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Ezekiel

Chapter 1

11-2“When I, Ezekiel, was thirty years old, I was living among the Israelite people by the Kebar Canal, which was south of Babylon. The Babylonians had taken us from the land of Judah and brought us here. On the fifth day of the fourth month of that year, it was as though the sky opened and I saw visions from God.

The fifth day of the fourth month was almost five years after King Jehoiachin had been exiled.” **23**So God gave Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, messages in Babylonia while he was beside the Kebar Canal. Yahweh’s power went to him there.

4In one of the visions, I saw a windstorm coming from the north. There was a huge cloud, and lightning was flashing within it continually, and a brilliant light surrounded the cloud. In the center of where the lightning was flashing, there was amber-colored fire. **5**In the center of the storm I saw what resembled four living creatures. They resembled humans, **6**but each of them had four faces and four wings. **7**Their legs were like human legs, but their feet resembled the hooves of calves that shined like polished bronze. **8**On the four sides of their bodies under their wings there were hands like humans have. **9**As the four creatures stood there, they formed a circle, with their wings touching each other. They did not turn when they were moving; they went straight ahead.

10Each of the creatures had four faces. In front there was a face that resembled a human face. The face on the right side resembled a lion’s face. The face on the left side resembled an ox’s face. The face in back resembled an eagle’s face. **11**Two of each creature’s wings were lifted up and touched the wings of the creatures that were on either side of it. The other two wings were folded against the creature’s body. **12**The creatures went straight ahead in whatever direction the Spirit of God, who controlled them, wanted them to go, without changing directions while they were moving. **13**The four creatures resembled burning coals or torches. A blazing fire moved back and forth among the creatures, and lightning flashed from among them. **14**The creatures were moving back and forth very rapidly, so that they looked like flashes of lightning.

15While I looked at the four living creatures, I saw a wheel on the ground beside each of them. **16**Each of the wheels was the same, and they all shone like beryl. Each wheel seemed to have one wheel inside another wheel. **17**Whenever they moved, they would go straight in one of the four directions that the creatures were facing; they did not turn in another direction while they moved. **18**The rims of the wheels were imposing and frightening, and they were covered with eyes.

19Whenever the living creatures moved, the wheels moved with them. So whenever the creatures rose up from the ground, the wheels also rose up. **20**Wherever the Spirit of God, who controlled the creatures, wanted them to go, they went; and the wheels went with them, because their spirit controlled the wheels. **21**Whenever the creatures moved, the wheels moved. Whenever the creatures stood still, the wheels stopped. Whenever the creatures rose up from the ground, the wheels rose up with them.

22Above the heads of the creatures there was something that resembled a dome. It glistened as ice shines, and it was awesome. **23**Under the dome, the creatures stretched out their wings. Each one had two wings that touched the wings of the creatures on either side, and two wings that covered his own body. **24**Whenever the creatures moved, their wings made a sound that resembled the crashing of waves in the sea. It also sounded like the voice of Almighty God, and like the noise of a huge army marching. Whenever the creatures stood still on the ground, they lowered their wings. **25**While they stood on the ground with their wings lowered, there was a voice from the dome that was over their heads.

²⁶Above the dome was something that resembled a huge throne that was made of a huge sapphire. Sitting on the throne was someone who resembled a human. ²⁷I saw that above his waist he resembled metal that was glowing as though it had a very hot fire inside it. And I saw that below his waist there was a very brilliant light that surrounded him. ²⁸It shone like a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day.

That was the brilliant light that represented the presence of Yahweh. When I saw it, I threw myself flat onto the ground, and I heard him speak!

Chapter 2

¹The voice said to me, "Son of man, stand up while I speak to you." ²While he spoke to me, God's Spirit entered me and enabled me to stand up. Then I heard him speak to me.

³He said, "Son of man, I will send you to the Israelite people. They are people who have turned away from me and rebelled against me. Their ancestors rebelled against me, and they themselves are still rebelling against me. ⁴The people to whom I will send you are very stubborn. But say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says to you.' ⁵And when you tell them my messages, perhaps those rebellious people will heed those messages and perhaps they will not heed them; but they will know that a prophet has been among them! ⁶And you, son of man, you must not be afraid of them or afraid of what they say. Living among them will be like living in the midst of briars or scorpions, but do not be afraid of them. They are rebellious people, but do not allow them to frighten you. ⁷Tell them my message, but do not expect them to pay attention to it, because they are very rebellious. ⁸But son of man, you must pay attention to what I say. Do not be rebellious like they are. Now open your mouth and eat what I give to you."

⁹Then, as I watched, I saw his hand that was stretched toward me. In his hand was a scroll. ¹⁰He unrolled the scroll. On both sides of it were written words that expressed sorrow and mourning and words about trouble.

Chapter 3

¹He said to me, "Son of Man, eat this scroll that is in front of you. Then go and speak to the Israelite people." ²So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat it.

³Then he said to me, "Son of Man, eat the scroll that I have given to you. Fill your stomach with it." So I ate it, and in my mouth it tasted as sweet as honey.

⁴Then he said to me, "Son of Man, go to the Israelite people and tell them my message. ⁵The people to whom I am sending you are not people whose language is very difficult to learn, a language which you do not understand. I am sending you to your Israelite people. ⁶I am sending you to people whose language you do not understand very well. If I were sending you to people whose language was difficult for you to understand, they would pay attention to what you say to them. ⁷But because the Israelite people do not want to listen to me, they will not want to listen to you. They do not want to listen because they are all very rebellious. ⁸But you—I will enable you to be as stubborn and tough as they are. ⁹I will cause you to be as firm as the hardest stone, like flint. So, even though they are very rebellious people, do not be afraid of them; do not allow them to frighten you."

¹⁰He also said to me, "Son of Man, listen very carefully to what I say, and keep thinking about it. ¹¹Go to your fellow Israelites who are here after being exiled, and speak to them. Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says' and then tell them my message, whether they want to hear it or whether they would rather cease to exist."

¹²Then in the vision the Spirit of God lifted me up, and I heard behind me the sound of a large earthquake. (Praise our glorious Yahweh in the place where he lives in heaven!) ¹³I heard the sound of the wings of the four living creatures brushing against each other, and I also heard the sound of the wheels that were beside them. It was a loud sound like an earthquake. ¹⁴The Spirit took me away. Within me I was very bitter and angry, and I felt unable

to do anything, as though Yahweh were pushing down on me very powerfully. ¹⁵I came to the exiles who lived at the town of Tel Aviv near the Kebar Canal in Babylon. Then, where they were living, I sat for seven days. I was shocked about everything that I had seen.

¹⁶After those seven days had ended, Yahweh gave me this message: ¹⁷“Son of Man, I am appointing you to be like a watchman. So listen to these messages that I will give you, and tell them those messages to warn them. ¹⁸When I say about some wicked people, ‘They will surely die because of their sins,’ if you do not warn them or tell them that they must turn from their wicked behavior if they want to save their lives, they will die because of their sin, and it will be your responsibility since you did not act to prevent it. ¹⁹But if you warn wicked people and they do not turn from all their wicked behavior, they will die because of their sins, but you will have saved yourself from my punishment.

²⁰Similarly, when righteous people turn from their righteous behavior and do evil deeds, and I cause bad things to happen to them, they will die. But you must warn them. If they do not stop their sinful behavior, they will die because of their sins. I will not think about the righteous things that they did previously. But if you have not warned them, I will hold you responsible for their deaths. ²¹But if you warn righteous people not to sin, and they do not sin; they will surely remain alive because they heeded your warning, and you will have saved yourself from my punishment.”

²²I felt Yahweh take control, and he spoke to me and said, “Get up and go to the plain, and I will speak to you there.” ²³So I got up and went out to the plain. And I saw the glory of Yahweh there, like the glory that I had seen along the Kebar Canal. And I threw myself flat onto the ground.

