** The Carians were apparently a bodyguard, probably comprised of foreigners. See *HALOT* 497 s.v. *כָּרִי* and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 126.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "the runners."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "he brought them to himself."

¹⁹ **tn** Or "covenant."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the gate of Sur" (followed by many English versions) but no such gate is mentioned elsewhere in the OT. The parallel account in 2 Chr 23:5 has "Foundation Gate." *סור* (*sur*), "Sur," may be a corruption of *יסוד* (*yśod*) "foundation," involving in part *dalet-resh* confusion.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "the runners."

²² **tn** The meaning of *בָּחָס* (*massakh*) is not certain. The translation above, rather than understanding it as a genitive modifying "house," takes it as an adverb describing how the groups will guard the palace. See *HALOT* 605 s.v. *בָּחָס* for the proposed meaning "alternating" (i.e., "in turns").

²³ **tn** Verses 5b-7 read literally, "the third of you, the ones entering [on] the Sabbath and the ones guarding the guard of the house of the king, and the third in the gate of Sur, and the third in the gate behind the runners, and you will guard the guard of the house, alternating. And the two units of you, all the ones going out [on] the Sabbath, and they will guard the guard of the house of the LORD for the king." The precise meaning of this text is impossible to determine. It would appear that the Carians and royal bodyguard were divided into three units. One unit would serve during the Sabbath; the other two would be off duty on the Sabbath. Jehoiada divided the first unit into three groups and assigned them different locations. The two off duty units were assigned the task of guarding the king.

your ranks must be killed. You must accompany the king wherever he goes.”¹

11:9 The officers of the units of hundreds did just as² Jehoiada the priest ordered. Each of them took his men, those who were on duty during the Sabbath as well as those who were off duty on the Sabbath, and reported³ to Jehoiada the priest.

11:10 The priest gave to the officers of the units of hundreds King David’s spears and the shields that were kept in the LORD’s temple. **11:11** The royal bodyguard⁴ took their stations, each holding his weapon in his hand. They lined up from the south side of the temple to the north side and stood near the altar and the temple, surrounding the king.⁵

11:12 Jehoiada⁶ led out the king’s son and placed on him the crown and the royal insignia.⁷ They proclaimed him king and poured olive oil on his head.⁸ They clapped their hands and cried out, “Long live the king!”

11:13 When Athaliah heard the royal guard⁹ shout, she joined the crowd¹⁰ at the LORD’s temple.

11:14 Then she saw¹¹ the king standing by the pillar, according to custom. The officers stood beside the king with their trumpets and all the people of the land were celebrating and blowing trumpets. Athaliah tore her clothes and screamed, “Treason, treason!”¹²

11:15 Jehoiada the priest ordered the officers of the units of hundreds, who were in charge of the army,¹³ “Bring her outside the temple to the guards.¹⁴ Put the sword to anyone who follows her.” The priest gave this order because he had decided she should not be executed in the LORD’s temple.¹⁵

11:16 They seized her and took her into the pre-

cincts of the royal palace through the horses’ entrance.¹⁶ There she was executed.

11:17 Jehoiada then drew up a covenant between the LORD and the king and people, stipulating that they should be loyal to the LORD.¹⁷ **11:18** All the people of the land went and demolished¹⁸ the temple of Baal. They smashed its altars and idols¹⁹ to bits.²⁰ They killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altar. Jehoiada the priest²¹ then placed guards at the LORD’s temple. **11:19** He took the officers of the units of hundreds, the Carians, the royal bodyguard, and all the people of land, and together they led the king down from the LORD’s temple. They entered the royal palace through the Gate of the Royal Bodyguard,²² and the king²³ sat down on the royal throne. **11:20** All the people of the land celebrated, for the city had rest now that they had killed Athaliah with the sword in the royal palace.

Joash’s Reign over Judah

11:21 (12:1)²⁴ Jehoash²⁵ was seven years old when he began to reign. **12:1** (12:2) In Jehu’s seventh year Jehoash became king; he reigned for forty years in Jerusalem.²⁶ His mother was Zibiah, who was from Beer Sheba. **12:2** Throughout his lifetime Jehoash did what the LORD approved,²⁷ just as²⁸ Jehoiada the priest taught him. **12:3** But the high places were not

¹⁶ *tn* Heb “and they placed hands on her, and she went the way of the entrance of the horses [into] the house of the king.”

¹⁷ *tn* Heb “and Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and [between] the king and [between] the people, to become a people for the LORD, and between the king and [between] the people.” The final words of the verse (“and between the king and [between] the people”) are probably accidentally repeated from earlier in the verse. They do not appear in the parallel account in 2 Chr 23:16. If retained, they probably point to an agreement governing how the king and people should relate to one another.

¹⁸ *tn* Or “tore down.”

¹⁹ *tn* Or “images.”

²⁰ *tn* The Hebrew construction translated “smashed...to bits” is emphatic. The adverbial infinitive absolute [הֵטְבוּ *hetev*], “well”) accompanying the Piel form of the verb שָׁבַר (*shavar*), “break,” suggests thorough demolition.

²¹ *tn* Heb “the priest.” Jehoiada’s name is added for clarification.

²² *tn* Heb “the Gate of the Runners of the House of the King.”

²³ *tn* Heb “he”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁴ *sn* Beginning with **11:21**, the verse numbers through **12:21** in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (*BHS*), with **11:21** ET = **12:1** HT, **12:1** ET = **12:2** HT, **12:2** ET = **12:3** HT, etc., through **12:21** ET = **12:22** HT. With **13:1** the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

²⁵ *tn* Jehoash is an alternate name for Joash (see 11:2).

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

²⁷ *tn* Heb “and Jehoash did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD all his days.”

²⁸ *tn* Heb “that which.” Jehoiada taught the king the Lord’s will.

¹ *tn* Heb “and be with the king in his going out and in his coming in.”

² *tn* Heb “according to all that.”

³ *tn* Heb “came.”

⁴ *tn* Heb “the runners” (also in v. 19).

⁵ *tn* Heb “and the runners stood, each with his weapons in his hand, from the south shoulder of the house to the north shoulder of the house, at the altar and at the house, near the king all around.”

⁶ *tn* Heb “he”; the referent (Jehoiada) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁷ *tn* The Hebrew term עֵדוּת (*’edut*) normally means “witness” or “testimony.” Here it probably refers to some tangible symbol of kingship, perhaps a piece of jewelry such as an amulet or neck chain. See the discussion in M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 128. Some suggest that a document is in view, perhaps a copy of the royal protocol or of the stipulations of the Davidic covenant. See HALOT 790-91 s.v. עֵדוּת.

⁸ *tn* Or “they made him king and anointed him.”

⁹ *tc* The MT reads, “and Athaliah heard the sound of the runners, the people.” The term הָיָה (*ha’am*), “the people,” is probably a scribal addition anticipating the reference to the people later in the verse and in v. 14.

¹⁰ *tn* Heb “she came to the people.”

¹¹ *tn* Heb “and she saw, and look.”

¹² *tn* Or “conspiracy, conspiracy.”

¹³ *tn* The Hebrew text also has, “and said to them.” This is redundant in English and has not been translated.

¹⁴ *tn* Heb “ranks.”

¹⁵ *tn* Heb “for the priest had said, ‘Let her not be put to death in the house of the LORD.’”

eliminated; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense on the high places.

12:4 Jehoash said to the priests, "I place at your disposal¹ all the consecrated silver that has been brought to the LORD's temple, including the silver collected from the census tax,² the silver received from those who have made vows,³ and all the silver that people have voluntarily contributed to the LORD's temple."⁴ **12:5** The priests should receive the silver they need from the treasurers and repair any damage to the temple they discover."⁵

12:6 By the twenty-third year of King Jehoash's reign the priests had still not repaired the damage to the temple. **12:7** So King Jehoash summoned Jehoiada the priest along with the other priests, and said to them, "Why have you not repaired the damage to the temple? Now, take no more silver from your treasurers unless you intend to use it to repair the damage."⁶ **12:8** The priests agreed⁷ not to collect silver from the people and relieved themselves of personal responsibility for the temple repairs.⁸

12:9 Jehoiada the priest took a chest and drilled a hole in its lid. He placed it on the right side of the altar near the entrance of⁹ the LORD's temple. The priests who guarded the entrance would put into it all the silver brought to the LORD's temple. **12:10** When they saw the chest was full of silver, the royal secretary¹⁰ and the high priest counted the silver that had been brought to the LORD's temple and bagged it up.¹¹

¹ **tn** The words "I place at your disposal" are added in the translation for clarification.

² **tn** *Heb* "the silver of passing over a man." The precise meaning of the phrase is debated, but קָבַר (*avar*, "pass over," probably refers here to counting, suggesting the reference is to a census conducted for taxation purposes. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 137.

³ **tn** *Heb* "the silver of persons, his valuation." The precise meaning of the phrase is uncertain, but parallels in Lev 27 suggest that personal vows are referred to here. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 137.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "all the silver which goes up on the heart of a man to bring to the house of the LORD."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Let the priests take for themselves, each from his treasurer, and let them repair the damage of the temple, with respect to all the damage that is found there." The word קָבַר (*makar*), translated here "treasurer," occurs only in this passage. Some suggest it means "merchant" or "benefactor." Its usage in Ugaritic texts, where it appears in a list of temple officials, suggests that it refers in this context to individuals who were in charge of disbursing temple funds.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "Now, do not take silver from your treasurers, because for the damages to the temple you must give it."

⁷ **tn** Outside of this passage the verb אָוַת (*au*) appears only in Gen 34:15-22.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and not to repair the damages to the temple." This does not mean that the priests were no longer interested in repairing the temple. As the following context makes clear, the priests decided to hire skilled workers to repair the damage to the temple, rather than trying to make the repairs themselves.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "on the right side of the altar as a man enters."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the king's scribe."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "went up and tied [it] and counted the silver that was found in the house of the LORD." The order of the clauses has been rearranged in the translation to make better sense in English, since it seems more logical to count the money before bagging it (cf. NIV, NCV, NRSV, NLT).

12:11 They would then hand over¹² the silver that had been weighed to the construction foremen¹³ assigned to the LORD's temple. They hired carpenters and builders to work on the LORD's temple, **12:12** as well as masons and stonemasons. They bought wood and chiseled stone to repair the damage to the LORD's temple and also paid for all the other expenses.¹⁴ **12:13** The silver brought to the LORD's temple was not used for silver bowls, trimming shears, basins, trumpets, or any kind of gold or silver implements. **12:14** It was handed over¹⁵ to the foremen who used it to repair the LORD's temple. **12:15** They did not audit the treasurers who disbursed¹⁶ the funds to the foremen, for they were honest.¹⁷ **12:16** (The silver collected in conjunction with reparation offerings and sin offerings was not brought to the LORD's temple; it belonged to the priests.)

12:17 At that time King Hazael of Syria attacked¹⁸ Gath and captured it. Hazael then decided to attack Jerusalem.¹⁹ **12:18** King Jehoash of Judah collected all the sacred items that his ancestors Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, had consecrated, as well as his own sacred items and all the gold that could be found in the treasuries of the LORD's temple and the royal palace. He sent it all²⁰ to King Hazael of Syria, who then withdrew²¹ from Jerusalem.

12:19 The rest of the events of Joash's reign, including all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.²² **12:20** His servants conspired against him²³ and murdered Joash at Beth-Millo, on the road that goes down to Silla.²⁴ **12:21** His servants Jozabad son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer murdered him.²⁵ He was buried²⁶ with his ancestors in the City of David. His son Amaziah replaced him as king.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "would give."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "doers of the work."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and for all that which was going out concerning the house for repair."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "was given."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "gave."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and they did not conduct a reckoning of the men who gave the silver into their hand to give to the doers of the work, for in honesty they were working."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "went up and fought against."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "Hazael set his face to go up against Jerusalem."

²⁰ **tn** The object ("it all") is supplied in the translation for clarification.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "went up."

²² **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Joash, and all which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?"

²³ **tn** *Heb* "rose up and conspired [with] a conspiracy."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "Beth Millo which goes down [toward] Silla."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "struck him down and he died."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "they buried him."

Jehoahaz's Reign over Israel

13:1 In the twenty-third year of the reign of Judah's King Joash son of Ahaziah, Jehu's son Jehoahaz became king over Israel. He reigned in Samaria¹ for seventeen years. **13:2** He did evil in the sight of² the LORD. He continued in³ the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat who had encouraged Israel to sin; he did not repudiate those sins.⁴ **13:3** The LORD was furious with⁵ Israel and handed them over to⁶ King Hazael of Syria and to Hazael's son Ben Hadad for many years.⁷

13:4 Jehoahaz asked for the LORD's mercy⁸ and the LORD responded favorably,⁹ for he saw that Israel was oppressed by the king of Syria.¹⁰ **13:5** The LORD provided a deliverer¹¹ for Israel and they were freed from Syria's power.¹² The Israelites once more lived in security.¹³ **13:6** But they did not repudiate¹⁴ the sinful ways of the family¹⁵ of Jeroboam, who encouraged Israel to sin; they continued in those sins.¹⁶ There was even an Asherah pole¹⁷ standing in Samaria. **13:7** Jehoahaz had no army left¹⁸ except for fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and 10,000 foot soldiers. The king of Syria had destroyed his troops¹⁹ and trampled on them like dust.²⁰

13:8 The rest of the events of Jehoahaz's reign, including all his accomplishments and successes, are recorded in the scroll called the

Annals of the Kings of Israel.²¹ **13:9** Jehoahaz passed away²² and was buried²³ in Samaria. His son Joash replaced him as king.

Jehoash's Reign over Israel

13:10 In the thirty-seventh year of King Joash's reign over Judah, Jehoahaz's son Jehoash became king over Israel. He reigned in Samaria²⁴ for sixteen years. **13:11** He did evil in the sight of²⁵ the LORD. He did not repudiate²⁶ the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat who encouraged Israel to sin; he continued in those sins.²⁷ **13:12** The rest of the events of Joash's²⁸ reign, including all his accomplishments and his successful war with King Amaziah of Judah, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.²⁹ **13:13** Joash passed away³⁰ and Jeroboam succeeded him on the throne.³¹ Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Elisha Makes One Final Prophecy

13:14 Now Elisha had a terminal illness.³² King Joash of Israel went down to visit him.³³ He wept before him and said, "My father, my father! The chariot³⁴ and horsemen of Israel!"³⁵ **13:15** Elisha told him, "Take a bow and some arrows," and he did so.³⁶ **13:16** Then Elisha³⁷ told the king of Israel, "Aim the bow."³⁸ He did so,³⁹ and Elisha placed his hands on the king's hands. **13:17** Elisha⁴⁰ said, "Open the east window," and he did so.⁴¹ Elisha said, "Shoot!" and

¹ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

² tn Heb "in the eyes of."

³ tn Heb "walked after."

⁴ tn Heb "he did not turn aside from it."

⁵ tn Heb "and the anger of the LORD burned against."

⁶ tn Heb "he gave them into the hand of."

⁷ tn Heb "all the days."

⁸ tn Heb "appeased the face of the LORD."

⁹ tn Heb "and the LORD heard."

¹⁰ tn Heb "for he saw the oppression of Israel, for the king of Syria oppressed them."

¹¹ sn The identity of this unnamed "deliverer" is debated. For options see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 143.

¹² tn Heb "and they went from under the hand of Syria."

¹³ tn Heb "and the sons of Israel lived in their tents as before."

