



Arabic Simplified Text

v4.9

Chronicles 2

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Chronicles 2

King Solomon, David's son, was able to gain complete control over his¹ 1 kingdom, because Yahweh his God was with him and enabled him to become a very strong .king

When David had been king, he arranged for a new sacred tent to be made in²⁻⁵ Jerusalem. Then David and the Israelite leaders brought God's sacred chest from the city of Kiriath Jearim to the new sacred tent. But when Solomon became the king, the first sacred tent was still in the city of Gibeon. There was a bronze altar there that Bezalel son of Uri .and grandson of Hur, had made was also still at Gibeon, in front of the first sacred tent

Solomon called together the army commanders who directed thousands of soldiers, and the commanders who directed hundreds of soldiers, with the judges and all the other leaders in Israel. He told them to go with him to Gibeon. So they all went to the place on the hill where idols were worshiped at Gibeon. That was the same place where God had met with his people in the tent which Moses had made. There Solomon and all the others with him ,Then Solomon went up to the bronze altar in front of the sacred tent⁶ .prayed to Yahweh .and he offered one thousand animals to be killed and completely burned on the altar

That night God appeared to Solomon in a dream and said to him, "Request whatever⁷ ".you want me to give to you

Solomon replied to God, "You were very kind to David my father, and now you have⁸ So Yahweh my God, you have caused me to become⁹ .appointed me to be the next king the king to rule people who are as many as the dust of the earth. So do what you promised Please enable me to be wise and to know what I should do, in order¹⁰ .to my father David that I may rule these people well, because there is no one who can rule all this great nation ".of yours without your help

God replied to Solomon, "You have not requested a huge amount of money or to be¹¹ honored or that your enemies be killed. And you have not requested that you be enabled to live for a long time. Instead, you have requested that I enable you to be wise and to know what you should do in order that you may govern well my people whom I have appointed So I will enable you to be wise and to know what you should do to rule my¹² .you to rule people well. But I will also enable you to have a huge amount of money and for people everywhere to honor you, more any king before you, and more than any king who will

Then Solomon and the people who were with him all left the sacred¹³ tent at Gibeon, and they returned to Jerusalem. There he ruled the Israelite people

Solomon acquired 1,400 chariots and twelve thousand men who rode on horses. He¹⁴ put some of the chariots and horses in Jerusalem, and put some of them in various other

During the years that Solomon was king, silver and gold were as common in¹⁵ cities Jerusalem as stones, and lumber from cedar trees were as plentiful as lumber from ordinary

Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from¹⁶ sycamore trees in the foothills In Egypt his men paid seven kilograms of silver for each chariot and¹⁷ the region of Kue one and seven-tenths kilograms of silver for each horse. They also sold many of them to the kings of the Heth and Aram people groups

Solomon decided that a temple should be built where Yahweh would be¹ 2

He commanded seventy² worshiped, and also that he would build a palace for himself thousand men to carry the building supplies and eighty thousand men to cut stones from quarries in the hills. He also chose 3,600 men to supervise them

:Solomon sent this message to King Hiram of the city of Tyre³

Many years ago when my father David was building his palace, you sent him cedar“ ?logs. Will you send me cedar logs, too

We are about to build a temple to set it apart for Yahweh, to burn for him incense⁴ made from fragrant spices, to always display before him the bread, and to burn animal offerings every morning and evening and day of rest, as well as at every new moon and on the other special festivals to honor Yahweh our God. We want to do these things

,We want this temple to be a great temple⁵ forever, as Yahweh has commanded But no one can build a place for God⁶ because our God is greater than all other gods to live in, since even the heavens and the earth are not big enough for him. I myself am not worthy to build him a house, except as a place to offer sacrifices to him

Therefore, please send me someone who is very good at making things from gold⁷ and silver and bronze and iron, and at making things from purple and red and blue cloth. He should also know well how to engrave designs. I want him to work in Jerusalem and in other places in Judah with my skilled craftsmen, the ones whom my father David appointed

I know that your workers are skilled in cutting timber, so also please send me⁸ cedar logs, pine logs, and algum from the Lebanon mountains. My workers will work

In that way, they will provide me with plenty of lumber. We will⁹ .with your workers
I¹⁰ .need plenty, because I want the temple that we will build to be large and beautiful
will pay to your workers, the men who cut the logs, 4,400 kiloliters of bushels of
ground wheat, 4,400 kiloliters of barley, and 440 kiloliters of wine, and 440 kiloliters of
”.olive oil

When Hiram received this message, he replied by sending a message back to¹¹
:Solomon

Let¹² .Because Yahweh loves his people, he has appointed you to be their king“
everyone praise Yahweh, the God to whom the Israelite people belong, the one who
created the sky and the earth! He has given King David a wise son, one who is very
intelligent and who has good skill and understanding. He wants to build a temple for
I will send to you Hiram-Abi, one of my skilled¹³ .Yahweh and a palace for himself

His mother was from the tribe of Dan, and his father was from here in¹⁴ .craftsmen
Tyre. He is able to make things from gold and silver and bronze and iron and stone and
wood, but he also makes nice things from purple and blue and red cloth, and he does all
kinds of engraving. He can make things using any design that you give to him. He will
.work with your craftsmen, and the craftsmen who did work for your father, King David

Now please send us the wheat, barley, olive oil, and wine that you promised to¹⁵
When you do that, my workers will cut in the Lebanon mountains all the¹⁶ .send to us
logs that you need and bring them down to the sea. Then we will tie the logs together to
form rafts with them, and float them in the sea to the city of Joppa. From there, you can
”.arrange for men to take them up to Jerusalem

Solomon told his workers to count all the people from other countries who were¹⁷
.living in Israel, similar to what his father David had done. There were 153,600 of them
Solomon assigned seventy thousand of them to carry materials, and eighty thousand to¹⁸
cut stone from quarries in the hills, and 3,600 of them to supervise the others and be sure
.that they worked steadily

.Then Solomon’s workers started to build the temple for Yahweh in Jerusalem^{1 3}

They built it on Mount Moriah, where an angel from Yahweh had appeared to his father
David. They built it on the ground that Ornan, a descendant of the Jebus people group, had
They began the work on the² .sold to David and where David said that it should be built
.second day of the second month, when Solomon had been ruling almost four years

.The foundation of the temple was twenty-seven meters long and nine meters wide³
The entrance room across the front of the temple was also nine meters long, the same as⁴
the temple's width. The entrance room was also nine meters high. Solomon caused
.workmen to coat the interior of the entrance room with thin sheets of pure gold

.Solomon's workers used panels of pine wood to line the main hall of the temple⁵
Then they covered those panels with very thin sheets of pure gold. On them they carved
They decorated the temple with⁶ .images of palm trees and designs that resembled chains
.very valuable stones. The gold that they used was from the land of Parvaim

They covered the ceiling beams, doorframes, walls and doors of the temple with very⁷
They also⁸ .thin sheets of gold. They also carved statues of winged creatures on the walls
built the very holy place inside the temple. It was nine meters long, the same as the
temple's width. The width of the very holy place was the same. They covered its walls with
Each gold nails⁹ .sheets of pure gold that altogether weighed about twenty metric tons
weighed about one-half a kilogram. They also covered the walls of the upper rooms with
.thin sheets of gold

Solomon's workers made two statues of creatures with wings to put inside the very¹⁰
Each statue had¹¹⁻¹² .holy place. They covered those statues with very thin sheets of gold
two long wings. One wing of each statue touched the wall of the temple. The other wing of
each statue touched a wing of the other statue. The wingspan of each cherub was about four
and three-fifths meters across. One wing of each cherub touched the wall, while the other
reached to the middle of room and touched the inner wing of the other cherub. Each wing
.was two and one-third meters long

It was nine meters from the outer wing of the one statue to the outer wing of the¹³
.other statue. The statues faced the doorway leading to the main room

Solomon's workers made a curtain to separate the main room from the very holy¹⁴
place. It was made of blue, purple, and red thread and fine linen. Figures of winged
They made two bronze pillars and put them¹⁵ .creatures were embroidered on the curtain
at the entrance of the temple. They were each sixteen meters high. A separate piece was
.attached to the top of each pillar; each of the top pieces was two and one-third meters high

.The workers made carvings that resembled chains and put them on top of the pillars¹⁶
They made carvings that resembled pomegranates and attached them to the chains. There
They set up the pillars in front of the temple, one the south¹⁷ .were one hundred of them
side of the entrance and the other on the north side. The one of the south side was named
.Jakin and the one on the north side was named Boaz

Solomon's workers made a square bronze altar, nine meters long on each side¹ 4

They also made a very large round tank that was² .and four and three-fifths meters high

Below the outer rim³ .called "The Sea," and it had a circumference of fourteen meters

there were small figures of bulls that were set in a circle, the bulls were placed 45 centimeters apart around the whole circle. The bulls were cast together in two rows, and they were also cast together with the metal basin that was called "The Sea." (Each row had (.three hundred figures of bulls

.The Sea" was set on twelve large figures of bulls, with the bulls facing outward⁴

The⁵ .Three bulls faced north, three faced west, three faced south, and three faced east sides of the tank were eight centimeters thick. The tank's brim was fashioned like the brim .of a cup; it resembled a lily blossom. The tank held sixty-six kiloliters of water

The craftsmen also made ten basins for washing the articles that were to be used in⁶ making offerings, and they set five on the south side, and five on the north side. In them the utensils used for the burnt offering were washed, and the priests washed themselves in the ".large bronze tank that was called "The Sea

The craftsmen also made ten gold lampstands according to how Solomon had⁷ instructed them. They put them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north .side

They made ten tables and put them in the temple, five on the south side and five on⁸ .the north side. They also made one hundred gold basins

They constructed one courtyard for the priests, and a larger courtyard for the other⁹ .people. They made doors for the courtyards and covered them with thin sheets of bronze

They placed the large tank that was called "The Sea" at the southeast corner of the¹⁰ .temple

.They also made pots and shovels for the ashes of the altar, and other small bowls¹¹

So Hiram and his workers finished the work that King Solomon had given him to do at :These were the things that they made¹² .the temple of God

the two large pillars

the two bowl shaped tops on top of the pillars

the two sets of carvings that resembled chains to decorate the tops of the two pillars

the four hundred carvings that resembled pomegranates that were placed in two¹³
.rows, they were made to decorate the tops of the two pillars
The pomegranate carvings also were used to decorate the stands, and the basins that¹⁴
,were placed on them
,the very large tank called “The Sea,” and the figures of twelve bulls underneath it¹⁵
the pots, shovels, meat forks, and all the other things needed for the work at the¹⁶
.altar

All those things that Hiram-Abi and his craftsmen made for King Solomon were of
They made them by pouring melted¹⁷ .bronze that they polished for it to gleam brightly
bronze into the clay molds that Hiram-Abi had set up near the Jordan River between the
All of those things that Solomon told them to make used¹⁸ .cities of Succoth and Zarethan
a very large amount of bronze, so great was the amount they used that no one knew how
.much it all weighed

:Solomon’s workers also made all these things that they later put into the temple¹⁹
,the golden altar
,the tables on which the priests put the bread to display before God
the pure gold lampstands and the pure gold lamps, in which the priests put oil to²⁰
,burn in front of the very holy place (as God had told Moses that the priests should do)
,the pure gold decorations that resembled flowers²¹
.and the lamps and tongs
The workers also made the pure gold wick trimmers and bowls for sprinkling, and²²
,dishes and incense burners
,the gold doors of the temple
,the gold inner doors leading to the very holy place
.the gold doors leading to the main hall

After Solomon’s workers had finished building the temple, Solomon put in the¹ 5
temple storerooms everything that his father David had dedicated to Yahweh—all the silver
.and gold and all the other things that were used at the temple

Then King Solomon summoned to Jerusalem all the elders of Israel, all the leaders of²
the tribes and of the families. He wanted them to join in bringing to the temple Yahweh’s
.sacred chest from Mount Zion, where it was in the part of the city called the city of David

So all the leaders of Israel gathered together with the king, during the Festival of³
.Shelters, in the seventh month

and⁵ ,When they had all arrived, the descendants of Levi lifted up the sacred chest⁴
they carried it and the sacred tent and the sacred things that were inside it. The priests, who
King Solomon and many of the other⁶ .were also descended from Levi, carried them
people of Israel who had gathered there walked in front of the sacred chest. And they
sacrificed a huge amount of sheep and bulls. No one was able to count them because there
.were very many

The priests then brought the sacred chest into the very holy place, into the inner room⁷
The⁸ .of the temple, and they placed it under the wings of the figures of winged creatures
wings of those figures spread out over the sacred chest and over the poles by which it was
The poles were very long, with the result that they could be seen by people who⁹ .carried
were standing in the entrance to the very holy place, but they could not be seen by anyone
The only things that were inside¹⁰ .standing outside the temple. Those poles are still there
the sacred chest were the two stone tablets that Moses had put there at Mount Sinai, where
.Yahweh had made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt

Then the priests left the holy place in the temple. All the priests who were there set¹¹
themselves apart to serve the priestly duties, without concern for which group they were
All the descendants of Levi who were musicians—Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, their¹² .from
sons and their other relatives—stood on the east side of the altar. They were wearing linen
clothes, and they were playing cymbals, harps, and lyres. There were 120 other priests who
The men blowing trumpets, those playing the cymbals and other¹³ .were blowing trumpets
musical instruments, and the singers, made music together, praising Yahweh and singing
:this song

;Yahweh is good to us“
”.he faithfully loves us forever

The glory of Yahweh filled the¹⁴ .Then suddenly the temple was filled with a cloud
.temple, with the result that the priests were not able to continue doing their work

.Then Solomon prayed, “Yahweh, you said that you would live in a dark cloud¹ 6

”!But now I have built a glorious temple for you to live in forever²

Then while all the people stood there, Solomon turned toward the people and asked³
.He said to them⁴ .God to bless them

Let us praise Yahweh, the God to whom we Israelites belong, who has caused to“
:happen what he promised to my father David. What he said to David was this

From the time that I brought my people out of Egypt, I have never chosen a city⁵
in Israel in which a temple should be built for people to worship me there. Nor did I

But now I have chosen⁶ .choose anyone to be the leader of my Israelite people
Jerusalem to be the place for people to worship me, and I have chosen you, David, to
””.rule my Israelite people

Then Solomon said further, “My father David wanted to build a temple for⁷
But Yahweh said to him, ‘It is good⁸ .Yahweh, the God to whom we Israelites belong
However, you are not the one who I want to⁹ .that you wanted to build a house for me
,build the temple, It is one of your own sons who will build it

And Yahweh has done what he promised to do. I have become the king of Israel¹⁰
to rule after my father, and I am ruling the people, as Yahweh promised, and I have
arranged for this temple to be built for us to worship Yahweh, the God to whom we
I have put the sacred chest in the temple, in which are the stone¹¹ .Israelites belong
”.tablets showing the covenant that Yahweh made with us Israelite people

Then Solomon stood in front of the altar that was in front of the people of Israel who¹²
Now His workers had¹³ .had gathered there. He spread out his hands as he began to pray
built a bronze platform there for him to stand on, which was two and one-third meters
square and one and one-half meters high. They had put it in the outer courtyard. Solomon
mounted that platform and then knelt down in front of all the people of Israel who had
,Then he prayed¹⁴ .gathered there, and he spread out his arms toward heaven

Yahweh, the God to whom we Israelite people belong, there is no God like you in“
heaven or on the earth. You solemnly promised in your covenant that you would faithfully
.love us, and that is what you have done for us who earnestly do what you want us to do

You have done the things that you promised my father David, who served you¹⁵
very well, that you would do. Truly, you promised to do those things for him, and today
.we see that by your power you have caused it all to happen

So now, Yahweh, the God we Israelites worship Israel, as you promised your¹⁶
servant David, my father, please make sure that he will always have a descendant who
will be king of Israel. For you promise you would do this if his descendants were
,So now, God of us Israelite people, cause what you promised David¹⁷ .faithful to you
.who served you well, to become true

But, my God, will you really live on earth among us? This temple I have built¹⁸
But¹⁹ .cannot contain you; not even the universe and heaven itself can contain you
Yahweh, my God, please listen to my prayer, while I am pleading with this day and do
Always protect this temple, this place where you said you²⁰ .what I am requesting
would be present, in order that you might always hear me when I pray, for I am your
,Listen to me when I pray, and listen to your Israelite people when they pray²¹ .servant
whether we are here, or even if we just face in this direction. Listen from heaven, where
.you live; and when you hear us pray, forgive us