²⁴Then the Spirit of God entered me and enabled me to stand up. He said to me, “Go into your house and stay inside it. ²⁵People will tie you with ropes, with the result that you will be unable to go out among the people.

²⁶Even though they are very rebellious people, I will cause your tongue to stick to the roof of your mouth, with the result that you will be unable to talk and to rebuke them. ²⁷But then when I speak to you again, I will enable you to talk and tell them ‘This is what the Lord Yahweh is saying to you.’ The one who wants to hear me will hear me, but the one who ignores the message will come to an end, since they are a rebellious people!”

Chapter 4

¹Yahweh continued and said, “Son of man, take a large clay tablet and scrape lines on it that represent Jerusalem.

²Then draw figures around it to represent enemy soldiers who will build earthworks and forts around the city in order to take it. Set figures around it that represent battering rams. ³Then take an iron pan, and place it to be like an iron wall between you and the carving of the city. Then stare at the image of the city. This means that enemy troops will surround the city to attack it. This will be a warning to the Israelite people.

⁴⁻⁵Then lie on your left side, and stay like that for 390 days. You will be symbolically bearing the punishment for the sins of the Israelites, the northern kingdom; you must lie like that one day for each year that I will punish them.

⁵⁻⁶After that, lie down again. This time, lie on your right side for forty days. That will symbolize that the Judean people, the southern kingdom, will be punished for their sins, one year for each day that you lie there. ⁷Turn your face toward the drawing of Jerusalem and bare your arm like a soldier does who prepares to go into battle, and prophesy about what will happen to the city. ⁸You will not be able to move; it will be as though I have tied you with ropes so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have finished symbolizing how many years the city will be besieged.

⁹Before you do that, take some wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; and put them in a storage jar, and use that to bake bread for yourself. That is what you will eat during the 390 days while you lie on your left side.

¹⁰You will eat about two hundred grams of bread each day throughout the day. ¹¹Also measure out about one-half liter of water to drink each day throughout the day. ¹²Eat that bread like you would eat a loaf of barley bread. But use your own dried dung for fuel to bake the bread while people are watching. ¹³That will symbolize that the

Israelite people will be forced to eat food that is unacceptable to me when they are living in the nations to which I will force them to go.”

¹⁴Then I said, “No, Lord Yahweh! Do not force me to do that! I have never caused myself to become unacceptable to you. From the time when I was young, I have never eaten meat of any animal that was found dead or that had been killed by wild animals. And I have never eaten any meat that is unacceptable to you.”

¹⁵Yahweh replied, “Because of that, I will allow you to bake your bread using dried cow manure instead of human dung for fuel.”

¹⁶Then he said to me, “Son of man, I will cause the supply of food to Jerusalem to be cut off. Then the people will eat the small amounts of food and drink the small amounts of water that their leaders permit them to have, and they will be very distressed and anxious as they do that, ¹⁷because water and food will be very scarce. They will see each other becoming extremely thin, and they will be appalled; but this will happen because they are being punished for the sins that they have committed.”

Chapter 5

¹“Then, son of man, when you start doing those things, take a sharp sword and use it like a barber’s razor to shave your head and your beard. Put the hair that you shaved off on scales, and divide the hair into three equal parts.

²When the time during which you will symbolize that the city will be surrounded by enemy troops ends, put a third of the hair inside the drawing of the city and burn it. Take another third of the hair, scatter it all around the drawing of the city, and then strike it with your sword. That will symbolize that I will strike the people of Jerusalem with their enemies’ swords. Then allow the wind to scatter the other third of the hair. That will symbolize that even if they flee from the city, I will still cause their enemies to pursue them and attack them with swords. ³But take a few of your hairs and tie them to your sleeves. ⁴Then take a few of those hairs, throw them into the fire, and burn them up. That will symbolize that a fire will spread from Jerusalem and destroy things throughout Israel.

⁵This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: This drawing will represent Jerusalem, the city that I have placed in the center of the nations, with other countries around it. ⁶But the wicked people of Jerusalem rebel against obeying my commands, and they show that they are more wicked than the people of the surrounding countries. They rejected my laws and refused to obey my commands.

⁷Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: You people of Jerusalem have been more rebellious than the people of the nations around you; you have not obeyed any of my laws. You have not even obeyed the laws of the nations around you!

⁸Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I am opposed to you people of Jerusalem. I will punish you, and the people of other nations will see it. ⁹Because of all your detestable idols and practices, I will punish you people of Jerusalem like I have never done before and will never do again. ¹⁰As a result, parents among you will eat their children, and children will eat their parents because there will be nothing else to eat. I will punish you severely, and I will cause those who will still be alive to be scattered in every direction. ¹¹Therefore, I, Yahweh the Lord, make this declaration! That as surely as I am alive, because you have polluted my temple with all your disgusting idols and with the other awful things that you do, I will no longer bless you. I will not pity you or act mercifully toward you.

¹²One-third of your people will die inside the city because of the plagues they will experience, or by famine. One-third of your people will be killed by your enemies’ swords outside the city. And one-third I will scatter in every direction, but your enemies will still pursue you and kill you with their swords.

¹³Then I will no longer be angry with you; I will stop punishing you after I have avenged myself against you. And when I stop punishing you, you will know that I, Yahweh, have spoken to you because I have finished punishing you in my anger.

¹⁴I will cause your city to be a ruins, so that people of other nations that are around you will pass by and see it and sneer at you. ¹⁵They will scorn you and taunt you. When I severely punish you because of my great anger, they will be horrified and you will be a warning to them. That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it. ¹⁶And when I cut off your food supply and cause there to be more famine, it will be as though I am shooting at you with my arrows that will destroy you. ¹⁷So I will cause you to experience a famine, and I will send wild beasts to attack you and your children, and all your children will be killed. You will experience plagues and wars, and I will cause your enemies to attack you with their swords. That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.”

Chapter 6

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, turn toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy about what will happen to them, and say, ³Mountains of Israel, listen to what Yahweh the Lord says to you! He says this to the mountains and the high hills and to the streambeds and the low valleys. He says: I am about to send enemy soldiers with swords to destroy all the hilltops where you worship idols. ⁴They will smash all your altars for worshiping idols and your pillars you use for astronomy, and they will kill many Israelite people in front of their idols. ⁵Their corpses will lie in front of their idols, and their bones will be scattered around their altars. ⁶Wherever you live, your towns will be ruined and the places where idols were worshiped on the hilltops will be smashed. Your altars will be completely smashed, and everything that you own will become a pile of ruins. ⁷Many of your people will be killed right in front of you, and then you will know that I am Yahweh and I do what I say I will do.

⁸But I will allow some of you to remain alive. They will escape death when your enemies scatter you among many other nations. ⁹When that happens, in those nations to which you have been forced to go, those of you who have escaped death will think about me. You will remember that I was very grieved because you turned away from me, because you were disloyal to me, and because you desired to worship your idols. You will hate yourselves because of the evil and detestable things that you have done. ¹⁰And you will realize that I, Yahweh, have punished you. You will realize that when I threatened to punish you, I surely intended to do that.

¹¹So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to you, Ezekiel: Slap your hands and stamp your feet and cry out to show that you are distressed, and groan about what will happen to the Israelite people because of all their wicked and detestable behavior. They will be killed by their enemies’ swords, they will die from hunger, and they will die from plagues. ¹²Those who are far from Jerusalem will die from plagues, those who are close to Jerusalem will be killed by their enemies’ swords. Those who are still alive after that will die from hunger. That is how I will punish them. ¹³Some of your people’s corpses will lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hilltop and on all the mountaintops, under every big tree—at all the places where they burned incense to honor their idols. When this happens you will realize that I, Yahweh, have done this. ¹⁴For I will display my power and cause every area in which they live in your country to become an empty wasteland, from the desert in the far south to the town of Diblah in the far north. Then they will realize that I, Yahweh, have done this.”

