

<CHAPTER 19> ¹

¹ King *Jehoshaphat* of Judah returned safely to his royal palace in Jerusalem. ² Jehu, the seer, ² the son of Hanani met the king, saying: “Do you think it is proper to assist the wicked and befriend those who hate ³ the Lord? Because of this the Lord’s wrath ⁴ has come down against you. ⁵ However, there is some good ⁶ to be found in you for you destroyed the Asheroth (*or, sacred poles*) ⁷ in the land and you have determined to seek God.”

⁴ *Jehoshaphat* resided in Jerusalem, and from there went out to be with the populace, from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim, to bring them back to the Lord (*or, to encourage them to worship the Lord*), the God of their ancestors. ⁵ He appointed judges in the land, in all the fortified ⁸ towns of Judah – town by town. ⁶ He appointed judges for them and instructed them, saying: “Think seriously about what you are to do as judges for you are to judge, not on behalf of people (*or, in the name of people*) but on behalf of (*or, in the name of*) the Lord; he is with you when you give your judgment. ⁹ ⁷ Now then: Have reverence for the Lord, causing you to be careful that there might not be any perversion of the justice ¹⁰ for the Lord nor partiality or bribery.”

⁸ Moreover, in Jerusalem *Jehoshaphat* appointed selected Levites and priests along with leading citizens of Israel, ¹¹ to act as judges for the Lord and to decide the civil disputes. They held court in Jerusalem. ¹² ⁹ He charged them: “This is how you are to act! You are to show respect for the Lord, in faithfulness and wholeheartedness. ¹³ ¹⁰ Whenever a legal problem (*or, a case*) ¹⁴ comes before you from your fellow citizens who live in the towns, concerning a homicide (*or, manslaughter*), a violation of the commandments, ritual or the law, you must instruct them that they may not incur guilt ¹⁵ before the Lord so that wrath may not come upon you and your fellow citizens. It is in such a manner that you are not to incur guilt. ¹¹ Amariah, the chief priest will have the

¹ There is no parallel passage in Kings.

² This was presumably a different person from the person having the same name who spoke (I Kings 16:1) 50 years earlier.

³ LXX: “η μεσουμενω υπο.”

⁴ Literally: “by this the wrath...” BV: “indignation from the Lord.”

⁵ The translation by Brenton has: “And there went out to meet him Jehu the prophet the son of Anani, and said to him, ‘King Jehoshaphat, doest thou help a sinner, or act friendly towards one hated by the Lord? Therefore has wrath come upon thee from the Lord.’”

⁶ Literally: “good things are found.”

⁷ See footnote II Chronicles 14:3. Footnote 358.

⁸ LXX: “strong.”

⁹ LXX: “λογιοι.” Literally: “in the word of judgment.”

¹⁰ NEB: “dread of the Lord be upon you for our God will not tolerate injustice, partiality or bribery.”

¹¹ NEB: “heads of families by paternal descent in Israel.”

¹² Literally: “dispute, and they returned to Jerusalem (*or, and they lived in Jerusalem*).” Some scholars feel this last phrase is a textual error. They emend the text to read: “and for the controversies of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

¹³ LXX: “full-heartedness.” Apparently local courts of justice were established in the provincial towns and a court of appeals was apparently established in Jerusalem.

¹⁴ LXX: “της αυηρ.”

¹⁵ Translators question the Hebrew words. Should this be translated as above or should it be translated as “that you may not incur guilt.”

final authority in religious matters and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael is the responsible leader and has final authority in civil cases. The Levites will have responsibility to act in matters in such a way that all dealings are conducted with courage before the Lord.”¹⁶

<CHAPTER 20>

¹ After this the Moabites¹⁷ and Ammonites¹⁸ along with the sons of the Meunities¹⁹ came to wage war against *Jehoshaphat*. ² Some messengers reported to *Jehoshaphat* saying, “A great horde is coming from Edom,²⁰ from beyond the [*Dead*] Sea, to attack you and presently they are at Hazazon-tamar (also called En-gedi).”²¹ ³ Then *Jehoshaphat* was fearful but determined²² to turn to the Lord for guidance. He proclaimed a fast for everyone in Judah. ⁴ Judah assembled to beseech the Lord, gathering from all the towns of Judah to seek the counsel of the Lord.

⁵ *Jehoshaphat* stood amid the assembled people of Judah and Jerusalem in the house of the Lord, in front of the new courtyard [*of the temple*], ⁶ and said, “O Lord, God of our ancestors! Are you the God of heaven? Do you rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? Are power and might in your hand so that therefore no one is able to withstand you? ⁷ O our God, didn’t you dispossess (*or, exile*) the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel came, and you gave this land to the descendants of your friend Abraham²³ forever?

⁸ “This was where they settled down and have built a sanctuary for your name, saying, ⁹ ‘If misfortune comes upon us, battle, judgment, (*or, sword of judgment*),²⁴ or pestilence,²⁵ or famine, we will stand before this house and before you (for your name is in this house) and we will praise²⁶ you in our afflictions and you will hear and save.’ ¹⁰ Now watch! The men of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, the ones who would not let Israel pass through²⁷ when our ancestors came from the land of Egypt, and they avoided (*or, they detoured around their land*) and caused no destruction²⁸ -- ¹¹ but see –they want to repay us by expelling us²⁹ from your premises which you have given us to inherit. ¹² O our God, won’t you execute judgment on them? We are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our expectations are with you.”

¹⁶ NRSV: “judges are solemnly instructed to be incorrupt and fearless.”

¹⁷ LXX: “children of Moab.”

¹⁸ LXX: “children of Ammon.”

¹⁹ LXX: “Μιναιων.” Hebrew unclear: “mywM[hm.]” The possible intention was “Edom” which would be fitting with the area of the Moabites and Ammonites. Edom was located east of the Jordan River, in present day Syria. The difference might cause the textual confusion to be readily understood. Syria in Hebrew would be “מרא.” Edom in Hebrew would be “מדיא.” The LXX has: “Μιναιων.”

²⁰ One Hebrew manuscript has “Edom.” All others have “Aram” (or Syria.)

²¹ The location of Engedi was along the west shore of the Dead Sea, about 24 miles south-east of Jerusalem.

²² Literally: “set his face.”

²³ LXX: literally: “τω ηγαπημενω σου.”

²⁴ Literally: “the sword.” TAN: “punishing sword.” NEB: “war or flood.”

²⁵ LXX: “ακρος.” “locusts.”

²⁶ Literally: “cry to you.”

²⁷ Literally: “invade.” LXX: “to pass through them.”

²⁸ Cf.: Deuteronomy 2:9.

²⁹ Vulgate: “et cameli corum.”

13 During this prayer all the men of Judah stood before the Lord accompanied by their little babies, their wives and their children.

14 The spirit of the Lord came on Jahaziel³⁰ the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel,³¹ son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the ancestral family of Asaph who stood in the midst of the assembly. 15 He said, “Be attentive, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King *Jehoshaphat*! This is what the Lord says to you:³² ‘Do not be fearful or discouraged because of the great horde, for the battle is not yours but God’s. 16 March against them tomorrow. They will come up through the Pass of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the gorge east of the Wilderness of Jeruel.’³³ 17 You will not engage in battle. Just take your positions and wait for you will witness the victory of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not fear or be discouraged.³⁴ Tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you.”³⁵

18 Then *Jehoshaphat* bowed his head³⁶ with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshiping him. 19 The Levites of the Kohathites and the Korahites stood to praise the Lord, the God of Israel with very loud song.

20 They rose early in the morning and went out into the Desert of Tekoa and as they went out *Jehoshaphat* stood and said loudly.³⁷ “Listen to me, Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Trust assuredly in the Lord your God and you will succeed!³⁸ Believe his prophets and you will be successful.” 21 When he had encouraged the people, and stationed those who were to sing praises, extolling (*or, to be cantors for*) the Lord, doing so in robes that were used for special occasions, they went before the vanguard singing, “Give thanks to the Lord for his steadfast love is eternal.”²² When they sang and praised,³⁹ the Lord laid an ambush (*or, caused the invaders to panic*)⁴⁰ against the warriors of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir who had come to invade Judah, so they were routed.⁴¹ 23 The warriors of Ammon and Moab fought⁴² against the warriors of Mount Seir, annihilating them completely and when they had annihilated the warriors of Seir they all joined in destroying one another.

24 When Judah came to the Watchtower of the Wilderness (*or, desert*) they looked toward the multitude. They saw them – corpses – lying on the ground. None had survived. 25 When *Jehoshaphat* and his people came to take the spoils (*or, to strip the*

³⁰ Jahaziel was a Levite who responded to the crisis. LXX: “και τω οζηηλ.”

³¹ LXX: “ελε(α)ηλ.”

³² LXX: “to yourselves.”

³³ LXX: “Ιερουηλ.” NIV: “in the desert Jeruel.”

³⁴ MFT: “Fear not, falter not.”

³⁵ The verse in the LXX reads: “It is not for you to fight; understand these things (ταυτα συνετε) and see the deliverance of the Lord with you, Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, do not be afraid to go forward to meet them and the Lord will be with you.”

³⁶ Some scholars substitute: “knelt.”

³⁷ LXX: “και εβοησεν.” “and cried out.”

³⁸ LXX: “you will be trusted.”

³⁹ TAN: “their joyous shouts and hymns.”

⁴⁰ CEV: “The Lord confused the enemy camp.”

⁴¹ Literally: “struck down.” LXX: “When they began to raise and give thanks the Lord caused the children of Ammon to fight against Moab and Mount Seir that came out to do battle against Judah and they were routed.”

⁴² LXX: “αυ ιστησαν.” “stood up against.”

bodies) they found an abundance of cattle, ⁴³ equipment, clothing, ⁴⁴ and precious objects which they pillaged ⁴⁵ for themselves until it was more than they were able to carry. There was so much that they spent three days taking all the booty. ²⁶ On the fourth day they assembled at the Valley of Beracah (*or, Valley of Blessing*) for there they blessed the Lord, which resulted in the valley being called the Valley of Blessing. ²⁷ Every warrior of Judah and Jerusalem, along with *Jehoshaphat* returned joyously to Jerusalem, for the Lord had caused them to rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸ They came to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem with harps, lyres and trumpets. ²⁹ The surrounding kingdoms were filled with the terror of God when they learned that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. ³⁰ Therefore the reign of *Jehoshaphat* was without trouble for his God provided rest from all sides.

³¹ *Jehoshaphat* reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he began his reign and reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. ³² He walked in the same way as his father and did not deviate from it, doing what was right in the sight of the Lord. ³³ However, he did not take away ⁴⁶ the high places. ⁴⁷ The populace still did not yield their hearts to the God of the Kings of Israel.

³⁴ The rest of the deeds of *Jehoshaphat* from beginning to end are recorded in the Chronicles of Jehu the son of Hanani, ⁴⁸ which are included in the Book of the Kings of Israel.

³⁵ After this *Jehoshaphat*, king of Judah entered into a partnership with AHAZIAH, king of Israel, who acted wickedly. ³⁶ He joined with him in the construction of ships that were able to sail to Tarshish. These were constructed at Ezion-geber. ⁴⁹ ³⁷ Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu ⁵⁰ from Mareshah prophesied against *Jehoshaphat*, saying, "Because you have been in partnership with AHAZIAH the Lord will destroy what you have accomplished. The ships were wrecked and were not able to sail to Tarshish.

21 ¹ *Jehoshaphat* died and was buried with his ancestors (*or, in the royal tombs*) in the city of David and his son *Jehoram* succeeded him as king. ⁵¹

<CHAPTER 21>

E. Reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah and Athaliah 21:2 – 23:21

² *Jehoram* had brothers, the sons of *Jehoshaphat*: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, ⁵² Michael and Shephar(t)iah, all of whom were the sons of King *Jehoshaphat* of

⁴³ So: LXX: "κτηνη." Literally: "among the bodies a large herd of..."

⁴⁴ A few Hebrew manuscripts have "clothing." Most have "corpses" which would have been clothed and considered suitable to strip of all possessions.

⁴⁵ LXX: "σκυλα." "stripped." BV: "They stripped off for themselves more than they could carry."

⁴⁶ TAN: "did not cease."

⁴⁷ Cf.: 17:6, 11:15 footnote 299. He had removed the Asherim (sacred poles) but apparently even though he had them removed the populous constructed new Asherim in spite of *Jehoshaphat*'s opposition. Possibly he gave up on the removal since he would not succeed in the elimination of them.

⁴⁸ LXX inserts: "who wrote."

⁴⁹ Ezion-geber was located at the head of the Gulf of Aqabah which had been the location for King Solomon's mine and smelting operation. Cf.: 9:21, footnote 252.

⁵⁰ LXX: "Dodia."

⁵¹ LXX: "Ιωραμ." With the death of *Jehoshaphat* of Judah and Ahab of Israel there was a marked change in the political climate of both countries.

⁵² TAN: "Azeriahu."

Judah. ³ Their father had given them many gifts of silver, gold and valuable presents together with fortified towns in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to *Jehoram*, because he was the oldest. ⁴ When *Jehoram* had ascended to the throne of his father and had consolidated his power, ⁵³ he put all his brothers to death with the sword, as well as some of the officers of Judah. ⁵⁴ ⁵ *Jehoram* was thirty-two years old when he became king and reigned in Jerusalem. ⁶ He carried out the practices of the kings of Israel, doing just as had been done in the house of AHAB since he was married to the daughter of AHAB. ⁵⁵ He did what was displeasing in the sight of the Lord. ⁷ Yet the Lord would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant which had been established with David, ⁵⁶ since he had promised to maintain a lamp to him and to his descendants forever.

⁸ Edom revolted from being ruled by Judah ⁵⁷ during *Jehoram's* reign and selected their own king. ⁹ Then *Jehoram's* army advanced against Edom with his commanders and all his chariots, and during the night he attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and his chariot commanders and defeated them. ⁵⁸ ¹⁰ Edom continually rebelled against the sovereignty of Judah [*so that its independence*] continues today. At the same time Libnah ⁵⁹ also revolted against *Jehoram* as their ruler, because he had abandoned the Lord the God of their ancestors. ⁶⁰

¹¹ Moreover he built altars ⁶¹ for worship in the hill country of Judah, and led the inhabitants of Jerusalem into unfaithfulness, and made Judah become wayward [*in their worship*].

¹² A letter came to *Jehoram* from the prophet Elijah which stated: "This is what the Lord, the God of your ancestor David says: 'Because you have not followed the practices of your father *Jehoshaphat* and the practices of King *Asa* of Judah, ¹³ but followed the practices of the kings of Israel and have misled Judah and seduced the inhabitants of Jerusalem, causing them to become as unfaithful as was AHAB who led Israel into unfaithfulness, and you have also murdered your brothers, (members of your own father's family who were better men than you). ¹⁴ Understand that the Lord will inflict a great calamity ⁶² on your subjects, your children, your wives, and all your possessions, ¹⁵ and you yourself will be severely stricken ⁶³ with a chronic intestinal disorder day after day, until your bowels will prolapse,' ⁶⁴

¹⁶ The Lord stirred up the anger of the Philistines and the Arabs who were neighbors of the Ethiopians against *Jehoram*, ¹⁷ and they attacked Judah and invaded,

⁵³ LXX: "rose up into power." Hebrew literally: "strong."

⁵⁴ Literally: "Israel."

⁵⁵ His daughter was Athaliah. Cf.: II Chronicles 22:2; II Kings 8:26. While she was called Omri's daughter she was actually Omri's granddaughter.