¹⁴ tn Heb "they did not turn away from."

¹⁵ tn Heb "house."

¹⁶ tc Heb "in it he walked." The singular verb (הָלַךְ, *halakh*) is probably due to an error of haplography and should be emended to the plural (הָלַכּוּ, *hal'ku*). Note that a vav immediately follows (on the form וַיִּגַּם, *v'gam*).

¹⁷ tn Or "an image of Asherah"; ASV, NASB "the Asherah"; NCV "the Asherah idol."

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

¹⁹ tn Heb "Indeed he did not leave to Jehoahaz people." The identity of the subject is uncertain, but the king of Syria, mentioned later in the verse, is a likely candidate.

²⁰ tn Heb "them," i.e., the remainder of this troops.

²¹ tn Heb "and made them like dust for trampling."

²² tn Heb "As for the rest of the events of Jehoahaz, and all which he did and his strength, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?"

²³ tn Heb "lay down with his fathers."

²⁴ tn Heb "and they buried him."

²⁵ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

²⁶ tn Heb "in the eyes of."

²⁷ tn Heb "turn away from all."

²⁸ tn Heb "in it he walked."

²⁹ sn Jehoash and Joash are alternate forms of the same name.

³⁰ tn Heb "As for the rest of the events of Joash, and all which he did and his strength, [and] how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?"

³¹ tn Heb "lay down with his fathers."

³² tn Heb "sat on his throne."

³³ tn Heb "Now Elisha was ill with the illness by which he would die."

³⁴ tn Heb "went down to him."

³⁵ tn Though the noun is singular here, it may be collective, in which case it could be translated "chariots."

³⁶ sn By comparing Elisha to a one-man army, the king emphasizes the power of the prophetic word. See the note at 2:12.

³⁷ tn Heb "and he took a bow and some arrows."

³⁸ tn Heb "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³⁹ tn Heb "Cause your hand to ride on the bow."

⁴⁰ tn Heb "and he caused his hand to ride."

⁴¹ tn Heb "he"; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴² tn Heb "He opened [it]."

he did so.¹ Elisha² said, “This arrow symbolizes the victory the LORD will give you over Syria.³ You will annihilate Syria in Aphek!”⁴ **13:18** Then Elisha⁵ said, “Take the arrows,” and he did so.⁶ He told the king of Israel, “Strike the ground!” He struck the ground three times and stopped. **13:19** The prophet⁷ got angry at him and said, “If you had struck the ground five or six times, you would have annihilated Syria!⁸ But now, you will defeat Syria only three times.”

13:20 Elisha died and was buried.⁹ Moabite raiding parties invaded¹⁰ the land at the beginning of the year.¹¹ **13:21** One day some men¹² were burying a man when they spotted¹³ a raiding party. So they threw the dead man¹⁴ into Elisha’s tomb. When the body¹⁵ touched Elisha’s bones, the dead man¹⁶ came to life and stood on his feet.

13:22 Now King Hazael of Syria oppressed Israel throughout Jehoahaz’s reign.¹⁷ **13:23** But the LORD had mercy on them and felt pity for them.¹⁸ He extended his favor to them¹⁹ because of the promise he had made²⁰ to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He has been unwilling to destroy them or remove them from his presence to this very day.²¹ **13:24** When King Hazael of Syria died, his son Ben Hadad replaced him as king. **13:25** Jehoahaz’s son Jehoash took back from²² Ben Hadad son of Hazael the cities that he had taken from his father Jehoahaz in war. Joash defeated him three times and recovered the Israelite cities.

Amaziah’s Reign over Judah

14:1 In the second year of the reign of Israel’s King Joash son of Joahaz,²³ Joash’s²⁴ son Amaziah became king over Judah. **14:2** He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for twenty-nine years in Jerusalem.²⁵ His mother²⁶ was Jehoaddan, who was from Jerusalem. **14:3** He did what the LORD approved,²⁷ but not like David his father. He followed the example of his father Joash.²⁸ **14:4** But the high places were not eliminated; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense on the high places.

14:5 When he had secured control of the kingdom,²⁹ he executed the servants who had assassinated his father.³⁰ **14:6** But he did not execute the sons of the assassins. He obeyed the LORD’s commandment as recorded in the law scroll of Moses,³¹ “Fathers must not be put to death for what their sons do,³² and sons must not be put to death for what their fathers do.³³ A man must be put to death only for his own sin.”³⁴

14:7 He defeated³⁵ 10,000 Edomites in the Salt Valley; he captured Sela in battle and renamed it Joktheel, a name it has retained to this very day. **14:8** Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel. He said, “Come, let’s meet face to face.”³⁶ **14:9** King Jehoash of Israel sent this message back to King Amaziah of Judah, “A thorn-bush in Lebanon sent this message to a cedar in Lebanon, ‘Give your daughter to my son as a wife.’ Then a wild animal³⁷ of Lebanon came by and trampled down the thorn.³⁸ **14:10** You thoroughly defeated Edom³⁹ and it has gone to your

¹ tn Heb “and he shot.”

² tn Heb “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³ tn Heb “The arrow of victory of the LORD and the arrow of victory over Syria.”

⁴ tn Heb “you will strike down Syria in Aphek until destruction.”

⁵ tn Heb “he”; the referent (Elisha) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁶ tn Heb “and he took [them].”

⁷ tn Heb “man of God.”

⁸ tn Heb “[It was necessary] to strike five or six times, then you would strike down Syria until destruction.” On the syntax of the infinitive construct, see GKC 349 §114.k.

⁹ tn Heb “and they buried him.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “entered.”

¹¹ tc The MT reading בָּא שָׁנָה (*ba’ shanah*), “it came, year,” should probably be emended to בְּבֵאֵת הַשָּׁנָה (*b’ba’ hashanah*), “at the coming [i.e., ‘beginning’] of the year.” See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 148.

¹² tn Heb “and it so happened [that] they.”

¹³ tn Heb “and look, they saw.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “the man”; the adjective “dead” has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

¹⁵ tn Heb “the man.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “he”; the referent (the dead man) has been specified in the translation for clarity. Otherwise the reader might think it was Elisha rather than the unnamed dead man who came back to life.

¹⁷ tn Heb “all the days of Jehoahaz.”

¹⁸ tn Or “showed them compassion.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “he turned to them.”

²⁰ tn Heb “because of his covenant with.”

²¹ tn Heb “until now.”

²² tn Heb “from the hand of.”

²³ sn The name *Joahaz* is an alternate form of Jehoahaz.

²⁴ sn The referent here is Joash of Judah (see 12:21), not Joash of Israel, mentioned earlier in the verse.

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

²⁶ tn Heb “the name of his mother.”

²⁷ tn Heb “he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD.”

²⁸ tn Heb “according to all which Joash his father had done, he did.”

²⁹ tn Heb “when the kingdom was secure in his hand.”

³⁰ tn Heb “he struck down his servants, the ones who had struck down the king, his father.”

³¹ tn Heb “as it is written in the scroll of the law of Moses which the LORD commanded, saying.”

³² tn Heb “on account of sons.”

³³ tn Heb “on account of fathers.”

³⁴ sn This law is recorded in Deut 24:16.

³⁵ tn Or “struck down.”

³⁶ tn Heb “let us look at each other [in the] face.” The expression refers here to meeting in battle. See v. 11.

³⁷ tn Heb “the animal of the field.”

³⁸ sn Judah is the *thorn* in the allegory. Amaziah’s success has deceived him into thinking he is on the same level as the major powers in the area (symbolized by the cedar). In reality he is not capable of withstanding an attack by a real military power such as Israel (symbolized by the wild animal).

³⁹ tn Or “you have indeed defeated Edom.”

head!¹ Gloat over your success,² but stay in your palace. Why bring calamity on yourself? Why bring down yourself and Judah along with you?”³ **14:11** But Amaziah would not heed the warning,⁴ so King Jehoash of Israel attacked.⁵ He and King Amaziah of Judah met face to face⁶ in Beth Shemesh of Judah. **14:12** Judah was defeated by Israel, and each man ran back home.⁷ **14:13** King Jehoash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah, son of Jehoash son of Ahaziah, in Beth Shemesh. He⁸ attacked⁹ Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate – a distance of about six hundred feet.¹⁰ **14:14** He took away all the gold and silver, all the items found in the LORD’s temple and in the treasuries of the royal palace, and some hostages.¹¹ Then he went back to Samaria.¹²

(**14:15** The rest of the events of Jehoash’s¹³ reign, including all his accomplishments and his successful war with King Amaziah of Judah, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.¹⁴ **14:16** Jehoash passed away¹⁵ and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. His son Jeroboam replaced him as king.)

14:17 King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah lived for fifteen years after the death of King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz of Israel. **14:18** The rest of the events of Amaziah’s reign are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.¹⁶ **14:19** Conspirators plotted against him in Jerusalem,¹⁷ so he fled to Lachish. But they sent assassins after him¹⁸ and they killed him there. **14:20** His body was carried back by

horses¹⁹ and he was buried in Jerusalem with his ancestors in the City of David. **14:21** All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in his father Amaziah’s place. **14:22** Azariah²⁰ built up Elat and restored it to Judah after the king²¹ had passed away.²²

Jeroboam II’s Reign over Israel

14:23 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Judah’s King Amaziah, son of Joash, Jeroboam son of Joash became king over Israel. He reigned for forty-one years in Samaria.²³ **14:24** He did evil in the sight of²⁴ the LORD; he did not repudiate²⁵ the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat who encouraged Israel to sin. **14:25** He restored the border of Israel from Lebo Hamath in the north to the sea of the Arabah in the south,²⁶ in accordance with the word of the LORD God of Israel announced through²⁷ his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hopher. **14:26** The LORD saw Israel’s intense suffering,²⁸ everyone was weak and incapacitated and Israel had no deliverer.²⁹ **14:27** The LORD had not decreed that he would blot out Israel’s memory³⁰ from under heaven,³¹ so he delivered them through Jeroboam son of Joash.

14:28 The rest of the events of Jeroboam’s reign, including all his accomplishments, his military success in restoring Israelite control over Damascus and Hamath, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.³² **14:29**

¹ **tn** Heb “and they carried him on horses.”

² **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Azariah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³ **sn** This must refer to Amaziah.

⁴ **tn** Heb “lay with his fathers.”

⁵ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

⁶ **tn** Heb “in the eyes of.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “turn away from all.”

⁸ **tn** The phrases “in the north” and “in the south” are added in the translation for clarification.

⁹ **tn** Heb “which he spoke by the hand of.”

¹⁰ **tc** Heb “for the LORD saw the very bitter affliction of Israel.” This translation assumes an emendation of מְרֵה (moreh), which is meaningless here, to מַרְרָה (hammar), the adjective “bitter” functioning attributively with the article prefixed. This emendation is supported by the LXX, Syriac Peshitta, and Vulgate. Another option would be מַרְרָה (mar hu’), “it was bitter.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “[there was] none but the restrained, and [there was] none but the abandoned, and there was no deliverer for Israel.” On the meaning of the terms מְרֵה (atsur) and קְיֹוֹב (azur), see the note at 1 Kgs 14:10.

¹² **tn** Heb “name.”

¹³ **tn** The phrase “from under heaven” adds emphasis to the verb “blot out” and suggest total annihilation. For other examples of the verb מַחְחָה (makhah), “blot out,” combined with “from under heaven,” see Exod 17:14; Deut 9:14; 25:19; 29:20.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “As for the rest of the events of Jeroboam, and all which he did and his strength, [and] how he fought and how he restored Damascus and Hamath to Judah in Israel, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?” The phrase “to Judah” is probably not original; it may be a scribal addition by a Judahite scribe who was trying to link Jeroboam’s conquests with the earlier achievements of David and Solomon, who ruled in Judah. The Syriac Peshitta has simply “to Israel.” M. Cogan and A. Tadmor (*II Kings* [AB], 162) offer this proposal, but acknowledge that it is

¹ **tn** Heb “and your heart has lifted you up.”

² **tn** Heb “be glorified.”

³ **tn** Heb “Why get involved in calamity and fall, you and Judah with you?”

⁴ **tn** Heb “did not listen.”

⁵ **tn** Heb “went up.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “looked at each other [in the] face.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “and Judah was struck down before Israel and they fled, each to his tent.”

⁸ **tc** The MT has the plural form of the verb, but the final *vav* (ו) is virtually dittographic. The word that immediately follows in the Hebrew text begins with a *yod* (י). The form should be emended to the singular, which is consistent in number with the verb (“he broke down”) that follows.

⁹ **tn** Heb “came to.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “four hundred cubits.” The standard cubit in the OT is assumed by most authorities to be about eighteen inches (45 cm) long.

¹¹ **tn** Heb “the sons of the pledges.”

¹² **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

¹³ **sn** Jehoash and Joash are alternate forms of the same name.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “As for the rest of the events of Jehoash, and all which he did and his strength, [and] how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “lay down with his fathers.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “As for the rest of the events of Amaziah, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “and they conspired against him [with] a conspiracy in Jerusalem.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “and they sent after him to Lachish.”

Jeroboam passed away¹ and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.² His son Zechariah replaced him as king.

Azariah's Reign over Judah

15:1 In the twenty-seventh year of King Jeroboam's reign over Israel, Amaziah's son Azariah became king over Judah. **15:2** He was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem.³ His mother's name was Jeholiah, who was from Jerusalem. **15:3** He did what the LORD approved, just as his father Amaziah had done.⁴ **15:4** But the high places were not eliminated; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense on the high places. **15:5** The LORD afflicted the king with an illness; he suffered from a skin disease⁵ until the day he died. He lived in separate quarters,⁶ while his son Jotham was in charge of the palace and ruled over the people of the land.

15:6 The rest of the events of Azariah's reign, including all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.⁷ **15:7** Azariah passed away⁸ and was buried⁹ with his ancestors in the City of David. His son Jotham replaced him as king.

Zechariah's Reign over Israel

15:8 In the thirty-eighth year of King Azariah's reign over Judah, Jeroboam's son Zechariah became king over Israel. He reigned in Samaria¹⁰ for six months. **15:9** He did evil in the sight of¹¹ the LORD, as his ancestors had done. He did not repudiate¹² the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat who encouraged Israel to sin. **15:10** Shallum son of Jabesh conspired

against him; he assassinated him in Ibleam¹³ and took his place as king. **15:11** The rest of the events of Zechariah's reign are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.¹⁴ **15:12** His assassination brought to fulfillment the LORD's word to Jehu,¹⁵ "Four generations of your descendants will rule over Israel."¹⁶ That is exactly what happened.¹⁷

15:13 Shallum son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of King Uzziah's¹⁸ reign over Judah. He reigned for one month¹⁹ in Samaria. **15:14** Menahem son of Gadi went up from Tirzah to²⁰ Samaria and attacked Shallum son of Jabesh. He killed him and took his place as king. **15:15** The rest of the events of Shallum's reign, including the conspiracy he organized, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.²² **15:16** At that time Menahem came from Tirzah and attacked Tiphshah. He struck down all who lived in the city and the surrounding territory, because they would not surrender.²³ He even ripped open the pregnant women.

Menahem's Reign over Israel

15:17 In the thirty-ninth year of King Azariah's reign over Judah, Menahem son of Gadi became king over Israel. He reigned for twelve years in Samaria.²⁴ **15:18** He did evil in

"highly speculative."