Chapter 7

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“You, son of man, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to the people of Israel: All of Israel, everything within its borders, will soon be destroyed. ³You people of Israel, the end has come. I will punish you severely. I will judge you for all the wicked things that you have done, and pay you back for your disgusting behavior. ⁴I will not pity you or act mercifully toward you. I will surely punish you for your wicked behavior. Then you will know that it has happened because I, Yahweh, have done it.

⁵This is also what Yahweh the Lord says: You will soon experience many terrible disasters! ⁶This will be the end of Israel; your country will be finished! And your lives will be ended! ⁷It will be the end of you people who live in the land of Israel. The time has come; the day when you will be destroyed is near. At that time the people who worship idols on the mountains will not be happy; they will panic. ⁸I am very angry with you and am about to pour out my punishment on you. I will judge you for all the wicked things that you have done and pay you back for your

disgusting behavior. ⁹I will not pity you or act mercifully toward you. I will surely punish you for your wicked behavior. Then you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have punished you.

¹⁰The day of your punishment is here! It has arrived! Disasters have come as a result of your pride. ¹¹People are acting violently and doing more wicked things. And nothing that belongs to those people will be left, none of their money, and they will not be respected by anyone. ¹²Now is the time; that day has arrived. People who buy things should not rejoice because they bought things very cheaply and those who sell things should not be sad because they had to sell things cheaply, because Yahweh will be punishing everyone. ¹³People who sell some of their property will never be able to buy it back—they will not even be able to return to see it; because they have sinned, not one of them will succeed in staying alive. ¹⁴Your commanders will blow trumpets to get the army ready to fight, but no one will respond, because I will be angry at all the people.

¹⁵When those things happen, your enemies will be outside the city with their swords, and there will be plagues and famines inside the city. Those who are caught outside of the city in the fields will be killed by their enemies' swords, and those who are in the city will die from famines and plagues. ¹⁶Those who survive and escape will flee to the mountains, and they all will moan because of their sins, as pigeons moan. ¹⁷Because they will be very afraid, all the people's hands will become limp and weak, and their knees will become very weak and unable to hold them up.

¹⁸They will put on clothes made from rough cloth, and they will be terrified. Their faces will show that they are ashamed, and they will shave their heads to show that they are very sad. ¹⁹They will throw their silver into the streets, and consider their gold the same way they would consider garbage, because they will realize that their silver and gold will not be able to rescue them when Yahweh punishes them. They will not be able to buy food to fill their stomachs, because having a lot of gold and silver has led them to sin. ²⁰They were proud, so they used their beautiful jewelry to make detestable and disgusting idols of their false gods. So I will make them see how disgusting and unacceptable these things are. ²¹I will give their silver and gold to foreigners who invade your country and take away your valuable treasures. I will give those things to wicked people, and I will not interfere when they will do disgraceful things to the things that they take. ²²I will allow robbers to enter the temple I love and protect, and they will desecrate it.

²³Prepare chains to be fastened on you when your enemies capture you as punishment because the people throughout the country are committing murder, and people in the city are being violent. ²⁴So I will bring armies of the nations whose people are extremely wicked to take the houses of the Israelite people. I will make Israelite people realize that they are to no longer be proud. Your enemies will cause your places of worship to no longer be acceptable to be used. ²⁵When your enemies cause you to be terrified, you will plead for them to make peace, but there will be no peace. ²⁶You will experience many disasters, and you will continually hear rumors about disasters that are happening in other places. People will plead with prophets to tell them what visions they have received, but the prophets will not have received any visions. Priests will no longer teach people the laws that I gave to Moses. Even the wise older people will not have any answers. ²⁷Your king will mourn, and his son will no longer expect that good things will happen. The hands of people throughout the country will tremble. And I will do to them what they deserve for their wicked behavior. I will judge and condemn them the same way they have judged and condemned others. Then they will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

Chapter 8

¹On the fifth day of the sixth month, almost six years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, I was sitting with the leaders of Judah in my house when I felt the presence of Yahweh the Lord come on me again.

²Then in a vision I saw someone who resembled a man, but below his waist his body was like fire and above his waist his body was glowing like very hot metal. ³He reached out what seemed to be a hand and grabbed me by the hair of my head. The Spirit lifted me up high above the earth, and in visions God took me from Babylon to Jerusalem. He took me to the temple, to the inner north gate, to the place where there was an idol that caused Yahweh to be very disgusted and furious. ⁴And there in front of me was the very bright light of God himself whom the Israelite people previously worshiped. It was like the vision that I had seen in the plain.

⁵God said to me, "Son of man, look toward the north!" So I looked, and I saw at the entrance of the gate near the altar that idol that caused Yahweh to be disgusted and furious.

⁶He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what the Israelite people are doing? They are doing detestable things here, things that will cause me to abandon my temple. But you will see things that are even more detestable."

⁷Then he brought me to the entrance of the courtyard. I looked and saw a hole in the wall. ⁸He said to me, "Son of man, dig through the wall here." So I dug through the wall, and I saw a doorway inside.

⁹He said to me, "Go in and see the wicked and detestable things that they are doing here!" ¹⁰So I went in through the doorway and looked, and I saw all over the walls of a big room, drawings of all kinds of creatures that crawl along the ground and other detestable animals, and drawings of all the idols that the people of Israel were worshiping. ¹¹In front of them stood seventy elders of Israel. Jaazaniah son of Shaphan, was standing among them. Each of them was holding a pan in which incense was burning, and fragrant smoke of burning incense was rising up.

¹²God said to me, "Son of man, look at what the Israelite elders are doing here in the darkness, each of them standing in his rooms with the carved images, worshiping his own idols! They are saying, 'Yahweh does not see us; Yahweh has deserted this country.'" ¹³He also said, "But you will see things that are even more detestable!"

¹⁴Then he took me to the entrance at the outer north gate of the temple. I saw women sitting there, mourning for the death of the god of the people of Babylonia, Tammuz. ¹⁵He said to me, "Son of man, do you see this? And you will see things that are more detestable than this!"

¹⁶Then he took me into the inner courtyard inside the temple. There at the entrance of the temple, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men. Their backs were toward the temple, and their faces were toward the east; they were bowing down to worship the sun as it rose in the east.

¹⁷He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing? Do you think that it is not a serious thing that these men of Judah are doing, worshiping these detestable things here? But they are doing other terrible things. They are acting violently throughout their country, and continually provoking my anger. Look at them! They are insulting me by their actions of false worship! ¹⁸So I will show them that I am very angry. I will not pity them or act mercifully toward them. And even if they shout loudly to me to help them, I will not pay attention to them."

Chapter 9

¹Then I heard Yahweh call out loudly, "You men who are going to punish this city, bring your tools of destruction here." ²Then I saw six men coming from the north gate of the temple. Each one was carrying a weapon. With them was a man wearing a white linen robe. He carried at his side a case containing things to write with. They all came in and stood beside the bronze altar.

³Then the glory that symbolized the presence of the God of Israel rose up from above the four winged creatures and moved to the entrance of the temple, and Yahweh called to the man wearing the linen robe, ⁴and said to him, "Go throughout Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who are very sad because of the detestable things that are being done inside the city."

⁵While I was listening, he said to the other six men, "Follow the man wearing the white robe, and kill people. Do not pity them or act mercifully toward them. ⁶Slaughter old men, young men and women, older women and children; but do not harm any of those who have that mark on their forehead. Start at my temple." So they began by killing the elders who were worshiping idols in front of the temple.