If people accuse someone of doing something wrong to another person, and if²²
they bring him in front of your altar outside this holy temple, and if he says, ‘I did not
then please listen from²³ ’,do that; may God punish me if I am not telling the truth
heaven and decide who is telling the truth. Then punish the person who is guilty as he
.deserves to be punished, and do good to the other person as a reward for his innocence

And suppose that your Israelite people are defeated by their enemies because²⁴
they sinned against you, and forced to go to some distant country. Suppose further that
they turn away from their sinful behavior and face in the direction of this temple and
acknowledge that you have justly punished them; and suppose that they beg you to
Then please listen to them from heaven and forgive your them for the²⁵ .forgive them
sins that they have committed, and bring them back to this land that you gave to our
.ancestors

When you do not allow any rain to fall because the people have sinned against²⁶
you—then, if they stop acting sinfully and humbly pray to you, you who are present in
then listen from heaven and forgive the sins of your people. Teach them²⁷ ,this place
the right way to conduct their lives. Then send rain on the land that you gave to your
.people forever

And when the people of this land experience famines, or if there is a plague or²⁸
mildew or locusts or grasshoppers, or when their enemies surround any of their cities in
and then if your²⁹ —order to attack them—if any of these disaster happens to them
Israelite people earnestly plead, or if even just one person does so—if they stretch out
their hands toward this temple and pray to you because they know the weakness and
then listen from your home in heaven and forgive³⁰ —sorrow in their own hearts
them. You alone know what each person is thinking, so reward each person according
Do this in order that they might honor you and conduct³¹ .to everything that he does
their lives as you want them to, all the time that they live in this land that you gave to
.our ancestors

There will be some foreigners who do not belong to your Israelite people who³²
have come here from countries far away because they have heard that you are very
then from your home³³, great and powerful. If they turn toward this temple and pray
in heaven please listen to their prayer and do for them what they request you to do. Do
that in order that all the people groups in the world will honor and obey you, as your
people of Israel do. And do this so that they will know that you are present in this
.temple that I have built

,When you send your people to go and attack their enemies, if they pray to you³⁴
no matter where they are, and if they turn toward this city that you have chosen and
then will you please³⁵, toward this temple that I have caused to be built to honor you
listen from heaven to their prayers. Listen to what they plead for you to do, and give
.them help

It is true that everyone sins. So when your people sin against you, and you³⁶
become angry with them, you might allow their enemies to capture them and take them
When that happens, while they³⁷.to their countries, even to countries that are far away
are in those distant countries, if they say ‘We have sinned; we have done things that are
suppose that they repent very³⁸’, wrong and have done things that are very wicked
sincerely and pray facing this land that you gave their ancestors, and facing this city
Then³⁹.that you chose, and facing this temple that I have built for you to be present in
from your home in heaven listen to their prayer, and listen to them while they plead for
your help, and do what they ask you to do, and forgive your people who have sinned
.against you

.Now, my God, look at us as we pray to you in this place, and please listen to us⁴⁰

,Yahweh our God, come and stay in this place with the sacred chest⁴¹
.the chest that shows that you are powerful

.Yahweh God, cause your priests to know clearly that you have rescued them
.Cause us your people to rejoice because of all the good things that you do for us
Yahweh God, do not reject me, the king whom you have appointed to be the king of⁴²
;Israel
do not forget how faithfully were to David, your servant, because of your covenant
”.with him

When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from the sky and burned up¹ 7
the animals that the people had sacrificed, as well as the other offerings. And the power and

The light was extremely bright, with the result that the² .light of Yahweh filled the temple
When all the Israelite people who were³ .priests could not enter the temple of Yahweh
there saw the fire coming down and the light of Yahweh above the temple, they prostrated
themselves with their faces touching the stone pavement. They worshiped and thanked
Yahweh, saying

;Yahweh is always good to us'
'he will love us forever, as he promised to do

Then the king and all the people who were there dedicated the temple to Yahweh by⁴⁻⁵
offering more sacrifices to him. King Solomon offered twenty-two thousand cattle and
The priests stood in their positions, and the⁶ .sheep and goats to be sacrificed 120,000
other descendants of Levi stood in their positions holding the musical instruments to praise
Yahweh, instruments that King David had ordered to be made for praising Yahweh and
thanking him. They sang, "He faithfully loves us forever." Opposite the other descendants
of Levi the priests stood, blowing their trumpets, while all the Israelite people were
.standing and listening

Solomon dedicated the middle part of the courtyard in front of the temple. Then he⁷
presented offerings to be completely burned there along with the fat of the animals to be
sacrificed to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. The priests burned them there in the
courtyard because in addition to those things there were offerings of flour, with the result
.that there was not enough space on the bronze altar to burn all those sacrifices

.Solomon and the other people celebrated the Festival of Shelters for seven days⁸
There was a huge group of people who celebrated with him. Some of them came from as
.far away as Lebohamath in the far north and from the border of Egypt in the far south
On the eighth day they gathered again to worship Yahweh. They had celebrated the⁹
Then¹⁰ .dedication of the altar for seven days and the Festival of Shelters for seven days
on the next day Solomon sent them to their homes. They were very joyful because of all the
.good things that Yahweh had done for David and Solomon and for all his Israelite people

.In this way, Solomon's workers finished building the temple and Solomon's palace¹¹
Then Yahweh¹² .And Solomon finished doing everything else that he had planned to do
appeared to him one night in a dream and said to him, "I have heard your prayer, and I have
.chosen this temple to be the place where my people will offer sacrifices to me

When I prevent any rain from falling, or when I command locusts to eat all the¹³
then if the people who belong to¹⁴ ,crops, or when I send a plague among my people
me, are sorry for their sins and stop doing them, and if they plead with me for me to

forgive, then I will indeed listen from heaven. I will forgive them for having sinned, and I will listen to them when they pray to me in this¹⁵ .I will cause them to prosper again I have decided to be present in this temple, and I have set apart it for myself. I¹⁶ .place .will protect it for all time

And as for you, if you obey me as David, your father, did, and if you do all that I¹⁷ I will make sure that¹⁸ ,command you to do, and if you obey all my laws and decrees ,your descendants will always be kings, which is what I promised to David your father '.when I told him, 'Persons from your descendants will always be the kings of Israel

What will I do to you Israelites when you stop worshiping me? What will I do¹⁹ when you disobey the decrees and commands I have given to you? And what will I do This is what I will do: I will cause you to be²⁰ ?when you start worshipping other gods driven away from this land that I have given to you, and I will reject the temple that I have set apart for myself. I will make people from all the other people groups laugh Although this temple²¹ .about what happened to house where Yahweh was worshiped ,is now so magnificent, when that happens, all the people who pass by will be appalled and they will say, 'Why has Yahweh done terrible things like this to this country and to And others will reply, 'It happened because they rejected Yahweh, the²² '?this temple God to whom their ancestors belonged, the one who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and they have chosen to worship other gods and try to please them. And that is ""why Yahweh has caused them to experience all these disasters

Then² .Solomon's workers took twenty years to build the temple and his palace¹ 8

his workers rebuilt the cities that King Hiram had given back to him, and Solomon sent Solomon's army then went to the town of Hamathzobah³ .Israelites to live in those cities They also rebuilt walls around the city of Tadmor in the wilderness, and⁴ .and captured it

They rebuilt the⁵ .in the region of Hamath, for all the towns where they kept supplies cities of Upper Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon, and built walls around them with gates

They also rebuilt the city of Baalath and all the cities where⁶ .and bars for the gates .supplies were kept, and the cities where Solomon's chariots and horses were kept ,Solomon's workers built whatever he wanted them to build, in Jerusalem and in Lebanon .and in other places in the area that he ruled

Solomon forced people from many other groups who were not Israelites to work for⁷ him as if they were slaves. They were people from the Heth, Amor, Periz, Hiv, and Jebus They were descendants of groups whom the Israelites had not completely⁸ .people groups destroyed. Solomon forced them to become his laborers, and they are still that at this

But Solomon did not force Israelites to work for him. Israelites became his⁹ .present time
They were also King¹⁰ .soldiers and commanders of his chariots and his chariot drivers
.Solomon's chief officials. There were 250 of them, and they supervised the workers

Solomon brought his wife, who was the daughter of the king of Egypt, to the place¹¹
that his workers had built for her in the place outside Jerusalem called the city of David. He
,said, "I do not want my wife to live in the palace that my father King David's workers built
because the sacred chest was in that palace for a while, and any place where the sacred
".chest has been is holy

,On the altar that Solomon's workers had built in front of the entrance to the temple¹²
He did that¹³ .Solomon brought many offerings that were to be completely burned
obeying what sacrifices Moses had declared should be made every day, on the Sabbath
days, to celebrate each day on which there was a new moon, and on the three other festivals
,that were celebrated each year: the Festival of Bread with No Yeast, the Festival of Harvest
Obeying what his father David had commanded, Solomon¹⁴ .and the Festival of Shelters
appointed the groups of priests for their work, and he appointed the descendants of Levi to
lead the people while they sang to praise Yahweh, and while they assisted the priests in
their daily work. He also appointed groups of them to guard all the gates, because that was
The priests and other descendants of¹⁵ .also what David, God's servant, had commanded
Levi obeyed completely everything that the king commanded, including the order to take
.care of the storerooms

They did all the work of building the temple that Solomon told them to do, until it¹⁶
.was all completed. In the way they finished building the temple

Then some of Solomon's men went to the cities of Ezion Geber and Elath on the¹⁷
.coast of the Sea of Reeds, next to a region that belonged to the Edom people group
King Hiram sent him from the city of Tyre some ships that were commanded by his¹⁸
officers. They were men who were experienced sailors. These men went in the ships with
,Solomon's men to the region of Ophir and brought back about fifteen metric tons of gold
.which they delivered to King Solomon

The queen who ruled the Sheba area in Arabia heard that Solomon had become¹ 9
famous, so she traveled to Jerusalem to ask him questions that were difficult to answer. She
,came with a large group of servants, and she brought camels that were loaded with spices
Solomon² .and valuable gems. When she arrived, she shared her thoughts with him
answered all her questions. He explained everything that she asked about, even things that
.were very difficult

she saw the⁴ ,The queen realized that Solomon was very wise. She saw his palace³
food that was served on his table every day, she saw where his officials lived, their
uniforms, the servants who served the food and wine, and the sacrifices that he took to the
.temple to be offered. She was extremely amazed

She said to the king, “Everything that I heard in my own country about you and about⁵
But I did not believe it was true until I came here and saw it⁶ !how wise you are is true
The men⁷ .myself. You are extremely wise and rich, even more than what people told me
who work for you are very fortunate! Your servants who are constantly standing in front of
I praise Yahweh your⁸ !you and listening to the wise things that you say are also fortunate
God, who has shown that he is pleased with you by appointing you to be the king of Israel
for him. God has always loved the Israelite people, and he desires to assist them forever, so
he has appointed you to be their king, in order that you will rule them fairly and
”.righteously

Then the queen gave to Solomon about four metric tons of gold and a large amount of⁹
spices and gemstones. Never had King Solomon received more spices than the queen gave
.him at that time

King Solomon gave to the queen from Sheba everything that she wanted. He¹⁰⁻¹²
gave her more than she had given to him. Then she and those who came with her returned
.to her own land

The men of Hiram worked with the men of Solomon to bring gold from Ophir. They
also brought a large amount of alghum wood. The wood was used to make steps for the
house of Yahweh, and they also used the wood to make harps and lyres for those who
played music. No one in all the land of Judah had ever seen anything like the quality of the
.alghum wood that was used to make the steps and the instruments

Each year there was brought to Solomon about twenty-two metric tons of gold. That¹³
Also, the kings of¹⁴ .was in addition to the taxes paid to him by the merchants and traders
.Arabia and the governors of the districts in Israel brought gold and silver to Solomon

King Solomon’s workers took this gold and hammered it into thin sheets and¹⁵
covered two hundred large shields with those thin sheets of gold; they put about six and
His workers made three hundred smaller¹⁶ .one-half kilograms of gold on each shield
shields. They covered each of them with one and three-quarters kilograms of gold. Then the
.king put those shields in the House of the Forest of Lebanon

His workers also made for him a large throne. Part of it was covered with ivory and¹⁷
.There were six steps in front of the throne¹⁸ .part of it was covered with very fine gold
There was a gold footstool that was attached to the throne. At each side of the throne there
So there were¹⁹ .was an armrest, and alongside each armrest there was a statue of a lion
All of²⁰ .twelve statues of lions. No throne like that had ever existed in any other kingdom
Solomon's cups were made of gold, and all the various dishes in the House of the Forest of
Lebanon were made of gold. They did not make things from silver, because during the
The king had a fleet²¹ .years that Solomon ruled, silver was not considered to be valuable
.of ships capable of sailing far out on the ocean. It sailed along with Hiram's merchant fleet
.Every three years the fleet brought gold, silver, ivory, apes, and baboons

Kings²³ .King Solomon became richer and wiser than any other king on the earth²²
,from all over the world wanted to come and listen to the wise things that Solomon said
:All the people who came to him brought presents²⁴ .things that God had put into his mind
things made from silver or gold; they also brought robes, weapons , spices, horses, and
.mules. The merchants continued to do this every year

Solomon had four thousand stalls for his horses and chariots, and twelve thousand²⁵
men who rode horses. Solomon put some of them in Jerusalem and some of them in other
Solomon ruled over all the kings in the area from the²⁶ .cities where he kept his chariots
Euphrates River in the northeast, to the region of Philistia in the west, and to the border of
During the years that Solomon was king, he caused silver to become²⁷ .Egypt in the south
as common in Jerusalem as stone; and he caused cedar trees in the foothills of Judah to
Solomon's agents brought horses to the land²⁸ .become as plentiful as sycamore fig trees
.of Judah from Egypt and from many other lands

Lists of all the other things that Solomon did are written in the scrolls written by the²⁹
prophet Nathan, and by the prophet Ahijah from the city of Shiloh, and in the scroll in
which was written the visions of the prophet Iddo (a scroll in which Iddo's visions about
Solomon ruled in Jerusalem over all of Israel³⁰ .(Jeroboam son of Nebat were also written
Then Solomon died; they buried him in the part of Jerusalem called 'the³¹ .for forty years
.city of David.' And his son Rehoboam became the next king

All the people of northern Israel went to the city Shechem in order to appoint¹ 10

Now Jeroboam son of Nebat² .Rehoboam to be their king. So Rehoboam also went there
had fled to Egypt to escape from King Solomon. While he was in Egypt he heard about the
people wanting to appoint Rehoboam to be their king, and so he returned to Israel from
So the leaders of the northern tribes summoned Jeroboam, and he went with them³ .Egypt

Your father Solomon forced us to work“⁴ ,to talk to Rehoboam. They said to Rehoboam very hard, but if you charge us fewer taxes than we were paying to him, and if you make us
”.work not so much we will serve you faithfully

He replied, “Come back three days from now, and I will give you my answer.” So⁵
.those leaders and Jeroboam left

Then King Rehoboam consulted his older men who had advised his father Solomon⁶
”?while he was still alive. He asked them, “What shall I say to answer these men
,They replied, “If you will be kind to these people and do things that will please them⁷
”.and if you say kind things to them when you answer them, they will always serve you

But he did not agree with what the older men advised him to do. Instead, he consulted⁸
He said to⁹ .the younger men who had grown up with him, who were now his advisors
them, “What do you say that I should answer the men who are asking me to reduce the
”?work and taxes that my father required from them

The young men who had grown up with him replied, “Those men have said that¹⁰
your father forced them to work very hard for him, so they want you to reduce the work and
taxes that your father required from them. But this is what you should tell them: ‘My little
My father required you people to work hard¹¹ ’.finger is thicker than my father’s waist
and pay high taxes, but I will make the loads you carry even heavier. My father whipped
”.you with leather whips, but I will whip you with scorpions

Three days later, Jeroboam and all the leaders came to King Rehoboam again, as he¹²
The king ignored the advice of the older men and spoke¹³ .had instructed them to do
He told them what the younger men had advised. He¹⁴ .harshly to the Israelite leaders
said, “My father put heavy burdens of work and taxes on you, but I will put heavier
burdens on you. It was as though he beat you with whips, but I will beat you with
So the king did not pay any attention to the people’s leaders. All this¹⁵ ”!scorpions
happened in order that what Yahweh wanted would occur, what he had told the prophet
.Ahijah about Jeroboam becoming king of the ten tribes out of the twelve

When the Israelite leaders realized that the king did not pay any attention to what¹⁶
,they said, they shouted

!We do not want anything to do with this descendant of King David“

!We will not pay attention to what this grandson of Jesse says

!You people of Israel, let us go home

”!As for this descendant of David, he can look after his family himself

.So the Israelite leaders returned to their homes

And after that, the only Israelite people whom Rehoboam ruled over were those who¹⁷ lived in the territory of the tribe of Judah, in the countryside and in the cities, towns, and villages