⁵⁶ Cf.: II Samuel 7. The promise mentioned here is a reference to the right of the throne. NEB: "He had promised to give him, and his sons a flame to burn for all time."

⁵⁷ Literally: "from under the hand of Judah." So also in v. 10.

⁵⁸ LXX: "και οφυγεν ο λαος εις τα οκηνωματα ατον." Some scholars translate: "and he was defeated." CEV: "He escaped during the night."

⁵⁹ Libnah was located in southern Judah at the border with the Philistine country.

⁶⁰ Jehoram was facing rebellion on both sides of his kingdom. In the east it was Edom, in the west it was Libnah.

⁶¹ Cf.: II Chronicles 11:15; footnote 299.

⁶² Literally: "plague."

⁶³ Literally: "in many sicknesses."

⁶⁴ Literally: "your bowels will come out." NEB: "until they prolapse and become severely ulcerated."

carrying away all the property they found that belonged to the royal palace as well as his sons and wives,⁶⁵ so that no son was left with the exception of Jehoahaz⁶⁶ who was the youngest.

¹⁸ After all this the Lord afflicted *Jehoram* with an incurable intestinal disease. ¹⁹ In due time, after two years had passed, his intestines prolapsed⁶⁷ because of the disease and he met an agonizing death.⁶⁸ His subjects did not kindle a fire in his honor, as had been done for his father. ²⁹ He was thirty-two years old when he began his reign and he reigned for eight years in Jerusalem. No one lamented his demise.⁶⁹ He was buried in the city of David but not in the royal tombs.

<CHAPTER 22>⁷⁰

¹ The inhabitants of Jerusalem made *Ahaziah*, *Jehoram*'s youngest⁷¹ son the king (since a band of raiders accompanied by Arabs entered the camp and had killed all the other sons).⁷² So *Ahaziah* the son of *Jehoram* reigned as king of Judah.

² *Ahaziah* began his reign when he was twenty-two⁷³ years old and he reigned for one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah⁷⁴ the granddaughter⁷⁵ of OMRI⁷⁶ ³ He also followed the example of the family of AHAB for his mother was his advisor and gave him evil advice.⁴ He did what was displeasing in the sight of the Lord as AHAB'S family had done; for after the death of his father members of AHAB'S family were appointed to become advisors which led to his downfall. ⁵ He even followed their advice and made an alliance with JORAM,⁷⁷ to wage war against King Hazeal of Syria in Ramoth-gilead. It was here that the Syrians⁷⁸ wounded JORAM ⁶ and he withdrew to recuperate in Jezreel after having sustained wounds in Ramah⁷⁹ (gilead).

King *Ahaziah*,⁸⁰ of Judah, *Jehoram*'s son went down to visit JORAM the son of AHAZ in Jezreel because he was ill (*or, wounded*).

⁶⁵ LXX: "και τψς θυγατερας αυτον." "and his daughters."

⁶⁶ The name Jehoahaz is a variant of Ahaziah. Another variant is Ahaz. See: 22:1. This is a curious verse which implies that Jerusalem alone was plundered and persons of the royal family were taken into exile. Surely this invasion had wider consequences which are not mentioned by the Chronicler.

⁶⁷ Literally: "his bowels came out."

⁶⁸ NEB: "in the second year the disease caused his bowels to prolapse, and the painful ulceration brought about his death."

⁶⁹ LXX: "he died without honor (επιανω)." Vulgate: "non rectius." Some Vulgate codices have "non desideratus."

⁷⁰ See: II Kings 8:25-28; 9:21-28. The account found in this chapter seems to be written with less care by the Chronicler than other chapters, thus making it difficult to translate clearly.

⁷¹ LXX: "little son."

⁷² LXX: "robbers that came against them, even the Arabians and the Alimazonians (και Αιμοζονεις) had slain all." TAN: "because all the older ones had been killed by the troops that penetrated the camp with the Arabs."

⁷³ Hebrew: "fourty-four." II Kings 8:26 says "twenty-two" as do the LXX and Vulgate. JB: "twenty."

⁷⁴ LXX: "Γοδαλια." "Gotholiah."

⁷⁵ Hebrew, LXX & Vulgate have "daughter."

⁷⁶ LXX: "Αμβρι."

⁷⁷ The name appears in manuscripts as "Joram" or "Jehoram." For the sake of clear understanding the king of Israel will be written as "Joram."

⁷⁸ Literally: "archers." LXX: "and the archers smote Joram."

⁷⁹ Ramah is a variant of Ramoth.

⁸⁰ Some MSS have "Ahaziah," others have "Azariah."

7 God caused the downfall ⁸¹ of *Azariah* because of his visit to JORAM for when he arrived and went out with JORAM to meet Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had appointed for the purpose of bringing an end to the dynasty of AHAB. 8 While Jehu was carrying out judgment on the house of AHAB ⁸² he met the officials of Judah and the nephews of *Ahaziah* who served as [*body*] guards for *Ahaziah*, and killed them. 9 He ordered a search for *Ahaziah* who was captured while hiding in Samaria, ⁸³ and he was brought to Jehu and was put to death. They buried him for they reasoned, saying, “He was a grandson of *Jehoshaphat* who sought guidance ⁸⁴ of the Lord wholeheartedly.” In the house of *Azariah* no one survived who would be capable of ruling.

10 As a result ⁸⁵ when Athaliah, the mother of *Ahaziah* saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed ⁸⁶ the remaining members of the house of Judah. 11 But Jehoshabeath, ⁸⁷ the daughter of the king took the [*infant*] Joash, the son of *Azariah* and whisked him away ⁸⁸ from among the king’s sons who were about to be killed, and she hid him and his nurse in a bedchamber (*or, storeroom for beds*). It was in this way that Jehoshabeath the daughter of King *Jehoram*, who was the wife of Jehoiadah the [*high*] priest, (because she was a sister of *Azariah*,) hid [*Joash*] from [*his grandmother*] Athaliah, so that she could not kill him. 12 He remained with them for six years, hidden in the house of God, while *Athaliah* reigned over the land.

<CHAPTER 23>

1 But in the seventh ⁸⁹ year Jehoiada took courage ⁹⁰ and gathered the commanders of hundreds: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, Azariah the son of Obed; Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat ⁹¹ the son of Zichri ⁹² making a [*secret*] pact with them. 2 They traveled all around Judah and recruited the Levites from all the towns of Judah as well as the heads of the ancestral families of Israel, and all these came to Jerusalem. 3 The entire assembly made a covenant with the King *Joash* in the House of God. ⁹³ Jehoiada declared: “Look! Here is the king’s son! He should reign exactly as the Lord promised concerning David’s descendants. 4 This is what you must do: When the priests and Levites come on duty on the Sabbath, one third will guard the

⁸¹ LXX: “καταστροφή.” “Destruction from God came upon Ochozias in his coming to Joram.”

⁸² Read II Kings 9 for a graphic description of Jehu’s judgment on the house of Ahab.

⁸³ Presumably this was the territory, not the city.

⁸⁴ LXX: “ιατρευομενον.”

⁸⁵ See: II Kings 11:1 – 21.

⁸⁶ NEB: “expatriate the royal line.”

⁸⁷ LXX: “Ιωσαβας.” The name is often transliterated as “Jehosheba” because of manuscript variants. She was an aunt of Joash.

⁸⁸ In the LXX the word “εκλεφεν” means “to steal” or “to remove.”

⁸⁹ LXX: some manuscripts have: “τω ετει τω οφδοω,” “eight years.” Rahlfs’s edition of the LXX has:

“τω ετει τω εβδομιω,” “seven years.” Cp.: II Kings 11:4 – 20.

⁹⁰ LXX: “strengthened himself.” JB: “Jehoiada took strong measures.”

⁹¹ LXX: “Ελισαφαν.”

⁹² LXX adds: “in the house,” and one MSS adds “of the Lord.”

⁹³ LXX: “and he (Jehoiada) showed them the king’s son.”

temple gate, ⁹⁴ 5 another third will guard the royal palace and one third will be guarding the Gate of Foundations, ⁹⁵ and the people will assemble at the courts of the House of the Lord. 6 No one is to be permitted to enter the House of the Lord except the priests and the maintaining Levites who are on duty. They may enter since they are consecrated (*or, holy*), but all the people are to stay outside, guarding what the Lord has designated for them, (*or, to observe the Lord's command*). 7 The Levites are to stand guard, surrounding the king, each with his sword drawn and whoever tries to enter the House (*of the Lord*) will be killed. Remain near the king in all his movements – coming and going.”

8 The Levites and the populace of Judah acted exactly as Jehoiada the priest had ordered. Those who were to go off duty ⁹⁶ on the Sabbath were not to be dismissed, but moved to their appointed places, ⁹⁷ joining those who were to come on duty for the Sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest did not allow anyone in the division to be dismissed. 9 Jehoiada the priest distributed spears as well as large and small shields which had been King David's, which were in the House of God, 10 and he stationed the people at the south side of the temple and at the north side of the temple and all around the altar to protect the king, every man with weapons in hand. In that way the temple was surrounded by armed guards. ⁹⁸ 11 Then he brought out the king's son, and placed the crown on his head, as well as the royal insignia, ⁹⁹ and proclaimed him to be king, and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and they shouted: “Long live the king!”

12 When *Athaliah* heard the shouting of the people ¹⁰⁰ she hurried to the House of the Lord where the crowd of people were, 13 and as she looked there was the king standing ¹⁰¹ by the pillar reserved for kings, ¹⁰² and the chief officers and trumpeters were beside the king, and all the people of the land were shouting joyously. ¹⁰³ The trumpeters blew their trumpets and the temple musicians (*or, cantors*) with their musical instruments were leading the celebration. ¹⁰⁴ *Athaliah* tore her clothing and shouted, “Treason! Treason!” 14 Then the priest Jehoiada ordered ¹⁰⁵ the officers who were in charge of the

⁹⁴ Literally: “keepers of the threshold” thus being “gate keepers.” TAN: “at the thresholds.” CB: “keepers of the threshold.”

⁹⁵ CB: “Gate Jesah.”

⁹⁶ Hebrew: “*ywk*”

⁹⁷ Those coming off duty were to work a double shift to provide ample protection for the new king. The plan, as it was carried out, would not instigate suspicion by those loyal to Queen Athaliah.

⁹⁸ The Hebrew is rather unclear.

⁹⁹ Literally: “and the bracelets.” By reading “*twr* [“ instead of “*twr* [c” the text would read “gave him the testimony (or, the royal insignia).” MFT: “bracelet.” TEV: “and gave him a copy of the laws governing kingship.” CEV: “instructions for ruling the nation.” LXX: “testimony.” “*μαρτυρια*.” NEB: “handed him the warrant.”

¹⁰⁰ LXX adds: “who were running and praising the king.”

“*και εξομολογουμεν και αινουν των βασιλευα.*” Some scholars feel verses 12 – 17 are a later insertion into the work of the Chronicler.

¹⁰¹ LXX: “upon his standing.”

¹⁰² The king had a special place at the eastern gateway to the temple court that contained the altar for burnt offerings. NEB: “standing on the dais.” Cf.: II Kings 11:14.

¹⁰³ LXX: “singing hymns of praise.” Vulgate: “et principes cantorum.”

¹⁰⁴ Literally: “and leading for praising.”

¹⁰⁵ Literally: “brought out.” Cf.: II Kings 11:15.

army ¹⁰⁶ saying: “Bring her out between ¹⁰⁷ the ranks [*of guards*] and anyone who attempts to follow her (*or, rescue her*) is to be put to death with the sword. ¹⁰⁸ The priest said, “Do not kill her in the House of the Lord.” ¹⁵ So they seized her ¹⁰⁹ and when she arrived at the entrance of the Horse Gate of the royal palace they put her to death.

¹⁶ Jehoiadah made a united covenant between himself, ¹¹⁰ the people and the king that they should be the Lord’s people. ¹⁷ Then the people all went to the temple of Baal and smashed the altars and idols, breaking them into bits, ¹¹¹ and they killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altar. ¹⁸ Jehoiada posted watchmen to supervise the House of the Lord under the direction of the Levitical priest and the Levites whom David had organized to be in charge of the House of the Lord by providing that burnt offerings continue being made in accordance with the writing of Moses. There was rejoicing and singing in accordance with the orders made by David. ¹⁹ He stationed the warders (*or, gatekeepers*) of the House of the Lord, so that no one should enter who was not in any way [*ritually*] clean. ²⁰ He took the officers, the nobles, those who held public office, and all the people of the land, and they escorted the king down from the Temple of the Lord, marching through the upper ¹¹² gate to the royal palace and they made certain that the king was seated on the royal throne. ²¹ It was in this manner that all the people of the land rejoiced and the city was quiet, now that *Athaliah* had been killed with the sword. ¹¹³

<CHAPTER 24>

F. Reign of Joash 24:1 – 27

¹ *Joash* ¹¹⁴ became king at the age of seven when he began his reign and he reigned in Jerusalem for forty years. His mother’s name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. ² *Joash* did what was right in the eyes of the Lord during the lifetime of Jehoiada the priest. ³ Jehoiada arranged that *Joash* would have two wives by whom he had sons and daughters. ¹¹⁵

⁴ Subsequently *Joash* decided ¹¹⁶ to renovate the House of the Lord. ⁵ He assembled the priests and the Levites and informed them, “Go out to the towns of Judah

¹⁰⁶ LXX: “even the captains of the Lord.”

¹⁰⁷ Literally: “from within.”

¹⁰⁸ LXX: “thrust her outside of the house and follow her and let her be slain with the sword. For the priest said, ‘Let her not be slain in the house of the Lord.’ NIV: footnote: “or, out of the precincts.”

¹⁰⁹ Literally: “placed her hands.”

¹¹⁰ Literally: “him.” Some scholars read this as being “the Lord.”

¹¹¹ LXX: “they ground his images to powder.”

¹¹² LXX: “inner.” “της εσωτερικης.”

¹¹³ This last phrase is found in Hebrew and in Codex Alexandrinus in the LXX.

¹¹⁴ Joash is sometimes transliterated as Jehoash. While the Chronicler has much to say about Joash being good, some scholars feel this account has subtle differences caused by revisions. See: II Kings 11:21-12:15.

¹¹⁵ LXX: “Joash took to himself two wives and they bore him sons and daughters.” Some scholars choose to use the LXX version rather than the Hebrew version of the text. It would not be unusual for someone else to select wives for a friend. In this case it was the uncle doing so for his nephew.

¹¹⁶ LXX: “it came into the heart of Joash.” Literally: “was with the heart.”

and collect money to repair (*or, for the upkeep of*)¹¹⁷ the House of your God annually,¹¹⁸ and see that you do it quickly.” However the Levites were not in a hurry to do so. 6 Therefore the king summoned Jehoiada the chief [*priest*] and said, “Why have you not insisted that the Levites bring in the tax from Judah and Jerusalem which had been levied (*or, imposed*)¹¹⁹ on the congregation by Moses, the servant of the Lord of Israel for the tent of testimony? 7 (For the followers¹²⁰ of the wicked woman (*or, the iniquitous queen*) *Athaliah* violated the House of God and plundered the consecrated things in the House of the Lord for use in the Baalim temple.)