⁷Then Yahweh said to those men, "Pollute the temple by filling the courtyard with the corpses of those whom you kill! Start now!" So they went out and started killing people throughout the city. ⁸While they were doing that, I was

left alone. I prostrated myself on the ground and cried out, "Yahweh my Lord, are you going to get rid of all the other people of Israel who are still alive, while you are severely punishing the people of Jerusalem?"

⁹He replied, "The sins of the people are numerous and severe! There is murder everywhere in this country, and this city is full of people who act unjustly. They say, 'Yahweh has abandoned this country, and he does not see what we are doing.' ¹⁰So I will not pity them or act mercifully toward them. I will do to them the evil things that they have done to other people."

¹¹Then the man wearing the linen robe returned, saying, "I have done what you commanded me to do."

Chapter 10

¹Then I saw what resembled a throne made of sapphire above the thing that resembled a dome that was above the heads of the four winged creatures. ²Yahweh said to the man wearing the linen robe, "Go between the wheels that are under the winged creatures. Pick up as many hot coals as you can, and scatter them over the city." And while I watched, the man wearing the white robe left.

³The four winged creatures were standing on the south side of the temple when the man wearing the white robe entered. Then a cloud filled the inner courtyard of the temple. ⁴And the glory of Yahweh went up from directly over the winged creatures and stood over the doorway of the temple. It filled the entire temple with a cloud and everything in the courtyard was bright because of Yahweh's glorious presence. ⁵I also heard the sound made by the wings of the winged creatures in the courtyard outside the temple. It was very loud, like the voice of Almighty God when he speaks.

⁶When Yahweh commanded the man wearing the linen robe to take burning coals from among those winged creatures, the man went into the courtyard and stood beside one of the wheels. ⁷Then one of those winged creatures reached out his hand to the fire that was there among them. He picked up some of the coals and put them in the hands of the man wearing the linen robe, and that man took them and left. ⁸Under the wings of the winged creatures was something that resembled a human's hands.

⁹Then I saw four wheels alongside the winged creatures. There was one wheel beside each of the winged creatures. The wheels shone like very valuable stones. ¹⁰The wheels were all alike: Each had one wheel inside another wheel. ¹¹Whenever they moved, they went straight in whatever direction one of the winged creatures faced. The wheels did not turn in another direction while the winged creatures flew. ¹²Their bodies, including their backs and hands and wings, were covered with eyes. The wheels were also covered with eyes. ¹³I heard someone call them 'the whirling wheels.' ¹⁴Each of the winged creatures had four faces. One face was like the face of a bull, one face was like the face of a human, one face was like the face of a lion, and one face was like the face of an eagle.

¹⁵Then the winged creatures rose up. They were the same living creatures that I had seen alongside the Kebar Canal. ¹⁶When the winged creatures moved, the wheels moved with them. When the winged creatures spread their wings to fly over the ground, the wheels did not leave them but stayed beside them. ¹⁷When the winged creatures stopped, the wheels stopped. When the winged creatures started to fly, the wheels flew with them, because the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

¹⁸Then the glory of Yahweh left the entrance of the temple and stopped above the winged creatures. ¹⁹While I watched, the winged creatures spread their wings and started to fly, and the wheels went with them. They stopped at the gate on the east side of the temple, and the glory of God, the one whom the Israelites had worshiped, was above them.

²⁰These were the same four living creatures that I had seen alongside the Kebar Canal, and I realized that they were the winged creatures. ²¹Each of them had four faces and four wings, and under their wings was what

resembled a human's hands. ²²Their faces were the same as the faces that I had seen at the Kebar Canal. Each of them flew straight ahead.

Chapter 11

¹Then God's Spirit lifted me up and took me to the gate on the east side of the temple. There at the gate were twenty-five men. Among them I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur, and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, who were leaders of the people. ²Yahweh said to me, "Son of man, these are the new leaders in Jerusalem who are planning to do evil things and who are giving wicked advice to people in this city. ³They say, 'It is not the time to build houses yet, but just as pieces of meat are carefully stored in covered pots we will be protected from the bad things that will happen to others.' ⁴So, son of man, prophesy about the terrible things that will happen to them."

⁵Then the Spirit of Yahweh came upon me and told me to say to the people, "This is what Yahweh says, 'You Israelite people say those things, and I know what you are thinking. ⁶You have killed many people in this city and filled the streets with their corpses.

⁷Therefore this is what Yahweh the Lord says, 'The corpses of the people whom you have killed here are like the meat and Jerusalem is the cauldron, but I will expel you people from this city! ⁸You are afraid of being killed by enemies' swords, so that is what I will cause to happen to you. ⁹I will expel you from this city and enable foreigners to capture you and punish you. ¹⁰They will kill you with their swords; you will be punished right here in Israel! Then people will realize that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do. ¹¹This city will not be a place where you will be protected like meat in a covered pot. I will punish you wherever you are in Israel. ¹²Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have predicted that would happen, because you have not obeyed my commands and decrees; instead, you have imitated the wicked behavior of the people of the nearby nations."

¹³While I was prophesying that, Pelatiah son of Benaiah suddenly died. Then I prostrated myself on the ground and cried out loudly, "Yahweh my Lord, are you going to similarly get rid of all the Israelite people who are still alive?"

¹⁴Then Yahweh gave me this message, ¹⁵"Son of man, the people who are still in Jerusalem are talking about your relatives, your clan, and all the rest of the Israelites who were exiled and saying, 'They are in Babylonia, far from Yahweh. They have left their property here in Israel, so their property now belongs to us!'"

¹⁶So tell them, "This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Although I caused them to be taken far away from Israel and scattered them among other nations, for a short time I have become a sanctuary for them in the countries to which they have been taken."

¹⁷So also tell them, "This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Some day I will gather you from the nations to which you have been taken and bring you back to Israel, and you will live in your country again.

¹⁸When you return to your country, you will get rid of all the vile statues of gods and detestable idols. ¹⁹I will give you Israelites one new heart and I will give you a new way of thinking when you return to Israel. You will not be stubborn, but will be obedient. ²⁰When I do that, you will carefully obey all my laws. You will be my people, and I will be your God. ²¹But as for those who are devoted to worshiping their vile statues and detestable idols, I will punish them as they deserve for the evil things that they have done." This is what Yahweh declared.

²²Then the winged creatures, with their wheels beside them, spread their wings and flew up into the air, and the dazzling brightness of Yahweh was above them. ²³That light went up away from the city and stopped above the mountain to the east of the city. ²⁴In the vision that I had been seeing, God's Spirit lifted me up and brought me back to the exiles in Babylonia. Then the vision ended, ²⁵and I told the exiles everything that Yahweh had shown me in the vision.

Chapter 12

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, you are living among people who are very rebellious. They have eyes, but they do not see what I want them to see; they have ears, but they do not listen to what I want them to hear, because they are such a rebellious people.

³Therefore, son of man, pack your belongings as though you were going into exile. Then, during the daytime, while people are watching, prepare to go to another place. Even though the people are rebellious, perhaps they will understand what you are symbolizing. ⁴During the daytime, while they are watching, bring out the things that you want to take, and pack them. Then in the evening, while they are watching, do what those who are preparing to go into exile do. ⁵Dig through the city wall and take your things through the hole. ⁶Put them in a sack on your shoulder while they are watching, and leave when it becomes dark. Cover your face so you cannot see the path. I want you to do this because I want you to warn the Israelite people.”

⁷So I did what Yahweh told me to do. During the day I brought things out of my house as though I was packing to go into exile. Then in the evening I dug through the city wall. Then while people watched, I put my sack of belongings on my shoulder and left.

⁸The next morning, Yahweh gave me this message, ⁹“Son of man, did the rebellious people of Israel not ask you, ‘What are you doing?’