Then King Rehoboam went with Adoniram to talk to the Israelite people. Adoniram¹⁸ was the man who supervised all the men who were forced to work for Rehoboam. But the Israelite people killed him by throwing stones at him. When that happened, King Ever since that time, the¹⁹ Rehoboam quickly got in his chariot and escaped to Jerusalem people of the northern tribes of Israel have been rebelling against the descendants of King David

When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he gathered 180,000 of the best¹ **11** soldiers from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. He wanted them to fight against the northern tribes of Israel and defeat them, in order that he could rule all twelve tribes again

Go and tell this“³ :But Yahweh spoke to the prophet Shemaiah and said this to him² to Solomon’s son Rehoboam, the king of Judah, and to all the Israelite people of the tribes Yahweh says that you must not go to fight against the people of⁴ :of Judah and Benjamin Israel; it is as though they are your own relatives. All of you must go home. What has ,happened is what Yahweh wanted to happen.”” So Shemaiah went and told that to them and they all paid attention to what Yahweh had commanded them to do; they did not attack Jeroboam and his soldiers

Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem, and his workers built walls around several of the cities⁵ In the area that belonged to the⁶ .and towns in Judah to protect them against enemy attacks ,Beth Zur⁷ ,tribes of Judah and Benjamin they built walls around Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa Zorah, Aijalon, and¹⁰ ,Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah⁹ ,Gath, Mareshah⁸ ,Soko, Adullam He also appointed an army commander in each of those cities and towns, and¹¹ .Hebron He put shields and spears in all the¹² .gave them supplies of food, olive oil, and wine cities and made them well-protected. So he continued to control the tribes of Judah and Benjamin

.The priests and other descendants of Levi throughout Israel supported Rehoboam¹³ The descendants of Levi abandoned their property and their pastureland, and they came¹⁴ to Jerusalem and to other places in Judah, because Jeroboam and his sons would not allow

Instead, Jeroboam appointed the priests that¹⁵ .them to do the work of priests of Yahweh ,he wanted to work at the altars he commanded to be built on the hills all around the cities to offer sacrifices to the idols that he commanded to be made that resembled goats and And people from every tribe in Israel who wanted to worship Yahweh, the God¹⁶ .calves to whom the Israelites belonged, went with the descendants of Levi to Jerusalem to offer They caused the¹⁷ .sacrifices to Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors worshiped kingdom of Judah to be strong, and for three years they were happy that Solomon's son Rehoboam was the king. During that time they conducted their lives righteously as David .and Solomon had done previously

Rehoboam married Mahalath. She was the daughter of David's son Jerimoth, and¹⁸ Rehoboam¹⁹ .her mother was Abihail, the daughter of Eliab and granddaughter of Jesse Later Rehoboam married²⁰ .and Mahalath had three sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham Maacah, the daughter of Absalom, and they had four sons: Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Rehoboam loved Maacah more than he loved any other of his wives and²¹ .Shelomith slave wives. Altogether he had eighteen wives and sixty slave wives, and twenty-eight sons .and sixty daughters

Rehoboam appointed his son Abijah to be the leader of his older and younger²² He very wisely sent²³ .brothers, because he wanted to appoint Abijah to be the next king some of his other sons to other cities in the areas of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and to other cities that had walls around them. He gave them plenty of supplies and many .wives

After Rehoboam had obtained complete control of his kingdom, he and all the¹ 12
As a result, after Rehoboam² .other people in Judah stopped obeying the laws of Yahweh had been king for almost five years, Yahweh sent Shishak, the king of Egypt, with his army He brought with his army twelve hundred chariots and sixty³ .to attack Jerusalem thousand soldiers who rode horses and a very large number of troops from two regions in They captured many of the cities in Judah that had walls⁴ .Libya, and from Ethiopia .around them, and they came as far as Jerusalem
Then the prophet Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and the other leaders of Judah who⁵ had gathered in Jerusalem because they were afraid of the army of Shishak. Shemaiah said to them, "Yahweh says this: 'You have abandoned me; so now I am abandoning you, to .allow you to be captured by the army of Shishak

Then the king and the other Israelite leaders humbled themselves and said, “What⁶
”.Yahweh is doing to us is just

When Yahweh realized that they had humbled themselves, he gave this message to⁷
.Shemaiah: “Because they have humbled themselves, I will not allow them to be destroyed
Instead, I will soon rescue them. I will not use Shishak’s army to completely destroy the
but they will conquer Jerusalem and force the people there to do⁸ ,people of Jerusalem
what Shishak wants them to do. As a result, the people of Jerusalem will learn that it is
”.better to serve me than to serve the kings of other countries

When Shishak’s army attacked Jerusalem, they took away the valuable things that⁹
were in the temple of Yahweh and in the king’s palace. They took everything that was

So King¹⁰ .valuable, including the gold shields that Solomon’s workers had made
Rehoboam’s workers made bronze shields to be used instead of the gold ones, and gave the
.bronze shields to the commanders of the men who guarded the entrance to the his palace
After that, whenever the king went to the temple, the guards went with him, carrying¹¹
'those bronze shields. Then when the king left, they would return the shields to the guards
.room

Because Rehoboam humbled himself, Yahweh stopped being angry with him, and¹²
.did not get rid of him. Instead, he caused good things to happen in Judah

King Rehoboam again obtained complete control in Jerusalem, and continued to be¹³
the king of Judah. He was forty-one years old when he became the king. He ruled for
seventeen years in Jerusalem, which is the city that Yahweh had chosen from all the tribes
Rehoboam’s mother’s¹⁴ .in Israel to be the place in which people were to worship him
name was Naamah. She was from the Ammon people group. Rehoboam did evil things
.because he did not try to find out what Yahweh wanted him to do

An account of all the things that Rehoboam did while he was the king, and lists of¹⁵
.the members of his family, are in the scrolls written by the prophets Shemaiah and Iddo
When¹⁶ .The armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam were constantly fighting each other
Rehoboam died, he was buried in the part of Jerusalem called the city of David. Then his
.son Abijah became the king

When Jeroboam had been ruling Israel for almost eighteen years, Abijah¹ 13

He ruled in Jerusalem for three years. His mother was² .became the king of Judah
.Micaiah, the daughter of Uriel from the city of Gibeath

Abijah went into the³ .There was a war between the armies of Abijah and Jeroboam battle, taking 400,000 of his capable soldiers, and Jeroboam prepared to fight them, taking .of his capable troops 800,000

Abijah stood on the top of Mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill country that⁴ belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, and he shouted, “Jeroboam and all you other people of ,You certainly know that Yahweh, whom we Israelites are to worship⁵ !Israel, listen to me made a covenant with David by which he promised that his descendants would always rule ,But Jeroboam, who was only an official of David’s son King Solomon⁶ .over Israel And when Solomon’s son Rehoboam became king and was still⁷ .rebelled against his king young and inexperienced, a group of worthless scoundrels gathered around you and .rebelled against him

And now you are planning to fight against the kingdom that Yahweh established to be⁸ governed by David’s descendants. It is true that you have a huge army, and you and your soldiers have brought with you the golden statues of calves that Jeroboam’s workers made

But you drove out the priests that Yahweh appointed, men who are⁹ .to be your gods descendants of Aaron the first high priest. You also drove out the descendants of Levi, and you appointed the priests that you wanted, like the people of other countries do. And so one may even come to set himself apart for the work of a priest, even sacrificing a young bull and seven rams as a sign of his ordination and his dedication to become a priest. But what !kind of priest is he? He is consecrated to serve idols that are not gods at all

As for us, Yahweh is our God, and we have not abandoned him. Our priests who¹⁰ Every¹¹ .serve Yahweh are descendants of Aaron, and the descendants of Levi assist them morning and every evening they present to Yahweh offerings to be completely burned on the altar, and they burn fragrant incense. Each week they place on the sacred table the bread to display before Yahweh, and each morning they light the lamps that are on the gold lampstand. We are obeying what Yahweh our God requires us to do. But you have Yahweh is with us; he is our leader. The¹² .abandoned him; you no longer worship him priests whom he has appointed will blow their trumpets to signal that we are ready to fight a battle against you. You Israelite men, do not fight against Yahweh, the God to whom your ”.ancestors belonged, because you will not be successful against him

.While he was speaking, Jeroboam sent some of his troops around the army of Judah¹³ So while the soldiers who were with Jeroboam were in front of the army of Judah, the other When the soldiers of Judah turned and¹⁴ .soldiers of Israel were behind the army of Judah saw that they were going to be attacked from the front and from the rear, they cried out to and the men of Judah shouted a loud battle¹⁵ ,Yahweh. The priests blew their trumpets

cry. Then Yahweh enabled Abijah and the army of Judah to defeat Jeroboam and the army
The soldiers of Israel fled from the soldiers of Judah, and God enabled the¹⁶ .of Israel
Abijah and his troops struck the capable soldiers of Israel¹⁷ .army of Judah to defeat them
.and killed 500,000 of them, the best soldiers there were in Israel

So the soldiers of Israel were defeated, and the soldiers of Judah won the battle¹⁸
.because they trusted in Yahweh, the God to whom their ancestors belonged

Abijah's army pursued the army of Jeroboam, and they captured from the people of¹⁹
During²⁰ .Israel the cities of Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephron, and the surrounding villages
the remaining time that Abijah ruled, Jeroboam did not become powerful again. Then
.Yahweh caused him to become very ill, and he died

But Abijah became more powerful. He married fourteen wives and had twenty-two²¹
.sons and sixteen daughters

An account of the other things that Abijah did while he was the was king, including²²
.what he said and what he did, is in the scroll written by the prophet Iddo

When Abijah died, he was buried in the part of Jerusalem called the city of¹ 14
David. His son Asa became the king. While Asa was ruling, there was peace in Judah for
.ten years

His workers³ .Asa did things that Yahweh his God considers to be right and good²
got rid of the altars to worship foreign gods that were at the hilltops where the idols were
worshiped. They smashed the stone pillars and cut down the poles that were there for the
Asa commanded the people of Judah to worship only Yahweh, the God⁴ .goddess Asherah

His⁵ .whom their ancestors worshiped, and to seek his will and obey his commands
workers destroyed all the places where idols were worshiped on the hilltops, and the altars
for burning incense to idols, in every town in Judah. As a result, there was peace while Asa
.His workers built cities and constructed walls around them⁶ .ruled the kingdom of Judah
.No army attacked Judah during those years, because Yahweh enabled them to have peace

Asa said to the people of Judah, "We should protect these towns by building walls⁷
around them, with watchtowers and gates that have bars. This country still belongs to us
because we have requested Yahweh our God to help us. We requested him for his help, and
he has given us peace in our entire country." So they built buildings and succeeded in what
.they did

Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Judah. They all carried large shields and⁸ spears. He also had 280,000 men from the tribe of Benjamin in his army. They also carried shields, and also bows and arrows. They were all brave soldiers

Zerah, a man from Ethiopia, attacked Judah with an army of one million men and⁹ Asa went with¹⁰ three hundred chariots. He came to Mareshah, southwest of Jerusalem his army to fight against them, and both armies took their positions in the Zephathah Valley

Then Asa cried out to Yahweh his God, saying, “Yahweh, there is no one like you¹¹ who can help those who have very little power to resist large armies. We have come to fight against this huge army. Yahweh, you are our God; do not allow anyone to defeat you

.Then Yahweh enabled Asa and the army of Judah to defeat the army from Ethiopia¹² and Asa and his army pursued them to the southwest as far as Gerar. A huge¹³ ,They fled number of the soldiers from Ethiopia were killed, with the result that those who were not killed were unable to fight anymore. They were completely defeated by Yahweh and his army, and the men of Judah carried away a great amount of their possessions of Judah were able to destroy the villages near to the city of Gerar because Yahweh had caused the people there to become terrified and unable to fight. The army of Judah took They also attacked the places where the¹⁵ away all the valuable things from those villages local people who took care of domestic animals had set up their tents, and they took away large flocks and herds of sheep and goats and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem

Azariah went to talk with² .The Spirit of God came on Azariah son of Oded¹ 15

Asa and said to him, “Asa and all you men of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, listen to me. Yahweh is with you whenever you are with him. If you request him to help you, he will

For many years the Israelite³ .help you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you But when⁴ .people did not have the true God, and they did not have priests or God’s laws .they experienced trouble, they turned to Yahweh, our God, and requested him to help them

At that time, people were not safe when they traveled, because all⁵ .And he helped them The people⁶ .the people who lived in those countries were experiencing many difficulties of various nations were crushed by armies of other nations, and people in some cities were crushed by armies from other cities, because God was allowing them to experience many But you people, you must be strong and do not become discouraged, because⁷ .difficulties ”.God will reward you for what you do to please him

Asa was encouraged when he heard what Azariah son of Oded, prophesied. Asa⁸ commanded his workers to remove all the detestable idols from everywhere in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and from the towns that his soldiers had captured in the hills of the tribe of Ephraim. Asa's workers repaired the altar where people offered sacrifices to He gathered together⁹. Yahweh that was in front of the entrance to the temple in Jerusalem all the people of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and many people had come from the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were living among them. He was able to do that because many people had left those tribes in Israel, when they realized that Yahweh .was helping him

,After Asa had been ruling for almost fifteen years, in the third month of that year¹⁰

At that time they sacrificed to Yahweh seven¹¹. those people gathered in Jerusalem hundred bulls and seven thousand sheep and goats, from the animals that they had captured They solemnly made an agreement to worship¹². when they defeated the army of Ethiopia

They promised to¹³. very sincerely Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors worshiped execute all those who would not worship Yahweh, including those who were important and

They shouted and blew trumpets and¹⁴. who were not important, both men and women All the people who were living in¹⁵. other horns while they solemnly promised to do that Judah were happy to promise to do that because they had solemnly promised to do it very sincerely. They eagerly asked Yahweh to guide them, and he helped them. So he enabled .them to have peace throughout their country

King Asa's grandmother Maacah had made a disgusting pole for worshiping the¹⁶ goddess Asherah. So Asa commanded his workers to cut down that pole, chop it into pieces, and burn it in the Kidron Valley. He did not allow Maacah to continue to influence

Although Asa's workers¹⁷. the people because she was the mother of the previous king did not get rid of places where people worshiped idols, and those high places remained on the hills throughout Asa's reign. But still, Asa was determined to do what pleased Yahweh He ordered his workers to bring into God's temple¹⁸. all during the years that he was alive .all the silver and gold and other valuable items that he and his father had dedicated to God

There were no more wars in Judah until Asa had been ruling Judah almost thirty-five¹⁹. years

When Asa had been ruling Judah for almost thirty-six years, King Baasha of¹ 16

Israel went with his army to attack Judah. They captured the town of Ramah north of Jerusalem and started to build a wall around it, in order to prevent any people from entering .or leaving the area in Judah that King Asa ruled

So Asa told his workers to take all the silver and gold that was in the storerooms of² the temple and in his own palace, and take and give it to Ben Hadad, the king of Aram, who

I want there to be a peace“³ ,was ruling in Damascus. He sent him a message, saying treaty between me and you, like there was between my father and your father. Look, I am sending you much silver and gold. So please cancel the treaty that you have made with ,Baasha, the king of Israel, in order that he will take his soldiers away from attacking mine
”.because he will be afraid of your army

Ben Hadad agreed to do what King Asa suggested. He sent the commanders of his⁴ ,armies with their soldiers to attack some of the towns in Israel. They captured Ijon, Dan When⁵ .Abel Maim, and all the cities in the tribe of Naphtali where supplies were kept Then King⁶ .Baasha heard about that, he commanded his troops to stop fortifying Ramah Asa gathered all the men of Judah, and they took away from Ramah all the stones and timber that Baasha’s men had been using to build the wall around that town. They took those materials to the cities of Geba and Mizpah north of Jerusalem and built walls around .them

At that time the prophet Hanani went to King Asa and said to him, “Because you⁷ relied on the king of Aram and not on Yahweh our God, the army of the king of Aram has .Remember that the huge armies from Ethiopia were very powerful⁸ .escaped from you That happened⁹ .But when you relied on Yahweh, he enabled your army to defeat them because Yahweh sees what is happening all over the earth, and he strengthens those who completely trust him. You have done a very foolish thing, so from now on other armies will
”.be fighting your army

Asa was very angry with the prophet because of what the prophet had said. So he¹⁰ commanded his officials to put Hanani in prison. At that same time, he started to treat some .of his people very cruelly