8 By order of the king a chest was made and was located outside the gate of the House of the Lord. 9 A proclamation was issued throughout Judah and Jerusalem, to bring the tax¹²¹ to the temple that Moses, the servant of God had laid on Israel when in the wilderness. 10 All the officers and all the people rejoiced and cheerfully¹²² brought in the money and dropped¹²³ it into the chest until the chest was filled. 11 The chest¹²⁴ was brought to the royal officers by the Levites when they knew a great deal of money was in it. The king’s secretary (*or, scribe*) and the agents of the chief priest would come and empty the chest and return it to its proper place. This was done regularly (*or, they did it daily*), collecting a great sum of money. 12 The king and Jehoiada handed the money over to those who were responsible for the work on the House of the Lord. They hired masons and carpenters to renovate the House of the Lord, as well as craftsmen who were iron workers and bronze (*or, copper*) founders to repair¹²⁵ the House of the Lord. 13 Those who toiled worked until the restoration¹²⁶ was completed and the House of God was restored to its original form¹²⁷ and stability. 14 When the work was finished they brought the balance of the money to the king and to Jehoiada and this additional money was to be used to make utensils for the House of the Lord, both for the services and for the burnt offerings, dishes for incense, and bowls of gold and silver. Burnt offerings took place daily in the House of the Lord throughout the lifetime of Jehoiada.

15 Jehoiada became very old, living a very satisfying life.¹²⁸ He died at the age of one hundred and thirty. 16 He was buried in the city of David together with the kings because he had accomplished so much good on behalf of Israel, God and the temple.

17 Following the death of Jehoiada the leading officials of Judah came, doing obeisance to the king, thus persuading him to listen to them. 18 [*It was with the king’s*

¹¹⁷ Literally: “to strengthen.”

¹¹⁸ Literally: “from year to year.” At the time of the writing by the Chronicler a head tax had been introduced for the upkeep of the temple. Cf.: II Chronicles 34:9. This was based on Exodus 30:12 – 15. See also: II Kings 12:2. This head tax was still in force in the New Testament. Matthew 17:24f.

¹¹⁹ The Hebrew is unclear. LXX: “ὅτι ἐκκλησιασθεῖ (τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ).”

¹²⁰ Literally: “the sons of.”

¹²¹ LXX: “κατηος εἶπεν.”

¹²² LXX: “καὶ ἐδώκαν.”

¹²³ Literally: “threw.”

¹²⁴ Cf.: John 12:6.

¹²⁵ Literally: “strengthen.”

¹²⁶ Literally: “set up.”

¹²⁷ Literally: “upon its proportion.”

¹²⁸ Literally: “became old and satisfied with days.”

permission that] they forsook the House of the Lord, the God of the ancestors (*or, It was through flattery that they induced Josiah to abandon the God of their ancestors*) and they then turned to the images of the Asheroth.¹²⁹ This caused the wrath [*of God*] to come on Judah and Jerusalem because of their guilt.¹³⁰ 19 The Lord sent prophets among them to bring them back to the Lord. These testified against the people but they would not pay attention to the message of these prophets.

20 Then the Spirit of God used¹³¹ Zechariah¹³² the son of Jehoiada the priest, and he stood on a platform¹³³ in the presence of the people and said to them: “This is what God says: ‘Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord when you cannot succeed, for it is because you have disregarded the Lord that he has forsaken you!’”²¹ They however conspired against him and by order of the king they stoned him to death¹³⁴ in the court of the House of the Lord. 22 It was in this way that *Joash* the king disregarded the loyalty¹³⁵ which Jehoiada, Zechariah’s father had shown him for he had Jehoiada’s son killed. When he was dying Zechariah said, “May the Lord see what is happening and bring revenge.”¹³⁶

23 At the close of the year¹³⁷ the army of the Syrians (*or, Aram*) attacked *Josiah*. They came to Judah and Jerusalem and wiped out all the officers of the people from among the citizenry, and sent the plunder to the king at Damascus. 24 Even though the invading army of the Syrians (*or, Aram*) was small in numbers they destroyed the very large army of Judah because Judah had abandoned the Lord the God of their ancestors. For this the Syrians (*or, Aramites*) inflicted punishment (*or, judgment*) on *Joash*.

25 When the Syrians (*or, Aramites*) withdrew¹³⁸ from Judah (leaving the king severely wounded) (*or, with many wounds*) his own servants conspired against him to avenge for the murder of the son¹³⁹ of Jehoiada the priest and they killed him in his bed.¹⁴⁰ It was in this way that he died and they buried him in the city of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. 26 (These were the conspirators: Zabab¹⁴¹ the son

¹²⁹ The Asheroth included a number of cult goddesses / gods among which was Astarte whose image was derived from the Babylonian god who is described in the Ras Shamra texts as a ‘mother goddess’ who was worshiped in various parts of the Near East. She became a cult goddess who was depicted in places of worship which were carved poles having a variety of symbols which were related to fertility religion which was a cultus which was obnoxious to the champions of the Lord as the true God.

¹³⁰ LXX: “εν τη ημεροι.”

¹³¹ Literally: “clothed.” TAN: “enveloped.”

¹³² LXX: “Αζαριων.”

¹³³ Literally: “above.”

¹³⁴ Literally: “stoned him with stones.”

¹³⁵ LXX: “mercy.”

¹³⁶ Literally: “seek and requite.” NRSV: “May the Lord see and avenge.” NIV: “May the Lord see this and call you to account.”

¹³⁷ This would be after the harvest. Occasionally in Hebrew Scripture this is referred to as “the season for war.”

¹³⁸ Cp.: II Kings 12:20 - 21.

¹³⁹ Hebrew: plural. Vulgate: singular.

¹⁴⁰ NAB: “they killed him on his sick bed.”

¹⁴¹ This is a variant of Jozabad.

of Shimeath ¹⁴² the Ammonite, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabitess.) ²⁷ Accounts of his sons and of the many pronouncements against him ¹⁴³ and his rebuilding ¹⁴⁴ of the House of God are recorded in the commentary ¹⁴⁵ in the Book of Kings, and *Amaziah* his son succeeded him as king.

<CHAPTER 25>

G. Reign of Amaziah 25:1 – 25 ¹⁴⁶

¹ *Amaziah* was twenty-five years old when he began his reign in Jerusalem and he reigned for twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. ² He did what was pleasing to the Lord, yet he did it hesitantly. ¹⁴⁷ ³ As soon as his royal power was under control ¹⁴⁸ he had his servants ¹⁴⁹ executed who had assassinated his father, the king. ⁴ He did not put their children to death in accord with what is written in the Book of Moses, where the Lord commanded ¹⁵⁰ "The parents are not to die for their children nor should children die for their parents but persons are to die only for their own personal actions."

⁵ Then *Amaziah* assembled the men of Judah and enlisted them by ancestral families from Judah and Benjamin to serve with commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. He mustered ¹⁵¹ all those who were aged twenty and upward, and found that there were three hundred thousand men fit for serving, ¹⁵² being able to bear both spears and shields. ⁶ He also hired one hundred thousand trained warriors from Israel for one hundred talents of silver. ¹⁵³ ⁷ A prophet (*or, man of God*) came to him saying: "O king! Do not let the army of Israel go with you for the Lord is not with Israel. – (all those Ephraimites). ¹⁵⁴ ⁸ If you assume that in this way you will be strong in waging war, God will cause you to be defeated by your enemy, for God has the power to cause victory or cause your downfall." ¹⁵⁵ ⁸ *Amaziah* said to the prophet, "What am I to do about the one hundred talents [*of silver*] which I have given for the mercenaries from Israel?" The man of God replied, "The Lord is able to provide you with greater abundance than this." ¹⁰ Then *Amaziah* detached the [*Israelite*] troops that had come to him from Ephraim, ordering them to return home. They became furiously enraged with Judah and returned to their own houses in rage.

¹⁴² This is a variant of Shomer.

¹⁴³ LXX: "παντες και προσηλθεν αυτω οι πεντε και τα λοιπα."

¹⁴⁴ Literally: "founding."

¹⁴⁵ Literally: "Midrash."

¹⁴⁶ Cf.: II Kings 14.

¹⁴⁷ LXX: "full." TEV: "and he did it reluctantly."

¹⁴⁸ Literally: "from upon him."

¹⁴⁹ TAN: "courtiers."

¹⁵⁰ Cf.: Deuteronomy 24:10.

¹⁵¹ Some scholars translate this Hebrew word as "census."

¹⁵² LXX: "men able to go to war holding..."

¹⁵³ A talent weighed 91 pounds, troy weight. This would be about 4 ½ tons of silver.

¹⁵⁴ The Hebrew is obscure.

¹⁵⁵ The Hebrew is unclear. LXX: "If you will undertake to strengthen yourself with these, then the Lord will put you to flight before our enemies for it is by the Lord both to strengthen and to put to flight."

Hebrew literally: "but if you so act, be strong for the battle for it is the Lord."

¹¹ *Amaziah* summoned up his courage and marched against the enemy, going to the Valley (*or, Wadi*) of Salt ¹⁵⁶ [*where they did battle*] killing ten thousand men of Seir. ¹⁵⁷ ¹² An additional ten thousand men were taken prisoner. ¹⁵⁸ These were brought to the top of the cliff (*or, Sela*), ¹⁵⁹ from which they were thrown and every single one was dashed to pieces, [*resulting in death*]. ¹³ However, the mercenaries ¹⁶⁰ whom *Amaziah* had sent back [*to Israel*] without engaging them in the battle raided the Judean cities from Samaria to Beth-horon and killed three thousand residents of the area and confiscated a great amount of boot y.

¹⁴ After *Amaziah* returned from defeating ¹⁶¹ Edom he brought back the gods of the people of Seir and established them as his gods, and worshiped them, making sacrifices (*or, burning incense*) to them. ¹⁵ Therefore the Lord was angry with *Amaziah* and sent a prophet to him who told him, “Why have you taken to worshiping the gods of a nation who did not save them from the power of your army?” ¹⁶ While the prophet was speaking *Amaziah* interrupted ¹⁶² him, saying: “When were you appointed ¹⁶³ as a royal counselor? Silence or else you will be executed.” The prophet desisted, though he added, “I know now that God has determined that you are to be destroyed because of your action and because you have ignored [*the Lord’s*] ¹⁶⁴ advice.”

¹⁷ Then King *Amaziah* of Judah received counsel from his advisors and tried to arrange a meeting with JEHOASH ¹⁶⁵ the son of JEHU, the king of Israel, saying, “Come, let us negotiate with one another.” ¹⁶⁶ ¹⁸ King JEHOASH of Israel sent a response to King *Amaziah* of Judah: “A thistle ¹⁶⁷ (*or, bramble*) in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon saying, ‘Give me your daughter in marriage,’ and a wild beast in Lebanon passed by and stomped on the thistle (*or, bramble*). ¹⁹ You boast, saying, ‘Look! I have defeated the Edomites; but you have become haughty and boastful. ¹⁶⁸ Stay at home! In that way you will not court disaster and fail and cause Judah to experience defeat.”

²⁰ *Amaziah* refused to listen though this was because of God so that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemy because *Amaziah* had worshiped the gods of Edom. ²¹ King JEHOASH of Israel moved his army and engaged King *Amaziah* of Judah in

¹⁵⁶ This was a valley in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea which was located in Edomite territory.

¹⁵⁷ Seir was a high plateau east of the Jordan and Dead Sea which was territory that was ruled by Edom.

¹⁵⁸ LXX: “took ten thousand five prisoners.”

¹⁵⁹ Sela was a fortress city of Edom located on a promontory from which the one hundred thousand enemy soldiers were thrown. It was located in the general area of Petra, near the edge of the escarpment.

¹⁶⁰ LXX: “sons of the troops.”

¹⁶¹ Literally: “the slaughter of the Edomites.”

¹⁶² LXX: Codex Alexandrinus has “προς αυτον.”

¹⁶³ LXX: “διδοκα σε.”

¹⁶⁴ Literally: “his.”

¹⁶⁵ Since Joash of Judah and Joash of Israel had the same names I have chosen to use the alternate spelling of the name of the king of Israel (Jehoash) to clearly designate the difference. This is carried out in verses 18, 21, 23 & 25.

¹⁶⁶ Literally: “look one another in the face.” The assumption seems to be that war was inevitable. *Amaziah* was looking for an excuse to urge war.

¹⁶⁷ The LXX simply transliterates the Hebrew word.

¹⁶⁸ Literally: “lifted up to boast.” TAN: “ambitious to get more glory.”

battle. They confronted each other at Beth-shemesh,¹⁶⁹ which belongs to Judah. ²² The army of Judah was routed by Israel and the soldiers fled to their homes. ²³ King JEHOASH captured King *Amaziah* of Judah, the son of *Joash* the son of *Ahaziah* of Judah, at Beth-shemesh and brought him to Judah¹⁷⁰ where a breach was made in the wall from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of six hundred feet.¹⁷¹ ²⁴ He took all the gold and silver and all the utensils he found in the House of God, along with the custodian (Obed-edom) and he also seized the treasures of the royal palace along with hostages,¹⁷² and returned to Samaria.

²⁵ King *Amaziah* the son of King *Joash* of Judah outlived King JEHOASH of Israel by fifteen years. ²⁶ The additional actions (*or, the entire biography*) of *Amaziah* from beginning to end is written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷ At the time that *Amaziah* turned away from the Lord a conspiracy was formed against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish.¹⁷³ He was followed to Lachish and assassinated there. ²⁸ His body was returned to Jerusalem on [*the back of*] a horse and he was buried with his ancestors in the city of Judah.

<CHAPTER 26>

H. Reigns of Uzziah, Jotham and Ahaz 26:1 – 28: 27

¹ All the people of Judah took *Uzziah*¹⁷⁴ who was sixteen years of age, proclaiming him king to succeed his father *Amaziah*. ² He built Eloth (*or, Elath*) and returned it as a possession of Judah after King [*Amaziah*] had died. ³ *Uzziah* was sixteen years old when he began to reign and he reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah¹⁷⁵ of Jerusalem. ⁴ He did what was pleasing to the Lord just as had been done by his father *Amaziah*. ⁵ He applied himself to the worship of God during the time of Zechariah¹⁷⁶ who instructed him in reverence¹⁷⁷ for God; and he was faithful in the worship of the Lord God and as long as he continued in faithfulness he prospered.¹⁷⁸

⁶ *Uzziah* went out to fight against the Philistines and breached the walls of Gath, Jabneh, Ashdod,¹⁷⁹ and other locations among the Philistines. ⁷ God helped him in his battles against the Philistines and the Arabs that lived in Gar-baal,¹⁸⁰ and against the

¹⁶⁹ Beth-shemesh was located on the northern border of Judah.

¹⁷⁰ TAN: "the wall of Jerusalem."

¹⁷¹ Literally: "four hundred cubits."

¹⁷² LXX: "sons of alliances (or unions)."

¹⁷³ Lachish was located between Jerusalem and Gaza, to the south-west of Jerusalem.

¹⁷⁴ The name *Uzziah* is sometimes transliterated as "Azariah."

¹⁷⁵ LXX: "Ἰεχελία."

¹⁷⁶ Zechariah was not the high priest. He may have been a priest but was an advisor and guide for *Uzziah*, teaching him morality, religious life and ritual.

¹⁷⁷ Hebrew unclear. It can be "reverence" or "awe" or the word can be translated as "the visions of God."

¹⁷⁸ Scholars feel there was a forty year period of prosperity in Israel and Judah. Verses 5 – 11 have no source in Kings. The Chronicler apparently uses a resource that was not available to the writer of Kings.

¹⁷⁹ LXX: "Azotos."

¹⁸⁰ LXX: "ἐπι της πετρας."