¹⁰So go back and say to them, ‘What I did is about the king in Jerusalem and all the other people of Israel who are there.’ ¹¹Tell them, ‘What I did is a warning to you. What I did in front of you, they are going to have to do. They will be captured and forced to go to another country. ¹²Their king will put his belongings on his shoulder when it becomes dark and he will try to escape. His servants will dig a hole through the city wall, and he will take his belongings through it. He will cover his face so others will not recognize him and he will not be able to see the land. ¹³But it will be as though I will spread a net for him to be captured; enemy soldiers will capture him, blind him, and take him to the city of Babylon where the Chaldean people live. But he will not be able to see it because he will be blind; and there he will die. ¹⁴I will scatter all those who have been around him—his advisors and his soldiers—in every direction; and I will cause his enemies to pursue them, with their swords ready to strike them.

¹⁵Then, when I scatter them among many nations, they will know that I, Yahweh have the power to do what I say that I will do. ¹⁶But I will spare some of them from being killed by the sword, or starving to death, or dying of disease so they can record that they have been doing disgusting things, and they will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

¹⁷Then Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ¹⁸“Son of man, tremble while you eat your food, and shudder fearfully while you drink your water. ¹⁹Tell this to the Israelite people: ‘This is what Yahweh the Lord says about those who are still living in Jerusalem and in other places in Israel. They also will be very anxious while they eat their food and drink their water, because their country will soon have everything taken away. That will happen because the people who live there continually act very violently. ²⁰The towns where people live will be devastated, and the land will become barren. Then you people will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

²¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²²“Son of man, the people in Israel have this proverb that says, ‘The days keep passing, and what the prophets predict never happens.’ ²³So say to them, ‘This is what Yahweh the Lord says: I am going to prove that what they say is not correct, and then they will never say it again in Israel.’ Tell them, ‘It will soon be the time when everything that the prophets predict will happen.’ ²⁴No longer will prophets tell the Israelite people false visions, or tell people prophecies just to please them. ²⁵Instead, I, Yahweh, will say what I want to tell the people, and what I predict will quickly happen. You rebellious people, I will cause to happen everything that I say will happen. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say.”

²⁶Yahweh also gave me this message. He said, ²⁷"Son of man, the Israelite people are constantly saying about you, 'The things that he sees in visions will not happen soon. They are about things that will happen many years from now, far in the future.'

²⁸Therefore say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: I will no longer delay causing to happen any of the things that I have prophesied. Whatever I have predicted will soon happen.'"

Chapter 13

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²"Son of man, prophesy a warning against the prophets in Israel who are prophesying. Some of them are prophesying things that they themselves have imagined. Say to them, 'Listen to what Yahweh says! ³He says, "Terrible things will happen to those wicked prophets who proclaim their own ideas and have not seen any visions from me. ⁴You Israelite people, your prophets are like jackals in the desert, they are scavengers feeding off of others' loss. ⁵Because you were listening to them, you have not repaired breeches or strengthened your walls. That needs to be done so that the walls will be strong when I, Yahweh, send your enemies to attack you. ⁶The visions and prophecies of those prophets are false. They say, 'Yahweh told me this.' I have not sent them to you to be my prophets, but you expect that what they prophesy will truly happen! ⁷They say that they have seen visions, but those visions are false, and the things that they prophesy are lies. They say, 'Yahweh told me this,' but I have told them nothing!

⁸Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Because you prophets have said what is false and because your visions are lies, I am opposed to you. ⁹I will strike all you prophets who falsely say that you have seen visions and prophesy things that are lies. You will not have any place among my people, your names will not be listed in the records of the Israelite people, and you will never return to Israel. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

¹⁰They deceive my people, saying "Things will go well for us" when things will not go well. It is like they want to make people think that there is a very strong wall when it is not strong. ¹¹So, tell those prophets who cover the wall with whitewash that the wall will surely fall down. It will rain very hard. I will send big hailstones to fall. Very strong winds will blow against it. ¹²When the wall falls down, the people will certainly say to those prophets, "The white paint certainly did not make the wall strong!"

¹³So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Because I am very angry with you, I will send enemy armies to destroy Jerusalem. It will be as though I will send a very strong wind and hailstones and very heavy rains to destroy you. ¹⁴The false prophecies of your prophets are like a wall that they have covered with whitewash, but I will break it down, and shatter it down to the ground, with the result that people can see its foundations. When the wall collapses you also will be killed, and everyone will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do. ¹⁵In that way I will show that I am very angry with the wall and with those who covered it with whitewash. And I will say, "The wall is gone and those who whitewashed it have been killed." ¹⁶Those are the prophets who prophesied that things would go well for the people in Jerusalem, when things would not go well for them.'

¹⁷So you, son of man, show that you are angry with the women of Jerusalem who prophesy things that they themselves have imagined, and speak true prophesy against them. ¹⁸Tell them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Terrible things will happen to you women who fasten magic charms on your wrists and make veils of various sizes to put on your heads in order to deceive the people. You think that you will deceive others by telling them that you know what will happen in the future, and you will save your own lives. ¹⁹You dishonored me by telling lies in order to get from my people a few handfuls of barley and a few pieces of bread. My people listen to lies; and you women who are lying to them have caused people who did not deserve to die to be killed, and have spared those who should not continue to live.'

²⁰Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to those women: 'I detest your magic charms by which you deceive people like other people trap birds. I will tear those charms off your wrists, and I will cause the people whom you

have deceived to no longer be deceived by you. ²¹I will also tear off your veils and rescue my people from continuing to be deceived by you, and they will no longer be under your control. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do. ²²You have discouraged righteous people by telling them lies when I did not do things to cause them to be sad. And you have encouraged wicked people to keep on doing their wicked behavior; if they had turned away from it, they would have continued to live. ²³Therefore, you will no longer falsely say that you have seen visions or tell people what will happen in the future in order to please them. I will rescue my people from being deceived by you. And then you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

Chapter 14

¹One day some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me. ²Then Yahweh gave me this message: ³“Son of man, these men worship idols, and they are allowing idols to induce them to sin. So should I answer them if they ask me for advice? ⁴But say this to them: ‘This is what Yahweh the Lord says: When any Israelite person wants to worship idols that will induce him to sin, and goes to a prophet to get advice, I, Yahweh, will give him the same answer that they deserve to receive because they worship idols. ⁵I will do this so the Israelite people, who have abandoned me in order to worship their idols, will sincerely worship me again.’

⁶Therefore, say to the Israelite people, ‘This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Repent! Stop worshiping your idols, and stop all your other detestable behavior!’

⁷When any of you Israelite people or any foreigner living among you turns away from me and starts worshiping idols that induce him to sin, and then goes to a prophet to find out what I want him to do, I myself will answer him.

⁸I will show that I detest him, and cause what happens to him to be a warning to others, and cause him to be someone whom people despise. I will not allow him to associate with my people. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

⁹And if a prophet is deceived and gives a false prophecy, even though I have allowed him to give that message, I will get rid of him and remove him from among my Israelite people. ¹⁰Both the prophet and the one who asks him for advice will be guilty, and I will punish both of them. ¹¹Then the Israelite people will no longer abandon me, and they will no longer become unacceptable to me because of their sins. They will be my people, and I will be their God. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say.”

¹²Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ¹³“You human, if the people of some country sin against me by abandoning me, and I punish them by cutting off their food supply and by sending a famine so that people and animals die, ¹⁴even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were there, they would save only themselves because of their being righteous. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.

¹⁵Or, if I send wild animals throughout the country, and they attack and kill many of the people, so that travel in that country becomes very dangerous and no one travels through that country, ¹⁶as surely as I am alive, even if those three men were in that country, they could not save even their own sons or daughters from being killed. Only they three would be saved, and the country would become a wasteland. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.

¹⁷Or, if I bring enemy soldiers to kill the people and animals throughout that country with their swords, ¹⁸as surely as I am alive, even if those three men were in that country, they would not be able to save even their own sons or daughters from being killed. They would save only themselves. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.