All the things that Asa did while he was ruling, from the time he started to rule until¹¹ When Asa had been¹² .he died, are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel ruling for almost thirty-nine years, he was afflicted with a disease in his feet. The disease was very severe, but in spite of that, he did not request help from Yahweh. Instead he Asa had been ruling for about forty-one years when he¹³ .sought help only from doctors People buried him in the tomb that his workers had made for him in the part of¹⁴ .died Jerusalem called “the city of David.” They laid his corpse on a bed covered with spices and .various perfumes that had been mixed together. They also lit a huge fire to honor him

Then Asa's son Jehoshaphat became the king of Judah, and he enabled his¹ 17
army to become very strong, with the result that they could resist attacks from the army of
He put soldiers in all the cities in Judah around which they had built walls, and he² .Israel
put soldiers in other places in Judah and in the towns in the tribe of Ephraim that soldiers of
.his father Asa had captured

,Yahweh helped Jehoshaphat because in his earlier years, when he first began his rule³
.he did the things that pleased Yahweh just as his ancestor King David had done
Instead, he sought advice from the God whom his⁴ .Jehoshaphat did not worship Baal
father had worshiped, and he obeyed God's commands and he did not do the evil things
Yahweh enabled him to completely control his⁵ .that the kings of Israel kept doing
kingdom. All the people of Judah brought gifts to him, with the result that he became very
.He was completely devoted to doing what pleased Yahweh⁶ .rich and was greatly honored
His workers got rid of the places on hilltops where idols were worshiped and the places
.where poles were set up and used to worship the goddess Asherah all throughout Judah

—When he had been ruling Judah for almost three years, he sent some of his officials⁷
Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah—to teach the people in various cities
,With them he sent several descendants of Levi—Shemaiah, Nethaniah⁸ .in Judah
Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah, along
They took with them a scroll on which was⁹ .with two priests, Elishama and Jehoram
written the laws of Yahweh and they taught them to the people in all the towns throughout
.Judah

The people in all the kingdoms surrounding Judah became very afraid of what¹⁰
Yahweh might do to punish them if they fought against Judah, so they did not try to fight
Some people from Philistia brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, and they¹¹ .Jehoshaphat's army
also brought to him the silver that he demanded that they pay to him. Some Arabs brought
.to him 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats

Jehoshaphat continued to become more powerful. His workers built forts and places¹²
Then they put large amounts of supplies in¹³ .to store supplies in various towns in Judah
.those storehouses

The leaders¹⁴ .Jehoshaphat also placed in Jerusalem soldiers who were experienced
:and numbers from each tribe were as follows

From the tribe of Judah, Adnah was the leader of the soldiers, and he commanded
.soldiers 300,000

.His assistant was Jehohanan, who commanded 280,000 soldiers¹⁵

Next was Zicri's son Amasiah, who volunteered to serve Yahweh in this way; he¹⁶

.commanded 200,000 courageous soldiers

From the tribe of Benjamin, Eliada, who was a brave soldier, was the leader of the¹⁷

.soldiers; he commanded 200,000 men who had bows, arrows, and shields

Next was Jehozabad, who commanded 180,000 men who had weapons for fighting¹⁸

.battles

Those were the soldiers who served the king in Jerusalem, in addition to the men whom¹⁹

.the king had placed in the other cities in Judah that had walls around them

Jehoshaphat became very wealthy and was greatly honored. But then he¹ 18

.arranged for one of his family to marry someone from the family of King Ahab of Israel

Several years later, he went down from Jerusalem to Samaria to visit Ahab. Ahab²

welcomed him, and the people who had come with him by slaughtering many sheep and

Then he asked Jehoshaphat, "Will you and your army go with my army³ .cattle for a feast

to attack the city of Ramoth in the region of Gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied, "My soldiers

Then he added, "But⁴ ".and I are at your orders. We will go to war when you tell us to go

".we should ask Yahweh first, to find out what he wants us to do

So the king of Israel gathered all his four hundred prophets and asked them, "Should⁵

"?we go to fight the people of Ramoth, or should we not

They replied, "Yes, go and attack them because God will enable your army to defeat

".them

"?But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of Yahweh here whom we can ask⁶

The king of Israel replied, "There is still one man here, whom we can ask to find out⁷

what Yahweh wants, His name is Micaiah son of Imlah. But I hate him because he never

".says that anything good about me. He always predicts that bad things will happen to me

"!Jehoshaphat replied, "King Ahab, you should not say that

.So the king of Israel told one of his officials to summon Micaiah immediately⁸

Now the king of Israel and the king of Judah were sitting there on thrones, wearing⁹

their royal robes. They were sitting by the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were busy

.saying words of prophecy to them

One of them whose name was Zedekiah son of Kenaanah, had made from iron¹⁰ something that resembled the horns of a bull. He proclaimed to Ahab, “This is what Yahweh says: ‘With horns like these, your army will keep attacking the army of Aram like All the other¹¹’.a bull attacks another animal, until you completely destroy them prophets of Ahab agreed. They said, “Yes! If you attack Ramoth in Gilead, you will be”.successful, because Yahweh will enable you to defeat them

The messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, “Listen to me! All the¹²”!other prophets are predicting the same thing. You had better do as they are doing

But Micaiah said, “As surely as Yahweh lives, I will tell him only what he tells me¹³”.to say

When Micaiah arrived, the king of Israel asked him, “Should we go to attack¹⁴”?Ramoth, or not

”!Micaiah replied, “Sure, go! Yahweh will enable your army to defeat them

.But King Ahab wished to appear reverent toward Yahweh in front of Jehoshaphat¹⁵”!He said to Miciaiah, “I keep telling you to say only what Yahweh tells you to say

Then Micaiah replied, “The truth is that in a vision I saw all the troops of Israel¹⁶ scattered on the mountains. They seemed to be like sheep that did not have a shepherd. And”’.Yahweh said, ‘Their master has been killed. So tell them all to go home peacefully

Ahab turned to Jehoshaphat and said, “I told you that Micaiah never says anything¹⁷”.good will happen to me! He only predicts bad things for me

But Micaiah continued, saying, “Listen to what Yahweh showed to me! In a vision I¹⁸ saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, with all the armies of heaven standing around him, on his And Yahweh said, ‘Who can persuade Ahab, the king of¹⁹’.right side and on his left side”’?Israel, to go to fight against the people of Ramoth, in order that he may be killed there

.Some suggested one thing, and others suggested something else

’!Finally one spirit forward and said, ‘I can do it²⁰

’?Yahweh asked him, ‘How will you do it

The spirit replied, ‘I will go and inspire all of Ahab’s prophets to tell lies.’ Yahweh²¹”!said, ‘You will be successful; go and do it

So now I tell you that Yahweh has caused your prophets to lie to you. Yahweh has²²
”.decided that something terrible will happen to you

Then Zedekiah walked over to Micaiah and slapped him on his face. He said, “Do²³
”?”you think that Yahweh’s spirit left me in order to speak to you

Micaiah replied, “You will find out for yourself to which of us Yahweh’s spirit has²⁴
truly spoken on the day when you go into a room of some house to hide from the Aramean
”!soldiers

King Ahab commanded his soldiers, “Arrest Micaiah and take him to Amon, the²⁵
Tell them that I have commanded that they²⁶ .governor of this city, and to my son Joash
should put this man in prison and give him only bread and water. Do not give him anything
”!else to eat until I return safely from the battle

Micaiah replied, “If you return safely, it will be clear that it was not Yahweh who²⁷
told me what to say to you!” Then he said to all those who were standing there, “Do not
”!forget what I have said to King Ahab

.So the king of Israel and the king of Judah led their armies to Ramoth in Gilead²⁸
King Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “I will put on different clothes, in order that no one will²⁹
recognize that I am the king. But you should wear your royal robe.” So the king of Israel
.disguised himself, and they both went into the battle

The king of Aram had told his soldiers who were driving the chariots, “Attack only³⁰
So when the soldiers who were driving³¹ ”.the king of Israel! Do not attack anyone else
the Aramean chariots saw Jehoshaphat wearing the royal robes, they thought, “He must be
,So they turned to attack him. But when Jehoshaphat cried out³² ”!the king of Israel
Yahweh helped him, and they realized that he was not the king of Israel. And God caused
.them to stop pursuing him

But one Aramean soldier shot an arrow at Ahab, without knowing who he was. The³³
arrow struck Ahab between the places where the parts of his armor joined together. Ahab
told the driver of his chariot, “Turn the chariot around and take me out of here! I have been
The battle continued all the day. Ahab was sitting propped up in his³⁴ ”!severely wounded
,chariot, facing the Aramean soldiers. And late in the afternoon, when the sun was setting
.he died

the² ,When King Jehoshaphat returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem¹ 19
prophet Jehu son of the prophet Hanani, went out of the city to meet the king, and said to

him, “It was not right for you to help a wicked man and to love those who hate Yahweh
But you have done some³ .Because of what you have done, Yahweh is angry with you
good things; you got rid of the poles in this country for worshiping the goddess Asherah
”.and you have been determined to do what pleases God

Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem. But one time, like he had done once previously, he⁴
went out among all the people in the country, from the city of Beersheba in the far south to
the hill country of the tribe of Ephraim in the far north, and he convinced them to return to

He appointed judges⁵ .worshiping Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors worshiped
He told them, “Make⁶ .throughout Judah, in each of the cities that had walls around them
your decisions carefully, because you are judging cases not in order to please people, but to
So now⁷ .please Yahweh. And he will be watching you whenever you make a decision
revere Yahweh and judge cases carefully and do not forget that Yahweh our God never acts
”.unjustly, and that he never does what people want because they offer him money

In Jerusalem, Jehoshaphat also appointed some priests and other descendants of Levi⁸
and some leaders of Israelite families to be judges. He told them to do what Yahweh’s laws

He told them⁹ .said was right when they settled disputes. Those men lived in Jerusalem
In every dispute that¹⁰ .this: “You must always do your work faithfully, honoring Yahweh
your fellow Israelites who live in the cities want you to settle, you must warn them to not
sin against Yahweh by telling lies during the trial—regardless of whether the trial is about
murder, or about various laws, or about various royal decrees. If you do not warn them
God will punish you. Do this so that he does not become angry with you or your fellow
.Israelites

Amariah, the high priest, will supervise you in any matter that Yahweh is concerned¹¹
about, and Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the leader of the tribe of Judah, will supervise you in
any matter that I am concerned about. And the descendants of Levi will assist you. Act
”.courageously, and I pray that Yahweh will help those who do their work well

Later armies from Moab and Ammon and some soldiers from region of Meun¹ 20

.near Edom, came to fight against Jehoshaphat’s army

.Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, “A huge army is coming to attack your army²
They are coming from the region of Edom, from the other side of the Dead Sea. They have
Jehoshaphat³ .already come to Hazezon Tamar!” Another name for that place is Engedi
became very afraid, so he decided to ask Yahweh what he should do. He also proclaimed
The people of Judah gathered together to request⁴ .that all the people of Judah should fast

Yahweh to help them. They came to Jerusalem from every town in Judah to seek help from
.Yahweh

Then Jehoshaphat stood up in front of the people of Judah in front of the new⁵
:and he prayed this⁶ ,courtyard of the temple

Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors belonged to, you rule from heaven. You rule“
over all the kings and nations on earth. You can do anything; no one can successfully

Our God, you drove out the people who lived in this land while your⁷ .oppose you
Israelite people advanced into it, and you certainly gave it to us who are descendants of
Our ancestors lived here and⁸ .Abraham, so that the land would belong to us forever
If we experience⁹ :built a temple at which to worship you. At that time they prayed
disasters, either from our enemies attacking us, or from disease or hunger, we will
assemble at this temple in your presence, for you agreed to be present here. We will
plead with you because of the things we are suffering, and you will hear us and will
'rescue us

,You would not allow our Israelite ancestors to enter the countries of Ammon¹⁰
Moab, or Edom when they were traveling from Egypt to Canaan. So our ancestors
turned away from those areas and did not attack the people there and did not destroy
We did good things for them. But¹¹ .them. But now they are coming here to attack us
now look at how they are repaying us by trying to drive out us from the land that you
,So, our God¹² !gave to our ancestors to belong to them and their descendants forever
.please punish them. We cannot defeat the enormous army that is coming to attack us
”.We do not know what to do, but we are depending on you to help us

All the men of Judah and their wives, children, and babies were standing there in the¹³
.presence of Yahweh while Jehoshaphat prayed

Then the Spirit of Yahweh came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, who was son of¹⁴
Benaiah, who was son of Jeiel, who was son of Mattaniah. He was a descendant of Levi
,and a descendant of Asaph. He stood up in front of the whole group that was gathered there
and said, “King Jehoshaphat and all you who live in Jerusalem and in other places in¹⁵
Judah, listen! This is what Yahweh says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of
this huge army that is coming to attack you, because it is not you who will win this battle. It
Tomorrow march down toward them. They will be climbing up¹⁶ .is God who will win it
through the pass of Ziz north of En Gedi. You will meet them at the end of the gorge near

But you will not need to fight this battle. You soldiers from¹⁷ .wilderness of Jeruel
Jerusalem and other places in Judah, just take your positions, and then stand still and watch

what will happen. You will see Yahweh rescue you. Do not be afraid or discouraged. March
””.toward them tomorrow, and Yahweh will be with you

Jehoshaphat prostrated himself with his face touching the ground, and all the people¹⁸
.of Jerusalem and other places in Judah who were there knelt down to worship Yahweh
Then some descendants of Levi who were descendants of Kohath and Korah stood up¹⁹
.and loudly praised Yahweh, the God whom the Israelites belonged to

.Early the next morning the army left to go to the desert near the town of Tekoa²⁰
While they were leaving, Jehoshaphat stood up and said to them, “You people of Jerusalem
and other places in Judah, listen to me! Trust in Yahweh our God; if you do that, you will
”.be strong. Trust in what his prophets have said; if you do that, you will be successful
Then, after consulting with the people’s leaders, Jehoshaphat assigned some persons to²¹
sign praise of Yahweh for his greatness, and for these individuals to lead the entire army to
,the enemy. They were singing

,Thank Yahweh“
”.because he faithfully loves us forever

While they began to sing and praise Yahweh, Yahweh caused some enemy soldiers²²
to unexpectedly attack the others from Ammon and Moab and Edom. They defeated the
Then the soldiers from Ammon and Moab attacked the soldiers²³ .others in their army
from Edom and completely annihilated them. After they finished slaughtering the men from
.Edom, they slaughtered each other

When the soldiers from Judah came to the place where they could look down over²⁴
the wilderness, they looked toward that huge army of their enemies, and they saw only
.corpses lying on the ground. No one had survived

So Jehoshaphat and his soldiers went to take the possessions of their enemies, and²⁵
they saw that there was a lot of equipment and clothing and other valuable things; there was
more than they could carry away. There were very many things, with the result that it took
The following day they gathered in Berakah²⁶ .three days for them to collect them all
Valley and praised Yahweh there. That is why that valley is still called Berakah, which
.means praise

Then while Jehoshaphat led them, all the soldiers who were from Jerusalem and²⁷
other places in Judah returned to Jerusalem. They were happy because Yahweh had enabled
,When they arrived at Jerusalem, they went to the temple²⁸ .them to defeat their enemies
.playing harps, lutes, and trumpets

People in the kingdoms of the nearby countries became very afraid when they heard²⁹
Then there was peace in³⁰ .how Yahweh had fought against the enemies of the Israelites
the kingdom that Jehoshaphat ruled, because God had enabled him to have peace
.throughout the country

Jehoshaphat continued to rule Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became³¹
king of Judah, and he ruled in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother's name was
He did things that were pleasing to Yahweh, like his³² .Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi
But he did not get rid of the³³ .father Asa had done, and he did not stop doing those things
places where idols were worshiped on the hills in the countryside, and most of the people
.still not erious about obeying the God whom their ancestors had worshiped

A record of the other things that Jehoshaphat did while he ruled, from the beginning³⁴
until he died, is in the scrolls written by the prophet Jehu son of Hanani. They are also in
.the scroll on which was written a record of the activities of the kings of Israel

Later, Jehoshaphat made a treaty with Ahaziah, the king of Israel, who was a very³⁵
They agreed that their workers would build a fleet of ships to use to buy³⁶ .wicked king
Eliezer³⁷ ,and sell things with other countries. After those ships were built at Ezion Geber
son of Dodavahu of the city of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat. He said, "You
have made an alliance with Ahaziah, who is a wicked king. Therefore, Yahweh will destroy
the ships that your workers have made." And the ships were wrecked, and were never able
.to sail to other countries