Meunites.¹⁸¹ 8 The Ammonites paid tribute to *Uzziah*, whose fame even spread to the border of Egypt,¹⁸² for he became very powerful. 9 *Uzziah* also built towers in Jerusalem, located at the Corner Gate, the Valley Gate, the angle (*or, escarpment*) and fortified them. 10 He built towers in the wilderness and hewed out¹⁸³ many cisterns for he had huge herds of cattle in the Shephelah¹⁸⁴ and the plain. He had farmers and vinedressers in the hills, and in the fertile areas, for he loved the soil.¹⁸⁵

11 *Uzziah* had an army of warriors¹⁸⁶ ready for battle who were posted in divisions based on the numbers who were mustered by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the officer, who were answerable to Hananiah, one of the royal officers.¹⁸⁷ 12 All the heads of ancestral houses (*or, clans*)¹⁸⁸ who were trained officers numbered two thousand six hundred. 13 These were the commanders of a powerful (*or, elite*) army that numbered three hundred and seven thousand five hundred who were powerful as they engaged in battle against the enemy to provide victory for the king. 14 *Uzziah* provided shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows and stones for slinging for his entire army. 15 In Jerusalem he made unique equipment devised by skillful men, to be on towers, and the corners of the wall, to shoot arrows and hurl great stones. His fame spread far for he was well supported and became strong as a result.

16 When he was mighty he became proud (*or, arrogant*)¹⁸⁹ which led to his downfall. He defied the Lord his God and engaged in corruption for he trespassed the Temple of the Lord his God and entered the Temple of the Lord to offer incense on the altar of incense. 17 The priest Azariah along with eighty courageous priests of the Lord who followed him; 18 confronted King *Uzziah* and said to him, “King *Uzziah*, you do not have it within your power (*or, you have no right*) to burn incense to the Lord. That is to be done solely by priests, the descendants of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense. Go out of the sanctuary! You have offended the Lord God and it will bring you no honor from God.”

19 Then *Uzziah* was angry. He had the censer in his hand intending to burn incense. As he became angry with the priests leprosy¹⁹⁰ broke out on his forehead in the presence of the priests in the House of the Lord, by the altar of incense. 20 The chief priest

¹⁸¹ The Meunites were people who probably migrated to Edom or they were captives who resided in Edom.

LXX: “*τῶν Μευαίου.*”

¹⁸² Literally: “name went to the entering of Egypt.”

¹⁸³ LXX: “hewed out of the rock.”

¹⁸⁴ See II Chronicles 1:13, footnote 28.

¹⁸⁵ TEV: “He encouraged the people to plant vineyards in the hill country and to farm the fertile land.”

¹⁸⁶ LXX: “force making war.”

¹⁸⁷ LXX: “*Uzziah* had a force making war that went out orderly to make war and returned orderly in numbers and their number was made by the hand of Jeiel the scribe and Massias the judge by the hand of Ananas the king’s deputy.” The word “deputy” in Greek can also be translated “succeeded” as in Acts 24:27.

¹⁸⁸ Literally: “fathers houses.”

¹⁸⁹ LXX: “his head was lifted up to destroy.”

¹⁹⁰ The word leprosy included a number of skin diseases. The precise medical problem in this case is uncertain. The result was that the person having leprosy was ostracized from society and declared to be unclean.

Azariah and all the priests looked at him and his forehead was leprous. They rushed him out as quickly as possible and he himself hurried to do so because the Lord had punished him. ²¹ King *Uzziah* was a leper to the day of his death, ¹⁹¹ and being a leper he lived in isolation. ¹⁹² for he was excluded (*or, banned*) from the House of the Lord, and *Jotham* his son was the vice regent over the royal household, governing the people of the land.

²² The additional events in the life of *Uzziah* from first to last were recorded by Isaiah the prophet; the son of Amoz. ²³ *Uzziah* died and was buried in the ancestral cemetery which belonged to the kings, for they said, “He is a leper.” His son *Jotham* succeeded him as king.

<CHAPTER 27> ¹⁹³

¹ *Jotham* was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. His mother’s name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. ² He did what was acceptable to the Lord as had been done by his father *Uzziah* – but he did not go inside the Temple of the Lord. ¹⁹⁴ The people, however, continued following corrupt ¹⁹⁵ practices. ³ He built the Upper Gate of the House of the Lord, and did extensive building at the Ophel ¹⁹⁶ wall. ⁴ Moreover he built cities ¹⁹⁷ in the hill country of Judah as well as forts and towers on the wooded hills.

⁵ He engaged in war against the king of the Ammonites and defeated them. In that year the Ammonites gave him one hundred talents of silver, ¹⁹⁸ a thousand cors ¹⁹⁹ of wheat and a thousand cors of barley. The Ammonites also paid this same amount of tribute [*to King Jotham*] for two additional years. ²⁰⁰

⁶ *Jotham* became powerful because he kept a true course before the Lord his God. ²⁰¹

⁷ Other actions, including his wars ²⁰² and his conduct are recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. ⁸ He was twenty-five years of age when he began to

¹⁹¹ Cf.: II Kings 18:5. It is simply reported that Uzziah was leprous. The Chronicler assigns the reason for his illness.

¹⁹² Hebrew obscure. LXX seems to say: “house of freedom” which possibly is a house that was not attached to any other. NEV: “He lived in a separate house.”

¹⁹³ Cf.: II Kings 15 – 16.

¹⁹⁴ The reference is to his father Uzziah entering the temple to burn incense. Cf.: II Chronicles 26:10 – 21.

¹⁹⁵ TAN: “the people acted corruptly.” CB: “the people were still perverse.”

¹⁹⁶ The Hebrew word “ \aleph ” means “bulge” or “mound.” This portion of the wall of Jerusalem apparently needed repeated attention. The exact location is in question by scholars. Some feel it was in the north-east portion of the city and others feel it was in the southern part of the city.

¹⁹⁷ “He built cities” is omitted by most LXX manuscripts but is included in Codex Alexandrinus.

¹⁹⁸ Cf.: II Chronicles 26, footnote 153.

¹⁹⁹ A “cor” was 6,524 bushels according to Dr. Metzger. The amount is used for wheat as well as barley and thus would be 6,524 bushels of each of the two grains. Other scholars feel a “cor” was 105 bushels. NEV: “62,000.”

²⁰⁰ LXX: “καὶ ἐωταυτον.”

²⁰¹ NAB: “he lived resolutely to the presence of God.”

²⁰² LXX: “καὶ ὁ πολέμος.”

reign and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. ²⁰³ ⁹ *Jotham* died and was buried in the city of David and his son *Ahaz* succeeded him as king.

<CHAPTER 28> ²⁰⁴

¹ *Ahaz* was twenty years ²⁰⁵ old when he began his reign and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what pleased the Lord as his forefather ²⁰⁶ David did. ² He followed the example of the kings of Israel, even casting molten images of the Baalim ²⁰⁷ ³ He burned incense in the Valley of Ben Hinnom (*or, the valley of Gehenna*)²⁰⁸ and burned his sons as an offering ²⁰⁹ in accordance with the abhorrent fashion of the nations the Lord had dispossessed at the arrival of the people of Israel [*in the land*]. ⁴ He sacrificed and burnt offerings in the high places (*or, local shrines*) and on the hills and under every leafy tree.

⁵ Because of this the Lord his God gave him over to the power ²¹⁰ of the king of Syria (*or, Aram*) who defeated him and took a large number of his people as captives and brought them to Damascus. *Ahaz* also was given over to the power of the king of Israel who crushingly defeated ²¹¹ him. ⁶ PEKA son of Remaliah killed a hundred and twenty thousand in Judah in one day, ²¹² because they had forsaken the Lord the God of their ancestors, all of whom were valiant warriors. ⁷ Zicri, a ²¹³ mighty man of Ephraim killed Maaseiah the king's son, ²¹⁴ Azrikam the commander of the palace ²¹⁵ and Elkanah the second in command ²¹⁶ under the king.

⁸ The Israelites took two hundred thousand of their relatives (women and children) captive along with much loot ²¹⁷ which they brought to Samaria. ⁹ A prophet of the Lord whose name was Obed, was there and went to meet the army on its way to Samaria and declared: "Look! It is because the Lord the God of your ancestors was angry with Judah

²⁰³ LXX adds "and he reigned twenty-five years, and sixteen years in Jerusalem."

²⁰⁴ Cp.: II Kings 13:32-38; 16:2 – 4.

²⁰⁵ All LXX manuscripts with the exception of Codex Alexandrinus have "twenty-five years."

²⁰⁶ Literally: "father."

²⁰⁷ The name Baal (plural Baalim) is a general term for a variety of local gods, usually fertility gods, whose image and form of worship varied from one locality to the other.

²⁰⁸ LXX: "he sacrificed to their idols in the Valley of Benennom."

²⁰⁹ This was the procedure of the followers of the god Moloch who practiced the sacrifice of children, in the area of Jerusalem usually in the Valley of Hinnom which bounds Jerusalem on the southwest side. Archaeologists have found several gates of cities with the remains of a child under the portal, illustrating the acceptance on the part of some people of some form of child sacrifice. NAB: "immolated his sons by fire." Human sacrifice was forbidden in Deuteronomy 18:18 and condemned by the prophets. The intellectual battle as to whether the Lord was the God of the universe or a local god is particularly evident in these chapters by the Chronicler.

²¹⁰ Literally: "the hand."

²¹¹ Literally "smote him with a great smite."

²¹² For verses 6 – 13 Cp.: II Kings 16:1 – 4; Isaiah 7.

²¹³ LXX: "the."

²¹⁴ This may have been a close relative since at this point in the life of Ahaz it is hardly possible that he could have a son of military age.

²¹⁵ NEB: "comptroller of the household." MFT: "the royal treasurer."

²¹⁶ MFT: "the royal vizier."

²¹⁷ Literally: "plundered."

that he delivered them into your hand. You have killed them in a rage that is so great that it reached heaven. ¹⁰ You propose to subjugate (*or, suppress*) the people of Judah and Jerusalem, (male and female), as your slaves. Don't you, yourselves, have sins ²¹⁸ of your own before the Lord your God? ²¹⁹ ¹¹ Now listen! Send the captives back for they are your kinfolk whom you have taken [*captive*] because the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon you." ²²⁰

¹² Some Ephramite chiefs, among them, Azariah ²²¹ the son of Jehohanan, Berekiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up in opposition to those who were returning from the war, ¹³ and told them, "You must not bring the captives here, or you will intentionally be bringing additional sin and guilt on us before the Lord, ²²² and furthermore there is intense hatred ²²³ toward Israel." ¹⁴ Then the armed men left the captives and the booty with the princes and all the others who had gathered. ¹⁵ These men whose names have been mentioned gave the captives [*needed items*] from the booty. They clothed the captives, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink and anointed them with healing ointment and transported those who were frail on donkeys, returning them to their relatives in Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

¹⁶ At that time King *Ahaz* sent a message to the king ²²⁴ of Assyria asking for assistance.

¹⁷ The Edomites invaded Judah again and carried captives away. ²²⁵ ¹⁸ The Philistines also made raids on the cities of the Shephelah (*or, foothills*) and the Negeb (*or, the southern region*) of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, and Soco with its villages, ²²⁶ Timnah with its villages and Gimzo with its villages and they settled there.

¹⁹ The Lord humbled Judah because of *Ahaz*. The king of Israel ²²⁷ was ruthless in dealing with the king of Judah who had been unfaithful to the Lord.

²⁰ Tiglath-Pilneser ²²⁸ king of Assyria attacked him [*Ahaz*] and afflicted him instead of being supportive of his military strength. ²¹ *Ahaz* took valuable items from the

²¹⁸ LXX: "ναρατιργσαι εκ αμαρτησαι."

²¹⁹ TAN: "as it is, you have nothing but offences against the Lord your God."

²²⁰ LXX: "for the anger of wrath of the Lord is on you."

²²¹ LXX: "υδιαζ ουδια."

²²² NIV: "Do you intend to add to our sins and guilt?"

²²³ LXX: "anger of wrath." TAN: "for your offence is grave enough that there is surely wrath upon Israel."

²²⁴ One Hebrew manuscript, LXX and Vulgate have 'king.' All other Hebrew manuscripts have "kings." Cf.: II Kings 16:7.

²²⁵ Cf.: Psalm 58:18; Ephesians 4:8.

²²⁶ LXX adds: "and the things in the House of the Lord and the things in the house of the king and of the princes, and they gave to the king." This is omitted in Codex Alexandrinus.

²²⁷ Some ancient manuscripts and versions have "Judah." The Chronicler on several occasions uses the word "Israel" meaning: "Judah." LB: (footnote): "King Ahaz ruled two tribes of Israel, Judah and Benjamin – and so referred to him in this unusual way as the king of Israel." In this translation a new sentence is formed to make the king of Israel (as found in the Hebrew text) the subject of a new sentence.

House of the Lord and the royal palace to give as tribute to the king of Assyria that he might become an ally of King *Ahaz* but it did not take place.

²² During this time of distress [*Ahaz*] became ²²⁹ even more unfaithful to the Lord –the same king – *Ahaz*. ²³⁰ ²³ He sacrificed ²³¹ to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, saying, “Because the gods of the king of Syria (*or, Aram*) aided them I will sacrifice to them so that they will also help me.” They, however, were his downfall ²³² as well as the downfall of Israel.

²⁴ They gathered together the furnishings of the House of the Lord and he (*or, Ahaz*) cut in pieces (*or, took away*) ²³³ the equipment of the House of God and shut the door of the House of the Lord. ²³⁴ He made altars for himself at every corner (*or, street*) in Jerusalem. ²⁵ In every town of Judah he made local shrines ²³⁵ to burn incense to other gods; provoking the anger of the Lord the God of his ancestors.

²⁶ Now: the rest of the history and actions of *Ahaz* from first to last are recorded in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷ *Ahaz* died and was buried with his ancestors in the city of Jerusalem, ²³⁶ for they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings of Israel. His son *Hezekiah* succeeded him as king.

<CHAPTER 29>

J. Reign of Hezekiah 29:1 – 32:13

1. The Cleansing of the Temple 19:1 – 39

¹ *Hezekiah* began his reign when he was five years old, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-nine years. His mother’s name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. ² He did what pleased the Lord in accordance with his forefather. ²³⁷

³ In the first year of his reign ²³⁸ in the first month, ²³⁹ he opened the doors of the House of the Lord and repaired them. ²⁴⁰ ⁴ He summoned the priests and the Levites, and

²²⁸ Hebrew: “Tilgath-pilneser.” TAN: “Tillegath-pilneser.” Tiglath-Pileser II ruled Assyria from 745 – 727 BCE. Cf. : II Kings 15:29; 15:7 His is known in history as Tiglath-pileser III.

²²⁹ LXX: “αλλ η τω θλιβηναι αψτον.”

²³⁰ LXX: “και ειπεν ο βασαλευς.”

²³¹ LXX: “εκζητησω.”

²³² Literally: “stumbling.”

²³³ Scholars are divided as to how this should be translated. Hebrew permits either translation.

²³⁴ Possibly this was one of the demands on the part of the Syrian king.

²³⁵ These were shrines where foreign gods could be worshipped.

²³⁶ LXX: “εν πολλαι Δαωιδ.”

²³⁷ Literally: “father.” Hezekiah was an enlightened ruler who set out immediately to re-establish temple worship which was at the heart of those who were true Israelites – to establish the worship that had been at the center of the lives of all descendants of Abraham.

²³⁸ LXX: “και εγενετο ως εστη επι της Βασιλειας αυτου.”