¹⁹Or, if I send a plague into that land and cause the people and the animals to die from the plague because I am very angry with those people, ²⁰as surely as I am alive, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in that country, they would not be able to save even their sons and daughters. They would save only themselves because of their being righteous. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.

²¹So now this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I will cause four things to happen to the people of Jerusalem to punish them very severely. Some people and animals will be killed by swords, some will die from famines, others will be attacked and killed by wild animals, and others will die in plagues. ²²But some of your people will remain alive, both adults and children. They will come to you, Ezekiel. And when you see their disgusting behavior and actions, you will realize that I had good reasons for causing the people of Jerusalem to experience those many great disasters that I have sent to them. ²³When you see those things that they do, you will know that there were very good reasons for me to do everything that I caused to happen to them. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.”

Chapter 15

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, the wood of a grapevine is certainly not more useful than the branches of the trees in a forest. ³No one even makes pegs from it to hang things on. ⁴And after a branch of a grapevine is thrown into a fire and the fire burns both ends and chars the branch in the middle, after that will it be useful for anything? ⁵No; if it was not useful for anything before it was burned, it certainly cannot be made into something useful after the fire has burned and charred it.

⁶Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: The wood of grapevines is useful only for fuel in a fire. Similarly, the people who live in Jerusalem are useless. ⁷I will reject them. It will be as though they have escaped from a fire, but there will still be a fire that will burn them up. And when I punish them, you people who remain alive will know that I, Yahweh, have done it. ⁸I will cause your country to become a wasteland because your people have not been loyal to me. That is what I, Yahweh, the Lord, say.”

Chapter 16

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, inform the people of Jerusalem about their detestable behavior. ³Say to them, ‘This is what Yahweh the Lord says to you people of Jerusalem: It is as though you are a woman whose father belonged to the Amor people group and your mother belonged to the Heth people group. ⁴It is as though on the day that you were born, your umbilical cord was not cut, and your body was not washed in water or rubbed with salt and wrapped in strips of cloth, like Israelite babies always are. ⁵No one pitied you or acted kindly toward you by doing those things for you. Instead, it was as though they hated you. As soon as you were born they threw you into a field to die.

⁶Then it was as though I passed by and saw you lying in your own blood and kicking. And while you lay there kicking in your own blood, I said to you, “I want you to remain alive!” ⁷It was as though I caused you to grow up, like plants in the field grow; you grew up and became tall and became like the most precious jewel of all. You developed into a beautiful woman, but you were still completely naked.

⁸When I saw you several years later, it was as though I spread the cloth of my robe over you to symbolize that I would marry you, with the result that you were no longer naked. I solemnly promised that I would marry you and made a marriage agreement with you, and you became my wife.’ That is what Yahweh the Lord says.

⁹And then it was as though I bathed you and washed the blood from you and put ointment on your body. ¹⁰It was as though I put a fine linen robe on you and gave you expensive clothes. I put an embroidered dress on you and put leather sandals on your feet. ¹¹It was as though I put bracelets on your arms and a necklace around your neck. Those things all had nice jewels fastened to them. ¹²I put a gold ring in your nose and fastened earrings to your ears and put a beautiful crown on your head. ¹³So it was as though you wore gold and silver ornaments. You had clothes made from fine linen and other expensive fabrics, and an embroidered dress. You ate fine flour, honey, and oil. You were the most beautiful woman and I made you into a queen. ¹⁴You were very beautiful, with the result that people in other nations heard about you, because they knew that I, Yahweh the Lord, am the one who had caused you to become very beautiful.

¹⁵But it was as though you forgot that I made you beautiful and started acting promiscuous with every man who came along, and they all enjoyed your beauty. ¹⁶It was as though you took some of your clothes to make beautifully decorated the high places, and that is where you slept with those men. Those things should certainly never occur! ¹⁷You took the fine gold and silver jewelry that I gave you, and you made male idols for yourself, in order to sleep with them. ¹⁸You took some of your embroidered clothes to put on those idols, and you burned oil and incense in front of them to honor them. ¹⁹And the bread that was made from fine flour and the olive oil and honey that I gave to you to eat, you offered to be a fragrant sacrifice to those idols. I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that that is what happened.

²⁰And you even took your sons and daughters who were supposed to be committed to me and sacrificed and killed them as though they were less important than your becoming a prostitute. ²¹You slaughtered those who were like my children, and offered them to be sacrifices to these false gods! ²²All during the time when you were acting like a prostitute and doing other detestable things, you did not think about the time when it was as though you were very young, naked, lying in your own blood and kicking in the field.

²³So I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that terrible things will happen to you. In addition to all the other wicked things that you did, ²⁴you built yourself a tall building in which you worship idols and you built a place to worship idols in every city square. ²⁵At the beginning of every street you built a tall building for the worship of idols, and showed people your beautiful body, offering it to sleep with every man who walked by, and so you were known as a prostitute and your fame for your immorality grew every day. ²⁶It was as though you had slept with men from Egypt who were eager to sleep with you, men who lived near Israel. You caused me to become very angry because you became more eager to sleep with more and more of them. ²⁷So I punished you and caused your enemies to capture some of your country. I enabled your greedy enemies from Philistia to defeat you; and even they were shocked because of your disgraceful behavior. ²⁸It was as though you slept with soldiers from Assyria, too, because you always wanted to sleep with more men. And after that, you still were not satisfied. ²⁹So you also slept with soldiers from Babylonia, a country full of merchants, but even that did not satisfy you.

³⁰I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that you are ruining your life! When you did all those things, you were acting like a prostitute who has no shame for all the things she does. ³¹But when you built the houses on the hills to worship idols in every city square, you were not really like a prostitute because prostitutes charge money. You refused to take money for what you did!

³²You are like a woman who commits adultery: You prefer to sleep with strangers rather than with your husband.

³³Prostitutes are paid, but it is as though you give gifts to all your lovers; you bribe them to come to you from everywhere to sleep with you. ³⁴So although you act like you are a prostitute, you are actually the opposite of other prostitutes! Instead of them giving any money to you, you give men money to sleep with you!

³⁵Therefore, you people of Jerusalem, you, who are like a prostitute, listen to what Yahweh the Lord is saying about you! ³⁶He says that what you have done is as though you have lusted for everyone around you and had slept with them and with the male idols you made, so that you even made your own children to be sacrifices to them. ³⁷So what I am going to do is as though I will gather those who you think have loved you and those whom you hated. I will gather them around you to attack you, and what I will do is as though I will strip your clothes off you, and they will see you when you are completely naked. ³⁸I will punish you like women who commit adultery and who murder people are punished. I will get revenge on you and get rid of you because I am extremely angry with you. ³⁹I will allow your enemies who you thought loved you break apart your high places of idol worship and pagan altars. They will strip you naked and keep your clothes and jewelry, and abandon you with nothing to cover yourself with.

⁴⁰They will bring a mob to attack you, and that mob will throw stones at you and cut you to pieces with their swords. ⁴¹They will burn down your houses and punish you while many women are watching. I will let them do this so that you will learn a lesson for acting so adulterously and for paying people to sleep with you. ⁴²Then I will no longer be angry with you. I will stop being jealous because your punishment will satisfy me.

⁴³You have forgotten the wonderful things that I did for you in previous years. You have caused me to become extremely angry because of all the evil things that you have done. In addition to all the other detestable things that you did, you committed many sexual sins. So I Yahweh the Lord declare that I will punish you for doing those things.