Then Jehoshaphat died and was buried where his ancestors were buried in the¹ 21
.part of Jerusalem called the city of David. His son Jehoram became the next king of Judah
Jehoram's younger brothers were Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and²
Before Jehoshaphat died, he had given them large gifts of silver and gold and³ .Shephatiah
other valuable things. He also appointed them to rule various cities in Judah that had walls
around them. But he appointed Jehoram to be the king of Judah, because Jehoram was his
.oldest son

After Jehoram was completely in control of his father's kingdom, he caused all of his⁴
Jehoram was⁵ .younger brothers to be killed, along with some of the leaders of the nation
.thirty-two years old when he became the king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eight years
But he did many of the evil things that the kings of Israel had done. He did many things⁶
that Yahweh said were evil, things that the family of Ahab had done, because he married

However, because of the covenant that Yahweh had made with⁷ .one of Ahab's daughters
.King David, Yahweh did not want to get rid of the descendants Judah

While Jehoram was ruling, the people in the region of Edom rebelled against the king⁸

So Jehoram and his officers and his men in⁹ .of Judah and appointed their own king
chariots went to Edom. There, the army of Edom surrounded them. However, Jerhoram and
.his army attacked them and broke free from them; then they escaped during the night
But the king of Judah was never able to regain control of Edom, and Edom is still not¹⁰
controlled by Judah. The people in the city of Libnah between Judah and Philistia also
,rebelled against Judah. Those things happened because Jehoram stopped obeying Yahweh
.the God whom his ancestors belonged to

.On the hilltops in Judah he had also built high places, where they worshiped idols¹¹
.He caused the people of Judah to stray away from Yahweh by worshiping foreign gods

:One day, Jehoram received a letter from the prophet Elijah. Elijah had written this¹²

This is what Yahweh, the God whom your ancestor King David worshiped, says: 'You'
have not done things that please me like your father Jehoshaphat did or what King
Instead, you have continually done the evil things that the kings of¹³ .Asa did
Israel have done. You have encouraged the people in Jerusalem and other places in
Judah to stop worshiping Yahweh and to be unfaithful to him. And you have killed
'your brothers, men who were better than you are

So now Yahweh is about to cause disasters to strike very severely the people in your¹⁴
.kingdom and even your own children and your wives, and everything that you own
And you yourself will have an intestinal disease that will continue to become¹⁵
".worse, and you will suffer from it until you die

Then Yahweh stirred up some men from the Philistia people group and some Arabs¹⁶
,who lived near the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, where people from Ethiopia had settled
Their army invaded Judah and took away from Jerusalem all¹⁷ .to come against Jehoram
the valuable things that they found in the king's palace; they also took away his sons and
wives. His youngest son, Jehoahaz, was the only one of his sons whom they did not take
.away

After that happened, Yahweh caused Jehoram to be afflicted with an intestinal¹⁸

About two years later, while he had great pain, he¹⁹ .disease that no doctor could cure
died because of that disease. The people of Judah had made bonfires to honor his ancestors
.when they died, but they did not make a bonfire for Jehoram

Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became the king, and he ruled in²⁰ Jerusalem for eight years. No one regretted it when he died. His corpse was buried in the part of Jerusalem called the city of David, but he was not buried where the other kings of Judah had been buried

The people of Jerusalem appointed Jehoram's youngest son Ahaziah to be¹ 22 their king, because the men from Philistia who had invaded Judah with some Arabs had killed all of Jehoram's other sons. So Ahaziah started to rule Judah

Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king. He ruled in Jerusalem for² one year. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of King Omri of Israel

King Ahab conducted his life just like the members of Ahab's family had done³ He did many things that⁴ because his mother encouraged him to do things that are wrong Yahweh said were evil, like the descendants of Ahab had done, because after Ahaziah's father died, they became his advisors. And Ahaziah died as a result of heeding their bad advice Before he died, he did what they encourage him to do by going with Joram son of⁵ King Ahab of Israel, to fight against the army of Hazael, the king of Aram, at Ramoth Gilead. Joram was wounded there by the Arameans

After he was wounded, Joram went back to the city of Jezreel to recover from his⁶ battle wounds. Then King Ahaziah went down to Jezreel to see Joram son of King Ahab because he had been wounded

God caused Ahaziah to die as a result of his going to visit Joram. When Ahaziah⁷ arrived, he went with Joram to meet Jehu son of Nimshi, whom Yahweh had appointed to While Jehu and the men who were with him were killing⁸ kill all the descendants of Ahab Ahab's descendants, they found the leaders of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's relatives Then Jehu went to⁹ who had been working for Ahaziah, and they killed all of them also find Ahaziah, and his soldiers found Ahaziah while he was hiding in the city of Samaria They brought him to Jehu and executed him. Then they buried his corpse, because they said, "He deserves to be buried, because he was a descendant of Jehoshaphat, who tried hard to please Yahweh." After that, there were no descendants of Ahaziah who were powerful enough to become the kings of Judah

When Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son had been killed, she¹⁰ commanded that all the members of Ahaziah's family who might become king must be But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram, took Joash, Ahaziah's very¹¹ executed young son, away from the other sons of the king who were about to be murdered, and she

hid him and his nursemaid in a bedroom in the temple. Because Jehosheba, who was the daughter of King Jehoram and the wife of the high priest Jehoiada, was Ahaziah's sister He¹² .she was able to hide the child, with the result that Athaliah could not kill him .remained hidden there for six years while Athaliah ruled Judah

The next year, Jehoiada decided that it was necessary to do something. So he¹ 23 made an agreement with the army commanders of groups of one hundred soldiers: Azariah ,son of Jeroham, Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah They went throughout Judah and gathered the descendants of² .and Elishaphat son of Zicri ,Levi and the leaders of Israelite families from all the cities. When they came to Jerusalem .the whole group went to the temple and made an agreement with the young king there³ Jehoiada said to them, “This is the son of the previous king of Judah. So he is the one who .must rule, like Yahweh promised that the descendants of King David must do

So this is what you must do: One-third of you priests and other descendants of Levi⁴ One-third of⁵ .who are starting to work on the Sabbath day must guard the temple doors you must guard the king's palace, and one-third of you must guard the Foundation Gate. All

Only the priests and the⁶ .the other people will be in the courtyard outside the temple descendants of Levi who work there are allowed to enter the temple, because they are set apart for that work. All the others must remain in the courtyard, obeying what Yahweh has You descendants of Levi must stand around the young king, each of you⁷ .commanded .with your weapon in your hand. You must kill anyone else who tries to enter the temple ”.And stay close to the king, wherever he goes

.So the descendants of Levi and all the men of Judah did what Jehoiada had told them⁸

He did not allow anyone to go home after he finished his work on that day. Each commander took his men, the ones who were finishing their work on that Sabbath day and

Then Jehoiada gave each of the⁹ .those who were starting their work on that day commanders the spears and the large and small shields that had been put there in the temple

He commanded all the guards to stand in their positions, each with his¹⁰ .by King David sword in his hand, all around the king—near the altar and near the temple, from the north .side to the south side

Then Jehoiada and his sons brought Joash out. They put a crown on his head and¹¹ gave him a scroll on which were written the rules that the kings needed to obey, and they proclaimed that he was now the king. They anointed him with olive oil and shouted, “We ”!desire that the king will live for many years

When Athaliah heard the noise being made by the people running toward the king¹² She saw the young king there standing alongside¹³ .and cheering, she ran to the temple the pillar at the entrance of the temple, which is the place at the temple where the kings ,usually stood. The army commanders and trumpet players were standing beside the king and all the people of Judah were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and singers with their musical instruments were leading the people while they praised God. Then Athaliah tore ”!her robes and started screaming, “You are committing treason

Jehoiada the high priest said to the army commanders, “Kill her, but do not kill her¹⁴ at the temple of Yahweh!” Then he said to them, “Bring Athaliah out between your ranks She tried to flee, but they seized her as she¹⁵ ”!and kill anyone who tries to follow her Then Jehoiada¹⁶ .reached the Horse Gate, before the palace, and they killed her there .made an agreement that he and the king and all the other people would be Yahweh’s people Then all the people who were there went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They¹⁷ smashed the altars of Baal. They also killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of those .altars

Then Jehoiada appointed the priests, who were also descended from Levi, to take¹⁸ care of the temple. They were part of the group to whom King David had given various ,work at the temple, to sacrifice the animals that were to be completely burned on the altar doing what was written in the laws that Moses had given to them. He also told them to He also put gatekeepers¹⁹ .rejoice and sing, which was also what David had commanded at the gates of the temple in order that anyone who was unacceptable to God would not be .allowed to enter

Jehoiada took with him the army commanders, the important men, the leaders and²⁰ many others, and brought the king down from the temple. They went into the palace Then all the people of Judah²¹ .through the Upper Gate, and put the king on his throne .rejoiced. And there was quiet throughout the city, because Athaliah had been killed

Joash was seven years old when he became the king of Judah, and he ruled in¹ 24

Jerusalem for forty years. His mother’s name was Zibiah; she was from the city of Joash did what pleased Yahweh all during the years that Jehoiada was the² .Beersheba Jehoiada chose two women to be Joash’s wives. And they bore Joash sons³ .high priest .and daughters

He summoned⁵ .Some years later, Joash decided that the temple should be repaired⁴ the priests and other descendants of Levi and said to them, “Go to the cities of Judah and collect from the people the tax money that they are required to pay each year, and use that

money to pay for repairing the temple. Do it immediately.” But the descendants of Levi did
.not do it immediately

So the king summoned Jehoiada and said to him, “Why have you not required the⁶
descendants of Levi to bring to Jerusalem from various places in Judah the annual tax that
”?Moses said that the people of Judah must pay, for taking care of the sacred tent

The temple needed to be repaired because the sons of that wicked woman Athaliah⁷
had entered into the temple and had wrecked some of the things, and had also used some of
.the sacred items that were in it for the worship of Baal

So, obeying what the king commanded, the descendants of Levi made a chest and⁸

Then the king sent letters⁹ .placed it outside the temple, at one of the entrances
everywhere in Judah, requesting everyone to bring their tax money to the temple, as Moses

All the¹⁰ .had required the Israelite people to do when they were in the wilderness
officials and the other people agreed, and they brought their contributions gladly. They put
Whenever the descendants of Levi brought the¹¹ .the money into the chest until it was full
chest to the king’s officials, and they saw that there was a lot of money in it, the king’s
secretary and the assistant to the high priest would take all the money from the chest and
then put the chest back in its place. They did this frequently, and they collected a huge

The king and Jehoiada gave the money to the men who were¹² .amount of money
supervising the work of repairing the temple. Those men hired stoneworkers and carpenters
to repair the temple. They also hired men who worked with iron and bronze to repair the
.things in the temple that were broken

The men who did the repair work worked hard, and the work of repairing the temple¹³
progressed. They rebuilt the temple to make it as it was originally, and they made it

When they had finished the repair work, they brought to the king and to¹⁴ .stronger
Jehoiada the money that they had not used for the repairs. That money was used to make
,things to use for performing the sacrifices that were to be completely burned on the altar
,and to make bowls and other gold and silver things for the temple. As long as Joash lived
the people continually brought to the temple sacrifices that were to be completely burned
.on the altar

He was buried¹⁶ .Jehoiada became very old. He died when he was 130 years old¹⁵
where the kings had been buried, in the part of Jerusalem called the city of David. He was
buried there because of the good things that he had done in Judah for God and for God’s
.temple

After Jehoiada died, the leaders of Judah went to Joash, bowed in front of him, and¹⁷

So they and the other people stopped¹⁸ .persuaded him to do what they wanted worshiping at the temple, and they started worshiping the poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah and other idols. Because they were doing those sinful things, God was very angry

Although¹⁹ .with the people of Jerusalem and with the people in other places in Judah Yahweh sent prophets to persuade them to return to him, and although the prophets testified .about the evil things that they had done, the people would not pay attention

Then God's Spirit came upon Zechariah son of Jehoiada the high priest. He stood up²⁰ front of the people and said, "This is what God says: Why are you violating Yahweh's commandments? You will not be able prosper if you do that. Since you have stopped ".obeying Yahweh, he will stop taking care of you

.But the people planned to kill Zechariah. And the king permitted them to kill him²¹ King Joash forgot²² .They killed him by throwing stones at him in the temple courtyard about how Zechariah's father Jehoiada had been kind to him. So he commanded them to kill Jehoiada's son Zechariah, who said as he was dying, "I hope that Yahweh will see what ".you are doing to me and punish you for doing it

.Near the end of that year , the army of Aram marched to attack the army of Joash²³ They invaded Judah and attacked Jerusalem and killed all the leaders of the people. They .seized many valuable things and sent them to their king in Damascus, their capital city The army of Aram that came to Judah was very small, but Yahweh allowed them to²⁴ defeat the large army of Judah, because he was punishing Joash and the other people of Before the²⁵ .Judah for having abandoned him, the God whom their ancestors worshiped battle ended, Joash was severely wounded. Then his officials decided to kill him for murdering Zechariah son of Jehoiada the high priest. They killed him while he was in his bed. They buried him in the part of Jerusalem called the city of David, but they did not bury .him in the place where the other kings had been buried

Those who conspired to kill him were Zabad son of Shimeath, who was a woman²⁶ from the Ammon people group, and Jehozabad son of Shimrith, who was a woman from An account of the things that were done by the sons of Joash²⁷ .the Moab people group and the many prophecies about Joash and what he did to repair the temple are written in the commentary on the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. Then after Joash died, Amaziah .his son became the king

Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became the king of Judah, and he¹ **25** ruled from Jerusalem for twenty-nine years. His mother was Jehoaddan. She was from

Amaziah did many things that pleased Yahweh, but he did not want to do² .Jerusalem
As soon as he was in complete control of his kingdom, he caused others³ .them very much
But he did not order their sons to be⁴ .to execute the officials who had murdered his father
executed; he obeyed what was in the laws that Moses had written. In those laws Yahweh
,had commanded, “People must not be executed because of what their children have done
and children must not be executed for what their parents have done. People must be
”.executed only for the sins that they themselves have committed

Amaziah summoned the men of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to come to⁵
Jerusalem, and there he put them into groups, each clan in a group by themselves. Then he
,appointed officers to command each group. Some officers commanded one hundred men
and some commanded one thousand men. They counted the men who were at least twenty
years old; altogether there were 300,000 men. They were all men who were ready to be in
Amaziah also hired 100,000⁶ .the army, and able to fight well, using spears and shields
-capable soldiers from Israel; he paid paid almost 3,300 kilograms (or about three and one
.third metric tons) of silver for them

But a prophet came to him and said, “Your Majesty, you must not allow those⁷
soldiers from Israel to march with your soldiers, because Yahweh does not help the people
Even if your soldiers go and fight⁸ .of the tribe of Ephraim or from anywhere else in Israel
courageously in battles, God will cause your enemies to defeat you; do not forget that God
”.has the power to help armies or to cause them to be defeated

Amaziah asked that prophet, “If I do that, what about 3,300 kilograms of silver that I⁹
”?paid to hire those soldiers from Israel

The prophet replied, “Yahweh is able to pay you back more money than you paid to
”.hire those soldiers

So Amaziah told those soldiers from Israel to return home. They left to go home, but¹⁰
.they were very angry with the king of Judah for not allowing them to stay and fight

Then Amaziah became brave, and he led his army to the Valley of Salt. There they¹¹

The army of Judah also¹² .killed ten thousand soldiers from the Edom people group
captured ten thousand other soldiers, took them to the top of a cliff, and threw them all
.down over the cliff, with the result that their bodies were all smashed to pieces

While that was happening, the soldiers from Israel whom Amaziah had sent home¹³
raided cities and towns in Judea, from the city of Samaria to the city of Beth Horon. They
.killed three thousand people and took away a great amount of valuable things

When Amaziah returned to Jerusalem after his army had slaughtered the soldiers¹⁴ from Edom, he brought the idols that his enemies had worshiped. He set them up to be his own gods. Then he bowed down to worship them and offered sacrifices to them. Because of that, Yahweh was very angry with Amaziah. He sent a prophet to him, who¹⁵ said, “Why do you worship these foreign gods who were not even able to save their own”?people when your army attacked them

While he was still speaking, the king said to him, “We certainly did not appoint you¹⁶ to be one of my advisors. So stop talking! If you say anything more, I will tell my soldiers”!to kill you

So the prophet said, “I know that God has determined to get rid of you, because you have begun to worship idols, and have not heeded my advice.” Then the prophet said nothing more

Some time later Amaziah, the king of Judah, consulted his advisors. Then he sent a¹⁷ message to Jehoash, the king of Israel. He wrote, “Come and meet me face to face in”battle