²³⁹ The first month was named Ahib (but was also called Nisan) which would be mid-March to mid-April in the Hebrew calendar.

assembled them in the open space to the east of the temple. ⁵ He informed them: “Levites: Listen! Sanctify (*or, consecrate*) yourselves, and sanctify the House of the Lord, the God of your ancestors, and remove all the defilement ²⁴¹ from the holy place. ⁶ Our ancestors have been unfaithful and have done what is displeasing in the sight of the Lord our God. They have abandoned (*or, rejected*) him and have turned away from the dwelling place of the Lord, turning ²⁴² their backs on him. ⁷ They also closed the doors of the porch (*or, vestibule*) ²⁴³ and extinguished the lamps and no longer burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. ⁸ Because of this the wrath of the Lord has descended on Judah and Jerusalem and God made them all repugnant (*or, as an object of horror and derision*), of astonishment and hissing ²⁴⁴ as you yourselves have seen. ⁹ Our fathers have been killed by the sword and our sons and daughters and our wives are all in captivity ²⁴⁵ because of this. ¹⁰ I am determined ²⁴⁶ to make a covenant with the Lord the God of Israel so that his fierce anger will be withdrawn (*or, averted*) from us. ¹¹ My sons, do not be negligent now (*or, do not continue being negligent*), for you are to be the chosen ones of the Lord to stand in his presence to serve him and to be his ministers, making offerings (*or, burning incense*) to him.”

¹² Then the Levites stood:

From the Koathites: Mahath the son of Amasai, Joel the son of Azariah ²⁴⁷ from the Merarites: Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel. From the Gershonites: Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah. ¹³ From the descendants of Elizaphan: ²⁴⁸ Shimri and Jeuel. From Asaph: Zechariah and Mattaniah. ¹⁴ From the descendants of Heman: Jehuel and Shimei. From the descendants of Jeduthun: Shemniar and Uzziel. ²⁴⁹ ¹⁵ These gathered their fellow Levites, made themselves ritually clean and entered the temple to cleanse it in accordance with the command of the king which was in keeping with God’s word. ¹⁶ The priests entered the inner part of the House of the Lord to cleanse (*or, ritually clean*) it and they brought out all the unclean things they found in the Temple of the Lord, bringing these into the court of the Temple of the Lord, and the Levites took these things and carted them away to the Wadi (*or, brook*) Kidron. ²⁵⁰ ¹⁷ They began the sanctification (*or, consecration*) on the first day ²⁵¹ of the first month and on the eighth ²⁵² day of the month they came to the vestibule (*or, porch*) of the Lord.

²⁴⁰ LXX: “As he ruled over his kingdom in the first month, he opened the doors of the House of the Lord and repaired them.” King Ahaz had locked the temple and halted worship there. II Chronicles 28:24, 25.

²⁴¹ LB: “clean all the debris.” TAN: “abhorrent things.”

²⁴² Literally: “had given their backs.”

²⁴³ LXX: “του ναου.”

²⁴⁴ Such action was done when passing by in the proximity of the temple to ward off a like fate. Lamentations 2:15 is an example of this action.

²⁴⁵ LXX: “εν γη ουκ αυτων ο και νον εστιν.”

²⁴⁶ Literally: “it is in my heart to.”

²⁴⁷ LXX: “Ζαχαρου.”

²⁴⁸ Elizaphan is of the Korah line. Numbers 3:30.

²⁴⁹ Asaph, Heman and Jeduthan (Ethan) are leaders from the families of Gerson, Korah and Merari respectively.

²⁵⁰ This was the area that was generally used as the garbage dump.

²⁵¹ LXX: “τη νουμηναι.” Manuscript B: “ημερα τη τριτη.”

²⁵² In Judaism eight days summarized a week. Monday to Monday was described as eight days.

Then for eight days they consecrated (*or, sanctified*) the house of the Lord. (*Or, It took one week to purify the temple and the second week for the courtyard (or environs) of the temple to be purified.*) On the sixteenth ²⁵³ day of the first month they finished their work. ¹⁸ They then entered [*the royal palace*], going to King *Hezekiah*, and said, “We have completed the ritual purification (*or, cleansing*) of the House of the Lord, the altar for burnt offerings and all the equipment (*or, utensils*) along with the table for the Bread of the Presence (*or, showbread*), and all of its equipment. ¹⁸ All the equipment which King *Ahaz* had discarded ²⁵⁴ during his apostasy (*or, faithlessness*) has been prepared and is ritually cleansed. These items are all placed in front of the altar of the Lord.”

²⁰ Then King *Hezekiah* rose early and convened the officers (*or, officials*) of the city and went to the House of the Lord. ²¹ They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs and seven male-goats as a sin ²⁵⁵ offering: for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah. ²⁵⁶ He ordered the priests, the descendants of Aaron, to offer these sacrifices at the altar of the Lord. ²² They slaughtered the bulls and the priests received the blood and threw (*or, dashed*) it against the altar; and they slaughtered the rams and their blood was thrown (*or, dashed*) against the altar; and they slaughtered the lambs and their blood was thrown (*or, dashed*) against the altar. ²³ The male-goats were intended for a sin offering and were presented to the king and the assembled congregation. These laid their hands on the male-goats. ²⁴ The priests slaughtered them as a sin offering ²⁵⁷ with their blood thrown (*or, dashed*) against the altar to make atonement (*or, to expiate*) for all Israel. The king commanded that the burnt offerings and the sin offerings should be made for all Israel.

²⁵ He stationed the Levites in the House of the Lord with cymbals, harps and lyres in accordance with the requirements of David and Gad the royal seer, and Nathan the prophet ²⁵⁸ (for the Lord had transmitted his wish through his prophets).

²⁶ The Levites stood [*in their designated places*] with the instruments of David along with the priests and their trumpets. ²⁷ Then *Hezekiah* commanded that the burnt offerings begin on the altar, and when the burnt offerings began the song of the Lord also commenced and the trumpets accompanied by the instruments ²⁵⁹ of David, king of Israel. ²⁸ The entire congregation worshiped ²⁶⁰ and the singers sang and the trumpets sounded; and this continued until the burnt offering was completed. ²⁹ When the offering was finished the king and all who were present with him bowed themselves (*or, knelt*) and worshiped. ³⁰ (King *Hezekiah* and the officers ordered the Levites to sing praises to the Lord using the words of David and the seer Asaph ²⁶¹ with gladness, ²⁶² and they bowed down (*or, knelt*) and worshiped.)

²⁵³ Most LXX manuscripts have “twelfth day.”

²⁵⁴ TAN: “befouled.”

²⁵⁵ The Hebrew is unclear. It may mean: “as a whole offering.”

²⁵⁶ LXX: “Israel.”

²⁵⁷ TAN: “purgation rite.”

²⁵⁸ The LXX uses the word “prophet” for both Gad and Nathan. Cf.: I Chronicles 15:16.

²⁵⁹ Literally: “and according to the authority of the instruments.”

²⁶⁰ TAN: “prostrated themselves.”

²⁶¹ Asaph was appointed by David to provide music that regularly praised God. I Chronicles 16:7, 37.

²⁶² TAN: “and they sang rapturously.” JB: “they sang most fervently and fell down and worshiped.”

31 Then *Hezekiah* said, “Now you have consecrated ²⁶³ yourselves to the Lord’ Come near, bring sacrifices and thank-offerings to the House of the Lord.” The congregation brought sacrifices and thank-offerings and all who were moved to do so ²⁶⁴ brought burnt offerings. 32 The numbers of burnt offerings which the congregation brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams, and two hundred lambs. All of these were for a burnt offering to the Lord [*for the purpose of pleasing the Lord*]. 33 The consecrated offerings were six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep. ²⁶⁵ 34 There were too few priests who were able to flay (*or, skin*) ²⁶⁶ all the animals to be prepared for burnt offerings so until additional priests had sanctified themselves their fellow religious leaders, the Levites, helped them until the work was completed – (for the Levites were more conscientious ²⁶⁷ than the priests in keeping themselves ritually clean). ²⁶⁸ 35 In addition to the large number of burnt offerings there was an abundance of fat pieces for the peace offerings, ²⁶⁹ and libations (*or, drink offerings*) for the burnt offerings. Thus the restoration of the House of the Lord was accomplished. 36 *Hezekiah* and all the people rejoiced because of what God had accomplished for the people, because it happened so suddenly.

<CHAPTER 30>

2. *The Unprecedented Passover 30:1 – 32:31* ²⁷⁰

1 *Hezekiah* sent a message to all Israel and Judah. He also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, telling them they should come to the House of the Lord at Jerusalem to keep the Passover ²⁷¹ of the Lord the God of Israel. 2 The king, his officers, and the entire assembly (*or, congregation*) in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second month ²⁷² 3 (for they were unable to keep the Passover on the proper date because a sufficient number of priests had not sanctified themselves (*or, ceremonially cleansed themselves*), nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem.) ²⁷³ 4 They resolved to circulate a decree which declared the proclamation ²⁷⁴ throughout all of Israel from Beer-

²⁶³ LXX: “filled your hands.”

²⁶⁴ Literally: “of a willing heart.”

²⁶⁵ TAN: “the sacred offerings were six hundred large cattle and three thousand small cattle.” The purpose was to ask the Lord to bless what had taken place in the re-consecration of the temple.

²⁶⁶ JB: “dismember.” Hebrew: “מִשָּׁפ.” The Hebrew word clearly means “to flay,” not “to dismember.”

²⁶⁷ Literally: “upright of heart.”

²⁶⁸ This is a perplexing verse in which the non-priests take up the slack caused by priests not being ready for their duties. The Levites and priests surely did not receive any appreciable support from the tithes to assist in personal and family living during the later reign of Ahaz.

²⁶⁹ The Hebrew word translated as “peace offerings” is not readily defined. BDB shows one possible way to describe the word as: “a sacrifice for alliance or friendship. A voluntary offering; an offering fellowship between God and the worshipers.” NIV: “fellowship offerings.” MFT: “recompense offerings and libations.” CB: “thank offerings.”

²⁷⁰ Some scholars feel this took place in 721 BCE, shortly after the conquest of Samaria. This date is not accepted by all scholars.

²⁷¹ Hebrew: plural. LXX: singular.

²⁷² The first month was designated for the holding of the Passover feast. Cf.: Exodus 12:18. Postponement was permitted in Numbers 9:10,11.

²⁷³ Additionally: the reconstruction of the temple was taking place during the first month.

²⁷⁴ Literally: “voice.”

sheba to Dan, that the people should come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover of the Lord, the God of Israel, for no large numbers of people had kept the Passover as it had been prescribed ²⁷⁵ (*or, a large number of people recalled the feast as it had been prescribed*). ²⁷⁶ ⁶ Couriers ²⁷⁷ went throughout Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officers that were exactly as the king had commanded, proclaiming: “O Israelites! Return to the Lord the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel that he may again return to the remnant ²⁷⁸ of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. ²⁷⁹ ⁷ Do not be like your fathers and your brothers who trespassed against the Lord God of their ancestors so he made them a horror (*or, desolation*) ²⁸⁰ as you see. ⁸ Do not be stiff-necked (*or, stubborn*) as your fathers were, but submit ²⁸¹ yourselves to the Lord and come to his sanctuary, which he has sanctified (*or, consecrated*) for eternity and serve the Lord your God so that his fierce anger may not rest on you. ²⁸² ⁹ If you return to the Lord, your brothers and your children will be looked upon with compassion by their captors, and will return to this land. Remember: the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn his face away from you. Return to him!”

¹⁰ The couriers traveled from town to town through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, going as far as Zebulun, where they were ridiculed and mocked. ¹¹ A few men from Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun became contrite (*or, were filled with contrition*) ²⁸³ and came to Jerusalem. ¹² The hand of God was also on Judah to cause them to be unified in doing what the king and his officers commanded by the word of the Lord. ²⁸⁴

¹³ A large crowd assembled in Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread ²⁸⁵ in the second month – a very large congregation. ¹⁴ They set to work and removed the altars [*of the Baalim*] that were in Jerusalem, and the altars for the burning of incense. ²⁸⁶ These were taken away and thrown into the Wadi Kidron (*or, the Brook Kidron*) ²⁸⁷ ¹⁵ They slaughtered the Pascal (*or, Passover*) lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and Levites had become ashamed so they sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings to the House of the Lord. ¹⁶ They took their accustomed stations based on the Law of the man of God: the priests threw (*or, dashed*) the blood [*against the altar*], which they had received from the hand of the Levites. ¹⁷ (Many of the people who were gathered had not sanctified themselves (*or, were not ceremonially clean*)). Therefore the Levites had the responsibility of killing the Pascal (*or, Passover*) lamb for everyone

²⁷⁵ Literally: “written.”

²⁷⁶ TEV: “in larger number than ever before.” CEV: “this was the largest crowd of people that had ever celebrated Passover, according to the official record.” Hebrew permits either translation.

²⁷⁷ Literally: “runners.”

²⁷⁸ There is a continuing theology of the ‘pious remnant’ that runs through the Hebrew scriptures.

²⁷⁹ See: II Kings 17:1 – 22.

²⁸⁰ The Hebrew word “חמא” BDB: “waste, appallment, horror.”

²⁸¹ Literally: “give a hand to.” LXX: “δοσαν.”

²⁸² Literally: “turn away from you.”

²⁸³ Cf.: Isaiah 57:15; Luke 18:13, 14. JB: “were humble enough to come.”

²⁸⁴ Verses 12 – 17 seem to display confusion on the part of the Chronicler.

²⁸⁵ This celebration began one day after Passover. The two festivals were often referred to as one/

²⁸⁶ These altars had been set up by King Ahaz. II Chronicles 28:24.

²⁸⁷ See II Chronicles 29:16, footnote 250.

who was not ceremonially clean, so it might be holy for the Lord.²⁸⁸ 18 A huge crowd of people, many coming from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, were not ceremonially clean, yet they ate the Passover in violation of what had been written [*in the Law*].²⁸⁹ Therefore *Hezekiah* interceded for them saying, “May the good Lord pardon²⁹⁰ every one¹⁹ who is determined to seek God the Lord, the God of his fathers even though not according to the sanctuary’s rule of cleanliness (*or, even though they are ritually unclean*).”²⁹¹ 20 The Lord heard *Hezekiah* and healed the people.

21 The Israelites who were present in Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days, with great rejoicing and the Levites and priests praised the Lord daily, singing to the Lord with unrestrained fervor (*or, with powerful instruments*).²⁹² 22 (*Hezekiah*) encouraged²⁹³ the Levites who showed that they had skills²⁹⁴ in the service of the Lord.) The festival continued for seven days,²⁹⁵ as did the food for the festival,²⁹⁶ sacrificing, peace offerings,²⁹⁷ and the giving of thanks to the Lord God.

23 Then the entire congregation resolved to continue keeping the festivities for an additional seven days; so with rejoicing they kept it for another seven days. 24 King *Hezekiah* of Judah contributed a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep to the congregation for sacrificial offerings, and the officers contributed a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep to the assembled congregation. The priests sanctified²⁹⁸ themselves in large numbers. 25 The entire congregation (*or, assembly*) of Judah, the priests and Levites, the entire congregation (*or, assembly*) who were residents of Israel, along with the resident aliens²⁹⁹ who came from the land of Israel and the resident aliens who resided in Judah rejoiced. 26 There was great rejoicing in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel there had been no comparable³⁰⁰ event to have occurred in Jerusalem. 27 Then the priests and the Levites stood and blessed the people. Their voice was heard and their prayer went up to the holy presence³⁰¹ of God in heaven.

²⁸⁸ TAN: “so as to consecrate them to the Lord.”

²⁸⁹ TAN: “had not performed the ritual of purification and so they were observing Passover improperly.”

²⁹⁰ TAN: “provide atonement.”

²⁹¹ This is another example of a sense of enlightenment on the part of King Hezekiah.