¹ **tn** *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

² **tn** The MT has simply "with the kings of Israel," which appears to stand in apposition to the immediately preceding "with his fathers." But it is likely that the words "and he was buried in Samaria" have been accidentally omitted from the text. See 13:13 and 14:16.

³ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD, according to all which Amaziah his father had done."

⁵ **tn** Traditionally, "he was a leper." But see the note at 5:1.

⁶ **tn** The precise meaning of בית הַחֲפוֹשִׁית (*bet hakhof'shit*), "house of [...?]," is uncertain. For a discussion of various proposals, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 166-67.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Azariah, and all which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?"

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and they buried him."

¹⁰ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "turn away from."

¹³ **tc** The MT reads, "and he struck him down before the people and killed him" (cf. KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT). However, the reading קָבַל עָמוֹ (*qaval'am*), "before the people," is problematic to some because קָבַל is a relatively late Aramaic term. Nevertheless, the Aramaic term *qobel* certainly antedates the writing of Kings. The bigger problem seems to be the unnecessary intrusion of an Aramaic word at all here. Most interpreters prefer to follow Lucian's Greek version and read "in Ibleam" (בִּיבְלָאִם, *b^evle'am*). Cf. NAB, TEV.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Jeroboam, look, they are written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "It was the word of the LORD which he spoke to Jehu, saying."

¹⁶ **tn** "sons of four generations will sit for you on the throne of Israel."

¹⁷ **sn** See the note at 2 Kgs 10:30.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and it was so."

¹⁹ **sn** Azariah was also known by the name Uzziah.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "a month of days."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "and came to."

²² **tn** *Heb* "went up from Tirzah and arrived in Samaria and attacked Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he conspired, look, they are written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "then Menahem attacked Tiphshah and all who were in it and its borders from Tirzah, for it would not open, and he attacked."

²⁵ **tn** Instead of "Tiphshah," the LXX has "Tirzah," while Lucian's Greek version reads "Tappuah." For discussion see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 171.

²⁶ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

the sight of¹ the LORD; he did not repudiate² the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat who encouraged Israel to sin.³

During his reign, 15:19 Pul⁴ king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem paid⁵ him⁶ a thousand talents⁷ of silver to gain his support⁸ and to solidify his control of the kingdom.⁹ 15:20 Menahem got this silver by taxing all the wealthy men in Israel; he took fifty shekels of silver from each one of them and paid it to the king of Assyria.¹⁰ Then the king of Assyria left; he did not stay there in the land.

15:21 The rest of the events of Menahem's reign, including all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.¹¹ 15:22 Menahem passed away¹² and his son Pekahiah replaced him as king.

Pekahiah's Reign over Israel

15:23 In the fiftieth year of King Azariah's reign over Judah, Menahem's son Pekahiah became king over Israel. He reigned in Samaria¹³ for two years. 15:24 He did evil in the sight of¹⁴ the LORD; he did not repudiate¹⁵ the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat who encouraged Israel to sin. 15:25 His officer Pekah son of Remaliah conspired against him. He and fifty Gileadites assassinated Pekahiah, as well as Argob and Arieih, in Samaria in the fortress of the royal palace.¹⁶ Pekah then took his place as king.

¹ **tn** Heb "in the eyes of."

² **tn** Heb "turn away from."

³ **tc** The MT of v. 18 ends with the words, "all his days." If this phrase is taken with what precedes, then one should translate, "[who encouraged Israel to sin] throughout his reign." However, it may be preferable to emend the text to כָּיָו (b⁶yomav), "in his days," and join the phrase to what follows. The translation assumes this change.

⁴ **sn** Pul was a nickname of Tiglath-pileser III (cf. 15:29). See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 171-72.

⁵ **tn** Heb "gave."

⁶ **tn** Heb "Pul." The proper name has been replaced by the pronoun ("him") in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew term כִּכְרָר (*kikkar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or to a standard unit of weight, generally regarded as a talent. Since the accepted weight for a talent of metal is about 75 pounds, this would have amounted to about 75,000 pounds of silver (cf. NCV "about seventy-four thousand pounds"); NLT "thirty-seven tons"; CEV "over thirty tons"; TEV "34,000 kilogrammes."

⁸ **tn** Heb "so his hands would be with him."

⁹ **tn** Heb "to keep hold of the kingdom in his hand."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "and Menahem brought out the silver over Israel, over the prominent men of means, to give to the king of Assyria, fifty shekels of silver for each man."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "As for the rest of the events of Menahem, and all which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?"

¹² **tn** Heb "lay down with his fathers."

¹³ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "in the eyes of."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "turn away from."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "and he struck him down in Samaria in the fortress of the house of the king, Argob and Arieih, and with him fifty men from the sons of the Gileadites, and they killed him."

sn The precise identity of Argob and Arieih, as well as their

15:26 The rest of the events of Pekahiah's reign, including all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.¹⁷

Pekah's Reign over Israel

15:27 In the fifty-second year of King Azariah's reign over Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah became king over Israel. He reigned in Samaria¹⁸ for twenty years. 15:28 He did evil in the sight of¹⁹ the LORD; he did not repudiate²⁰ the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat who encouraged Israel to sin. 15:29 During Pekah's reign over Israel, King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came and captured Ijon, Abel Beth Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor,²¹ Gilead, and Galilee, including all the territory of Naphtali. He deported the people²² to Assyria. 15:30 Hoshea son of Elah conspired against Pekah son of Remaliah. He assassinated him²³ and took his place as king, in the twentieth year of the reign of Jotham son of Uzziah.

15:31 The rest of the events of Pekah's reign, including all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.²⁴

Jotham's Reign over Judah

15:32 In the second year of the reign of Israel's King Pekah son of Remaliah, Uzziah's son Jotham became king over Judah. 15:33 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for sixteen years in Jerusalem.²⁵ His mother was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. 15:34 He did what the LORD approved, just as his father Uzziah had done.²⁶ 15:35 But the high places were not eliminated; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense on

relationship to the king, are uncertain. The usual assumption is that they were officials assassinated along with Pekahiah, or that they were two of the more prominent Gileadites involved in the revolt. For discussion see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 173.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "As for the rest of the events of Pekahiah, and all which he did, look, they are written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel."

¹⁸ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "in the eyes of."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "turn away from."

²¹ **map** For location see Map1-D2; Map2-D3; Map3-A2; Map4-C1.

²² **tn** Heb "them."

²³ **tn** Heb "and struck him down and killed him."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "As for the rest of the events of Pekah, and all which he did, look, they are written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel."

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

²⁶ **tn** Heb "he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD, according to all which Uzziah his father had done."

the high places. He built the Upper Gate to the LORD's temple.

15:36 The rest of the events of Jotham's reign, including his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.⁴ **15:37** In those days the LORD prompted King Rezin of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah to attack Judah.² **15:38** Jotham passed away³ and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his ancestor David. His son Ahaz replaced him as king.

Ahaz's Reign over Judah

16:1 In the seventeenth year of the reign of Pekah son of Remaliah, Jotham's son Ahaz became king over Judah. **16:2** Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for sixteen years in Jerusalem.⁴ He did not do what pleased the LORD his God, in contrast to his ancestor David.⁵ **16:3** He followed in the footsteps of⁶ the kings of Israel. He passed his son through the fire,⁷ a horrible sin practiced by the nations⁸ whom the LORD drove out from before the Israelites. **16:4** He offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

16:5 At that time King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel attacked Jerusalem.⁹ They besieged Ahaz,¹⁰ but were unable to conquer him.¹¹ **16:6** (At that time King Rezin of Syria¹² recovered Elat for Syria; he drove the Judahites from there.¹³ Syrians¹⁴ arrived in Elat and live there to this very day.) **16:7** Ahaz sent messengers to King Tiglath-pileser of

Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your dependent.¹⁵ March up and rescue me from the power¹⁶ of the king of Syria and the king of Israel, who have attacked¹⁷ me." **16:8** Then Ahaz took the silver and gold that were¹⁸ in the LORD's temple and in the treasuries of the royal palace and sent it as tribute¹⁹ to the king of Assyria. **16:9** The king of Assyria responded favorably to his request,²⁰ he²¹ attacked Damascus and captured it. He deported the people²² to Kir and executed Rezin.

16:10 When King Ahaz went to meet with King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria in Damascus, he saw the altar there.²³ King Ahaz sent to Uriah the priest a drawing of the altar and a blueprint for its design.²⁴ **16:11** Uriah the priest built an altar in conformity to the plans King Ahaz had sent from Damascus.²⁵ Uriah the priest finished it before King Ahaz arrived back from Damascus.²⁶ **16:12** When the king arrived back from Damascus and²⁷ saw the altar, he approached it²⁸ and offered a sacrifice on it.²⁹ **16:13** He offered his burnt sacrifice and his grain offering. He poured out his libation and sprinkled the blood from his peace offerings on the altar. **16:14** He moved the bronze altar that stood in the LORD's presence from the front of the temple (between the altar and the LORD's temple) and put it on the north side of the new³⁰ altar. **16:15** King Ahaz ordered Uriah the priest, "On the large altar³¹ offer the morning burnt sacrifice, the evening grain offering, the royal burnt sacrifices and grain offering, the burnt sacrifice for all the people of Israel, their grain offering, and their libations. Sprinkle all the blood of the burnt sacrifice and other sacrifices on it. The bronze altar will be for my personal use."³² **16:16** So Uriah the priest did exactly as³³ King Ahaz ordered.

¹ **tn** Heb "As for the rest of the events of Jotham, and that which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?"

² **tn** Heb "the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin...and Pekahiah...."

³ **tn** Heb "lay down with his fathers."

⁴ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁵ **tn** Heb "and he did not do what was proper in the eyes of the LORD his God, like David his father."

⁶ **tn** Heb "he walked in the way of."

⁷ **sn** This may refer to child sacrifice, though some interpret it as a less drastic cultic practice. For discussion see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 266-67.

⁸ **tn** Heb "like the abominable practices of the nations."

⁹ **tn** Heb "went up to Jerusalem for battle."

¹⁰ **tn** That is, Jerusalem, Ahaz's capital city.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "they were unable to fight." The object must be supplied from the preceding sentence. Elsewhere when the Niphal infinitive of לָחַם (*lakham*) follows the verb יָכַל (*yakhol*), the infinitive appears to have the force of "prevail against." See Num 22:11; 1 Sam 17:9; and the parallel passage in Isa 7:1.

¹² **tc** Some prefer to read "the king of Edom" and "for Edom" here. The names Syria (Heb "Aram," אֲרָם, *aram*) and Edom (אֲדָוּם, *edom*) are easily confused in the Hebrew consonantal script.

¹³ **tn** Heb "from Elat."

¹⁴ **tc** The consonantal text (*Kethib*), supported by many medieval Hebrew MSS, the Syriac version, and some MSS of the Targum and Vulgate, read "Syrians" (Heb "Arameans"). The marginal reading (*Qere*), supported by the LXX, Targums, and Vulgate, reads "Edomites."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "son." Both terms ("servant" and "son") reflect Ahaz's subordinate position as Tiglath-pileser's subject.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "hand, palm."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "who have arisen against."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "that was found."

¹⁹ **tn** Or "bribe money."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "listened to him."

²¹ **tn** Heb "the king of Assyria."

²² **tn** Heb "it."

²³ **tn** Heb "in Damascus."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "the likeness of the altar and its pattern for all its work."

²⁵ **tn** Heb "according to all that King Ahaz sent from Damascus."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "so Uriah the priest did, until the arrival of King Ahaz from Damascus."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "and the king."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "the altar."

²⁹ **tn** Or "ascended it."

³⁰ **tn** The word "new" is added in the translation for clarification.

³¹ **tn** That is, the newly constructed altar.

³² **tn** Heb "for me to seek." The precise meaning of בָּקַר (*baqar*), "seek," is uncertain in this context. For discussion see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 189.

³³ **tn** Heb "according to all which."

16:17 King Ahaz took off the frames of the movable stands, and removed the basins from them. He took “The Sea”¹ down from the bronze bulls that supported it² and put it on the pavement. 16:18 He also removed the Sabbath awning³ that had been built⁴ in the temple and the king’s outer entranceway, on account of the king of Assyria.⁵

16:19 The rest of the events of Ahaz’s reign, including his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.⁶ 16:20 Ahaz passed away⁷ and was buried with his ancestors in the City of David. His son Hezekiah replaced him as king.

Hoshea’s Reign over Israel

17:1 In the twelfth year of King Ahaz’s reign over Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king over Israel. He reigned in Samaria⁸ for nine years. 17:2 He did evil in the sight of⁹ the LORD, but not to the same degree as the Israelite kings who preceded him. 17:3 King Shalmaneser of Assyria threatened¹⁰ him; Hoshea became his subject and paid him tribute. 17:4 The king of Assyria discovered that Hoshea was planning a revolt.¹¹ Hoshea had sent messengers to King So¹² of Egypt and had not sent his annual tribute to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria arrested him and imprisoned him.¹³ 17:5 The king of Assyria marched through¹⁴ the whole land. He attacked Samaria and besieged it for three years. 17:6 In the ninth year of Hoshea’s reign, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the people of Israel¹⁵ to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, along the Habor (the river of Gozan), and in the cities of the Medes.

A Summary of Israel’s Sinful History

17:7 This happened because the Israelites sinned against the LORD their God, who brought them up from the land of Egypt and freed them from the power of¹⁶ Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped¹⁷ other gods; 17:8 they observed the practices¹⁸ of the nations whom the LORD had driven out from before Israel, and followed the example of the kings of Israel.¹⁹ 17:9 The Israelites said things about the LORD their God that were not right.²⁰ They built high places in all their cities, from the watchtower to the fortress.²¹ 17:10 They set up sacred pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. 17:11 They burned incense on all the high places just like the nations whom the LORD had driven away from before them. Their evil practices made the LORD angry.²² 17:12 They worshiped²³ the disgusting idols²⁴ in blatant disregard of the LORD’s command.²⁵

17:13 The LORD solemnly warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and all the seers, “Turn back from your evil ways; obey my commandments and rules that are recorded in the law. I ordered your ancestors to keep this law and sent my servants the prophets to remind you of its demands.”²⁶ 17:14 But they did not pay attention and were as stubborn as their ancestors,²⁷ who had not trusted the LORD their God. 17:15 They rejected his rules, the covenant he had made with their ancestors, and the laws he had commanded them to obey.²⁸ They paid allegiance to²⁹ worthless idols, and so became

¹⁶ tn Heb “and from under the hand of.” The words “freed them” are added in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁷ tn Heb “feared.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “walked in the customs.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “and [the practices of] the kings of Israel which they did.”

²⁰ tn The meaning of the verb וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ (vay^hkhapp^eu), translated here “said,” is uncertain. Some relate it to the verbal root כָּפַח (khafah), “to cover,” and translate “they did it in secret” (see BDB 341 s.v. כָּפַח). However, the pagan practices specified in the following sentences were hardly done in secret. Others propose a meaning “ascribe, impute,” which makes good contextual sense but has little etymological support (see HALOT 339 s.v. חָפַח). In this case Israel claimed that the LORD authorized their pagan practices.

²¹ sn That is, from the city’s perimeter to the central citadel.

²² tn Heb “and they did evil things, angering the LORD.”

²³ tn Or “served.”

²⁴ sn See the note at 1 Kgs 15:12.

²⁵ tn Heb “about which the LORD had said to them, ‘You must not do this thing.’”

²⁶ tn Heb “obey my commandments and rules according to all the law which I commanded your fathers and which I sent to you by the hand of my servants the prophets.”