⁴⁴People who like to quote proverbs will quote this proverb about you: 'Daughters behave like their mothers behave.' ⁴⁵You are like your mother; it was as though she detested her husband and her children. You are like your sisters, who also despised their husbands and their children. It was as though your father belonged to the Amor people group and your mother belonged to the Heth people group. ⁴⁶And it was as though your older sister was Samaria, and she and her daughters lived to the north of you, and it was as though your younger sister was Sodom, and her daughters lived to the south of you. ⁴⁷You not only imitated all their detestable behavior, but you quickly became more sinful than they were. ⁴⁸I, Yahweh the Lord, solemnly declare that as surely as I am alive, the people who lived in Sodom and other nearby cities never did the detestable things that you people in Jerusalem and other places in Judah have done.

⁴⁹These are the sins of the people who lived in Sodom, who were like your sister people among them: they were prideful and did not think they would ever be punished. They ignored poor and hurting people around them. ⁵⁰The people of Sodom and nearby cities were proud and did detestable things in my presence, so I got rid of them when I saw what they had been doing. ⁵¹Also, the people of Samaria did not commit half as many sins as you commit. You have done more disgusting things than they have done. You cause the people of Samaria to appear to be good, compared to you. ⁵²Your sins are worse than their sins, so they seem to be less wicked than you are. So I will punish you more than I punished them. As a result, you will be ashamed and disgraced.

⁵³However, some day I will cause the people of Sodom and Samaria and the cities near to them to prosper again. And I will cause you to prosper again, too. ⁵⁴You will be very ashamed of the wicked things that you have done, and that will cause the people of those cities to be encouraged. ⁵⁵The people of Sodom and Samaria will prosper again, and you and the people in nearby cities will prosper also. ⁵⁶You sneered at the people of Sodom when you were proud, ⁵⁷before it was revealed that you were more wicked than she was. And now the people of Edom and the people of Philistia all insult you and despise you. ⁵⁸And you are being punished for all your immoral behavior and other detestable things that you do. This is what Yahweh is saying to you!

⁵⁹This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I will continue to punish you like you deserve to be punished, because by rejecting the agreement that I made with you, you have despised that solemn agreement that you promised to obey. ⁶⁰But I will not forget the agreement that I made with you long ago and I will make an agreement with you that will endure forever. ⁶¹Then you will think about what you have done, and you will be ashamed about those things when you welcome the people of Sodom and Samaria, cities which are like your daughters, but they will not have the same agreement that I will make with you. ⁶²I will establish my agreement with you, and you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do. ⁶³Then when I have forgiven you for all your sins, you will think about all the sins that you committed and you will be ashamed. You will never again boast about them, because you will be humiliated." I, the Lord Yahweh, have said so! This is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

Chapter 17

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²"Son of man, tell this story as an illustration to the people of Israel. ³Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: A huge eagle that had strong wings and long beautiful feathers of many colors flew to Lebanon. It grasped the top of a cedar tree ⁴and broke it off. Then the eagle carried it away to Canaan, a country that had many merchants, and planted it in one of the cities there.

⁵Then that eagle took a seedling from your country and planted it in a fertile field. He planted it like people plant a willow tree, alongside a stream that had plenty of water. ⁶It grew and became a low grapevine that spread along the ground. Its branches turned up toward the eagle, but its roots grew down into the ground. So it became a good vine and produced lots of branches and leaves.

⁷But there was another huge eagle that had strong wings and beautiful feathers. And some of the roots of the vine grew toward that eagle, and its branches also turned toward it, hoping that the eagle would bring more water to it.

⁸That happened in spite of the fact that the vine had been planted in good soil, where there was plenty of water, with the result that it had produced branches and produced grapes and had become a very healthy vine.'

⁹Then after you have told that to the people, say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: That vine will certainly not remain healthy. It will be pulled up by its roots by the eagle that planted it, and all its fruit will be stripped off and its leaves will wither. And it will not need someone with strong arms or many people to pull it out by its roots. ¹⁰Even if that vine is transplanted, it certainly will not continue to grow. When the hot wind from the east blows against it, it will completely wither, there where it was planted!'"

¹¹Then Yahweh gave this message to me: ¹²"Ask these rebellious Israelite people, 'Do you know what this parable means?' Tell them that it signifies that the king of Babylon went to Jerusalem with his army and captured the king of Judah and his officials, and took them back to Babylon. ¹³Then he took one of the king's close relatives, appointed one of them as king, and made an agreement with him, forcing him to solemnly promise to remain loyal. The king of Babylon also took to Babylon the other important citizens of Judah, ¹⁴in order that the kingdom of Judah would not be able to become powerful again. The king of Babylon intended that the kingdom of Judah would not continue to exist if the people did not obey that agreement that he made with the king of Babylon. ¹⁵The king of Judah rebelled against the king of Babylon by sending officials to Egypt to request from them horses and a large army to fight against the army of Babylonia. But the king of Judah will certainly not be successful. Rulers who rebel like that and refuse to obey solemn agreements will never escape.

¹⁶I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that as surely as I am alive, the king of Judah will die in Babylon, in the city where the king of Babylon appointed him to be the king of Judah. He will die because he despised the solemn agreement and refused to do what he promised to do. ¹⁷The king of Egypt with all his very huge army will not be able to help the king of Judah: The soldiers from Babylonia will build ramps up against the city walls and set up devices to batter the walls. They will enter Jerusalem and kill many of its people. ¹⁸The king of Judah despised the solemn agreement by disregarding the treaty. Although he had solemnly promised to be under the control of the king of Babylon, he sent officials to request help from Egypt. Therefore he will not escape being punished by the king of Babylon.

¹⁹Therefore this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Just as surely as I am alive, I will cause the king of Judah to be punished for ignoring the solemn agreement that he made with the king of Babylon and then refusing to obey it, since this violates what I expect. ²⁰It will be as though I will spread a net to capture him, and he will be caught in it. He will be captured and taken to Babylon and punished because he rebelled against me. ²¹Most of his soldiers who try to escape will be killed by their enemies' swords, and those who survive will be scattered in all directions. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

²²This is also what Yahweh the Lord says: "It will be as though I will take a shoot from the top of a very tall cedar tree and plant it in another place. I will plant it on a very high mountain. ²³It will be as though I will plant it on a mountain in Israel, and it will grow and become a beautiful cedar tree. Many kinds of birds will make their nests in the tree, and they will have shade in its branches. ²⁴And it will be as though all the trees in the field will know that I, Yahweh, get rid of tall trees and will make little ones grow. I cause big green trees to wither, and I cause dry trees to become green.

I, Yahweh have said this, and I will certainly do what I have said that I will do."

Chapter 18

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²"You people quote this proverb and say that it is about Israel:

'Parents eat sour grapes,

but it is their children who have a very sour taste in their mouths.'

This means that you think that you must suffer for the sins that your ancestors committed.

³But I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that as surely as I am alive, you Israelite people will no longer say this proverb.

⁴Everyone who is alive belongs to me. That includes children and their parents; they all belong to me. And it is those who sin who will die because of their sins.

⁵So suppose that there is a righteous person,
one who always does what is fair and right.

⁶He does not eat meat sacrificed to idols on the hilltops;
he does not request help from idols as the rest of Israel has been doing.

He does not sleep with someone else's wife
or with a woman during her monthly menstrual period.

⁷He does not mistreat people;

if a person borrows money from him and gives him something to guarantee that he will pay the money back, this man always gives it back to that person before the sun goes down.

He does not rob people.

He gives food to hungry people.

He gives clothing to people who need clothes.

⁸When he lends money to people,

he does not do it to make him pay interest.

He does not do things that are evil.

He always decides things fairly.

⁹He faithfully obeys all my laws.

That man is truly righteous;

he will remain alive.

That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, promise.

¹⁰But suppose that man has a son who acts violently, who murders people and does any of these other things, even though his father has not done any of them.

¹¹He eats meat sacrificed to idols on the hilltops.

He sleeps with other people's wives.

¹²He mistreats poor and needy people.

He robs people.