²⁹² Compare I Chronicles 13:8. Literally: “with instruments of might.” NIV footnote: “with resounding instruments belonging to the Lord.”

²⁹³ LXX: “spoke to every heart of the Levites.”

²⁹⁴ NIV: “who showed good understanding of the service of the Lord.”

²⁹⁵ LXX: “και συντελεσαν.”

²⁹⁶ See: Exodus 12:16-18.

²⁹⁷ See: II Chronicles 29:35, footnote 269. NIV: “fellowship offerings.”

²⁹⁸ LXX: “και αρια.”

²⁹⁹ These were permitted to take part in the first Passover. Exodus 12:49.

³⁰⁰ LXX adds: “και εορτη.” “the festival.”

³⁰¹ Literally: “his holy habitation.”

<CHAPTER 31>

¹ When all this was finished, all the Israelites who were present went out to the towns of Judah and shattered the pillars ³⁰² and cut down the Asherim [*posts*] (*or, sacred posts*) ³⁰³ and demolished the high places (*or, shrines*) and the altars throughout Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh, until all were destroyed. ³⁰⁴ Then all the people of Israel returned to their towns, every man to his own possession.

² *Hezekiah* reorganized ³⁰⁵ the divisions ³⁰⁶ of the priests and Levites, by divisions – each division according to the office (*or, assigned duty*). The priests and Levites received duties: burnt offerings, peace offerings, ³⁰⁷ tend the gates of the camp ³⁰⁸ of the Lord, and give thanks and praise. ³ The royal contribution, from his own resources, was given for the burnt offerings, both morning and evening, offerings for the Sabbath, the new moons and the fixed (*or, appointed*) feasts, as is written in the Law of the Lord.

⁴ He ordered ³⁰⁹ the people who lived in Jerusalem to deliver the portion of their gifts that was due to the priests and Levites. ³¹⁰ so they might devote themselves to the Law ³¹¹ of the Lord. ⁵ As soon as the word spread ³¹² the Israelites gave the first fruits of grain, wine, oil, honey, and all the agricultural produce in abundance. They brought in the full tithes of everything ³¹³ they had, which was in great abundance. ⁶ The Israelites and Judeans who lived in the towns of Judah also brought in the tithes of cattle and sheep and the dedicated things ³¹⁴ which had been consecrated (*or, dedicated*) to the Lord their God, and laid them in heaps. ³¹⁵ ⁷ In the third month they began accumulating these heaps and these were completed in the seventh month. ⁸ When *Hezekiah* and the officers came and saw the heaps they blessed the Lord and his people Israel.

⁹ *Hezekiah* questioned the priests and Levites about the heaps. ¹⁰ The chief priest Azariah who was of the family of Zadok, responded, “Ever since they began giving the contributions to the House of the Lord we have eaten and had enough and have plenty left ³¹⁶ for the Lord has blessed his people, so that we have this great surplus.”

¹¹ *Hezekiah* issued orders to prepare storage rooms in the House of the Lord, and this was accomplished. ¹² They faithfully brought the gifts, the tithes, and the sacred (*or, dedicated*) things. The chief overseer in charge of these gifts was Conaniah the Levite,

³⁰² LXX: “statues” or “standing images.”

³⁰³ These were wooden symbols of female fertility goddesses. BV: “shame images.”

³⁰⁴ Literally: “even to completion.”

³⁰⁵ NEB: “installed.”

³⁰⁶ LXX: “daily courses.”

³⁰⁷ TAN: “offerings for well being.” NEB: “shared offerings.” NIV: “fellowship offerings.”

³⁰⁸ LXX: “εν ταις αυλαις οικου.”

³⁰⁹ Literally: “and said so.”

³¹⁰ This is in contrast with Ahaz who apparently did not provide help for the priests and Levites.

³¹¹ LXX: “εντη λειτοοργαι οικου.”

³¹² LXX: “και ως προσεταζεν.”

³¹³ According to Numbers 15 the gifts were designated for the priests and the tithes were for the Levites.

³¹⁴ Literally: “the tithes of dedicated things.”

³¹⁵ LXX: “heaps, heaps.”

³¹⁶ LXX: “και κατελιπωμεν.”

with his brother Shimei as his deputy. ¹³ Their aides were: Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah ³¹⁷ who were overseers who assisted Conaniah and his brother Shimei. These positions were by the appointment of King *Hezekiah* and Azariah the chief priest (*or, officer*) of the house of God.

¹⁴ Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, keeper of the East Gate, was in charge of the freewill offerings (*or, voluntary donations*) to God, to distribute the contributions reserved for the Lord and the most holy offerings. ¹⁵ His aides were: ³¹⁸ Eden, Miniamim, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah who faithfully assisted him in the towns of the priests, ³¹⁹ to make a distribution to their fellow priests, old and young alike, by divisions. ³²⁰ ¹⁶ Additionally, ³²¹ these enrolled by genealogy, males from three ³²² years old and upward, all would enter into the House of the Lord as the duty of each day required, for their service was based on their offices within their divisions would receive gifts. ¹⁷ The enrollment of the priests was according to clans ³²³ and likewise the Levites from twenty years of age and upward according to the offices of their divisions would be recipients. ¹⁸ The priests were enrolled with all their little children, their wives, their sons and daughters – the entire multitude, for they were faithful in keeping themselves holy.

¹⁹ The Aaronite priests who resided in the rural areas in the vicinity of towns were designated by name and were allocated a portion to every male among the priests and to every one among the Levites who was registered.

²⁰ *Hezekiah* did this throughout all Judah; and he did what was good and upright, being faithful before the Lord his God. ²¹ Every task he undertook in the service of the House of God and in accordance with the Law and the commandments in seeking his God he did with all his heart and he prospered.

<CHAPTER 32> ³²⁴

3. *The Assyrian Invasion and Hezekiah's Death 32:1 – 33*

¹ After these things and these acts of faithfulness ³²⁵ King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah and besieged the fortified towns, intending ³²⁶ to conquer them for himself. ² When *Hezekiah* saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to make war against Jerusalem ³ he consulted with his officials and his military staff about halting the

³¹⁷ LXX: “και ου υιοι αυτου.”

³¹⁸ Literally: “over his hands were.” A possible translation might be: “under his authority.”

³¹⁹ LXX: “δια χειρος.”

³²⁰ TAN: “great and small alike.”

³²¹ LXX: “εκαστος.”

³²² So: literally in Hebrew. Possibly it should read “thirty” since that was the age at which one would become a priest. It is also a possibility that the three year olds were to be registered as potential priests and Levites so it could be determined what the future might hold for the priesthood and Levites.

³²³ Literally: “to their fathers houses.”

³²⁴ The invasion of Sennacherib is described in greater detail in II Kings 18 – 20; Isaiah 36 – 39.

³²⁵ Literally: “things and this faithfulness.”

³²⁶ LXX: “Sennacherib saying to himself.”

flow of water [*at the surface*] coming from springs that were outside the city, and the people supported him. ⁴ A very large force of people assembled and they stopped ³²⁷ all the springs and the Wadi (*or, the stream*) that flowed ³²⁸ through the land, ³²⁹ saying, “Why should the king of Assyria come and find an abundance of water?” ⁵ *Hezekiah* worked hard ³³⁰ in repairing the walls that had broken down, and built towers ³³¹ and built a second wall outside the existing one. He reinforced the Millo ³³² in the city of David. He also established an armory with weapons and shields in abundance.

⁶ He appointed military officers over the people, and assembled them in the open space (*or, square*) at the city gate, ³³³ and spoke encouragingly ³³⁴ to them (*or, and rallied them*), saying, ⁷ “Be strong! Be brave! ³³⁵ Do not be fearful or discouraged because the King of Assyria and all the horde ³³⁶ that is with him, for there is one who grants us greater power than he is able to obtain (*or, we have more power on our side than he has on his side*). ⁸ With Sennacherib there is only human power, but the Lord our God is with us to help us and to fight our battle.” The people were encouraged by the speech of *Hezekiah*, king of Judah.

⁹ Later on King Sennacherib of Assyria besieged Lachish ³³⁷ with his entire army. He sent ambassadors to Jerusalem to King *Hezekiah* of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Judah who were residing in Jerusalem, saying, ¹⁰ “This is what King Sennacherib of Assyria says: Where do you get the confidence to remain in Jerusalem when under siege? ¹¹ *Hezekiah* is beguiling you, for what is he giving you? It is having you perish by famine and thirst. He tells you, ‘The Lord our God will save us from the hand of the king of Assyria.’ ¹² Wasn’t he the very one who took away the shrines and altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem saying, ‘You can only worship and bow down (*or, prostrate yourselves*) ³³⁸ at this one altar and here you will worship and this is the only altar on which you are to burn incense (*or, sacrifice*).’ ¹³ You surely realize (*or, are you not aware*) what my father has done to all the people of other lands? Were the gods of those nations able to obtain freedom after they had been conquered by my army? ¹⁴ Among all the gods of nations my father had destroyed – who is it that can save his people from my hand? Do you really think that our God is able to save you? ¹⁵ Now therefore, do not let *Hezekiah* delude you or beguile you in this fashion and do not believe him, for there is no

³²⁷ LXX: “υδατα.”

³²⁸ LXX: “made a division.”

³²⁹ Literally: “in the midst of the land.” LXX: “της πολεως.”

³³⁰ LXX: “και κατισχοση.”

³³¹ LXX: “και προηρος.” Hebrew: “and raised on the towers.” Some MSS: “building towers on.”

³³² The name means “filling.” Possibly this is a terrace or platform located at the north end of the city wall of Jerusalem.

³³³ LXX: “της φαραγγος.”

³³⁴ Literally: “upon their hearts.” LXX: “spoke to their heart.”

³³⁵ TAN: “Be determined and confident.”

³³⁶ NEB: “rabble.”

³³⁷ Literally: “against Lachish.” The location is the present day Tel ed Doweir, thirty miles southwest of Jerusalem and thirty miles east of the Mediterranean Sea. Because of its location along the road to Egypt it was the most powerful city. Wm. F. Albright excavated the site.

³³⁸ LXX: “το θυσιαστηρια τουτου.”

god of any nation or kingdom that has been able to save his people from my hand or from the hand of my father. How much less will your God save you from my power!”

¹⁶ The aides to the ambassador said even worse things about the Lord God and against his servant *Hezekiah*. ¹⁷ (Sennacherib also wrote letters ³³⁹ insulting (*or, casting contempt*) on the Lord the God of Israel and spoke against him, saying, “As certainly as the gods of the nations of the lands were not able to prevent their people from falling into my hands, neither will the God of *Hezekiah* be able to save (*or, rescue*) his people from my power.” ¹⁸ They shouted loudly in the Hebrew language to the people of Jerusalem who were on the walls, terrifying and demoralizing them, and causing panic among them so they might be able to capture the city. ¹⁹ They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as if he had been like (*or, in the same way as they talked of*) other gods of the people which had been made by human hands (*or, idols*).

²⁰ Then King *Hezekiah* and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz prayed because of this and cried to heaven. ²¹ The Lord sent an angel, who annihilated every mighty warrior, commander, and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria so he withdrew in total disgrace to his own land. When he came into the house of his god, his own sons assassinated him with the sword. ³⁴⁰

²² In this way the Lord saved *Hezekiah* and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of King Sennacherib of Assyria and from the hand of all other enemies, granting ³⁴¹ peace on every side. ²³ Many brought tribute to the Lord in Jerusalem and precious gifts for King *Hezekiah* of Judah so that from then on he was highly regarded by all the surrounding nations.

²⁴ At that time *Hezekiah* became mortally ill ³⁴² and he prayed to the Lord, and the Lord answered him, ³⁴³ giving him a [*miraculous*] sign. ²⁵ Because of pride he did not respond with gratitude to the benefit he had received because he was arrogant. ³⁴⁴ Therefore the Lord’s wrath came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. ²⁶ *Hezekiah* humbled ³⁴⁵ himself (*or, repented*) of his pride and the wrath of the Lord did not come on them during the days of *Hezekiah*.

²⁷ *Hezekiah* became very wealthy and was highly honored ³⁴⁶ and he made treasuries for himself: treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields ³⁴⁷ and

³³⁹ LXX: “book.”

³⁴⁰ LXX: “The Lord sent an angel, and he destroyed every mighty man and warrior and leader and captain in the camp of the king of Assyria; and he returned with shame on his face to his own land and came into the house of his god, and some of them that came out of his bowels killed him with the sword.” Cf.: ANET p. 288d. Cf.: Sennacherib, Appendix I.

³⁴¹ LXX: “και κατεπαυσεν αυτους.”

³⁴² Literally: “sick to the point of death.”

³⁴³ LXX: “και επηκισεν.”

³⁴⁴ LXX: “But Hezekiah did not recompense the Lord according to the return (literally: prayer) which he made him, but his heart was lifted up, and the wrath came upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem.”

³⁴⁵ LXX: “was brought low.”

³⁴⁶ NEB: “fame.”

³⁴⁷ LXX: “και οπλοθηκας.” Vulgate: “et armorum aniversi generis.”

for all kinds of equipment; 28 storehouses also for the yield of grain, wine and oil, and stalls ³⁴⁸ for all kinds of cattle, and sheep-folds. ³⁴⁹ 29 He also amassed cities for himself and flocks and herds in abundance for God had given him a huge amount of property.

³⁰ This same *Hezekiah* blocked the upper outlet of the Ghion spring ³⁵⁰ (*and channeled it through a tunnel*) to the city of David. *Hezekiah* was successful in every endeavor. ³¹ Now in the matter of the ambassadors of the rulers of Babylon who had been sent to *Hezekiah* to inquire about his miraculous recovery which had taken place, the Lord God left him to himself in order to test his character and know his true feeling.

³² The rest of the affairs of *Hezekiah* and his good deeds ³⁵¹ are recorded as the Vision of Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz, in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ³³ *Hezekiah* died and they buried him in the ascent of the tombs ³⁵² of the descendants of David and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him at his funeral. His son *Manasseh* succeeded him as king.

<CHAPTER 33>

K. Reigns of Manasseh and Amon 33:1 – 25 ³⁵³

¹ *Manasseh* was ³⁵⁴ twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty-five years ³⁵⁵ in Jerusalem. ² He did what was displeasing to the Lord for he copied the abhorrent practices ³⁵⁶ of the nations whom the Lord had dispossessed before the arrival of the people of Israel. ³⁵⁷ ³ He rebuilt the sacred shrines which his father *Hezekiah* had demolished and erected altars ³⁵⁸ to the Baalim and made Asherim (*or, sacred posts*) ³⁵⁹ and worshiped all the stars of heaven (*or, the host of heaven*) and served them. ⁴ He built altars in the House of the Lord, about which the Lord had said, “My name will be in Jerusalem forever.” ⁵ He built altars for all the stars of heaven (*or, the host of heaven*) at the courts of the House of the Lord. ⁶ He consigned his sons to be burned in the Valley of Ben-hinnom ³⁶⁰ and practiced sorcery (*or, witchcraft*), divination, fortune telling, and consulted with mediums ³⁶¹ and wizards (*or, spiritualists*). He did much that was displeasing to the Lord, provoking the Lord to anger. ⁷ He had the sculptured image of the

³⁴⁸ Literally: “for folds.” LXX: “villages.”

³⁴⁹ LXX: “και μαρδρας εις τα ποιμνια.”

³⁵⁰ TAN: “upper Ghion.” This was an intermittent spring in the Kidron valley. *Hezekiah* had a tunnel chiseled through solid rock to bring water into Jerusalem in the event of a siege. The water was channeled to the Pool of Siloam. Cf.: John 9:1. See *Hezekiah’s tunnel*, Appendix 2.