²⁷ tn Heb and they stiffened their neck like the neck of their fathers.”

²⁸ tn Or “and his warnings he had given them.”

²⁹ tn Heb “They went [or, ‘followed’] after.” This idiom probably does not mean much if translated literally. It is found most often in Deuteronomy or in literature related to the covenant. It refers in the first instance to loyalty to God and to His covenant or His commandments (1 Kgs 14:8; 2 Chr 34:31) with the metaphor of a path or way underlying it (Deut 11:28; 28:14). To “follow other gods” was to abandon this way and this loyalty (to “abandon” or “forget” God, Judg 2:12; Hos

¹ sn See the note at 1 Kgs 7:23.

² tn Heb “that [were] under it.”

³ tn The precise meaning of the Hebrew term מוֹסָח (musakh; Qere) / מוֹסָח (misakh; Kethib) is uncertain. For discussion see HALOT 557 s.v. מוֹסָח and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 189-90.

⁴ tn Heb “that they built.”

⁵ sn It is doubtful that Tiglath-pileser ordered these architectural changes. Ahaz probably made these changes so he could send some of the items and materials to the Assyrian king as tribute. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 190, 193.

⁶ tn Heb “As for the rest of the events of Ahaz, and that which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?”

⁷ tn Heb “lay down with his fathers.”

⁸ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

⁹ tn Heb “in the eyes of.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “went up against.”

¹¹ tn Heb “and the king of Assyria found in Hoshea conspiracy.”

¹² sn For discussion of this name, see HALOT 744 s.v. חוּא and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 196.

¹³ tn Heb “and bound him in the house of confinement.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “went up against.”

¹⁵ tn The Hebrew text has simply “Israel” as the object of the verb.

worthless to the LORD.¹ They copied the practices of the surrounding nations in blatant disregard of the LORD's command.² **17:16** They abandoned all the commandments of the LORD their God; they made two metal calves and an Asherah pole, bowed down to all the stars in the sky,³ and worshiped⁴ Baal. **17:17** They passed their sons and daughters through the fire,⁵ and practiced divination and omen reading. They committed themselves to doing evil in the sight of the LORD and made him angry.⁶

17:18 So the LORD was furious⁷ with Israel and rejected them;⁸ only the tribe of Judah was left. **17:19** Judah also failed to keep the commandments of the LORD their God; they followed Israel's example.⁹ **17:20** So the LORD rejected all of Israel's descendants; he humiliated¹⁰ them and handed them over to robbers, until he had thrown them from his presence. **17:21** He tore Israel away from David's dynasty, and Jeroboam son of Nebat became their king.¹¹ Jeroboam drove Israel away¹² from the LORD and encouraged them to commit a serious sin.¹³ **17:22** The Israelites followed in the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and did not repudiate¹⁴ them. **17:23** Finally¹⁵ the LORD rejected

Israel¹⁶ just as he had warned he would do¹⁷ through all his servants the prophets. Israel was deported from its land to Assyria and remains there to this very day.

The King of Assyria Populates Israel with Foreigners

17:24 The king of Assyria brought foreigners¹⁸ from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim and settled them in the cities of Samaria¹⁹ in place of the Israelites. They took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities. **17:25** When they first moved in,²⁰ they did not worship²¹ the LORD. So the LORD sent lions among them and the lions were killing them. **17:26** The king of Assyria was told,²² "The nations whom you deported and settled in the cities of Samaria do not know the requirements of the God of the land, so he has sent lions among them. They are killing the people²³ because they do not know the requirements of the God of the land." **17:27** So the king of Assyria ordered, "Take back one of the priests whom you²⁴ deported from there. He must settle there and teach them the requirements of the God of the land."²⁵ **17:28** So one of the priests whom they had deported from Samaria went back and settled in Bethel.²⁶ He taught them how to worship²⁷ the LORD.

17:29 But each of these nations made²⁸ its own gods and put them in the shrines on the high places that the people of Samaria²⁹ had made. Each nation did this in the cities where they lived. **17:30** The people from Babylon made Succoth Benoth,³⁰ the people from Cuth made

2:13) and to follow the customs or religious traditions of the pagan nations (2 Kgs 17:15). The classic text on "following" God or another god is 1 Kgs 18:18, 21 where Elijah taunts the people with "halting between two opinions" whether the LORD was the true God or Baal was. The idiom is often found followed by "to serve and to worship" or "they served and worshiped" such and such a god or entity (Jer 8:2; 11:10; 13:10; 16:11; 25:6; 35:15).

1 *tn* *Heb* "they followed after the worthless thing/things and became worthless." The words "to the LORD" are not in the Hebrew text but are implicit from the context. There is an obvious wordplay on the verb "became worthless" and the noun "worthless thing", which is probably to be understood collectively and to refer to idols as it does in Jer 8:19; 10:8; 14:22; Jonah 2:8.

2 *tn* *Heb* "and [they walked] after the nations which were around them, concerning which the LORD commanded them not to do like them."

3 *tn* The phrase *הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהַיָּם* (*khol ts'va' hashamayim*), traditionally translated "all the host of heaven," refers to the heavenly lights, including stars and planets. In 1 Kgs 22:19 these heavenly bodies are pictured as members of the Lord's royal court or assembly, but many other texts view them as the illegitimate objects of pagan and Israelite worship.

4 *tn* Or "served."

5 *sn* See the note at 2 Kgs 16:3.

6 *tn* *Heb* "they sold themselves to doing what was evil in the eyes of the LORD, angering him."

7 *tn* *Heb* "very angry."

8 *tn* *Heb* "turned them away from his face."

9 *tn* *Heb* "they walked in the practices of Israel which they did."

10 *tn* Or "afflicted."

11 *tn* *Heb* "and they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king."

12 *tc* The consonantal text (*Kethib*) assumes the verb is *נָדָה* (*nada*), an alternate form of *נָדַח* (*nadah*), "push away." The marginal reading (*Qere*) assumes the verb *נָדַח* (*nadakh*), "drive away."

13 *tn* *Heb* "a great sin."

14 *tn* *Heb* "turn away from."

15 *tn* *Heb* "until."

16 *tn* *Heb* "the LORD turned Israel away from his face."

17 *tn* *Heb* "just as he said."

18 *tn* The object is supplied in the translation.

19 *sn* In v. 24-29 Samaria stands for the entire northern kingdom of Israel.

20 *tn* *Heb* "in the beginning of their living there."

21 *tn* *Heb* "fear."

22 *tn* *Heb* "and they said to the king of Assyria, saying." The plural subject of the verb is indefinite.

23 *tn* *Heb* "Look they are killing them."

24 *tc* The second plural subject may refer to the leaders of the Assyrian army. However, some prefer to read "whom I deported," changing the verb to a first person singular form with a third masculine plural pronominal suffix. This reading has some support from Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic witnesses.

25 *tc* *Heb* "and let them go and let them live there, and let him teach them the requirements of the God of the land." The two plural verbs seem inconsistent with the preceding and following contexts, where only one priest is sent back to Samaria. The singular has the support of Greek, Syriac, and Latin witnesses.

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

27 *tn* *Heb* "fear."

28 *sn* The verb "make" refers to the production of idols. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 210-11.

29 *tn* *Heb* "Samaritans." This refers to the Israelites who had been deported from the land.

30 *sn* No deity is known by the name *Succoth Benoth* in extant Mesopotamian literature. For speculation as to the identity of this deity, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 211.

Nergal,¹ the people from Hamath made Ashima,² 17:31 the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak,³ and the Sepharvites burned their sons in the fire as an offering to Adramelech and Anammelech,⁴ the gods of Sepharvaim. 17:32 At the same time they worshiped⁵ the LORD. They appointed some of their own people to serve as priests in the shrines on the high places.⁶ 17:33 They were worshipping⁷ the LORD and at the same time serving their own gods in accordance with the practices of the nations from which they had been deported.

17:34 To this very day they observe their earlier practices. They do not worship⁸ the LORD; they do not obey the rules, regulations, law, and commandments that the LORD gave⁹ the descendants of Jacob, whom he renamed Israel. 17:35 The LORD made an agreement¹⁰ with them¹¹ and instructed them, “You must not worship other gods. Do not bow down to them, serve them, or offer sacrifices to them. 17:36 Instead you must worship the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt by his great power and military ability;¹² bow down to him and offer sacrifices to him. 17:37 You must carefully obey at all times the rules, regulations, law, and commandments he wrote down for you. You must not worship other gods. 17:38 You must never forget the agreement I made with you, and you must not worship other gods. 17:39 Instead you must worship the LORD your God; then he will rescue you from the power of all your enemies.” 17:40 But they¹³ pay no attention; instead they observe their earlier practices. 17:41 These nations are worshipping the LORD and at the same time serving their idols; their sons and grandsons do just as their fathers have done, to this very day.

Hezekiah Becomes King of Judah

18:1 In the third year of the reign of Israel’s King Hoshea son of Elah, Ahaz’s son Hezekiah became king over Judah. 18:2 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he

reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem.¹⁴ His mother¹⁵ was Abi,¹⁶ the daughter of Zechariah. 18:3 He did what the LORD approved, just as his ancestor David had done.¹⁷ 18:4 He eliminated the high places, smashed the sacred pillars to bits, and cut down the Asherah pole.¹⁸ He also demolished the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for up to that time¹⁹ the Israelites had been offering incense to it; it was called Nehushtan.²⁰ 18:5 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; in this regard there was none like him among the kings of Judah either before or after.²¹ 18:6 He was loyal to²² the LORD and did not abandon him.²³ He obeyed the commandments which the LORD had given to²⁴ Moses. 18:7 The LORD was with him; he succeeded in all his endeavors.²⁵ He rebelled against the king of Assyria and refused to submit to him.²⁶ 18:8 He defeated the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from the watchtower to the city fortress.²⁷

18:9 In the fourth year of King Hezekiah’s reign (it was the seventh year of the reign of Israel’s King Hoshea, son of Elah), King Shalmaneser of Assyria marched²⁸ up against Samaria²⁹ and besieged it. 18:10 After three years he captured it (in the sixth year of Hezekiah’s reign); in the ninth year of King Hoshea’s reign over Israel Samaria was captured. 18:11 The king of Assyria deported the people of Israel³⁰ to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, along the Habor (the river of Gozan), and in the cities of the Medes. 18:12 This happened because they did not obey³¹ the LORD their God and broke his

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

¹⁵ tn Heb “the name of his mother.”

¹⁶ tn The parallel passage in 2 Chr 29:1 has “Abijah.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD, according to all which David his father had done.”

¹⁸ tn The term is singular in the MT but plural in the LXX and other ancient versions. It is also possible to regard the singular as a collective singular, especially in the context of other plural items.

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

¹⁹ tn Heb “until those days.”

²⁰ tn In Hebrew the name sounds like the phrase הַנְּחֻשְׁתָּן (n^hkh^{ash} hann^hkhoshet), “bronze serpent.”

²¹ tn Heb “and after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, and those who were before him.”

²² tn Heb “he hugged.”

²³ tn Heb “and did not turn aside from after him.”

²⁴ tn Heb “had commanded.”

²⁵ tn Heb “in all which he went out [to do], he was successful.”

²⁶ tn Heb “and did not serve him.”

²⁷ sn See the note at 2 Kgs 17:9.

²⁸ tn Heb “went” (also in v. 13).

²⁹ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

³⁰ tn The Hebrew text has simply “Israel” as the object of the verb.

³¹ tn Heb “listen to the voice of.”

¹ sn *Nergal* was a Mesopotamian god of the underworld.

² sn This deity is unknown in extra-biblical literature. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 211-12.

³ sn *Nibhaz* and *Tartak* were two Elamite deities. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 212.

⁴ sn *Adramelech* and *Anammelech*, the gods of the Sepharvaim are unknown in extra-biblical literature. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 212.

⁵ tn Heb “feared.”

⁶ tn Heb “and they appointed for themselves from their whole people priests for the high places and they were serving for them in the house[s] of the high places.”

⁷ tn Heb “fearing.”

⁸ tn Heb “fear.”

⁹ tn Heb “commanded.”

¹⁰ tn Or “covenant.”

¹¹ sn That is, the descendants of Jacob/Israel (see v. 35b).

¹² tn Heb “and outstretched arm.”

¹³ sn This refers to the foreigners whom the king of Assyria settled in the land (see v. 35a).

agreement with them.¹ They did not pay attention to and obey all that Moses, the LORD's servant, had commanded.²

Sennacherib Invades Judah

18:13 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, King Sennacherib of Assyria marched up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. **18:14** King Hezekiah of Judah sent this message to the king of Assyria, who was at Lachish, "I have violated our treaty.³ If you leave, I will do whatever you demand."⁴ So the king of Assyria demanded that King Hezekiah of Judah pay three hundred talents⁵ of silver and thirty talents of gold. **18:15** Hezekiah gave him all the silver in⁶ the LORD's temple and in the treasuries of the royal palace. **18:16** At that time King Hezekiah of Judah stripped the metal overlays from the doors of the LORD's temple and from the posts which he had plated⁷ and gave them to the king of Assyria.

18:17 The king of Assyria sent his commanding general, the chief eunuch, and the chief adviser⁸ from Lachish to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem,⁹ along with a large army. They went up and arrived at Jerusalem. They went¹⁰ and stood at the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth.¹¹ **18:18** They summoned the king, so Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went out to meet them.

18:19 The chief adviser said to them, "Tell Hezekiah: 'This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: "What is your source of confidence?"¹² **18:20** Your claim to have a strategy and military strength is just empty talk.¹³ In whom

are you trusting that you would dare to rebel against me? **18:21** Now look, you must be trusting in Egypt, that splintered reed staff. If a man leans for support on it, it punctures his hand and wounds him. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt does to all who trust in him. **18:22** Perhaps you will tell me, 'We are trusting in the LORD our God.' But Hezekiah is the one who eliminated his high places and altars and then told the people of Judah and Jerusalem, 'You must worship at this altar in Jerusalem.' **18:23** Now make a deal¹⁴ with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, provided you can find enough riders for them. **18:24** Certainly you will not refuse one of my master's minor officials and trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen.¹⁵ **18:25** Furthermore it was by the command of the LORD that I marched up against this place to destroy it. The LORD told me, 'March¹⁶ up against this land and destroy it.'"¹⁷

18:26 Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, Shebna, and Joah said to the chief adviser, "Speak to your servants in Aramaic,¹⁸ for we understand it. Don't speak with us in the Judahite dialect¹⁹ in the hearing of the people who are on the wall." **18:27** But the chief adviser said to them, "My master did not send me to speak these words only to your master and to you.²⁰ His message is also for the men who sit on the wall, for they will eat their own excrement and drink their own urine along with you."²¹

18:28 The chief adviser then stood there and called out loudly in the Judahite dialect,²² "Listen to the message of the great king, the king of Assyria. **18:29** This is what the king says: 'Don't let Hezekiah mislead you, for he is not able to

¹ tn Heb "his covenant."

² tn Heb "all that Moses, the LORD's servant, had commanded, and they did not listen and they did not act."

³ tn Or "I have done wrong."

⁴ tn Heb "Return from upon me; what you place upon me, I will carry."

⁵ tn The Hebrew term כִּיקָר (*kikkar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or to a standard unit of weight, generally regarded as a talent. Since the accepted weight for a talent of metal is about 75 pounds, this would have amounted to about 22,500 pounds of silver and 2,250 pounds of gold.

⁶ tn Heb "that was found."