But Jehoash replied this to King Amaziah: “One time a thistle growing in the¹⁸ mountains in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar tree, saying, ‘Give your daughter to my son in order that he can marry her.’ But a wild animal in Lebanon came along and trampled What I mean is that you are saying to yourself that your army¹⁹ the thistle under his feet has defeated the army of Edom, so you have become very proud. You can be proud of your victory, but you should not fight me. If you do, you will only make trouble for yourself. I”will defeat you, and Judah with you

But Amaziah paid no attention to Jehoash’s message. This happened because God²⁰ wanted Jehoash’s army to defeat them, because they were worshiping the gods of Edom

So Jehoash’s army attacked. Their two armies faced each other at the city of Beth²¹ The army of Judah was badly defeated by the army of Israel, and all²² Shemesh in Judah

King Jehoash’s army also captured King²³ the soldiers of Judah fled to their homes Amaziah there. Then he brought Amaziah to Jerusalem, and his soldiers tore down the wall that was around the city, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. That was a section that His soldiers also carried away the gold, silver²⁴ was one-hundred and eighty meters long and other valuable objects from the temple that the descendants of Obed Edom had been guarding. They also took away the valuable things in the palace, and they took to Samaria some prisoners whom they had captured

King Jehoash of Israel died, and King Amaziah of Judah lived for fifteen years after²⁵
An account of all the other things that Amaziah did while he was the king of Judah²⁶ .that
From the time that Amaziah²⁷ .is written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel
started to disobey Yahweh, some men in Jerusalem planned to kill him. He was able to
escape to the city of Lachish, but those who wanted to kill him sent another group of people
They put his corpse on a horse and brought it back to²⁸ .to Lachish and killed him there
Jerusalem and buried it where his ancestors had been buried in what is called the city of
.Judah

All the people took Uzziah and made him their king, in the place of his father¹ 26

While he was the king, after his² .Amaziah. Uzziah was sixteen years old at that time
father King Amaziah had died, he had his workers rebuild the city of Elath and brought that
.city under the protection of Judah

Uzziah ruled in Jerusalem for fifty-two years. His mother was Jecoliah; she was from³
Uzziah did the things that Yahweh said were good, like his father Amaziah⁴ .Jerusalem
He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah. Zechariah is the one who⁵ .had done
taught him to give honor to God. For as long as he sought Yahweh, God made him
.successful

Uzziah and his army went to attack the army of Philistia. They tore down the walls of⁶
the cities of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod. Then they rebuilt the cities near Ashdod and in
God helped them to fight the army of Philistia and the Arabs⁷ .other places in Philistia
who lived in the city of Gur Baal, and the descendants of Meun who had come to that area
Even the Ammon people group paid taxes to Uzziah each year. So Uzziah⁸ .from Edom
.became famous as far as the border of Egypt, because he had become very powerful

Uzziah's workers built watchtowers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley⁹
.Gate, and at the place where the wall turns, and they placed weapons in those towers
They also built watchtowers in the wilderness and dug many wells. They did that to¹⁰
provide water for a lot of the king's cattle that were in the foothills and in the plains. Uzziah
,was very interested in farming, so he also stationed workers to take care of his fields
.vineyards in the hills, and in the fertile areas

Uzziah's army was trained for fighting battles. They were in groups that were¹¹
always ready to go into battles. Jeiel, the king's secretary, and Maaseiah, one of the army
,officers, counted the men and placed them in groups. Hananiah, one of the king's officials
The total number of the family leaders who led the strongest¹² .was their commander

In the groups that those leaders commanded¹³ .soldiers in battle was 2,600 in number there was a total of 307,500 well-trained soldiers. It was a very powerful army, ready to Uzziah gave to each soldier a shield, a spear, a helmet, a vest¹⁴ .fight the king's enemies In Jerusalem his¹⁵ .made of iron plates, a bow and arrows, and a sling for throwing stones ,skilled workers made machines to put on the watchtowers and on the corners of the walls ,to shoot arrows and to hurl large stones. He became very famous even in distant places .because God helped him very much and enabled him to become very powerful

But because Uzziah was very powerful, he became very proud, and that caused him¹⁶ to be punished. He disobeyed what Yahweh his God had commanded. He went into the temple to burn incense on the altar where God had said that only the priests should burn Azariah, the high priest, and eighty other brave priests followed him into the¹⁷ .incense

They rebuked him and said to him, "Uzziah, it is not right for you to burn¹⁸ .temple incense to Yahweh because you are not set apart to serve as a priest, and only a priest can burn incense to Yahweh. The priests are the descendants of Aaron our first high priest, and you are not one of them! You must leave immediately, because you have disobeyed Yahweh "!"our God, and he will not honor you for what you have done

Now Uzziah was holding in his hand a pan for burning incense, and he became very¹⁹ angry with the priests. While he was expressing his anger, while he stood beside the altar of .incense in front of the priests, suddenly spots of leprosy appeared on his forehead ,When Azariah the high priest and all the other priests who were there looked at him²⁰ they saw the leprosy on his forehead, so they quickly took him outside. And truly the king was eager to leave the temple, because he knew that it was Yahweh who had caused him to .have that leprosy, and he did not want it to become worse

King Uzziah had leprosy until he died. Because he had leprosy, he lived in a house²¹ .that was not near other houses, and he was not allowed to enter the courtyard of the temple .His son Jotham supervised the palace and ruled the people of Judah

A record of all the other things that Uzziah did while he was the king of Judah was²² Because Uzziah was a leper, when he died²³ .written by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz they would not bury him in the royal tombs. Instead, they buried him in a nearby cemetery .that the kings owned. Then his son Jotham became the king of Judah

Jotham was twenty-five years old when he became the king of Judah. He¹ 27 ruled from Jerusalem for sixteen years. His mother was Jerushah, the daughter of the priest Jotham obeyed Yahweh and did what Yahweh approved. He followed the² .Zadok example of his father Uzziah in everything he did. (He did not, however, go into the Temple

of Yahweh to burn incense as his father had done.) Yet the people of Judah continued to do
.the things that showed how sinful they had become

Jotham's workers rebuilt the Upper Gate of the temple, and they did a lot of work to³
They built cities in the hills of Judah, and they built⁴ .repair the wall near the hill of Ophel
.forts and towers for defense in the forests

During the time that he was the king of Judah, his army attacked and defeated the⁵
army of the Ammon people group. Then, every year during the next three years, he required
,them to pay to him about three and one-third metric tons of silver, 2,200 kiloliters of wheat
.and 2,200 kiloliters of barley

Jotham faithfully obeyed Yahweh his God, and as a result he became a very powerful⁶
.king

,A record of everything else that Jotham did during the time that he was the king⁷
including the wars that his army fought, is written in the book of the kings of Judah and
After he had ruled Judah for sixteen years, he died when he was forty-one years⁸ .Israel
.He was buried in Jerusalem, and his son Ahaz became the next king of Judah⁹ .old

Ahaz was twenty years old when he became the king of Judah. He ruled from¹ 28
Jerusalem for sixteen years. His ancestor King David had been a good king, but Ahaz was
and was as sinful as the kings of Israel² not like David. He constantly disobeyed Yahweh
He³ .had been. He made idols of the god Baal by having craftsmen cast them in metal
burned incense in the Valley of Ben Hinnom. He even killed some of his own sons in fires
as sacrifices. That imitated the disgusting customs that the people groups who previously
lived there had done, people whom Yahweh had drive out when the Israelites were
He offered sacrifices to idols at the houses built upon⁴ .advancing through the land
.hilltops and under every big green tree

Therefore Yahweh his God allowed his army to be defeated by the army of the king⁵
.of Aram. They captured many soldiers of Judah and took them as prisoners to Damascus
The army of the king of Israel also defeated the army of Judah and killed very many of

In one day the army of Remaliah's son, King Pekah of Israel, killed⁶ .their soldiers
fine soldiers in Judah. That happened because the people of Judah had abandoned 120,000
Zicri, a warrior from the tribe of⁷ .Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors worshiped
Ephraim, killed King Ahaz's son Maaseiah, Azrikam, who was in charge of the palace, and
The soldiers of Israel captured 200,000 of the people of⁸ .Elkanah, the king's assistant

Judah, including many wives and sons and daughters of the soldiers of Judah. They also
.seized and took back to Samaria many valuable things

But a prophet of Yahweh, whose name was Oded, was in Samaria. He went out of the⁹
city to meet the army as it was returning. He said to them, “Yahweh, the God to whom your
ancestors belonged, was angry with the people of Judah, so he has handed them over to
And now you want to sin by¹⁰ .you, and you have slaughtered so many in a towering rage
causing men and women from Judah to become your slaves, but you have certainly
So listen to me! Send back to Judah your¹¹ .offended Yahweh, our God, in this matter
fellow countrymen whom you have captured, because Yahweh is extremely angry with you
”.for what you did to them

,Then some of the leaders of the tribe of Ephraim—Azariah son of Johanan¹²
—Berekiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai
They said to them, “You must not¹³ .rebuked those who were returning from the battle
bring those prisoners here! If you do that, Yahweh will consider that we are guilty of
sinning. We are already guilty of committing many sins; do you want to cause us to be even
more guilty by committing another sin? God is already very angry with us people of
”!Israel

,So, while their leaders and others were watching, the soldiers released the prisoners¹⁴
The leaders¹⁵ .and also gave back to them the valuable things that they had captured
assigned some men to take care of the prisoners. These men took some of the clothes that
the soldiers had taken from the people of Judah and gave those clothes to the people who
were naked. They also gave to the prisoners sandals and other clothes, as well as things to
eat and drink, and they gave them olive oil to rub on their wounds. They gave donkeys to
those who were very weak, in order that they could ride on them. Then they led them all to
.Jericho, the city that had many palm trees. Finally those men returned to Samaria

.About that time, King Ahaz sent a message to the king of Assyria requesting help¹⁶
He did that because the army from the Edom people group had come again and attacked¹⁷
At the same time, men¹⁸ .Judah and taken away many of the people of Judah as prisoners
from Philistia raided towns in the foothills and in the southern Judean wilderness. They
,captured the cities of Beth Shemesh, Aijalon, and Gederoth, as well as those of Soko
Yahweh allowed those things to happen in¹⁹ .Timnah, and Gimzo with its nearby villages
order to humble King Ahaz, because he had encouraged the people of Judah to do wicked
Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, sent²⁰ .things and had disobeyed Yahweh very much
his army saying that they would help Ahaz, but instead of helping him, they caused him
Ahaz’s soldiers took some of the valuable things from the temple and from the²¹ .trouble

king's palace and from other leaders of Judah, and sent them to the king of Assyria to pay him to help them, but the king of Assyria refused to help Ahaz

While King Ahaz was experiencing those troubles, he disobeyed Yahweh even more²²

He offered sacrifices to the gods that were worshiped in Damascus, whose army had²³ defeated his army. He thought, "The gods that are worshiped by the kings of Aram have helped them, so I will offer sacrifices to those gods in order that they will help me." But worshiping those gods caused Ahaz and all of Israel to be ruined

Ahaz gathered all the furnishings that were used in the temple and broke them into²⁴ pieces. He locked the doors of the temple and set up altars for worshiping idols at every

In every city in Judah, his workers built houses on the²⁵ street corner in Jerusalem hilltops, and there they burned sacrifices to other gods, and that caused Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors worshiped, to be very angry with them

A record of the other things that Ahaz did while he was the king, from when he²⁶ Ahaz²⁷ started to rule until he died, is written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel died and was buried in Jerusalem, but he was not buried in the tombs where the other kings of Israel had been buried. Then his son Hezekiah became the king

Hezekiah was twenty-five years old when he became the king of Judah. He¹ **29** ruled from Jerusalem for twenty-nine years. His mother was Abijah, the daughter of a man Hezekiah did things that Yahweh considered to be right, like² whose name was Zechariah his ancestor King David had done

During the first month of the first year that Hezekiah was ruling Judah, he unlocked³ Then he gathered the priests and⁴ the doors of the temple, and his workers repaired them and he said to⁵ other descendants of Levi in the courtyard on the east side of the temple them, "You descendants of Levi, listen to me! Set yourselves apart, and prepare the house of Yahweh so it is a place that honors Yahweh, whom your ancestors worshiped; carry out Our ancestors disobeyed God; they did many⁶ all the filthiness that is in the holy place things that he says are evil, and they did things that are not pleasing to him. They They⁷ abandoned this place where Yahweh lives, and they have stopped worshiping him, locked the doors of the temple and extinguished the lamps. They did not burn any incense and they did not offer any sacrifices that were to be completely burned on the altar in the Therefore, Yahweh has become very angry with us people of Jerusalem and⁸ holy place other places in Judah, and he has caused other people to become frightened and horrified of That is why our fathers have been⁹ us. And they ridicule us. You know this very well

killed in battles, and our sons and daughters and our wives have been captured and taken to

But now I intend to make a covenant with Yahweh, our God, in order¹⁰ .other countries

You who are like my sons, do not waste any¹¹ .that he will no longer be angry with us
time. Do immediately what Yahweh wants you to do. Yahweh has chosen you to stand in
”.his presence and offer sacrifices and burn incense

.Then these descendants of Levi started to work in the temple¹²

From the descendants of Kohath there were Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son
 .of Azariah

From the descendants of Merari there were Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of
 .Jehallelel

From the descendants of Gershon there were Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son
 .of Joah

.From the descendants of Elizaphan there were Shimri and Jeiel¹³

.From the descendants of Asaph there were Zechariah and Mattaniah

.From the descendants of Heman there were Jehiel and Shimei¹⁴

.From the descendants of Jeduthun there were Shemaiah and Uzziel

Those men gathered their fellow descendants of Levi and together they prepared¹⁵
themselves for the work of the priesthood. They took all the steps to prepare themselves so
they could serve the king in Yahweh’s house, because the king was following Yahweh’s

The worked within the¹⁶ .commands. And the Levites entered the temple to clean it up
temple to purify it. They brought out into the courtyard of the temple everything that they
had found in the temple that was not pleasing to Yahweh. Then the descendants of Levi

The priests and¹⁷ .took those things down to the Kidron Valley and burned them there
other descendants of Levi started this work on the first day of the first month and finished
setting apart for the honor of Yahweh, the courtyard of the temple on the eighth day of that
month, and they finished the work of setting the temple apart for the honor of Yahweh, one
 .week later

Then they went to King Hezekiah and reported this: “We have purified all parts of¹⁸
the temple, and the altar where sacrifices are completely burned, and all the items used at
the altar, the table on which the priests display the bread before Yahweh, and the things
Ahaz ruled over us, he disobeyed what Yahweh had commanded, and¹⁹ .used at that table
he threw away many of the tools and implements from the temple many things that should
be there, but now we have brought them back, we dedicated them to Yahweh’s service, and
”.then we placed them in front of the altar of Yahweh, where they can be seen

Early the next morning, King Hezekiah gathered together the city officials, and they²⁰ They took with them seven bulls, seven rams, seven²¹ .went to the courtyard of the temple male lambs, and seven male goats to be an offering in order that Yahweh would forgive the sins of all the people in the kingdom of Judah, and in order to purify the temple. The king commanded that the priests, who were descendants of Aaron, should offer those animals to So first the priests slaughtered those bulls, and took²² .be sacrifices to Yahweh on the altar the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. Then they slaughtered the rams and sprinkled their .blood on the altar. Then they slaughtered the lambs and sprinkled their blood on the altar The goats that were slaughtered to be an offering in order that Yahweh would forgive²³ the sins of the people were brought to the king and the others who were there. Then the Then the priests²⁴ .king and those who were present laid their hands on those goats .slaughtered those goats and splashed their blood on the altar, to atone for the sins of Israel The priests did that because the king had commanded that offerings that would be completely burned on the altar and other sacrifices should be made for all the people of .Israel

,The king then told the descendants of Levi to stand in the temple with their cymbals²⁵ .harps, and lyres, obeying what David and his prophets Gad and Nathan had commanded Those were things that Yahweh had told his prophets that the descendants of Levi should So the descendants of Levi went and stood in the temple, and began to play the²⁶ .do musical instruments that King David had given to them. And the priests began to blow their .trumpets

Then Hezekiah told some of the priests to slaughter the animals that would be²⁷ completely burned on the altar. When they started to slaughter the animals, the people started to sing to praise Yahweh, while the other descendants of Levi were playing their All the people who were there bowed to worship Yahweh, while the singers²⁸ .instruments sang and the trumpeters played. They continued to do this until they had finished .slaughtering all the animals that would be completely burned

When they finished making those offerings, the king and all those who were there²⁹ Then King Hezekiah and his officials commanded³⁰ .knelt down and worshiped Yahweh the descendants of Levi to praise Yahweh, singing the songs composed by David and Asaph .the prophet. So they sang songs joyfully, and bowed their heads to worship