³⁵¹ LXX: “mercy.”

³⁵² The meaning of “ascent of the tombs” is unclear. This might be the upper section of the tombs, or the most prominent and honored place for the burial.

³⁵³ Verses 1 – 9: see II Kings 21:1 - 9

³⁵⁴ LXX: “in his reigning.”

³⁵⁵ LXX Codex A: “fifty years.”

³⁵⁶ LXX: “απο παντων των βδελυτματων.”

³⁵⁷ LXX: “before the face of the children of Israel.” CEV: “that the Lord had forced out of Israel.”

³⁵⁸ LXX: “στηλας.”

³⁵⁹ Cf.: II Chronicles 14:2, footnote 358.

³⁶⁰ Cf.: II Chronicles 28:3, footnotes 208, 209. See Appendix 3. Molech.

³⁶¹ Literally: “ventriloquists.”

idol he had made placed in the House of God, of which God has said to David and to his son Solomon, “In this house and in Jerusalem which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will establish my name forever, ⁸ and I will never again remove Israel from the land which I had assigned to your ancestors, provided that they would be careful to do all that I commanded them, -- all the teachings (*or, law*), the statutes and the rules that were given through Moses.” ⁹ *Manasseh* led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray (*or, seduced them*), so that they did more evil than the nations that had been destroyed before the people of Israel.

¹⁰ The Lord spoke to ³⁶² *Manasseh* and to the people but they ignored the warning. ¹¹ Therefore the Lord brought up the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria against them. He took *Manasseh* with hooks ³⁶³ and bound him with fetters of bronze and led him to Babylon. ³⁶⁴ ¹² When he was in distress he entreated the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. ¹³ He prayed to God and God heard his plea and his supplication and returned him to Jerusalem, to his kingdom. Then *Manasseh* knew that the Lord was his God.

¹⁴ After this he built an outer wall for the city of David west ³⁶⁵ of Gihon, in the valley ³⁶⁶ to the entrance ³⁶⁷ of the Fish Gate, and encircled Ophel ³⁶⁸ and raised the wall to a very great height. He also placed army officers in all the fortified towns of Judah. ³⁶⁹ ¹⁵ He removed the foreign gods and the images from the House of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built on the mountain of the House of the Lord, and in Jerusalem and dumped them outside the city. ¹⁶ He rebuilt the altar of the Lord and offered sacrifices of peace (*or, wellbeing*) and thanksgiving ³⁷⁰ on it. ³⁷¹ He commanded Judah to serve the Lord the God of Israel. ¹⁷ Nevertheless the people continued sacrificing at the sacred shrines, but only sacrificing in the name of the Lord their God.

¹⁸ The rest of the events of *Manasseh* and his prayer ³⁷² to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the Lord the God of Israel are all in the

³⁶² LXX: “spoke against (or, concerning).”

³⁶³ Scholars feel that this may have been a hook placed through the nose and then perhaps replaced with a leather thong so the individual could be led as a prisoner. NIV: “put a hook in his nose.”

³⁶⁴ II Kings does not mention *Manasseh*’s time of captivity or his repentance. He may have been taken to Assyria to profess his allegiance to the Assyrians. Assyrian inscriptions state that *Manasseh* paid tribute to Esarhaddon (680 – 669 BCE) and Ashurbanipal (668 – 627 BCE).

³⁶⁵ LXX: “κατα νοτον,” in Codices A & B.

³⁶⁶ LXX: “torrent.”

³⁶⁷ LXX: “κοκλοθεν.” Vulgate: “per circuitum.”

³⁶⁸ The word “Ophel” literally means “bulge,” describing that portion of the city wall as a bulge in the wall which was apparently near the temple area.

³⁶⁹ The contents of verses 14 – 17 are not found in II Kings. At this point Judah was under the control of Assyria. The fortifications were perhaps done under orders from Assyria for this was the buffer zone between Assyria and Egypt.

³⁷⁰ NIV: “fellowship offerings.”

³⁷¹ LXX: “praise.”

³⁷² The prayer in Appendix 4 is an apocryphal book bearing *Manasseh*’s name. The title was surely drawn from this verse but not the content. The book is from the third century of the CE This would place it about seven centuries after *Manasseh*.

Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. ³⁷³ 19 [His prayer and how God received ³⁷⁴ his plea ³⁷⁵ and all his sins and his faithfulness along with the places in which he built sacred shrines and set up Asherim and the images before he humbled himself – these are all recorded (*or, reported*) in the Chronicles of the Seers.] ³⁷⁶ 20 *Manasseh* died and they buried him in the palace grounds ³⁷⁷ and his son *Amon* succeeded him as king

. ²¹ *Amon* was twenty-two years old when he began to reign and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. ³⁷⁸ 22 He did what was displeasing in the sight of the Lord, as his father *Manasseh* had done. *Amon* sacrificed to all the idols that his father *Manasseh* had made and worshiped them. ²³ He did not humble himself before the Lord as his father *Manasses* had done so his was an ever increasing guilt. ²⁴ His servants conspired against him and killed him inside his palace. ²⁵ The people of the land ³⁷⁹ assassinated all those who had conspired against king *Amon* and the people of the land made his son *Josiah* king in his stead.

<CHAPTER 34>

L. The Prayer of Josiah 34:1 – 35:27

¹ *Josiah* was eight years old when he began his reign and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. ³⁸⁰ ² He did what was pleasing to the Lord and followed the example of his ancestor ³⁸¹ David. He did not deviate to the right or left. ³ In the eighth year of his reign (*or, when he was sixteen years old*), while still a boy, he began his concern for the Lord, the God of his ancestor David and in the twelfth year of his reign he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of all the shrines (*or, high places*), the Asherim (*or, sacred poles*) ³⁸² and the carved idols ³⁸³ and cast (*or, molten*) images. ⁴ The altars of the Baalim were demolished in his presence along with the altars of incense which were above them; and he crushed the Asherim (*or, sacred altars*), idols and cast images, which were all ground to dust and scattered on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵ He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, ³⁸⁴ and purged Judah and Jerusalem [*to make them*

³⁷³ The Chronicler again uses the name “Israel” for “Judah.”

³⁷⁴ JB: “relented.”

³⁷⁵ LXX: “words.”

³⁷⁶ So: one Hebrew MSS & LXX. Other Hebrew MSS have “Hozai.” Some scholars feel this verse is a later insertion into the writing of the Chronicler.

³⁷⁷ NEB: “in the garden tomb of his family.” See: II Kings 21:18.

³⁷⁸ Cf.: II Kings 21:19 – 26.

³⁷⁹ These were some of the male citizenry. The Hebrew term “Am Ha ‘arez” LXX: “ο λαος της γης.” Some scholars feel these were the religious illiterates who did not know the technicalities of the Law but had a sense of personal justice and who felt a responsibility as citizens. The expression is used 7 times by the Chronicler.

³⁸⁰ Some scholars set the date as 639 BCE There is not agreement among scholars as to the exact date. The date given is an approximate concept of the date of Josiah.

³⁸¹ Literally: “father.”

³⁸² LXX: “groves.” This was an opportune time for Judah. The Assyrian Empire was on the verge of destruction in 612 BCE so control by Assyria was nominal.

³⁸³ LXX: “ornaments for the altars.”

³⁸⁴ The burning of the bones of the priests made those altars unclean and they were never to be used again. See: I Kings 13:3.

ritually clean]. ⁶ The towns of Manasseh, Ephraim and Simeon and as far as Naphtali were in ruins along with the surrounding territory. ³⁸⁵ ⁷ He demolished the altars and crushed the sacred poles and ground the images into powder. He chopped down all the incense altars throughout the entire land of Israel. ³⁸⁶ Then he returned to Jerusalem.

⁸ In the eighteenth year of his reign ³⁸⁷ after he had purged the land ³⁸⁸ and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the House of the Lord his God. ⁹ They came to the high priest Hilkiah and delivered the money that had been brought to the House of God, which the Levites, the warders (*or, gate keepers*) ³⁸⁹ had collected from ³⁹⁰ Manasseh and Ephraim, from the remnant of Israel, from all of Judah and Benjamin along with the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³⁹¹ ¹⁰ They delivered it into the custody of the one who had oversight over the House of the Lord and the workmen who were working in the House of the Lord, who distributed it for the repairing and restoration of the house. ¹¹ They gave it to the carpenters and builders to buy (*dressed*) ³⁹² quarried stone, and timbers ³⁹³ for clamps and timber for all the buildings which the kings of Judah allowed to fall into ruin (*or, had neglected*). ¹² The men worked conscientiously. The Levites Jahath, Obadiah the sons of Merari, Zechariah and Meshullam of the sons of the Kohathites were over the workers to supervise them. Other Levites, all of whom were skillful musicians, having instruments ¹³ were over the porters (*or, burden bearers*) and they also supervised ³⁹⁴ all those who worked in every kind of service. Some of the Levites prepared records or were officials, or warders (*or, gate keepers*).

¹⁴ While they were taking the money out that had been brought to the House of the Lord Hilkiah the priest found a scroll (*or, book*) of the Law which was given by Moses. ³⁹⁵ ¹⁵ Then Hilkiah spoke to Shaphan the secretary: "I have found the scroll of the Law of the House of the Lord.." ³⁹⁶ ¹⁶ Shaphan brought the book to the king, and reported ³⁹⁷

³⁸⁵ Hebrew uncertain. Much of the territory of Israel and Judah fell into ruin after the fall of Israel and the lack of power in Assyria.

³⁸⁶ The order of events recorded by the Chronicler is much more natural than the record of II Kings 22:3 – 20. Here Josiah has taken some action in re-establishing faith in Judah which culminates in the discovery of the book (possibly Deuteronomy) in the temple.

³⁸⁷ LXX: "οτε συνετελεσεν."

³⁸⁸ LXX Codex A adds the words of footnote 387 here. ("When he had finished.")

³⁸⁹ Literally: "keepers of the threshold."

³⁹⁰ Literally: "from the hand of."

³⁹¹ This passage, in the Ketib form (as written) is "the inhabitants of Jerusalem." The Qere (spoken form) is "they returned to Jerusalem."

³⁹² LXX: "squared stone."

³⁹³ The Hebrew word is questionable. A possible translation is "timbers" or "beams" for joists. Some have translated it as "couplings;" which no doubt is a possibility. CB: "timber for framing and for beams for the structures." NAB: "and timber for the tie-beams and rafters."

³⁹⁴ LXX adds: "και επισταται ειπ παντων."

³⁹⁵ TEV: "While the money was being taken out of, the storeroom Hilkiah found the book of the Law of God the Law of the Lord that God given to Moses."

³⁹⁶ Cf.; ANET page 495a. Verses 14 - 15: Most scholars feel this was the book of Deuteronomy though this might be considered to be an early version of that book.

³⁹⁷ Literally: "returned."

to the king: “Your servants are doing the work that has been entrusted ³⁹⁸ to them. ¹⁷ They have paid out the silver (*or, money*) that was found in the House of the Lord and have delivered it into the hands of the artisans and the workmen.” ¹⁸ Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a scroll (*or, book*).” Shaphan read it to the king,

¹⁹ When the king heard the words of the Law he tore his clothes. ²⁰ The king issued orders to Hilkiah, Ahikiah the son of Shaphan, Abdon ³⁹⁹ the son of Micah, Shaphan the secretary and Asaiah the king’s servant, saying, ²¹ “Go, inquire of the Lord on my behalf of those who remain in Israel and Judah concerning the words of the scroll (*or, book*) that has been found and the wrath of the Lord that has befallen our ancestors for the wrath of the Lord which he is able to pour out on us is great because our ancestors did not keep the word of the Lord, by living according to all that is written in this scroll (*or, book*).”

²² Hilkiah and those whom the king had sent ⁴⁰⁰ went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, son of Hasrah, ⁴⁰¹ keeper of the wardrobe ⁴⁰² (now she was living in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter ⁴⁰³ and spoke accordingly to her. ²³ She responded to them: “This is what the Lord the God of Israel says: Tell the man who sent you to me, ²⁴ This is what the Lord says: Realize this! I will bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants. All the curses ⁴⁰⁴ that are written in the scroll (*or, book*) which was read in the presence of the king of Judah [*will be fulfilled*] ²⁵ because they forsook me and have burned ⁴⁰⁵ incense to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all they have done (*or, with everything they have done*). Therefore my wrath will be poured out ⁴⁰⁶ against this place and will not be quenched. ²⁶ Say to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the Lord: This is what you are to tell him: The Lord, the God of Israel says: ‘Regarding the word which you have heard, ²⁷ because you have been penitent and have humbled yourself before ⁴⁰⁷ God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me and have torn your clothing and wept before me, I also have heard you says the Lord. ²⁸ Assuredly you will go to your ancestors and to your grave in peace. Because you wept before me you will not see all the evil that I will bring on this place and its inhabitants.’” They brought the message from the Lord back to [*King Josiah*].

²⁹ The King sent word and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ³⁰ The king went up to the House of the Lord, with all the men of Judah and all the

³⁹⁸ Literally: “given into the hand of.”

³⁹⁹ In II Kings 22:15 the name is “Ashbor.”

⁴⁰⁰ So: Syriac & Vulgate. The Hebrew lacks the word “sent.”

⁴⁰¹ LXX: “Χαλλης.” Literally: “Tikvah the son of Harhas.” In reality he was the grandson of Hasrah.

⁴⁰² LXX: “τας εντολας.”

⁴⁰³ The “Second Quarter” might be a newer portion of the city of Jerusalem. TEV: “who lived in the newer part of Jerusalem.” See: Zephaniah 1:10.

⁴⁰⁴ LXX: “τους λογους.”

⁴⁰⁵ LXX: “flamed forth.”

⁴⁰⁶ LXX: “και εξεκαυθη.”

⁴⁰⁷ LXX: “απο προωπον μου.”

inhabitants of Jerusalem, accompanied by the priests and Levites – all the people both great and small (*or, important and unimportant*) – and he read aloud the entire text of the scroll (*or, book*) of the covenant⁴⁰⁸ which had been found in the House of the Lord, in their presence.³¹ The king stood in his palace⁴⁰⁹ and made a solemn covenant (*or, compact*) before the Lord, to keep his commandments, injunctions, and laws with all his heart and all his soul, to fulfill the terms of the covenant (*or, compact*) that was written in the scroll (*or, book*).³² Then he obligated all who were present in Jerusalem and in Benjamin to accept it and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to act in accordance with the covenant (*or, compact*) of God, the God of their ancestors.³³ *Josiah* removed all the abominations from the entire territory of the Israelites, and obligated all who were in Israel to worship the Lord their God. Throughout all his days they did not turn away⁴¹⁰ from following the Lord, the God of their ancestors.

<CHAPTER 35>⁴¹¹

¹ *Josiah* kept the Passover to the Lord in Jerusalem and they slaughtered the Passover lamb, on the fourteenth day of the first month. ² He reinstated the priests to their shifts (*or, offices*) and encouraged them in their service (*or, making it possible for them to discharge their duties*) to the House of the Lord.⁴¹² ³ He spoke to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were holy (*or, consecrated*) before the Lord, saying, “Since the holy ark⁴¹³ was placed in the house that Solomon the son of David, king of Israel built there is no need for you to carry the ark on your shoulders. Now you are called upon to serve the Lord your God, and his people Israel. ⁴ Make your preparations within your ancestral families according to your divisions, as had been presented by the directions⁴¹⁴ given by David, king of Israel and the directions of his son Solomon. ⁵ Stand in the holy place according to the responsibilities (*or, courses*) assigned to your ancestral families, doing so for your fellow – lay people and let there also be opportunity for the Levites also to have part in these responsibilities.⁴¹⁵ ⁶ Slaughter the Passover and sanctify yourselves and prepare for your extended family in accordance with the word of the Lord by Moses.”