⁷ tn Heb "At that time Hezekiah stripped the doors of the LORD's temple, and the posts which Hezekiah king of Judah had plated."

⁸ sn For a discussion of these titles see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 229-30.

⁹ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁰ tn Heb "and they went up and came."

¹¹ tn Heb "the field of the washer."

¹² tn Heb "What is this object of trust in which you are trusting?"

¹³ tn Heb "you say only a word of lips, counsel and might for battle." Sennacherib's message appears to be in broken Hebrew at this point. The phrase "word of lips" refers to mere or empty talk in Prov 14:23.

¹⁴ tn Heb "exchange pledges."

¹⁵ tn Heb "How can you turn back the face of an official [from among] the least of my master's servants and trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen?" In vv. 23-24 the chief adviser develops further the argument begun in v. 21. His reasoning seems to be as follows: "In your weakened condition you obviously need military strength. Agree to the king's terms and I will personally give you more horses than you are capable of outfitting. If I, a mere minor official, am capable of giving you such military might, just think what power the king has. There is no way the Egyptians can match our strength. It makes much better sense to deal with us."

¹⁶ tn Heb "Go."

¹⁷ sn In v. 25 the chief adviser develops further the argument begun in v. 22. He claims that Hezekiah has offended the Lord and that the Lord has commissioned Assyria as his instrument of discipline and judgment.

¹⁸ sn Aramaic was the diplomatic language of the empire.

¹⁹ tn Or "Hebrew."

²⁰ tn Heb "To your master and to you did my master send me to speak these words?" The rhetorical question expects a negative answer.

²¹ tn Heb "[Is it] not [also] to the men...?" The rhetorical question expects the answer, "Yes, it is."

²² sn The chief adviser alludes to the horrible reality of siege warfare, when the starving people in the besieged city would resort to eating and drinking anything to stay alive.

²³ tn The Hebrew text also has, "and he spoke and said."

rescue you from my hand!¹ **18:30** Don't let Hezekiah talk you into trusting in the LORD when he says, "The LORD will certainly rescue us; this city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria." **18:31** Don't listen to Hezekiah! For this is what the king of Assyria says, "Send me a token of your submission and surrender to me."² Then each of you may eat from his own vine and fig tree and drink water from his own cistern, **18:32** until I come and take you to a land just like your own – a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey. Then you will live and not die. Don't listen to Hezekiah, for he is misleading you when he says, "The LORD will rescue us." **18:33** Have any of the gods of the nations actually rescued his land from the power of the king of Assyria?³ **18:34** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?⁴ Indeed, did any gods rescue Samaria⁵ from my power?⁶ **18:35** Who among all the gods of the lands has rescued their lands from my power? So how can the LORD rescue Jerusalem from my power?⁷ **18:36** The people were silent and did not respond, for the king had ordered, "Don't respond to him."

18:37 Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn⁸ and reported to him what the chief adviser had said. **19:1** When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went to the LORD's temple. **19:2** He sent Eliakim the palace supervisor, Shebna the scribe, and the leading priests,⁹ clothed in sackcloth, with this message to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz: **19:3** "This is what Hezekiah

says:¹⁰ "This is a day of distress, insults,¹¹ and humiliation,¹² as when a baby is ready to leave the birth canal, but the mother lacks the strength to push it through."¹³ **19:4** Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all these things the chief adviser has spoken on behalf of his master, the king of Assyria, who sent him to taunt the living God.¹⁴ When the LORD your God hears, perhaps he will punish him for the things he has said.¹⁵ So pray for this remnant that remains."¹⁶

19:5 When King Hezekiah's servants came to Isaiah, **19:6** Isaiah said to them, "Tell your master this: 'This is what the LORD says: "Don't be afraid because of the things you have heard – these insults the king of Assyria's servants have hurled against me."¹⁷ **19:7** Look, I will take control of his mind,¹⁸ he will receive¹⁹ a report and return to his own land. I will cut him down²⁰ with a sword in his own land."²¹

19:8 When the chief adviser heard the king of Assyria had departed from Lachish, he left and went to Libnah, where the king was campaigning.²² **19:9** The king²³ heard that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia was marching out to fight him.²⁴ He again sent messengers to Hezekiah, ordering them: **19:10** "Tell King Hezekiah of Judah this: 'Don't let your God in whom you trust mislead you when he says, "Jerusalem will not be handed over²⁵ to the king of Assyria."²⁶ **19:11** Certainly you have heard how the kings of Assyria have annihilated all lands.²⁷ Do you really think you will be rescued?²⁸ **19:12** Were the nations whom my ancestors destroyed – the nations of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people

¹⁰ tn In the Hebrew text this verse begins with "they said to him."

¹¹ tn Or "rebuke," "correction."

¹² tn Or "contempt."

¹³ tn Heb "when sons come to the cervical opening and there is no strength to give birth."

¹⁴ tn Heb "all the words of the chief adviser whom his master, the king of Assyria, sent to taunt the living God."

¹⁵ tn Heb "and rebuke the words which the LORD your God hears."

¹⁶ tn Heb "and lift up a prayer on behalf of the remnant that is found."

¹⁷ tn Heb "by which the servants of the king of Assyria have insulted me."

¹⁸ tn Heb "I will put in him a spirit." The precise sense of רוח (*ruakh*), "spirit," is uncertain in this context. It may refer to a spiritual being who will take control of his mind (see 1 Kgs 22:19), or it could refer to a disposition of concern and fear. In either case the LORD's sovereignty over the king is apparent.

¹⁹ tn Heb "hear."

²⁰ tn Heb "cause him to fall," that is, "kill him."

²¹ tn Heb "and the chief adviser returned and he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish."

²² tn Heb "he"; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²³ tn Heb "heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, 'Look, he has come out to fight with you!'"

²⁴ tn Heb "will not be given."

²⁵ tn Heb "Look, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, annihilating them."

²⁶ tn Heb "and will you be rescued?" The rhetorical question expects the answer, "No, of course not!"

¹ tc The MT has "his hand," but this is due to graphic confusion of *vav* (ו) and *yod* (י). The translation reads "my hand," along with many medieval Hebrew MSS, the LXX, Syriac Peshitta, Targum, and Vulgate.

² tn Heb "make with me a blessing and come out to me."

³ tn Heb "Have the gods of the nations really rescued, each his land, from the hand of the king of Assyria?" The infinitive absolute lends emphasis to the main verb. The rhetorical question expects the answer, "Of course not!"

⁴ tn The parallel passage in Isa 36:19 omits "Hena and Ivvah." The rhetorical questions in v. 34a suggest the answer, "Nowhere, they seem to have disappeared in the face of Assyria's might."

⁵ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

⁶ tn Heb "that they rescued Samaria from my hand?" But this gives the impression that the gods of Sepharvaim were responsible for protecting Samaria, which is obviously not the case. The implied subject of the plural verb "rescued" must be the generic "gods of the nations/lands" (vv. 33, 35).

⁷ tn Heb "that the LORD might rescue Jerusalem from my hand?" The logic runs as follows: Since no god has ever been able to withstand the Assyrian onslaught, how can the people of Jerusalem possibly think the LORD will rescue them?

⁸ sn As a sign of grief and mourning.

⁹ tn Heb "elders of the priests."

of Eden in Telassar – rescued by their gods?¹ 19:13 Where are the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of Lair,² Sepharvaim, Hena, and Iv-vah?”

19:14 Hezekiah took the letter³ from the messengers and read it.⁴ Then Hezekiah went up to the LORD’s temple and spread it out before the LORD. 19:15 Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: “LORD God of Israel, who is enthroned on the cherubs!⁵ You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the sky⁶ and the earth. 19:16 Pay attention, LORD, and hear! Open your eyes, LORD, and observe! Listen to the message Sennacherib sent and how he taunts the living God!⁷ 19:17 It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands. 19:18 They have burned the gods of the nations,⁸ for they are not really gods, but only the product of human hands manufactured from wood and stone. That is why the Assyrians could destroy them.⁹ 19:19 Now, O LORD our God, rescue us from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth will know that you, LORD, are the only God.”

19:20 Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah: “This is what the LORD God of Israel says: ‘I have heard your prayer concerning King Sennacherib of Assyria.¹⁰ 19:21 This is what the LORD says about him:¹¹

“The virgin daughter Zion¹²
despises you, she makes fun of you;
Daughter Jerusalem
shakes her head after you.¹³

19:22 Whom have you taunted and hurled
insults at?

At whom have you shouted,¹⁴
and looked so arrogantly?¹⁵
At the Holy One of Israel!¹⁶

19:23 Through your messengers you
taunted the sovereign master,¹⁷
‘With my many chariots¹⁸

I climbed up the high mountains,
the slopes of Lebanon.

I cut down its tall cedars,
and its best evergreens.

I invaded its most remote regions,¹⁹
its thickest woods.

19:24 I dug wells and drank
water in foreign lands.²⁰

With the soles of my feet I dried up
all the rivers of Egypt.’

19:25²¹ Certainly you must have heard!²²
Long ago I worked it out,
In ancient times I planned²³ it;

and now I am bringing it to pass.
The plan is this:

Fortified cities will crash
into heaps of ruins.²⁴

19:26 Their residents are powerless,²⁵
they are terrified and ashamed.

They are as short-lived as plants in the
field,

or green vegetation.²⁶

They are as short-lived as grass on the
rooftops²⁷

when it is scorched by the east wind.²⁸

¹ **tn** *Heb* “Did the gods of the nations whom my fathers destroyed rescue them – Gozan and Haran, and Rezep and the sons of Eden who are in Telassar?”

² **sn** *Lair* is a city located in northeastern Babylon. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 235.

³ **tc** The MT has the plural, “letters,” but the final *mem* is probably dittographic (note the initial *mem* on the form that immediately follows). Some Greek and Aramaic witnesses have the singular.

⁴ **tc** The MT has the plural suffix, “them,” but this probably reflects a later harmonization to the preceding textual corruption (of “letter” to “letters”). The parallel passage in Isa 37:14 has the singular suffix.

⁵ **sn** This refers to the cherub images that were above the ark of the covenant.

⁶ **tn** Or “the heavens.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “Hear the words of Sennacherib which he sent to taunt the living God.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “and they put their gods in the fire.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “so they destroyed them.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “That which you prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.” The verb “I have heard” does not appear in the parallel passage in Isa 37:21, where אֲשֶׁר (*asher*) probably has a causal sense, “because.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “this is the word which the LORD has spoken about him.”

¹² **sn** Zion (Jerusalem) is pictured here as a young, vulnerable daughter whose purity is being threatened by the would-be Assyrian rapist. The personification hints at the reality which the young girls of the city would face if the Assyrians conquer it.

¹³ **sn** Shaking the head was a mocking gesture of derision.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “have you raised a voice.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and lifted your eyes on high?”

¹⁶ **sn** This divine title pictures the Lord as the sovereign king who rules over his covenant people and exercises moral authority over them.

¹⁷ **tn** The word is אֲדֹנָי (*adonai*), “lord,” but some Hebrew MSS have יְהוָה (*Yehovah*), “LORD.”

¹⁸ **tc** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has בְּרִכְבֵּי (*berekhev*), but this must be dittographic (note the following רִכְבֵּי [*rikhbi*], “my chariots”). The marginal reading (*Qere*) בְּרַב (*b²rov*), “with many,” is supported by many Hebrew MSS and ancient versions, as well as the parallel passage in Isa 37:24.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “the lodging place of its extremity.”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “I dug and drank foreign waters.”

²¹ **tn** Having quoted the Assyrian king’s arrogant words in vv. 23-24, the Lord now speaks to the king.

²² **tn** *Heb* “Have you not heard?” The rhetorical question expresses the Lord’s amazement that anyone might be ignorant of what he is about to say.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “formed.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and it is to cause to crash into heaps of ruins fortified cities.” The subject of the third feminine singular verb תִּהְיֶה (*hi*) is the implied plan, referred to in the preceding lines with third feminine singular pronominal suffixes.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “short of hand.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “they are plants in the field and green vegetation.” The metaphor emphasizes how short-lived these seemingly powerful cities really were. See Ps 90:5-6; Isa 40:6-8, 24.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “[they are] grass on the rooftops.” See the preceding note.

²⁸ **tc** The Hebrew text has “scorched before the standing grain” (perhaps meaning “before it reaches maturity”), but it is preferable to emend קָמַח (*qamah*), “standing grain,” to קָדִים (*qadim*), “east wind” (with the support of 1Q Isa^a in Isa 37:27).

19:27 I know where you live,
and everything you do.¹

19:28 Because you rage against me,
and the uproar you create has reached my
ears;²

I will put my hook in your nose,³
and my bridle between your lips,
and I will lead you back the way
you came.”

19:29⁴ This will be your confirmation that I
have spoken the truth:⁵ This year you will eat what
grows wild,⁶ and next year⁷ what grows on its own
from that. But in the third year you will plant seed
and harvest crops; you will plant vines and con-
sume their produce.⁸ 19:30 Those who remain in
Judah will take root in the ground and bear fruit.⁹

19:31 For a remnant will leave Jerusalem;
survivors will come out of Mount Zion.
The intense devotion of the sovereign
LORD¹⁰ to his people¹¹ will accomplish
this.

19:32 So this is what the LORD says about
the king of Assyria:
“He will not enter this city,
nor will he shoot an arrow here.¹²
He will not attack it with his shield-carry-
ing warriors,¹³
nor will he build siege works against it.
19:33 He will go back the way he came.
He will not enter this city,” says the
LORD.

¹ **tc** *Heb* “your going out and your coming in.” The MT also has here, “and how you have raged against me.” However, this line is probably dittographic (note the beginning of the next line).

² **tc** *Heb* “and your complacency comes up into my ears.” The parallelism is improved if **tc** *Heb* **שְׂאֵנְךָ** (*sha'anankh*), “your complacency,” is emended to **שְׂאֵנְךָ** (*sha'avankh*), “your uproar.” See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 237-38.

³ **sn** The word picture has a parallel in Assyrian sculpture. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 238.

⁴ **tn** At this point the word concerning the king of Assyria (vv. 21-28) ends and the Lord again directly addresses Hezekiah and the people (see v. 20).

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and this is your sign.” In this case the **אוֹת** (*ot*), “sign,” is a future confirmation of God’s intervention designated before the actual intervention takes place. For similar “signs” see Exod 3:12 and Isa 7:14-25.

⁶ **sn** This refers to crops that grew up on their own (that is, without cultivation) from the seed planted in past years.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and in the second year.”

⁸ **tn** The four plural imperative verb forms in v. 29b are used rhetorically. The Lord commands the people to plant, harvest, etc. to emphasize the certainty of restored peace and prosperity. See *IBHS* 572 §34.4.c.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “The remnant of the house of Judah that is left will add roots below and produce fruit above.”

¹⁰ **tn** Traditionally “the LORD of hosts.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “the zeal of the LORD.” In this context the Lord’s “zeal” refers to his intense devotion to and love for his people which prompts him to protect and restore them. The *Qere*, along with many medieval Hebrew mss and the ancient versions, has “the zeal of the LORD of hosts” rather than “the zeal of the LORD” (*Kethib*). The translation follows the *Qere* here.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “there.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “[with] a shield.” By metonymy the “shield” stands for the soldier who carries it.