.Then Hezekiah said, “You have now set yourselves apart for the honor of Yahweh³¹ So come close to the temple and bring animals to be sacrificed, and also bring the other offerings to thank Yahweh for what he has done for you.” Then those who wanted to bring .animals to be completely burned on the altar brought them

Altogether they brought seventy bulls, one hundred rams, and two hundred male³²
The other animals that they brought were³³ .lambs to be completely burned on the altar
six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep and goats that were set apart for the honor of
There were not enough priests to remove the skins from the³⁴ .Yahweh, to be sacrifices
animals that would be completely burned on the altar. So the descendants of Levi stepped
in to helped the priests until the work was finished. The Levites were more hard-working
.and dedicated that the priests were

In addition to the all the offerings that were completely burned on the altar, the³⁵
priests burned the fat of the accompanying animals that were sacrificed to maintain good
.fellowship with Yahweh; there were also offerings of wine

And Hezekiah and all the other³⁶ .In this way the worship at the temple began again
people of Judah celebrated, because God had enabled them to do all the repair work very
.quickly

King Hezekiah, his officials, and all the other people who had gathered in¹⁻³ **30**
Jerusalem wanted to celebrate the Passover festival. But they were not able to celebrate it at
the usual time, because many of the priests had still not been able to perform all the rites of
purity for themselves, so they were not allowed to do the work of that festival. Also, not
everyone had come to Jerusalem to celebrate it. So they decided to celebrate the festival the
The king and all the other people who had gathered thought that this⁴ .following month
So they decided to send messages to all the cities and villages in Judah⁵ .was a good plan
and in Israel, from Beersheba in the far south to Dan in the far north, including places in the
tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, to invite people to come to the temple in Jerusalem to
.celebrate the Passover to honor Yahweh, the God whom the Israelite people worshiped
Many of the people had not previously celebrated that festival, even though it had been
.written in the law of Moses that they should do that

,Obeying what the king commanded, messengers went throughout Judah and Israel⁶
:taking messages that had been written by the king and his officials. This is what they wrote

,You Israelite people, you who survived after being slaves of the kings of Assyria“
return to Yahweh, the God whom our great ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
worshiped, in order that he may return to you. Your fathers and your fellow
countrymen did not faithfully obey Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors

Do not act like they did, because what they did caused Yahweh to⁷ .worshiped
punish them so severely that other people were horrified when they heard of what
.Do not be stubborn as our ancestors were. Do what Yahweh desires⁸ .he had done

Come to Jerusalem to the temple, which he has set apart for his honor forever. Do
.what pleases Yahweh our God, in order that he will no longer be angry with you
If you return to Yahweh, the people who have captured our brothers and sisters⁹
.and our children will act kindly toward them, and allow them to return to this land
Do not forget that Yahweh our God is kind and merciful. If you return to him, he
”.will no longer reject you

The messengers went to all the cities in the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, as far¹⁰
north as the tribe of Zebulun, and gave them this message, but most of the people there
,But some of the people of the tribes of Asher¹¹ .scorned them and ridiculed them
Also in Judah¹² .Manasseh, and Zebulun acknowledged their sin and went to Jerusalem
God made the people want together to obey Yahweh, which is what the king and his
.officials had told them to do in the message that they sent

So a huge crowd of people gathered in Jerusalem in the second month of the year, to¹³
They removed the altars of Baal in¹⁴ .celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread
Jerusalem and took away the altars for burning incense to honor other gods; they burned
.them all in the Kidron Valley

They slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of that month. The¹⁵
priests and the other descendants of Levi who had not performed the rituals to purify
themselves, they were ashamed; and they set about to make themselves qualified for the
service to Yahweh, and they brought to the temple animals to be completely burned on the
.altar in the house of Yahweh

Then they stood in the places that Moses had written in his law that they should¹⁶
stand in. Then the descendants of Levi gave to the priests bowls containing blood of the
animals that were being sacrificed, and the priests sprinkled the altar with some of the
Many people in the crowd had not purified themselves, and therefore they were¹⁷ .blood
not able to kill the lambs and dedicate them to Yahweh. So it was necessary for the
Although most of the people who had¹⁸ .descendants of Levi to kill the lambs for them
come from the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Issachar had not purified themselves, they
ate the food of the Passover Festival anyway, ignoring the rules written by Moses. But
Hezekiah prayed for them, saying “Yahweh, you always do what is good; I pray that you
who sincerely wants to honor you, the God whom our ancestors¹⁹ will forgive everyone
worshiped, even if they have not purified themselves by obeying the sacred laws that you
And Yahweh heard what Hezekiah prayed; he forgave the people, and did²⁰ ”.gave to us
.not punish them

The Israelite people who were there in Jerusalem celebrated the Festival of²¹ Unleavened Bread for seven days. They rejoiced greatly as they celebrated, while the priests and other descendants of Levi sang to Yahweh every day and played musical instruments to praise God

Hezekiah thanked all the descendants of Levi for doing this work for Yahweh, and²² for very skillfully leading the people who were worshiping. For those seven days the people ate the Passover food and brought offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh and praised Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors had worshiped

Then the whole group decided to celebrate for seven more days; so they celebrated²³ King Hezekiah provided one thousand bulls and seven²⁴ joyfully for seven more days thousand sheep to be slaughtered for the people to eat during the festival, and the officials also gave them one thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep and goats. Many priests set All the people of²⁵ themselves apart for serving Yahweh and to honor him, at this festival Judah rejoiced, including the priests and other descendants of Levi and all the people from Israel who had come, and including some from other countries who were living in Israel Everyone in Jerusalem was²⁶ and some from other countries who were living in Judah very joyful, because nothing like this had happened in Jerusalem since the time when The priests and the other descendants of²⁷ David's son Solomon was the king of Israel Levi stood up to bless the people, and God heard them, because their prayers reached up to heaven, the holy place where God lives

After the festival ended, the Israelites who were there went to all the cities in¹ 31 Judah and smashed the stones for worshiping idols, and cut down the poles for worshiping the goddess Asherah. They destroyed the high places where idols were worshiped, and the altars of Baal throughout the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and also in the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. After destroying all of them, they returned to their own cities and towns

Hezekiah divided the priests and other descendants of Levi into groups. He appointed² some of the groups to offer sacrifices that would be completely burned on the altar and offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. He appointed some groups to do other work at the temple: Some to lead the people in their worship, some to thank Yahweh, and some to The king contributed some of his³ sing songs to praise Yahweh at the gates of the temple own funds to buy animals that would be sacrificed in the morning and in the evening of each day, and on the Sabbath days, to celebrate the new moons, and during the other feasts Hezekiah told the⁴ according to what was written in the laws that Yahweh gave to Moses people living in Jerusalem to give to the priests and the other descendants of Levi the

portions of meat that should be given to them, in order that they could devote all their time
As soon as he told that to them, they generously gave the⁵ .to obeying the laws of Yahweh
first part of their harvest of grain, and the first part of the new wine that they produced, and
olive oil and honey, and of the crops that grew in their fields. They brought to the temple a
The men of Israel and Judah who were living in various cities in⁶ .tenth of all their crops
Judah also brought a tenth of their cattle and sheep and goats, and a tenth of other things
that they had set them apart for the honor of Yahweh their God, and they piled up all those
They started to do that in the third month and finished doing it in the⁷ .things in heaps
When Hezekiah and his officials saw the heaps, they praised Yahweh and⁸ .seventh month
.requested God to bless the people

But Hezekiah asked the priests and other descendants of Levi, “What are these heaps⁹
Then Azariah the high priest, a descendant of Zadok, replied, “Since the¹⁰ ”?of things
time that the people started to bring their offerings to the temple, we have had even more
food than we need. This has happened because Yahweh has greatly blessed our fellow
Israelites, with the result that all this is left over after we priests and other descendants of
”!Levi took all that we need

Then Hezekiah ordered that they should prepare storerooms at the temple to hold¹¹
Then they brought into the storerooms all the tithes and offerings and¹² .these supplies
things and the things dedicated to Yahweh which the people had brought. One of the
descendants of Levi whose name was Konaniah was in charge of those things, and his
,Those two men supervised Jehiel, Azariah¹³ .younger brother Shimei was his assistant
Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismakiah, Mahath and Benaiah while they did the
work. They were appointed by King Hezekiah; Azariah was in charge of everything that
.was done in the temple

Kore son of Imnah, another descendant of Levi, who guarded the east gate of the¹⁴
temple, was in charge of the offerings to God that were made voluntarily. He distributed to
the priests and other descendants of Levi the offerings and other things that were dedicated
Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah and Shecaniah faithfully¹⁵ .to Yahweh
assisted him in the towns where the priests lived. They distributed those things to the
groups of their fellow priests; they distributed them to everyone, including those who were
.young and those who were old

They also distributed things to the males who were at least three years old, those¹⁶
whose names were on the scrolls where lists of family names were written. They were
males who were allowed to enter the temple to perform their tasks each day, the tasks that
The names of the priests were on the scrolls where¹⁷ .each group had been assigned to do

their families” names were written. They also distributed things to groups of descendants of Levi, those who were at least twenty years old wives and other sons and daughters whose names were on the scrolls where the family names were written, because they also faithfully had set themselves apart for the honor of Yahweh and his requirements for holiness

Hezekiah also appointed other men to distribute portions of those offerings to the priests and other descendants of Levi who were living in the pasturelands around the towns of Judah. But they gave things only to those who were descendants of Aaron the first high priest, whose names were on the scrolls containing the names of their families

That is what Hezekiah did throughout Judah. He always faithfully did things that In everything that he did for the worship in the temple, and as he obeyed God’s laws and commands, he tried to find out what his God wanted, and he worked energetically. So he was successful

After King Hezekiah had obeyed Yahweh’s instructions and had done all those things, King Sennacherib of Assyria came with his army and invaded Judah. He commanded his soldiers to surround the cities that had walls around them, thinking that When Hezekiah saw that they would break through those walls and conquer those cities he³⁻⁴, Sennacherib had come with his army and that they intended to attack Jerusalem consulted with his officials and army leaders. They said to themselves, “Why should allow the king of Assyria and his army to come and find plenty of water to drink?” So they decided to stop the water from flowing outside the city. A large group of men gathered Then⁵ together and blocked all the springs and the stream that flowed through that area they worked hard to repair all the sections of the city wall that had been broken, and they built watchtowers on the walls higher. They strengthened the Millo, a massive supporting wall on the east side of the city of David. They also made a large number of weapons and shields

Hezekiah appointed army commanders, and he gathered them in front of him in the Be⁷ square at one of the city gates, and he encouraged them by saying this to them strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the huge army that is with him, because Yahweh is with us, and his power is greater than They have to rely on the power of humans, but we have Yahweh our God to⁸ their power help us and to fight battles for us.” So the people became more confident because of what Hezekiah, the king of Judah, said

Later, when Sennacherib and all his soldiers were surrounding the city of Lachish, he⁹ sent some officers to Jerusalem to give this message to King Hezekiah and to all the people of Judah who were there

I am Sennacherib, the great king of Assyria, and this is what I say: While you¹⁰ are staying in Jerusalem, my soldiers are surrounding the city. So what are you Hezekiah says to you, ‘Yahweh our God will save us¹¹’ depending on to keep you safe from being defeated by the army of you.’ He wants you to die from having no food or Hezekiah is the one who told his men to get rid of that god’s high places on¹² .water the hills, and his altars in the countryside, saying to you people of Jerusalem and other places in Judah, ‘You must worship at only one altar and burn sacrifices on only that’ .altar

Do you people not know what I and my ancestors have done to all the people¹³⁻¹⁴ groups in other countries? We destroyed them all, and their gods could not save them So do not allow Hezekiah to deceive you like this. Do not believe what he¹⁵ .from me says, because no god of any nation or kingdom has ever been able to rescue his people from being conquered by my army and the armies of my ancestors. So certainly your ”.god will not be able to rescue you from my power

,Sennacherib’s officers said more things to insult Yahweh their God and Hezekiah¹⁶ King Sennacherib wrote more letters insulting Yahweh, the God¹⁷ .who served God well whom the Israelites belonged to. He wrote, “No god of any of these nations I have conquered could save his people from me. Similarly, the god of Hezekiah will not save his Then the officers shouted in the Hebrew language to the people¹⁸ ”.people from my power who were on the wall, in order to cause them to be very terrified , thinking that as a result They belittled the God¹⁹ .the army of Assyria could capture the city without a battle worshiped by the people of Jerusalem like they belittled the gods of the other people groups .of the world, gods which indeed were only idols fashioned by craftsmen

Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah cried out to God, praying very earnestly²⁰ And that night Yahweh sent an angel who killed all the soldiers of Assyria²¹ .about this and their leaders and their officers in the place where the king of Assyria and his army had set up their tents. So the king of Assyria left, and returned to his own country, very disgraced. And one day when he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons struck .him with their swords and killed him

That is how Yahweh guided and rescued Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from²² the power of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, and from the power of all their other

Many people²³ .enemies. That is how he gave them peace with all the countries near them brought offerings for Yahweh to Jerusalem, and also brought valuable gifts for King Hezekiah. And from that time, Hezekiah was highly respected by the people of all the other .nations

About that time, Hezekiah became very ill. He thought that he was about to die. But²⁴ he prayed to Yahweh, and Yahweh answered him. He performed a miracle and healed But Hezekiah was very proud, and he did not thank Yahweh for acting kindly²⁵ .Hezekiah toward him. Therefore Yahweh was angry with him and punished him and the people of Then Hezekiah said that he was sorry about being²⁶ .Jerusalem and other places in Judah proud, and the people of Jerusalem also said that they were sorry for their sins. So Yahweh .did not punish them during the remaining years that Hezekiah was their king

Hezekiah became very rich and was greatly honored. His workers made storerooms²⁷ for his silver and gold, for his very valuable stones, and for spices and shields and other His workers also built buildings to store the grain and wine and olive²⁸ .valuable things oil that people produced and brought to him. They also made stalls for various kinds of They built cities and acquired for the²⁹ .cattle, and pens for his flocks of sheep and goats king great many flocks of sheep and goats and herds of cattle, because God had enabled .him to become very rich

Hezekiah was the one who told his workers to block the place where the water flows³⁰ out of the spring of Gihon, and to build a tunnel through which the water flowed to the west .side of the area called the city of David. He was able to do everything that he wanted to do But when messengers who were sent by the rulers of Babylon came and asked about the³¹ miracle that God had performed in the land, it was then that God left Hezekiah alone in order to test him. God tested him so that he would know everything that was in Hezekiah's .heart

A record of the other things that happened while Hezekiah was ruling, and the things³² that he did to please God, is written on the scroll of the vision of Isaiah the prophet. It is When Hezekiah died, he was³³ .also written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel buried in the tombs where the most respected kings of Judah were buried. Everyone in .Jerusalem and other places in Judah honored him. Then his son Manasseh became the king

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became the king of Judah, and he¹ **33** .He did many things that Yahweh said were evil² .ruled from Jerusalem for fifty-five years He imitated the disgusting things that were formerly done by the people groups that He commanded³ .Yahweh had expelled from Israel as his people advanced into the land

his workers to rebuild the high places upon the hills for worshiping idols, the same ones, that his father Hezekiah had destroyed. He told them to set up poles to honor the god Baal and to make poles to honor the goddess Asherah. He also bowed down to worship all the stars⁴. He directed his workers to build altars for foreign gods in the temple itself, about⁴ .stars which Yahweh had said, “It is here in Jerusalem that I want people to worship me, forever”.