⁷ Then *Josiah* donated,⁴¹⁶ as Passover offerings to the lay people who were present, lambs and kids from his flock, a total of thirty thousand lambs and kids and three thousand bulls, all coming from the king’s possessions. ⁸ His officers also gave willingly⁴¹⁷ to the people, the priests and the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the chief officers of the House of God gave offerings to the priests in the amount of two thousand

⁴⁰⁸ “Scroll of the covenant” could also be translated as “scroll of God’s agreement.”

⁴⁰⁹ See: II Kings 23:3. NRSV: “the king stood by the pillar.” TEV: “He stood by the royal column.”

⁴¹⁰ LXX: “from behind.”

⁴¹¹ Some scholars set the date as 639 BCE. There is not a common agreement as to the exact date by scholars but this does give an approximate concept of the date of *Josiah*.

⁴¹² In II Kings there is no parallel to II Chronicles 35:2 – 7.

⁴¹³ TEV: “the sacred covenant box.” LXX: “και εθηκαν.”

⁴¹⁴ LXX: “και δια χειρος.”

⁴¹⁵ Hebrew obscure.

⁴¹⁶ LXX: “began by giving.”

⁴¹⁷ LXX: “σπηρξσυτο.”

six hundred lambs and kids, and three hundred bulls. ⁹ Conamiah ⁴¹⁸ along with Shemaiah and Nethanel his brother, Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, the officers of the Levites donated offerings amounting to five thousand lambs and kids, and five hundred bulls to the Levites.

¹⁰ When the preparation of the service had been completed the priests stood in their designated places and the Levites in their designated places in accord with the king's command. ¹¹ The Levites slaughtered the Passover lambs and the priests sprinkled (*or, dashed*) the blood, which had been presented to them, ⁴¹⁹ while the Levites flayed the animals. ¹² They set the reserved portions for the burnt offerings aside ⁴²⁰ that they might distribute these by family groups from their ancestral families to the lay people to offer to the Lord, as is written in the scroll (*or, book*) of Moses doing the same also with the bulls. ⁴²¹ ¹³ They roasted the Passover lamb over the fire as had been prescribed ⁴²² and they boiled the holy offerings in pots, cauldrons and pans ⁴²³ and carried them quickly ⁴²⁴ to the lay people. ⁴²⁵ ¹⁴ Afterward the Levites prepared a meal for themselves and for the priests because the priests, the sons of Aaron, were occupied with burnt offerings and the fat parts until night, so [*that is why*] the Levites prepared the meal for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. ¹⁵ The cantors (*or, singers*) who were the descendants of Asaph, were in their assigned positions by the command of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the warders (*or, gate keepers*) were at each gate: they did not need to depart from their assigned tasks, for their brethren, the Levites had prepared [food] for them

¹⁶ The entire service of the Lord was prepared that day to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the Lord, according to the command of King *Josiah*. ¹⁷ The people of Israel who were present ⁴²⁶ kept the Passover at that time and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. ¹⁸ There had never been a Passover like it in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet: none ⁴²⁷ of the kings of Israel had celebrated such a Passover as was celebrated by *Josiah*, and the priests and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel were present, along with the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁹ This Passover was celebrated in the eighteenth year of the reign of *Josiah*. ⁴²⁸

⁴¹⁸ LXX adds: “και Βαβαις.”

⁴¹⁹ This phrase is omitted in Hebrew, but included in the LXX.

⁴²⁰ LXX: “και ητοιμασαν.”

⁴²¹ TAN: “They provided for themselves and the priests for the Aaronite priests were busy offering the burnt offerings and the fatty parts until night fall, so the Levites provided both for themselves and for the Aaronite priests.”

⁴²² LXX: “judgment.”

⁴²³ LXX: “και ευοδωθη.”

⁴²⁴ LXX: “ran to.”

⁴²⁵ It is interesting to compare this Passover with the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah.

⁴²⁶ LXX: “found.”

⁴²⁷ LXX: “and every.”

⁴²⁸ The Chronicler does not specify the exact date of the Passover. Cf.: II Kings 23:21 – 23. Some scholars call this the great “Unity Passover.” The LXX adds the following: “And King Josiah burnt those who had a divining spirit (*or, ventriloquists*), and the wizards and the images and the idols, and the sodomites which were in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might confirm the words of the law that were written in the book which Chelcias the priest found in the House of the Lord. There was no king like him, before him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his strength, according to all the Law of

20 After all this, when *Josiah* had furnished the temple ⁴²⁹ [*Pharaoh*] Neco ⁴³⁰ of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish ⁴³¹ on the Euphrates and Judah went out to do battle against him. 21 Neco sent envoys to King *Josiah* saying, “What have we to do with each other, King of Judah? Don’t interfere with God, for I am not coming against you ⁴³² at this time but against the House with which we have an act of war; and God has commanded me to make haste. Stop opposing! Do not interfere with God because he is with me or else he will destroy you.” ⁴³³ 22 Nonetheless *Josiah* would not turn away from him, but disguised himself ⁴³⁴ in order to fight against Neco for he did not heed the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but joined battle in the plain of Megiddo. ⁴³⁵ 23 The archers shot King *Josiah* and the king told his servants: “Take me away, I am severely wounded.” 24 His servants took him out of his chariot and carried him on his reserve transport (*or, second wagon*) ⁴³⁶ and brought him to Jerusalem. He died and was buried in the tombs of his ancestors. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for *Josiah*. 25 Jeremiah also took part in a lament ⁴³⁷ for *Josiah* and all the singers, ⁴³⁸ both male and female, sing of *Josiah* in their laments to this day. ⁴³⁹ These laments were made in a combined fashion in Israel and they are written in the Laments. 27 The rest of the acts of *Josiah*, and his good deeds based on what was written in the Law of the Lord, 27 and his acts from first to last are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

Moses, and after him there rose up none like him. Nevertheless the Lord did not turn the finger of his fierce anger, wherewith the Lord was greatly angry against Judah for all the provocations wherewith Manasses provoked him: and the Lord said, ‘I will even remove Judah from my presence, as I have removed Israel, and I have rejected the city which I chose, even Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, ‘My name shall be there.’”

⁴²⁹ LXX: “ετ απεβη φαραω.”

⁴³⁰ Pharaoh Neco was of the 26th Dynasty. He killed King Josiah of Judah (640 – 609 BCE) (or, 604 – 545 BCE).

⁴³¹ This was a capital of the Hittite Empire located along the Euphrates River. Nebuchadnezzar crushed the army of the Egyptian Pharaoh Neco in 605 BCE. The result was that Egypt lost its domination of the South-East shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

⁴³² LXX: “παλλεμον ποιησων.”

⁴³³ Neco was at war with Babylon which was on the verge of defeating the Assyrian Empire which was waning at that time. Thus he was an ally of Assyria. The battle of Carchemish changed the scene. Egypt and Assyria lost their power forever. TEV: “This war I am fighting does not concern you, King of Judah. I have not come to fight you, but to fight my enemies and God has told me to hurry. God is on my side, so don’t oppose me or he will destroy you.”

⁴³⁴ LXX: “εκρατατωθη.” The Targum adds: “He donned armor.” Interestingly Ahab had also disguised himself. For both of these kings this was fatal.

⁴³⁵ Cf.: ANET p. 234d. The city was built on a hill overlooking the central plain or the Plain of Esdraelon. This location is also mentioned in Revelation 16:16.

⁴³⁶ MFT: “his reserve chariot.” NEB: “his viceroy’s chariot.”

⁴³⁷ LXX: “framed a lamentation.” CB: “chanted a dirge.”

⁴³⁸ NEB: “minstrels, both men and women.”

⁴³⁹ This reference to a lamentation by Jeremiah is only found here, not in II Kings or Jeremiah. It is questionable if it refers to the Book of Lamentations by Jeremiah since the subject matter in Lamentations does not exactly fit this situation. Lamentations was compiled after the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem.

<CHAPTER 36⁴⁴⁰

¹ The people of the land took *Jehoahaz* the son of *Josiah* and made him king in Jerusalem instead of his father. ² *Jehoahaz* was twenty-three⁴⁴¹ years old when he became king, and ruled in Jerusalem for three months. ³ Then the king of Egypt⁴⁴² deposed him in Jerusalem and demanded tribute payment (*or, imposed a levy*) in the amount of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold.⁴⁴³ ⁴ The king of Egypt made *Jehoahaz*' brother *Eliakim* king over Judah and Jerusalem and changed his name⁴⁴⁴ to *Jehoiakim*, for Neco took *Jehoahaz*, bringing him to Egypt.⁴⁴⁵

⁵ *Jehoiakim* was twenty-five⁴⁴⁶ years old when he began ruling and he ruled in Jerusalem for eleven years.⁴⁴⁷ He did what was displeasing to the Lord his God.⁴⁴⁸ ⁶ *Nebuchadnezzar* king of Babylon attacked him and bound him in bronze fetters, transferring him⁴⁴⁹ to Babylon. ⁷ *Nebuchadnezzar* also brought a portion of the vessels of the House of the Lord to Babylon and put them in his palace⁴⁵⁰ in Babylon. ⁸ The additional acts of *Jehoiakim*, and all his abominations (*or, disgusting acts*) which he committed and everything of which he was guilty are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.⁴⁵¹ His son *Jehoiachin* ruled in his stead.

⁹ *Jehoiachin* was eight[een]⁴⁵² when he became king and ruled three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did what was displeasing to the Lord. ¹⁰ In the spring of the year King *Nebuchadnezzar* sent to have him brought to Babylon,⁴⁵³ with the precious

⁴⁴⁰ This chapter reproduces, with some variants, II Kings 23:26 – 24:20.

⁴⁴¹ LXX: “a son of twenty-three years in his reigning.”

⁴⁴² LXX: “ο βασιλευς εις Αιγυπτον.”

⁴⁴³ TEV: “7,500 pounds of silver” “73 pounds of gold.” NIV: “three and three quarter tons of silver” “seventy five pounds of gold.” CEV: “four tons of silver.” “seventy five pounds of gold.”

⁴⁴⁴ LXX: “και εδησεν τους μεγασταυς.”

⁴⁴⁵ LXX adds: “and he died there: but he had given the silver and the gold to Pharaoh. At that time the land began to be taxed to give the money at the command of Pharaoh; and every one as he could borrowed (or, asked; begged) the silver and the gold of the people of the land, to give to Pharaoh Neco.”

⁴⁴⁶ LXX: “the son of twenty five years in his reigning.”

⁴⁴⁷ LXX adds: “and his mother’s name was Zechora, daughter of Nerias of Rama.”

⁴⁴⁸ LXX adds: “according to all that his fathers did in his days, *Nebuchadnezzar*, king of Babylon came into the land, and he served him three years and then revolted from him. The Lord sent the Chaldeans against them and plundering parties of Syrians and plundering parties of Moabites, and of the children of Ammon, and of Samaria; but after this they departed, according to the word of the Lord by the hand of his servants the prophets. Nevertheless the wrath of the Lord was upon Judah so that he (Judah) should be removed from his presence because of the sins of *Manasseh* in all that he did, and for the innocent blood which *Jehoiakim* shed, for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, yet the Lord would not utterly destroy them.”

⁴⁴⁹ LXX: “και απηγαγεν αυτον.”

⁴⁵⁰ LXX: “his temple.”

⁴⁵¹ LXX: adds: “and *Jehoiakim* died and was buried with his ancestors in Ganozae.”

⁴⁵² Hebrew: “eight.” This is a possible copyist’s error. Eighteen is found in II Kings 24:8 and LXX Codex A.

⁴⁵³ Scholars are divided as to Babylon being the place to which *Jehoiachin* was sent. Some feel *Nebuchadnezzar* had moved to another location as the capital of his empire.

vessels of the House of the Lord, and made his uncle ⁴⁵⁴ *Zedekiah* king over Judah and Jerusalem.

¹¹ *Zedekiah* was thirty-one years old when he began to reign and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. ¹² He did what was displeasing to the Lord his God. He did not humble himself (*or, was not ashamed*) ⁴⁵⁵ before the prophet Jeremiah who was the spokesman for the Lord. ¹³ He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had demanded that he take an oath of allegiance [*as a vassal*] before God; he also was rebellious and revolted (*or, obstinate and stubborn*) in order not to need to turn to the Lord, the God of Israel. ¹⁴ All the leading priests ⁴⁵⁶ and the people also were exceedingly unfaithful, following all the abominations of the [*surrounding*] nations, and they polluted the House of the Lord which had been consecrated in Jerusalem.

¹⁵ The Lord, the God of their ancestors regularly (*or, daily*) sent guidance through his messengers because he had compassion on the people and on his dwelling place, ⁴⁵⁷ ¹⁶ but they continually ridiculed the messengers of God, disdainful of God's words and taunting his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, until there was no remedy.

¹⁷ Therefore he brought the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their ⁴⁵⁸ sanctuary, ⁴⁵⁹ and had no compassion on young men or virgins, old men or the decrepit -- he delivered them all into his hand. ¹⁸ (Also all the vessels of the House of God, large and small, and the treasuries of the House of the Lord, along with the royal treasuries and those of the priests (*or, officers*): all these were taken by him to Babylon. ⁴⁶⁰ ¹⁹ They burned the House of God, and destroyed ⁴⁶¹ the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its mansions (*or, fortified buildings*) with fire and destroyed all its precious objects.) ²⁰ He took those who had escaped the sword ⁴⁶² into exile in Babylon, and these became slaves (*or, servants*) to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia. ⁴⁶³ ²¹ All this was done in fulfillment of the word of the Lord who spoke through Jeremiah, until the land had fulfilled its sabbaths (*or, seventy years*). ⁴⁶⁴ All the days that it lay desolate and it kept the sabbaths to fulfill the seventy years.

⁴⁵⁴ Literally: "brother." In II Kings 24:17 Zedekiah is the uncle of Jehoiachin.

⁴⁵⁵ NEB: "He did not defer to the guidance of the prophet Jeremiah."

⁴⁵⁶ LXX: "great or glorious people" and adds: "and the people of the land."

⁴⁵⁷ LXX: "and the Lord God of their fathers sent by the hand of his prophets for he spared his people and his sanctuary."

⁴⁵⁸ LXX: "his."

⁴⁵⁹ LXX adds: "and did not spare Zedekiah."

⁴⁶⁰ It seems strange that the prisoners were taken to Babylon and not to a Chaldean capital. The Chaldeans seem to have settled for having Babylon as their major center.

⁴⁶¹ LXX: "dug down."

⁴⁶² LXX: "the remnant."

⁴⁶³ LXX: "Μηδων."

⁴⁶⁴ TAN: "until the land had paid back its sabbaths." Cf.: Leviticus 25:1 – 7. According to Leviticus 25 the land was to rest every seventh year. No doubt the seventh year of rest had passed which would be a year of jubilee. LXX: "σαββατοισι."

22 [Now, ⁴⁶⁵ in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord that was spoken by Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia so that he issued a proclamation throughout his realm both orally and in writing: 23 “This is what Cyrus, King of Persia declares: ‘The Lord the God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and has charged me with building him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Whoever among you – of all his people – may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up (*to Jerusalem*)’.”]

⁴⁶⁵ Verses 22 – 23 also appear with slight variants in Ezra 1:1 – 3. Some scholars feel these verses are a later interpolation into the writing of the Chronicler.