19:34 I will shield this city and rescue it for the
sake of my reputation and because of my promise
to David my servant.”¹⁴

19:35 That very night the LORD’s messenger
went out and killed 185,000 men in the Assyrian
camp. When they¹⁵ got up early the next morn-
ing, there were all the corpses.¹⁶ 19:36 So King
Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and went on
his way. He went home and stayed in Nineveh.¹⁷
19:37 One day,¹⁸ as he was worshiping in the tem-
ple of his god Nisroch,¹⁹ his sons²⁰ Adrammelech
and Sharezer struck him down with the sword.²¹
They escaped to the land of Ararat; his son Esar-
haddon replaced him as king.

Hezekiah is Healed

20:1 In those days Hezekiah was stricken with a
terminal illness.²² The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz
visited him and told him, “This is what the LORD
says, ‘Give your household instructions, for you
are about to die; you will not get well.’”²³ 20:2 He
turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD,
20:3 “Please, LORD. Remember how I have served
you²⁴ faithfully and with wholehearted devotion,²⁵
and how I have carried out your will.”²⁶ Then He-
zekiah wept bitterly.²⁷

20:4 Isaiah was still in the middle courtyard
when the LORD told him,²⁸ 20:5 “Go back and
tell Hezekiah, the leader of my people: ‘This
is what the LORD God of your ancestor David
says: “I have heard your prayer; I have seen your
tears. Look, I will heal you. The day after tomor-
row²⁹ you will go up to the LORD’s temple. 20:6 I
will add fifteen years to your life and rescue you
and this city from the king of Assyria. I will

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “for my sake and for the sake of David my servant.”

¹⁵ **tn** This refers to the Israelites and/or the rest of the Assyrian army.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “look, all of them were dead bodies.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went and returned and lived in Nineveh.”

¹⁸ **sn** The assassination probably took place in 681 b.c.

¹⁹ **sn** No such Mesopotamian god is presently known. Perhaps the name is a corruption of Nusku.

²⁰ **tc** Although “his sons” is absent in the *Kethib*, it is supported by the *Qere*, along with many medieval Hebrew mss and the ancient versions. Cf. Isa 37:38.

²¹ **sn** Extra-biblical sources also mention the assassination of Sennacherib, though they refer to only one assassin. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 239-40.

²² **tn** *Heb* “was sick to the point of dying.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “will not live.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “walked before you.” For a helpful discussion of the background and meaning of this Hebrew idiom, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 254.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and with a complete heart.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and that which is good in your eyes I have done.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “wept with great weeping.”

²⁸ **tc** *Heb* “and Isaiah had not gone out of the middle courtyard, and the word of the LORD came to him, saying.” Instead of “courtyard” (**חֲצֵרָה**, *khater*), the marginal reading, (*Qere*), the Hebrew consonantal text (*Kethib*) has **חֲצֵרָה** (*ha'ir*), “the city.”

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “on the third day.”

shield this city for the sake of my reputation and because of my promise to David my servant.”¹ **20:7** Isaiah ordered, “Get a fig cake.” So they did as he ordered² and placed it on the ulcerated sore, and he recovered.³

20:8 Hezekiah had said to Isaiah, “What is the confirming sign that the LORD will heal me and that I will go up to the LORD’s temple the day after tomorrow?” **20:9** Isaiah replied, “This is your sign from the LORD confirming that the LORD will do what he has said. Do you want the shadow to move ahead ten steps or to go back ten steps?”⁴ **20:10** Hezekiah answered, “It is easy for the shadow to lengthen ten steps, but not for it⁵ to go back ten steps.” **20:11** Isaiah the prophet called out to the LORD, and the LORD⁶ made the shadow go back ten steps on the stairs of Ahaz.⁷

Messengers from Babylon Visit Hezekiah

20:12 At that time Merodach-Baladan⁸ son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah was ill. **20:13** Hezekiah welcomed⁹ them and showed them his whole storehouse, with its silver, gold, spices, and high quality olive oil, as well as his armory and everything in his treasuries. Hezekiah showed them everything in his palace and in his whole kingdom.¹⁰ **20:14** Isaiah the prophet visited King Hezekiah and asked him, “What did these men say? Where do they come from?” Hezekiah replied, “They come from the distant land of Babylon.” **20:15** Isaiah¹¹ asked, “What have they seen in your palace?” Hezekiah replied, “They have seen everything in my palace. I showed them everything¹² in my treasuries.” **20:16** Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Listen to the word of the LORD, **20:17** ‘Look, a time is¹³ coming when everything in your palace and the

things your ancestors have accumulated to this day will be carried away to Babylon; nothing will be left,’ says the LORD. **20:18** ‘Some of your very own descendants whom you father¹⁴ will be taken away and will be made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’” **20:19** Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The LORD’s word which you have announced is appropriate.”¹⁵ Then he added,¹⁶ “At least there will be peace and stability during my lifetime.”¹⁷

20:20 The rest of the events of Hezekiah’s reign and all his accomplishments, including how he built a pool and conduit to bring¹⁸ water into the city, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.¹⁹ **20:21** Hezekiah passed away²⁰ and his son Manasseh replaced him as king.

Manasseh’s Reign over Judah

21:1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned for fifty-five years in Jerusalem.²¹ His mother²² was Hephzibah. **21:2** He did evil in the sight of²³ the LORD and committed the same horrible sins practiced by the nations²⁴ whom the LORD drove out from before the Israelites. **21:3** He rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he set up altars for Baal and made an Asherah pole just like King Ahab of Israel had done. He bowed down to all the stars in the sky²⁵ and worshiped²⁶ them. **21:4** He built altars in the LORD’s temple, about which the LORD had said, “Jerusalem will be my home.”²⁷ **21:5** In the two courtyards of the LORD’s temple he built altars for all the stars in the sky. **21:6** He passed his son²⁸ through the fire²⁹ and practiced divination and omen reading. He set up a ritual pit to conjure up underworld spirits, and appointed magicians to

¹ **tn** Heb “for my sake and for the sake of David my servant.”

² **tn** Heb “and they got [a fig cake].”

³ **tn** Heb “and he lived.”

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew הָלַךְ (*halakh*, a perfect), “it has moved ahead,” should be emended to הָלַךְ (*hayelekh*, an imperfect with interrogative *he* [ה] prefixed), “shall it move ahead.”

⁵ **tn** Heb “the shadow.” The noun has been replaced by the pronoun (“it”) in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁶ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁷ **tn** Heb “on the steps which [the sun] had gone down, on the steps of Ahaz, back ten steps.”

sn These steps probably functioned as a type of sundial. See HALOT 614 s.v. מַשְׁבֵּטָה and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 256.

⁸ **tc** The MT has “Berodach-Baladan,” but several Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, and Latin witnesses agree with the parallel passage in Isa 39:1 and read “Merodach-Baladan.”

⁹ **tc** Heb “listened to.” Some Hebrew MSS, as well as the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate versions agree with the parallel passage in Isa 39:2 and read, “was happy with.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “there was nothing which Hezekiah did not show them in his house and in all his kingdom.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Isaiah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹² **tn** Heb “there was nothing I did not show them.”

¹³ **tn** Heb “days are.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “Some of your sons, who go out from you, whom you father.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “good.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “and he said.” Many English versions translate, “for he thought.” The verb אָמַר (*amar*), “say,” is sometimes used of what one thinks (that is, says to oneself). Cf. NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “Is it not [true] there will be peace and stability in my days?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Yes, there will be peace and stability.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “and he brought.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “As for the rest of the events of Hezekiah, and all his strength, and how he made a pool and a conduit and brought water to the city, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “lay down with his fathers.”

²¹ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²² **tn** Heb “the name of his mother.”

²³ **tn** Heb “in the eyes of.”

²⁴ **tn** Heb “like the abominable practices of the nations.”

²⁵ **sn** See the note at 2 Kgs 17:16.

²⁶ **tn** Or “served.”

²⁷ **tn** Heb “In Jerusalem I will place my name.”

²⁸ **tc** The LXX has the plural “his sons” here.

²⁹ **sn** See the note at 2 Kgs 16:3.

supervise it.¹ He did a great amount of evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger.² 21:7 He put an idol of Asherah he had made in the temple, about which the LORD had said to David and to his son Solomon, “This temple in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will be my permanent home.³ 21:8 I will not make Israel again leave the land I gave to their ancestors,⁴ provided that they carefully obey all I commanded them, the whole law my servant Moses ordered them to obey.” 21:9 But they did not obey,⁵ and Manasseh misled them so that they sinned more than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed from before the Israelites.

21:10 So the LORD announced through⁶ his servants the prophets: 21:11 “King Manasseh of Judah has committed horrible sins.⁷ He has sinned more than the Amorites before him and has encouraged Judah to sin by worshiping his disgusting idols.⁸ 21:12 So this is what the LORD God of Israel says, ‘I am about to bring disaster on Jerusalem and Judah. The news will reverberate in the ears of those who hear about it.’⁹ 21:13 I will destroy Jerusalem the same way I did Samaria¹⁰ and the dynasty of Ahab.¹¹ I will wipe Jerusalem clean, just as one wipes a plate on both sides.¹² 21:14 I will abandon this last remaining tribe among my people¹³ and hand them over to their enemies; they will be plundered and robbed by all their enemies,¹⁴ 21:15

¹ **tn** *Heb* “and he set up a ritual pit, along with conjurers.” The Hebrew אֹב (‘ov), “ritual pit,” refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. In 1 Sam 28:7 the witch of Endor is called a בַּעַלְתֵי אֹב (ba‘alat ‘ov), “owner of a ritual pit.” See H. Hoffner, “Second millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew ‘OB,’” *JBL* 86 (1967), 385-401.

² **tc** *Heb* “and he multiplied doing what is evil in the eyes of the LORD, angering.” The third masculine singular pronominal suffix (“him”) has been accidentally omitted in the MT by haplography (note the *vav* that immediately follows).

³ **tn** *Heb* “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I chose from all the tribes of Israel, I will place my name perpetually (or perhaps “forever”).”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “I will not again make the feet of Israel wander from the land which I gave to their fathers.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “listen.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “spoke by the hand of.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “these horrible sins.”

⁸ **sn** See the note at 1 Kgs 15:12.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “so that everyone who hears it, his two ears will quiver.”

¹⁰ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria, and the plumb line of the house of Ahab.” The measuring line and plumb line are normally used in building a structure, not tearing it down. But here they are used ironically as metaphors of judgment, emphasizing that he will give careful attention to the task of judgment.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “just as one wipes a plate, wiping and turning [it] on its face.” The word picture emphasizes how thoroughly the Lord will judge the city.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “the remnant of my inheritance.” In this context the Lord’s remnant is the tribe of Judah, which had been preserved when the Assyrians conquered and deported the northern tribes. See 17:18 and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 269.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “they will become plunder and spoils of war for all their enemies.”

because they have done evil in my sight¹⁵ and have angered me from the time their ancestors left Egypt right up to this very day!”

21:16 Furthermore Manasseh killed so many innocent people, he stained Jerusalem with their blood from end to end,¹⁶ in addition to encouraging Judah to sin by doing evil in the sight of the LORD.¹⁷

21:17 The rest of the events of Manasseh’s reign and all his accomplishments, as well as the sinful acts he committed, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.¹⁸

21:18 Manasseh passed away¹⁹ and was buried in his palace garden, the garden of Uzzah, and his son Amon replaced him as king.

Amon’s Reign over Judah

21:19 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned for two years in Jerusalem.²⁰ His mother²¹ was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz, from Jotbah. 21:20 He did evil in the sight of²² the LORD, just like his father Manasseh had done. 21:21 He followed in the footsteps of his father²³ and worshiped and bowed down to the disgusting idols²⁴ which his father had worshiped.²⁵ 21:22 He abandoned the LORD God of his ancestors and did not follow the LORD’s instructions.²⁶ 21:23 Amon’s servants conspired against him and killed the king in his palace. 21:24 The people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and they²⁷ made his son Josiah king in his place.

21:25 The rest of Amon’s accomplishments are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “in my eyes.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and also Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, until he filled Jerusalem from mouth to mouth.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “apart from his sin which he caused Judah to commit, by doing what is evil in the eyes of the LORD.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “As for the rest of the events of Manasseh, and all which he did, and his sin which he committed, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “lay down with his fathers.”

²⁰ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “the name of his mother.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “in the eyes of.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “walked in all the way which his father walked.”

²⁴ **sn** See the note at 1 Kgs 15:12.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and he served the disgusting idols which his father served and he bowed down to them.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and did not walk in the way of the LORD.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “the people of the land.” The pronoun “they” has been used in the translation for stylistic reasons, to avoid the repetition of the phrase “the people of the land” from the beginning of the verse.

the Kings of Judah.¹ **21:26** He was buried² in his tomb in the garden of Uzzah, and his son Josiah replaced him as king.

Josiah Repents

22:1 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned for thirty-one years in Jerusalem.³ His mother⁴ was Jedidah, daughter of Adaiah, from Bozkath. **22:2** He did what the LORD approved⁵ and followed in his ancestor David's footsteps;⁶ he did not deviate to the right or the left.

22:3 In the eighteenth year of King Josiah's reign, the king sent the scribe Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, to the LORD's temple with these orders:⁷ **22:4** "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him melt down⁸ the silver that has been brought by the people to the LORD's temple and has been collected by the guards at the door. **22:5** Have them hand it over to the construction foremen⁹ assigned to the LORD's temple. They in turn should pay the temple workers to repair it,¹⁰ **22:6** including craftsmen, builders, and masons, and should buy wood and chiseled stone for the repair work.¹¹ **22:7** Do not audit the foremen who disburse the silver, for they are honest."¹²

22:8 Hilkiah the high priest informed Shaphan the scribe, "I found the law scroll in the LORD's temple." Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan and he read it. **22:9** Shaphan the scribe went to the king and reported,¹³ "Your servants melted down the silver in the temple¹⁴ and handed it over to the construction foremen

assigned to the LORD's temple." **22:10** Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a scroll." Shaphan read it out loud before the king. **22:11** When the king heard the words of the law scroll, he tore his clothes. **22:12** The king ordered Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, **22:13** "Go, seek an oracle from¹⁵ the LORD for me and the people – for all Judah. Find out about¹⁶ the words of this scroll that has been discovered. For the LORD's fury has been ignited against us,¹⁷ because our ancestors have not obeyed the words of this scroll by doing all that it instructs us to do."¹⁸

22:14 So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shullam son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, the supervisor of the wardrobe.¹⁹ (She lived in Jerusalem in the Mishneh²⁰ district.) They stated their business,²¹ **22:15** and she said to them: "This is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'Say this to the man who sent you to me: **22:16** "This is what the LORD says: 'I am about to bring disaster on this place and its residents, the details of which are recorded in the scroll which the king of Judah has read." **22:17** This will happen because they have abandoned me and offered sacrifices²³ to other gods, angering me with all the idols they have made.²⁴ My anger will ignite against this place and will not be extinguished!" **22:18** Say this to the king of Judah, who sent you to seek an oracle from the LORD: "This is what the LORD God of Israel says concerning the words you have heard: **22:19** 'You displayed a sensitive spirit²⁵ and humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard how I intended to make this place and its residents into an appalling example of an accursed people."²⁶

1 tc Heb "As for the rest of the things of Amon which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?" Many Hebrew mss have וְכֹל (v^ccol), "and all," before אֲשֶׁר (asher). In this case we can translate, "As for the rest of the events of Amon's reign, and all his accomplishments,...."

2 tn Heb "he buried him." Here "he" probably refers to Amon's son Josiah.

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

4 tn Heb "the name of his mother."