He directed that altars for worshiping all the stars be built in both of the courtyards⁵. He even sacrificed some of his own sons by burning them in a fire in⁶ outside the temple the Valley of Ben Hinnom. He performed rituals to practice sorcery. He asked fortune tellers for advice. He performed witchcraft. He talked to people who consulted the spirits of people who had died to find out what would happen in the future. He did many things that Yahweh says are very evil, things that caused Yahweh to become very angry

Manasseh took the carved idol that his workers had made and put it in the temple⁷. That is the temple concerning which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, “My temple will be here in Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen where I want people to worship me, forever If they will obey all the laws and decrees and regulations that I told⁸ .Moses to give to them, I will not again force the Israelite people to leave this land that I But Manasseh led the people of Jerusalem and other places in⁹ ”.gave to their ancestors Judah to do things that are wrong, with the result that they did more evil than had been done by the people in the people groups that Yahweh had driven out as the Israelite people .advanced through the land

Yahweh spoke to Manasseh and the people of Judah, but they paid no attention¹⁰. So Yahweh caused the army commanders of Assyria and their soldiers to come to¹¹ Jerusalem, and they captured Manasseh. They put a hook in his nose, put bronze chains on There, while he was suffering, he humbled himself¹² .his feet, and took him to Babylon greatly in the presence of Yahweh, the God whom his ancestors worshiped, and pleaded When he prayed, Yahweh heard him and pitied him. So he¹³ .with Yahweh to help him allowed him to return to Jerusalem and to rule his kingdom again. Then Manasseh realized .that Yahweh is God, who can do anything

Later, Manasseh’s workers rebuilt the eastern section of the outer wall around¹⁴ Jerusalem, and they made it higher. That section extended from spring of Gihon north to the Fish Gate, and around the part of the city that they called Ophel Hill. Manasseh also .appointed army officers to guard each of the cities in Judah that had walls around them Manasseh’s workers removed from the temple the idols and the figures of gods of other¹⁵ nations. He also told them to remove the altars that they had previously built on Mount .Zion and in other places in Jerusalem. He had all those things thrown out of the city Then he told them to repair the altar of Yahweh, and he offered sacrifices to restore¹⁶

fellowship with Yahweh and to thank him. And he told the people of Judah that they must
The people continued to offer sacrifices at the high places on the¹⁷ .worship only Yahweh
.hills, but only to Yahweh their God

The other things that happened while Manasseh was ruling, including his prayer to¹⁸
God and the messages from Yahweh that the prophets spoke to him, are written in the book
What Manasseh prayed and how God pitied him because of what¹⁹ .of the kings of Israel
he pleaded to God for—also his sins and ways in which he disobeyed God—also the list of
places where he built the houses on the hills for idol worship and set up poles to honor the
goddess Asherah and other idols before he humbled himself—these are all written in what
Manasseh died and was buried in his palace. Then his son Amon²⁰ .the prophets wrote
.became the king of Judah

Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem²¹
He did many things that Yahweh said were evil, as his father Manasseh²² .for two years
But he did²³ .had done. Amon worshiped all the idols that Manasseh’s workers had made
not humble himself and turn to Yahweh like his father did. So he became more sinful than
.his father had been

.Then Amon’s officials made plans to kill him. They assassinated him in his palace²⁴
But then the people of Judah killed all those who had assassinated Amon, and they²⁵
.appointed his son Josiah to be their king

Josiah was eight years old when he became the king of Judah. He ruled from¹ 34

He did things that were pleasing to Yahweh, and² .Jerusalem for thirty-one years
conducted his life like his ancestor King David had done. He fully obeyed all the laws of
.God

When he had been ruling for almost eight years, while he was still a boy, he began to³
worship God as his ancestor King David had done. Four years later, he began to get rid of
all the houses that were built on the hills for idol worship, and they were all around
Jerusalem and in other places in Judah. They also took down the poles that were to give
While he⁴ .honor the goddess Asherah and the carved idols and metal statues of gods
directed them, his workers tore down the altars where people worshiped Baal. They
smashed the altars that were near those altars, where people burned incense. They smashed
the poles to honor the goddess Asherah and the idols carved from wood or stone and metal
statues. They smashed them to bits and scattered the bits over the graves of those who had
They burned the bones of the priests who had offered⁵ .offered sacrifices to them
sacrifices; they burned them on their own altars. In that way Josiah caused Jerusalem and

In the towns in⁶ other places in Judah to be acceptable places to worship Yahweh again the tribes of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far north as the tribe of Naphtali and Josiah's workers tore down the pagan altars and the⁷ ,in the ruins around all those towns poles to honor the goddess Asherah, and crushed the idols to powder, idols that craftsmen had carved. They also smashed to pieces all the altars for burning incense throughout Israel .Then Josiah returned to Jerusalem

When Josiah had been ruling for almost eighteen years, he decided to do something⁸ else to cause the land and the temple to be acceptable places to worship Yahweh. So he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah and Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joah son of Joahaz, the .secretary, to repair the temple of Yahweh

They went to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the money that had been brought⁹ to the temple. That was the money that the descendants of Levi who guarded the doors of the temple had collected from the people of the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim and other places in Israel, and also from all the people in Jerusalem and other places in the tribes of .Judah and Benjamin—all the people of the land who survived

Then Hilkiah gave some of the money to the men who had been appointed to¹⁰ supervise the work of repairing the temple. The supervisors paid the men who did the repair They also gave some of the money to the carpenters and builders to buy the cut¹¹ .work stones and the timber for the joists and the beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah .had allowed to decay

,The workers did their work faithfully. Their supervisors were Jahath and Obadiah¹² who were descendants of Levi's son Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, who were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. All the descendants of Levi, who played musical supervised all the workers as they did their various jobs. Some of the¹³ ,instruments well descendants of Levi were secretaries; some kept records, and some guarded the temple .gates

While they were giving to the supervisors the money that had been taken to the¹⁴ temple, Hilkiah the high priest found a scroll on which was written the laws that Yahweh So Hilkiah said to Shaphan, "I have found in¹⁵ .had given to Moses to give to the people the temple a scroll on which is written the laws that God gave to Moses!" Then Hilkiah .gave the scroll to Shaphan

Shaphan took the scroll to the king and said to him, "Your officials are doing¹⁶ ,They have taken the money that was in the temple¹⁷ .everything that you told them to do ".and they have given it to the men who will supervise the men who will repair the temple

Then Shaphan said to the king, “I have also brought to you a scroll that Hilkiyah gave to¹⁸
.me.” And Shaphan started to read it to the king

When the king heard the laws that were written in the scroll, he tore his clothes¹⁹
Then he gave these instructions to Hilkiyah, to Shaphan’s son²⁰ .because he was very upset
:Ahikam, to Micah’s son Abdon, to Shaphan, and to Asaiah, the king’s special advisor
Go and ask Yahweh for me, and for all his people who are still alive in Judah and²¹
Israel, about what is written in this scroll that has been found. Because it is clear that
Yahweh is very angry with us because our ancestors disobeyed what Yahweh said; they did
”.not obey the laws that are written on this scroll

So Hilkiyah and the others went to consult a woman whose name was Huldah, who²²
was a prophetess who lived in the Second District of Jerusalem. Her husband Shallum son
.of Tikvah, took care of the robes that were worn in the temple

,When they told her what the king had said, she said to them, “This is what Yahweh²³
the God whom we Israelites say we worship, says: ‘Go back and tell the king who sent you
that this is what Yahweh says: “Listen to this carefully. I am going to bring a disaster on²⁴
Jerusalem and all the people who live here. I will send on them the curses that were written

I will do that because they have²⁵ .in the scroll that was read to the king of Judah
abandoned me, and they burn incense to honor other gods. They have caused me to become
The king of Judah sent you to²⁶ ”.very angry because of all the idols that they have made
inquire what I, Yahweh, want. Go and tell him that this is what I, Yahweh, the God whom
Because you heeded what was written²⁷ :you Israelites worship, say about what you read
in the scroll, and you humbled yourself when you heard what I said to warn about what
would happen to this city and the people who live here, and because you tore your robes
,So I will allow you to die in peace²⁸ .and wept in my presence, I have listened to you
”.without seeing me punish this place and the people living in it

Then the king summoned all the elders of²⁹ .So they took her reply back to the king
They went up together to the temple with the³⁰ .Jerusalem and other places in Judea
leaders of Judah and many other people of Jerusalem and the priests and other descendants
of Levi, from the least important to the most important ones. And while they listened, the
king read to them everything that was in the scroll containing God’s laws that had been
.found in the temple

Then the king stood next to the pillar at the entrance to the temple, where kings³¹
stood when they announced something important, and while Yahweh was listening, he

repeated his promise to sincerely obey, with his entire inner being, Yahweh and all his commands and regulations and decrees that were written on the scroll

Then the king said that everyone who lived in Jerusalem and from the tribe of Benjamin should promise that they also would obey those laws. And they did that, agreeing that they would obey the agreement that God, whom their ancestors had worshiped, had made with them

Josiah instructed his workers to remove all the disgusting idols from all the land of the Israelite people, and he commanded that all those from Israel who were there should worship only Yahweh their God. As long as Josiah was alive, the people did what was pleasing to Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors worshiped

Josiah commanded that the people should celebrate the Passover Festival in Jerusalem. So they slaughtered the lambs for the Passover on the 14th day of the first month. Josiah assigned to the priests to the tasks that they should perform at the temple. The descendants of Levi were the ones who and encouraged them to do their work well taught all the Israelite people; they had been set apart for Yahweh. Josiah said to them, “Put the sacred chest in the temple that the workers of David’s son King Solomon of Israel built. But carry it on poles; do not carry it on your shoulders. And do well your work for Yahweh. Divide yourselves into your traditional clans. your God and for his Israelite people obeying the instructions that King David and his son Solomon wrote

Then stand in the temple area, with each of you in your own Levite clan, ready to Slaughter the. help your fellow Israelites when they bring their offerings to the temple lambs for the Passover. Do this for your fellow Israelites. Perform the rituals to set yourselves apart for God’s honor and to serve Yahweh and do his work. Prepare the sacrifices, doing what Yahweh told Moses to tell you that you should do

Josiah provided from his own flocks and herds thirty thousand young sheep and goats for the Passover sacrifices. He also provided three thousand bulls from his own herds

His officials also voluntarily contributed animals for the people and the priests and the other descendants of Levi. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the officials who were in charge of the temple, gave to the priests 2,600 lambs and three hundred cattle to be sacrifices for the Passover. Also, Konaniah, along with his younger brothers Shemaiah, and Nethanel, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, the leaders of the descendants of Levi provided five thousand lambs and five hundred cattle for the other descendants of Levi, to be sacrifices for the Passover

Everything for the Passover was arranged: The priests and the other descendants of¹⁰

Then they¹¹ .Levi stood in their places in their groups, as the king had commanded slaughtered the Passover lambs. The priests sprinkled the blood from the bowls that were .handed to them, while the other descendants of Levi removed the skins from the animals They set aside the animals to be completely burned on the altar, in order to give them to¹² the various family groups to offer to Yahweh, obeying the instructions that were written in

Obeying those¹³ .the laws God gave Moses. They did the same thing with the cattle regulations, they roasted over the fire the lambs for the Passover. And they boiled the meat of the sacred offerings in pots and kettles and pans, and served the meat immediately to all

After that, they prepared meat for themselves and for the¹⁴ .the people who were there priests, because the priests were busy until nighttime, sacrificing the offerings to be completely burned and burning the fat parts of the offerings. So the descendants of Levi prepared meat for themselves and for the priests, who were descendants of Aaron, the first .high priest

The musicians, who were descendants of Asaph, stood in their places, as had been¹⁵ commanded by King David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's prophet. The men who guarded the gates of the temple did not need to leave their places, because their fellow .descendants of Levi prepared food for them to eat

.So on that day everything that needed to be done for worshiping Yahweh was done¹⁶ They celebrated the Passover Festival , and they presented offerings to be completely The Israelites who were¹⁷ .burned on the altar, which was what Josiah had commanded there celebrated the Passover on that day, and for seven days they celebrated the Festival of The Passover Festival had not been celebrated like that in Israel¹⁸ .Unleavened Bread since the time that the prophet Samuel lived. And none of the kings of Israel had ever celebrated the Passover like Josiah did, along with the priests, the other descendants of Levi, and all the other people of Judah and Israel who were there with the people who lived They celebrated this Passover Festival when Josiah had been ruling for¹⁹ .in Jerusalem .almost eighteen years

After Josiah had done all those things to restore the worship at the temple, King²⁰ Necho of Egypt went with his army to attack the city of Carchemish alongside the Necho sent²¹ .Euphrates River, and Josiah marched with his army to fight against them some messengers to Josiah, to tell him, "You are the king of Judah, and there is certainly no reason for you to fight me; we are attacking the army of Babylonia. God has told me to ".hurry. So stop opposing God, who is for me. If you do not stop, God will get rid of you

But Josiah would not listen to him. Instead, he disguised himself in order to be able²² to attack the army of Egypt without anyone recognizing him. He did not pay any attention to what God had told Necho to say. Instead, he and his army went to fight Necho's army at the plain of Megiddo.

Some archers shot King Josiah. He told his officers, "Take me away from here"²³

So they took him out of his chariot and put him in²⁴ ".because I am badly wounded another chariot that he had brought with him, and they took him to Jerusalem, where he died. He was buried in the tombs where his ancestors had been buried, and all the people of Jerusalem and other places in Judah mourned for him

The prophet Jeremiah composed a song to lament for Josiah, and all the men and²⁵ women singers in Israel still mourn for Josiah by singing that song. That became a custom in Israel; the words of that song are written in a scroll of funeral songs

A record of the other things that happened while Josiah ruled, from the time he²⁶⁻²⁷ started to rule until he died, including how he faithfully was devoted to honoring God by obeying all that was written in the laws of Yahweh, is written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah

Then the people of Judah chose Josiah's son Jehoahaz and appointed him to¹ **36** be the king in Jerusalem

Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became the king, but he ruled from²

The king of Egypt captured him and prevented him³ .Jerusalem for only three months from ruling any longer. He also forced the people of Judah to pay to him a tax of three and

The king of Egypt⁴ .one-third metric tons of silver and thirty-three kilograms of gold appointed Jehoahaz's younger brother Eliakim to be the king of Judah. He changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. But Necho seized Jehoahaz and took him to Egypt

Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became the king of Judah, and he ruled⁵ Then⁶ .from Jerusalem for eleven years. He did many things that Yahweh said were evil the army of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jehoiakim's army. They captured Nebuchadnezzar's⁷ .Jehoiakim, fastened him with bronze chains, and took him to Babylon soldiers also took valuable things from the temple. They took them to Babylon and put them in King Nebuchadnezzar's palace there

A record of the other things that happened while Jehoiakim was ruling, the disgusting⁸ things that he did and the evil things that people said that he did, is written in the book of

the kings of Judah and Israel. After he was taken to Babylon, his son Jehoiachin became the
.king of Judah

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became the king of Judah, and he ruled⁹
from Jerusalem for only three months and ten days. He did many things that Yahweh said

During the spring of the next year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent soldiers to¹⁰ .were evil
bring him to Babylon. They also took to Babylon many valuable things from the temple of
Yahweh. Then Nebuchadnezzar appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, to be the king of
.Judah

Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became the king, and he ruled in¹¹
He did many things that Yahweh said were evil. He did not¹² .Jerusalem for eleven years
humble himself when the prophet Jeremiah spoke to him a message from Yahweh to warn

He would not return to Yahweh, the God that the people of Israel said that they¹³ .him
worshiped. Zedekiah also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had forced him to
.solemnly promise using God's name to be loyal to him. Zedekiah became very stubborn

Furthermore, all the leaders of the priests and also the people of Judah became more¹⁴
wicked again, doing all the disgusting things that the people of the other nations did, and
causing the temple in Jerusalem that Yahweh had caused to be holy to become an
.unacceptable place to worship him

Yahweh, the God whom the ancestors of the people of Judah worshiped, gave¹⁵
messages to his prophets many times, and the prophets gave those messages to the people
of Judah. Yahweh did that because he pitied his people and did not want his temple to be

But the people continually made fun of God's messengers. They despised¹⁶ .destroyed
God's messages. They ridiculed his prophets, until finally God became extremely angry
He¹⁷ .with his people, with the result that nothing could stop him from destroying Judah

incited the king of Babylonia to attack Judah with his army. They killed the young men
with their swords, even in the temple. They did not spare anyone, either young men or
young women or old people. God enabled the army of Nebuchadnezzar to defeat all of
His soldiers took to Babylon all the things that were used in God's temple, big¹⁸ .them
things and little things, all the valuable things, and the valuable things that belonged to the

They burned the temple, and they broke down the wall¹⁹ .king and his officials
surrounding Jerusalem. They burned all the palaces in Jerusalem and destroyed all the
.remaining valuable things there

Nebuchadnezzar's soldiers took to Babylon the remaining people who had not been²⁰
killed with their swords, Those people became the king's slaves and his son's slaves, until
Moses had said that every seventh year the²¹ .the army of Persia conquered Babylonia

people must not plant their fields; they must allow the soil to rest. But the people had not .done that. So after the army of Babylonia destroyed Judah, the soil was allowed to rest .That continued for seventy years, fulfilling what Yahweh had told Jeremiah would happen

During the first year that Cyrus was the king of Persia, in order that what Yahweh²² told Jeremiah would happen would occur, Yahweh motivated Cyrus to write this and :proclaim it throughout his kingdom

I, Cyrus, the king of Persia, declare that Yahweh, the God who rules in heaven, has²³ enabled me to become the ruler of all the kingdoms of this world. And he has appointed me to command that my workers build a temple for him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. I am allowing any of his people among you to go to Jerusalem. And I will pray that Yahweh will
”.be with them