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

6 tn Heb "and walked in all the way of David his father."

7 tn Heb "with these orders, saying."

8 tc The MT has וַיִּתְּם (v^yyattem), "and let them add up" (Hiphil of תָּמַם [tammam], "be complete"), but the appearance of הִיטְקוּ (hitkhu), "they melted down" (Hiphil of נָתַךְ [natakh], "pour out") in v. 9 suggests that the verb form should be emended to וַיִּתְּךְ (v^yyatekhh), "and let him melt down" (a Hiphil of נָתַךְ [natakh]). For a discussion of this and other options see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 281.

9 tn Heb "doers of the work."

10 tn Heb "and let them give it to the doers of the work who are in the house of the LORD to repair the damages to the house."

11 tn Heb "and to buy wood and chiseled stone to repair the house."

12 tn Heb "only the silver that is given into their hand should not be reckoned with them, for in faithfulness they are acting."

13 tn Heb "returned the king a word and said."

14 tn Heb "that was found in the house."

15 tn Or "inquire of."

16 tn Heb "concerning."

17 tn Heb "for great is the anger of the LORD which has been ignited against us."

18 tn Heb "by doing all that is written concerning us." Perhaps אֶלֵינוּ ('alenu), "concerning us," should be altered to אֶלָיו ('alav), "upon it," in which case one could translate, "by doing all that is written in it."

19 tn Heb "the keeper of the clothes."

20 tn Or "second." For a discussion of the possible location of this district, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 283.

21 tn Heb "and they spoke to her."

22 tn Heb "all the words of the scroll (Hiphil of the king of Judah has read."

23 tn Or "burned incense."

24 tn Heb "angering me with all the work of their hands." The translation assumes that this refers to idols they have manufactured (note the preceding reference to "other gods," as well as 19:18). However, it is possible that this is a general reference to their sinful practices, in which case one might translate, "angering me by all the things they do."

25 tn Heb "Because your heart was tender."

26 tn Heb "how I said concerning this place and its residents to become [an object of] horror and [an example of] a curse." The final phrase ("horror and a curse") refers to Judah becoming a prime example of an accursed people. In curse formulations they would be held up as a prime example of divine judgment. For an example of such a curse, see Jer 29:22.

You tore your clothes and wept before me, and I have heard you,' says the LORD. **22:20** 'Therefore I will allow you to die and be buried in peace.¹ You will not have to witness² all the disaster I will bring on this place.'"" Then they reported back to the king.

The King Institutes Religious Reform

23:1 The king summoned all the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem.³ **23:2** The king went up to the LORD's temple, accompanied by all the people of Judah, all the residents of Jerusalem, the priests, and the prophets. All the people were there, from the youngest to the oldest. He read aloud⁴ all the words of the scroll of the covenant that had been discovered in the LORD's temple. **23:3** The king stood by the pillar and renewed⁵ the covenant before the LORD, agreeing to follow⁶ the LORD and to obey his commandments, laws, and rules with all his heart and being,⁷ by carrying out the terms⁸ of this covenant recorded on this scroll. All the people agreed to keep the covenant.⁹

23:4 The king ordered Hilkiah the high priest, the high-ranking priests,¹⁰ and the guards¹¹ to bring out of the LORD's temple all the items that were used in the worship of¹² Baal, Asherah, and all the stars of the sky.¹³ The king¹⁴ burned them outside of Jerusalem in the terraces¹⁵ of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel.¹⁶ **23:5** He eliminated¹⁷ the pagan priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to offer sacrifices¹⁸ on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the area right around Jerusalem. (They offered sacrifices¹⁹ to Baal, the sun god, the moon god, the constellations, and all the stars in the sky.) **23:6** He removed the Asherah

pole from the LORD's temple and took it outside Jerusalem to the Kidron Valley, where he burned it.²⁰ He smashed it to dust and then threw the dust in the public graveyard.²¹ **23:7** He tore down the quarters²² of the male cultic prostitutes in the LORD's temple, where women were weaving shrines²³ for Asherah.

23:8 He brought all the priests from the cities of Judah and ruined²⁴ the high places where the priests had offered sacrifices, from Geba to Beer Sheba.²⁵ He tore down the high place of the goat idols²⁶ situated at the entrance of the gate of Joshua, the city official, on the left side of the city gate. **23:9** (Now the priests of the high places did not go up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat unleavened cakes among their fellow priests.)²⁷ **23:10** The king²⁸ ruined Topheth in the Valley of Ben Hinnom so that no one could pass his son or his daughter through the fire to Molech.²⁹ **23:11** He removed from the entrance to the LORD's temple the statues of horses³⁰ that the kings of Judah had placed there in honor of the sun god. (They were kept near the room of Nathan Melech the eunuch, which was situated among the courtyards.)³¹ He burned up the chariots devoted to the sun god.³² **23:12** The king tore down the altars

²⁰ tn Heb "and he burned it in the Kidron Valley."

²¹ tc Heb "on the grave of the sons of the people." Some Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, Aramaic, and Latin witnesses read the plural "graves."

tn The phrase "sons of the people" refers here to the common people (see BDB 766 s.v. בְּנֵי), as opposed to the upper classes who would have private tombs.

²² tn Or "cubicles." Heb "houses."

²³ tn Heb "houses." Perhaps tent-shrines made from cloth are in view (see BDB 109 s.v. בַּיִת). M. Cogan and H. Tadmor (*II Kings* [AB], 286) understand this as referring to clothes made for images of the goddess.

²⁴ tn Heb "defiled; desecrated," that is, "made ritually unclean and unusable."

²⁵ sn These towns marked Judah's northern and southern borders, respectively, at the time of Josiah.

²⁶ tc The Hebrew text reads "the high places of the gates," which is problematic in that the rest of the verse speaks of a specific gate. The translation assumes an emendation to *בְּמִתְּחִילֵי הַשְּׂעָרִים* (*bamot hash"arim*), "the high place of the goats" (that is, goat idols). Worship of such images is referred to in Lev 17:7 and 2 Chr 11:15. For a discussion of the textual issue, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 286-87.

²⁷ tn Heb "their brothers."

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

²⁹ sn Attempts to identify this deity with a god known from the ancient Near East have not yet yielded a consensus. For brief discussions see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor *II Kings* (AB), 288 and HALOT 592 s.v. מֹלֵךְ. For more extensive studies see George C. Heider, *The Cult of Molek*, and John Day, *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament*.

³⁰ tn The MT simply reads "the horses." The words "statues of" have been supplied in the translation for clarity.

³¹ tn Heb "who/which was in the [...?]." The meaning of the Hebrew term פַּרְוָרִים (*parvarim*), translated here "courtyards," is uncertain. The relative clause may indicate where the room was located or explain who Nathan Melech was, "the eunuch who was in the courtyards." See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 288-89, who translate "the officer of the precincts."

³² tn Heb "and the chariots of the sun he burned with fire."

¹ tn Heb "Therefore, look, I am gathering you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your tomb in peace."

² tn Heb "your eyes will not see."

³ tn Heb "and the king sent and all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem gathered to him."

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

⁴ tn Heb "read in their ears."

⁵ tn Heb "cut," that is, "made, agreed to."

⁶ tn Heb "walk after."

⁷ tn Or "soul."

⁸ tn Heb "words."

⁹ tn Heb "stood in the covenant."

¹⁰ tn Heb "the priests of the second [rank]," that is, those ranked just beneath Hilkiah.

¹¹ tn Or "doorkeepers."

¹² tn Heb "for."

¹³ tn Heb "all the host of heaven" (also in v. 5).

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

¹⁵ tn Or "fields." For a defense of the translation "terraces," see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 285.

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

¹⁷ tn Perhaps, "destroyed."

¹⁸ tn Or "burn incense."

¹⁹ tn Or "burned incense."

the kings of Judah had set up on the roof of Ahaz's upper room, as well as the altars Manasseh had set up in the two courtyards of the LORD's temple. He crushed them up¹ and threw the dust in the Kidron Valley. **23:13** The king ruined the high places east of Jerusalem, south of the Mount of Destruction,² that King Solomon of Israel had built for the detestable Sidonian goddess Astarte, the detestable Moabite god Chemosh, and the horrible Ammonite god Milcom. **23:14** He smashed the sacred pillars to bits, cut down the Asherah pole, and filled those shrines³ with human bones.

23:15 He also tore down the altar in Bethel⁴ at the high place made by Jeroboam son of Nebat, who encouraged Israel to sin.⁵ He burned all the combustible items at that high place and crushed them to dust; including the Asherah pole.⁶ **23:16** When Josiah turned around, he saw the tombs there on the hill. So he ordered the bones from the tombs to be brought;⁷ he burned them on the altar and defiled it. This fulfilled the LORD's announcement made by the prophet while Jeroboam stood by the altar during a festival. King Josiah⁸ turned and saw the grave of the prophet who had foretold this.⁹ **23:17** He asked,

"What is this grave marker I see?" The men from the city replied, "It's the grave of the prophet¹⁰ who came from Judah and foretold these very things you have done to the altar of Bethel." **23:18** The king¹¹ said, "Leave it alone! No one must touch his bones." So they left his bones undisturbed, as well as the bones of the Israelite prophet buried beside him.¹²

23:19 Josiah also removed all the shrines on the high places in the cities of Samaria. The kings of Israel had made them and angered the LORD.¹³ He did to them what he had done to the high place in Bethel.¹⁴ **23:20** He sacrificed all the priests of the high places on the altars located there, and burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

23:21 The king ordered all the people, "Observe the Passover of the LORD your God, as prescribed in this scroll of the covenant." **23:22** He issued this edict because¹⁵ a Passover like this had not been observed since the days of the judges; it was neglected for the entire period of the kings of Israel and Judah.¹⁶ **23:23** But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah's reign, such a Passover of the LORD was observed in Jerusalem.

23:24 Josiah also got rid of¹⁷ the ritual pits used to conjure up spirits,¹⁸ the magicians, per-

¹ **tc** The MT reads, "he ran from there," which makes little if any sense in this context. Some prefer to emend the verbal form (Qal of רוץ [rats], "run") to a Hiphil of רוץ with third plural suffix and translate, "he quickly removed them" (see BDB 930 s.v. רוץ, and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* [AB], 289). The suffix could have been lost in MT by haplography (note the *mem* [מ] that immediately follows the verb on the form בִּשְׁמָה, *misham*, "from there"). Another option, the one reflected in the translation, is to emend the verb to a Piel of רָצַץ (*ratsats*), "crush," with third plural suffix.

² **sn** This is a derogatory name for the Mount of Olives, involving a wordplay between בִּשְׁמָה (*mash^ckhah*), "anointing," and בִּשְׁחִית (*mash^kkhit*), "destruction." See HALOT 644 s.v. בִּשְׁחִית and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 289.

³ **tn** Heb "their places."

⁴ **map** For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

⁵ **tn** Heb "And also the altar that is in Bethel, the high place that Jeroboam son of Nebat who encouraged Israel to sin, also that altar and the high place he tore down." The more repetitive Hebrew text is emphatic.

⁶ **tn** Heb "he burned the high place, crushing to dust, and he burned the Asherah pole." High places per se are never referred to as being burned elsewhere. בָּמֹת (*bamah*) here stands by metonymy for the combustible items located on the high place. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 289.

⁷ **tn** Heb "and he sent and took the bones from the tombs."

⁸ **tn** Heb "the king"; this has been specified as "King Josiah" in the translation for clarity (cf. TEV, CEV, NLT).

⁹ **tc** The MT is much shorter than this. It reads, "according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words." The LXX has a much longer text at this point. It reads: "[w]hich was proclaimed by the man of God [while Jeroboam stood by the altar at a celebration. Then he turned and saw the grave of the man of God [who proclaimed these words]. The extra material attested in the LXX was probably accidentally omitted in the Hebrew tradition when a scribe's eye jumped from the first occurrence of the phrase "man of God" (which appears right before the extra material) and the second occurrence of the phrase (which appears at the end of the extra material)."

sn This recalls the prophecy recorded in 1 Kgs 13:2.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "man of God."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹² **tn** Heb "and they left undisturbed his bones, the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria." If the phrase "the bones of the prophet" were oppositional to "his bones," one would expect the sentence to end "from Judah" (see v. 17). Apparently the "prophet" referred to in the second half of the verse is the old prophet from Bethel who buried the man of God from Judah in his own tomb and instructed his sons to bury his bones there as well (1 Kgs 13:30-31). One expects the text to read "from Bethel," but "Samaria" (which was not even built at the time of the incident recorded in 1 Kgs 13) is probably an anachronistic reference to the northern kingdom in general. See the note at 1 Kgs 13:32 and the discussion in M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 290.

¹³ **tc** Heb "which the kings of Israel had made, angering." The object has been accidentally omitted in the MT. It appears in the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate versions.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel."

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

¹⁵ **tn** The Hebrew text has simply "because." The translation attempts to reflect more clearly the logical connection between the king's order and the narrator's observation. Another option is to interpret כִּי (*ki*) as asseverative and translate, "indeed."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "because there had not been observed [one] like this Passover from the days of the judges who judged Israel and all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah."

¹⁷ **tn** Here בָּעַר (*bi'er*) is not the well attested verb "burn," but the less common homonym meaning "devastate, sweep away, remove." See HALOT 146 s.v. בָּעַר.

¹⁸ **sn** See the note at 2 Kgs 21:6.

sonal idols, disgusting images,¹ and all the detestable idols that had appeared in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem. In this way he carried out the terms of the law² recorded on the scroll that Hilkiyah the priest had discovered in the LORD's temple. **23:25** No king before or after repented before the LORD as he did, with his whole heart, soul, and being in accordance with the whole law of Moses.³

23:26 Yet the LORD's great anger against Judah did not subside; he was still infuriated by all the things Manasseh had done.⁴ **23:27** The LORD announced, "I will also spurn Judah,⁵ just as I spurned Israel. I will reject this city that I chose – both Jerusalem and the temple, about which I said, "I will live there."⁶

23:28 The rest of the events of Josiah's reign and all his accomplishments are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.⁷ **23:29** During Josiah's reign Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt marched toward⁸ the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria. King Josiah marched out to fight him, but Necho⁹ killed him at Megiddo¹⁰ when he saw him. **23:30** His servants transported his dead body¹¹ from Megiddo in a chariot and brought it to Jerusalem, where they buried him in his tomb. The people of the land took Josiah's son Jehoahaz, poured olive oil on his head,¹² and made him king in his father's place.

Jehoahaz's Reign over Judah

23:31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.¹³ His mother¹⁴ was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah.

23:32 He did evil in the sight of¹⁵ the LORD as his ancestors had done.¹⁶ **23:33** Pharaoh Necho imprisoned him in Riblah in the land of Hamath and prevented him from ruling in Jerusalem.¹⁷ He imposed on the land a special tax¹⁸ of one hundred talents¹⁹ of silver and a talent of gold. **23:34** Pharaoh Necho made Josiah's son Eliakim king in Josiah's place, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. He took Jehoahaz to Egypt, where he died.²⁰ **23:35** Jehoiakim paid Pharaoh the required amount of silver and gold, but to meet Pharaoh's demands Jehoiakim had to tax the land. He collected an assessed amount from each man among the people of the land in order to pay Pharaoh Necho.²¹

Jehoiakim's Reign over Judah

23:36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned for eleven years in Jerusalem.²² His mother was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiyah, from Rumah. **23:37** He did evil in the sight of²³ the LORD as his ancestors had done.

24:1 During Jehoiakim's reign,²⁴ King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked.²⁵ Jehoiakim was his subject for three years, but then he rebelled against him.²⁶ **24:2** The LORD sent against him Babylonian, Syrian, Moabite, and Ammonite raiding bands; he sent them to destroy Judah, as he had warned he would do through his

¹ **sn** See the note at 1 Kgs 15:12.

² **tn** *Heb* "carrying out the words of the law."

³ **tn** *Heb* "and like him there was not a king before him who returned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his being according to all the law of Moses, and after him none arose like him."

⁴ **sn** The description of Josiah's devotion as involving his whole "heart, soul, and being" echoes the language of Deut 6:5.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Yet the LORD did not turn away from the fury of his great anger, which raged against Judah, on account of all the infuriating things by which Manasseh had made him angry."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "Also Judah I will turn away from my face."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "My name will be there."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Josiah, and all which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?"

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "went up to." The idiom *עָלָה...עָלָה* (*alah ...'al*) can sometimes mean "go up against," but here it refers to Necho's attempt to aid the Assyrians in their struggle with the Babylonians.

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

¹¹ **map** For location see Map1-D4; Map2-C1; Map4-C2; Map5-F2; Map7-B1.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "him, dead."

¹³ **tn** Or "anointed him."

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

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the name of his mother."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "according to all which his fathers had done."

¹⁷ **tc** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has "when [he was] ruling in Jerusalem," but the marginal reading (*Qere*), which has support from Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, and Latin witnesses, has "[preventing him] from ruling in Jerusalem."

¹⁸ **tn** Or "fine."

¹⁹ **tn** The Hebrew term *כִּכְר* (*kikkar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or to a standard unit of weight, generally regarded as a talent. Since the accepted weight for a talent of metal is about 75 pounds, this would have amounted to about 7,500 pounds of silver and 75 pounds of gold (cf. NCV, NLT); CEV "almost four tons of silver and about seventy-five pounds of gold."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and he took Jehoahaz, and he came to Egypt and he died there."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "And the silver and the gold Jehoiakim gave to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the silver at the command of Pharaoh, [from] each according to his tax he collected the silver and the gold, from the people of the land, to give to Pharaoh Necho."

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

²³ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "In his days."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "came up." Perhaps an object ("against him") has been accidentally omitted from the text. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 306.

²⁶ **tn** The Hebrew text has "and he turned and rebelled against him."

servants the prophets.¹ **24:3** Just as the LORD had announced, he rejected Judah because of all the sins which Manasseh had committed.² **24:4** Because he killed innocent people and stained Jerusalem with their blood, the LORD was unwilling to forgive them.³

24:5 The rest of the events of Jehoiakim's reign and all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.⁴ **24:6** He passed away⁵ and his son Jehoiachin replaced him as king. **24:7** The king of Egypt did not march out from his land again, for the king of Babylon conquered all the territory that the king of Egypt had formerly controlled between the Stream of Egypt and the Euphrates River.

Jehoiachin's Reign over Judah

24:8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.⁶ His mother⁷ was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan, from Jerusalem. **24:9** He did evil in the sight of⁸ the LORD as his ancestors had done.

24:10 At that time the generals⁹ of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marched to Jerusalem and besieged the city.¹⁰ **24:11** King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city while his generals were besieging it. **24:12** King Jehoiachin of Judah, along with his mother, his servants, his officials, and his eunuchs surrendered¹¹ to the king of Babylon. The king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign,¹² took Jehoiachin¹³ prisoner. **24:13** Nebuchadnezzar¹⁴ took from there all the riches in the treasuries of the LORD's temple and of the royal palace. He removed all the gold items which King Solomon of Israel had made for the LORD's temple, just as

the LORD had warned. **24:14** He deported all the residents of Jerusalem, including all the officials and all the soldiers (10,000 people in all). This included all the craftsmen and those who worked with metal. No one was left except for the poorest among the people of the land. **24:15** He deported Jehoiachin from Jerusalem to Babylon, along with the king's mother and wives, his eunuchs, and the high-ranking officials of the land.¹⁵ **24:16** The king of Babylon deported to Babylon all the soldiers (there were 7,000), as well as 1,000 craftsmen and metal workers. This included all the best warriors.¹⁶ **24:17** The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's¹⁷ uncle, king in Jehoiachin's place. He renamed him Zedekiah.

Zedekiah's Reign over Judah

24:18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem.¹⁸ His mother¹⁹ was Hamutal,²⁰ the daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah. **24:19** He did evil in the sight of²¹ the LORD, as Jehoiakim had done.²²

24:20 What follows is a record of what happened to Jerusalem and Judah because of the LORD's anger; he finally threw them out of his presence.²³ Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. **25:1** So King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came against Jerusalem with his whole army and set up camp outside²⁴ it. They built siege ramps all around it. He arrived on the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign.²⁵ **25:2** The city remained under siege until King Zedekiah's eleventh year. **25:3** By the ninth day of the fourth month²⁶ the famine in the city was so severe the residents²⁷

¹ *tn* *Heb* "he sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which he spoke by the hand of his servants the prophets."

² *tn* *Heb* "Certainly according to the word of the LORD this happened against Judah, to remove [them] from his face because of the sins of Manasseh according to all which he did."

³ *tn* *Heb* "and also the blood of the innocent which he shed, and he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive."

⁴ *tn* *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Jehoiakim, and all which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?"

⁵ *tn* *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

⁶ *map* For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁷ *tn* *Heb* "the name of his mother."

⁸ *tn* *Heb* "in the eyes of."

⁹ *tn* *Heb* "servants."

¹⁰ *tn* *Heb* "went up [to] Jerusalem and the city entered into siege."

¹¹ *tn* *Heb* "came out."

¹² *sn* That is, the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, 597 B.C.

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

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

¹⁵ *tn* *Heb* "and he deported Jehoiachin to Babylon; the mother of the king and the wives of the king and his eunuchs and the mighty of the land he led into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon."

¹⁶ *tn* *Heb* "the entire [group], mighty men, doers of war."

¹⁷ *tn* *Heb* "his."

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

¹⁹ *tn* *Heb* "the name of his mother."

²⁰ *tc* Some textual witnesses support the consonantal text (*Kethib*) in reading "Hamital."

²¹ *tn* *Heb* "in the eyes of."

²² *tn* *Heb* "according to all which Jehoiakim had done."

²³ *tn* *Heb* "Surely [or, 'for'] because of the anger of the LORD this happened in Jerusalem and Judah until he threw them out from upon his face."

²⁴ *tn* Or "against."

²⁵ *sn* This would have been Jan 15, 588 B.C. The reckoning is based on the calendar that begins the year in the spring (Nisan = March/April).

²⁶ *tn* The MT has simply "of the month," but the parallel passage in Jer 52:6 has "fourth month," and this is followed by almost all English translations. The word "fourth," however, is not actually present in the MT of 2 Kgs 25:3.

sn According to modern reckoning that would have been July 18, 586 B.C. The siege thus lasted almost a full eighteen months.

²⁷ *tn* *Heb* "the people of the land."

had no food. **25:4** The enemy broke through the city walls,¹ and all the soldiers tried to escape. They left the city during the night.² They went through the gate between the two walls that is near the king's garden.³ (The Babylonians were all around the city.) Then they headed for the Jordan Valley.⁴ **25:5** But the Babylonian army chased after the king. They caught up with him in the plains of Jericho,⁵ and his entire army deserted him. **25:6** They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah,⁶ where he⁷ passed sentence on him. **25:7** Zedekiah's sons were executed while Zedekiah was forced to watch.⁸ The king of Babylon⁹ then had Zedekiah's eyes put out, bound him in bronze chains, and carried him off to Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar Destroys Jerusalem

25:8 On the seventh¹⁰ day of the fifth month,¹¹ in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard¹² who served the king of Babylon, arrived in Jerusalem.¹³ **25:9** He burned down the LORD's temple, the royal palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem, including every large house.¹⁴ **25:10** The whole Babylonian army that came with the captain of the royal guard tore down the walls that surrounded Jerusalem. **25:11** Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal

guard, deported the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen.¹⁵ **25:12** But he¹⁶ left behind some of the poor of the land and gave them fields and vineyards.

25:13 The Babylonians broke the two bronze pillars in the LORD's temple, as well as the movable stands and the big bronze basin called "The Sea."¹⁷ They took the bronze to Babylon. **25:14** They also took the pots, shovels,¹⁸ trimming shears,¹⁹ pans, and all the bronze utensils used by the priests.²⁰ **25:15** The captain of the royal guard took the golden and silver censers²¹ and basins. **25:16** The bronze of the items that King Solomon made for the LORD's temple – including the two pillars, the big bronze basin called "The Sea," the twelve bronze bulls under "The Sea,"²² and the movable stands – was too heavy to be weighed. **25:17** Each of the pillars was about twenty-seven feet²³ high. The bronze top of one pillar was about four and a half feet²⁴ high and had bronze latticework and pomegranate shaped ornaments all around it. The second pillar with its latticework was like it.

25:18 The captain of the royal guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah, the priest who was second in rank, and the three doorkeepers. **25:19** From the city he took a eunuch who was in charge of the soldiers, five²⁵ of the king's advisers²⁶ who were discovered in the city, an official army secretary who drafted citizens²⁷ for military service, and sixty citizens from the people of the land who were discovered in the city. **25:20** Nebuzaradan, captain of the royal guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. **25:21** The king of Babylon ordered them to be executed²⁸ at Riblah

¹ **tn** *Heb* "the city was breached."

² **tn** The Hebrew text is abrupt here: "And all the men of war by the night." The translation attempts to capture the sense.

³ **sn** The king's garden is mentioned again in Neh 3:15 in conjunction with the pool of Siloam and the stairs that go down from the City of David. This would have been in the southern part of the city near the Tyropean Valley which agrees with the reference to the "two walls" which were probably the walls on the eastern and western hills.

⁴ **sn** *Heb* "toward the Arabah." The Arabah was the rift valley north and south of the Dead Sea. Here the intention was undoubtedly to escape across the Jordan to Moab or Ammon. It appears from Jer 40:14; 41:15 that the Ammonites were known to harbor fugitives from the Babylonians.

⁵ **map** For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-E3; Map10-A2; Map11-A1.

⁶ **sn** *Riblah* was a strategic town on the Orontes River in Syria. It was at a crossing of the major roads between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Pharaoh Necho had earlier received Jehoahaz there and put him in chains (2 Kgs 23:33) prior to taking him captive to Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar had set up his base camp for conducting his campaigns against the Palestinian states there and was now sitting in judgment on prisoners brought to him.

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew text has the plural form of the verb, but the parallel passage in Jer 52:9 has the singular.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "were killed before his eyes."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (the king of Babylon) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁰ **tn** The parallel account in Jer 52:12 has "tenth."

¹¹ **sn** The seventh day of the month would have been August 14, 586 B.C. in modern reckoning.

¹² **tn** For the meaning of this phrase see BDB 371 s.v. מְרַמָּה 2, and compare the usage in Gen 39:1.

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

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and every large house he burned down with fire."

¹⁵ **tc** The MT has "the multitude." But הַהֶמוֹן (*hehamon*) should probably be emended to הַמְּרַמָּה (*he'amon*).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the captain of the royal guard." However, the subject is clear from the preceding and contemporary English style would normally avoid repeating the proper name and title.

¹⁷ **sn** See the note at 1 Kgs 7:23.

¹⁸ **sn** These shovels were used to clean the altar.

¹⁹ **sn** These were used to trim the wicks.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "with which they served [or, 'fulfilled their duty']."

²¹ **sn** These held the embers used for the incense offerings.

²² **tc** The MT lacks "the twelve bronze bulls under 'the Sea,'" but these words have probably been accidentally omitted by homoioarcton. The scribe's eye may have jumped from the הָהָא (v^h*ha*) on הַבְּבָרָה (v^h*habbaqar*), "and the bulls," to the הָהָא on הַמְּרַמָּה (v^h*hamm'khanot*), "and the movable stands," causing him to leave out the intervening words. See the parallel passage in Jer 52:20.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "eighteen cubits." The standard cubit in the OT is assumed by most authorities to be about eighteen inches (45 cm) long.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "three cubits." The parallel passage in Jer 52:22 has "five."

²⁵ **tn** The parallel passage in Jer 52:25 has "seven."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "five seers of the king's face."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "the people of the land."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "struck them down and killed them."

in the territory¹ of Hamath. So Judah was deported from its land.

Gedaliah Appointed Governor

25:22 Now King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, as governor over the people whom he allowed to remain in the land of Judah.² **25:23** All of the officers of the Judahite army³ and their troops heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah to govern. So they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite. **25:24** Gedaliah took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety.⁴ He said, "You don't need to be afraid to submit to the Babylonian officials. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you."⁵ **25:25** But in the seventh month⁵ Ishmael son of Nethaniah,

son of Elishama, who was a member of the royal family,⁶ came with ten of his men and murdered Gedaliah,⁷ as well as the Judeans and Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah. **25:26** Then all the people, from the youngest to the oldest, as well as the army officers, left for⁸ Egypt, because they were afraid of what the Babylonians might do.

Jehoiachin in Babylon

25:27 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-seventh⁹ day of the twelfth month,¹⁰ King Evil-Merodach of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, pardoned¹¹ King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him¹² from prison. **25:28** He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prestigious position than¹³ the other kings who were with him in Babylon. **25:29** Jehoiachin¹⁴ took off his prison clothes and ate daily in the king's presence for the rest of his life. **25:30** He was given daily provisions by the king for the rest of his life until the day he died.¹⁵

¹ **tn** *Heb* "land."

² **tn** *Heb* "And the people who were left in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon left, he appointed over them Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan."

³ **tn** *Heb* "of the army." The word "Judahite" has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

⁴ **tn** The words "so as to give them...some assurance of safety" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁵ **sn** It is not altogether clear whether this is in the same year that Jerusalem fell or not. The wall was breached in the fourth month (= early July; Jer 39:2) and Nebuzaradan came and burned the palace, the temple, and many of the houses and tore down the wall in the fifth month (= early August; Jer 52:12). That would have left time between the fifth month and the seventh month (October) to gather in the harvest of grapes, dates and figs, and olives (Jer 40:12). However, many commentators feel that too much activity takes place in too short a time for this to have been in the same year and posit that it happened the following year or even five years later when a further deportation took place, possibly in retaliation for the murder of Gedaliah and the Babylonian garrison at Mizpah (Jer 52:30). The assassination of Gedaliah had momentous consequences and was commemorated in one of the post exilic fast days lamenting the fall of Jerusalem (Zech 8:19).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "[was] from the seed of the kingdom."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and they struck down Gedaliah and he died."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "arose and went to."

⁹ **sn** The parallel account in Jer 52:31 has "twenty-fifth."

¹⁰ **sn** The twenty-seventh day would be March 22, 561 B.C. in modern reckoning.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "lifted up the head of."

¹² **tn** The words "released him" are supplied in the translation on the basis of Jer 52:31.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "made his throne above the throne of."

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

¹⁵ **tc** The words "until the day he died" do not appear in the MT, but they are included in the parallel passage in Jer 52:34. Probably they have been accidentally omitted by homoioteleuton. A scribe's eye jumped from the final vav (ו) בְּיוֹמוֹ (*b'yomo*), "in his day," to the final vav (ו) בּוֹרֵי (*moto*), "his death," leaving out the intervening words.