If someone gives him something to guarantee that he will pay back money that he has borrowed, the unrighteous man never gives it back to him before the sun goes down.

He seeks help from idols.

He does other disgusting things.

¹³When he lends money, he charges interest.

If you think that I will keep such a person alive, you are certainly wrong. Because he has done all those detestable things, I will certainly make him die, and it will be his own fault.

¹⁴But suppose that man has a son who sees all the sins that his father commits, but he himself does not do those things.

¹⁵The son does not eat meat sacrificed to idols on the hilltops.

He does not request help from idols.

He does not sleep with other people's wives.

¹⁶He does not mistreat people.

If he lends money to someone, he does not require that person to give him something to guarantee that he will pay the money back.

He does not rob anyone.

He gives food to those who need it.

He gives clothes to those who need clothes.

¹⁷He does not commit sins, unlike his father,

and does not charge interest when he lends money.

He faithfully obeys all my laws.

I will make sure that that person does not die for his father's sins; he will certainly stay alive. ¹⁸But I will ensure that his father will die for the sins that he committed, because the father cheated and robbed people, and did other things that are evil.

¹⁹If you ask, 'Why should the man's son not suffer for the evil things that his father did?', I will answer that the son has done what is fair and right and has obeyed all my laws, so he will surely remain alive. ²⁰It is those who sin who will die because of their sins. I will not punish people because their parents have sinned, or because their children have sinned. I will reward people who live rightly, and I will punish the wicked people, those who live wrongly.

²¹But if a wicked person stops doing all the evil things that he did previously, and if he starts to obey faithfully all my laws, and if he does what is fair and right, he will surely remain alive; I will not kill him. ²²I will not punish him for the sins he committed previously. Because of the good things that he has done since that time, I will allow him to stay alive. ²³I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that I certainly am not happy about wicked people dying. Instead, I am happy when they stop doing wicked things and remain alive as a result.

²⁴But if a righteous person stops doing right things and starts to commit sins and does the same disgusting things that wicked people do, I will certainly not allow him to remain alive. I will not think about the righteous things that he did previously. Because he did not faithfully do what pleases me, and because of all the sins that he has committed, he will certainly die.

²⁵But you say that I, Yahweh, do not act fairly. You Israelite people, listen to what I say: It is certainly not what I do that is unfair; it is what you continually do that is not fair. ²⁶If a righteous person turns away from doing what is right and commits sins, he will die for committing those sins. ²⁷But if a wicked person turns away from doing wicked things and does what is just and right, he will save himself from dying. ²⁸Because he has thought about all the evil things that he did and has turned away from doing them, I will certainly allow him to live. I will not kill him.

²⁹But you, the Israelites, say that I do not act fairly. You people of Israel, I always act fairly. It is you who are acting wickedly.

³⁰Therefore, you Israelite people, I, Yahweh the Lord, will judge each of you according to what you have done. Repent! Turn away from all your wicked behavior! Then I will not destroy you because of the wrong things you have done. ³¹Stop doing wicked things; start thinking in a new way. You Israelite people, do you really want me to kill you because you have sinned? ³²I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that I am not pleased if you die. So turn away from your sins and stay alive!"

Chapter 19

¹Yahweh said to me, ²"Ezekiel, sing a sad funeral song which will be a parable about the leaders of Israel. Say to the Israelite people,

'It is as though your mother had been a brave female lion
who raised her cubs among other lions.

³She taught one of them to hunt for other animals to kill,
and he even learned to kill and eat people.

⁴When people from other nations heard about him,
they trapped him in a pit.

Then they used hooks
to drag him to Egypt.

⁵His mother waited for him to return,
but soon she stopped hoping for that to happen.

So she raised another cub
who also became very fierce.

⁶He hunted along with other lions for animals to kill,
and he even learned to kill and eat people.

⁷He mistreated his victims' widows,
and he destroyed cities.
When he roared loudly,
everyone was terrified and abandoned everything they owned.

⁸So people of other nations planned to kill him;
and men came from many places
to spread out a net for him.

They caught him in it.

⁹They pulled him with hooks in his flesh and put him into an iron cage,

then they took him to the king of Babylon.

There they locked him up so that the sound of his voice could never be heard echoing on the hills of Israel.'

¹⁰It is as though your mother

were a grapevine fertilized in blood,

and growing up beside a stream.

There was plenty of water,

so it had lots of branches and produced a lot of grapes.

¹¹That grapevine grew and became taller than all the nearby trees;

everyone could see that it was very strong and healthy.

And those branches were good for making scepters that symbolize the power of a king.

¹²But Yahweh became very angry,

so he pulled up the vine by its roots

and threw it on the ground,

where the very hot winds from the desert dried up all its fruit.

The strong branches wilted and were burned in a fire.

¹³Now Yahweh has planted that vine in a hot, dry desert.

¹⁴A fire started to burn its stem,

and then started to burn the branches;

it burned all the grapes.

Now not even one strong branch remains;

they will never become scepters for a king.'

This funeral song must be sung very sadly."

Chapter 20

¹Almost seven years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, on the tenth day of the fifth month of that year, some Israelite elders came to me to ask if I had any message for them from Yahweh.

²Then Yahweh gave me a message for them. He said, ³"Son of man, speak to the elders and tell them that the Lord Yahweh says this: 'You say that you have come to ask if there is any message from me, but as surely as I am alive, I will not allow you to ask for any message from me.'

⁴If you are willing to warn them, remind them of the disgusting things that their ancestors did. ⁵Then say to them, 'On the day that I chose you Israelite people to belong to me, I made a solemn oath to your ancestors while they were still in Egypt.' I said to them, 'I am Yahweh, your God. ⁶I will bring you out of Egypt and lead you to a land that I have chosen for you. It is the most fertile and beautiful land in the world. ⁷Each of you must get rid of the

disgusting idols that you love, and the idols which you learned to worship in Egypt, and with which you made it impossible for me to accept you. I, Yahweh your God, am saying this to you.'

⁸But they rebelled against me. They would not pay attention to me. They did not get rid of the disgusting idols they loved; they did not reject the idols that they saw in Egypt. So because I was angry with them, I said that I would punish them in Egypt. ⁹But for the sake of my own reputation, I decided to do something for your people so that the other people groups would not laugh at me and say I had no power. I decided that they would see me bring my people out of Egypt. ¹⁰Therefore I led your people out of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. ¹¹I gave them all my laws and decrees, in order that they would obey them, and as a result they would live for a long time. ¹²Also, I established the Sabbath days to be a reminder between me and them, so they would know that I am Yahweh, the one who sets them apart for my honor.

¹³But the Israelite people rebelled against me in the wilderness also. They did not obey my commands; they rejected them, even though they would have lived a long time if they had obeyed them, and they treated the Sabbath days like any other day. So I said that I would destroy them in the wilderness, because that would show that I was very angry with them. ¹⁴But again, so that the other people groups would not laugh at me, I decided to do something in order to show those people groups that I was still as powerful as when they had seen me bring my people out of Egypt. ¹⁵I solemnly swore to your people in the wilderness that I would not take them into the land that I had promised to give them, a land that was the most fertile and beautiful land in the world. ¹⁶I made this oath, because they had rejected and disobeyed all my laws, and because they were treating the Sabbath days like any other day. And they insisted on worshiping their idols. ¹⁷But I still pitied them, so I did not destroy them in the wilderness. ¹⁸I said to their children, the next generation, 'Do not do the things that your parents always do. Do not worship their idols and so make it impossible for me to accept you. ¹⁹I am Yahweh your God. Carefully obey my laws and commands. ²⁰Respect my Sabbath days, in order that by doing that, it will remind you that you belong to me.

²¹But their children also rebelled against me. They did not take care to obey my laws, even though anyone who obeys them will live for a long time; and they also treated the Sabbath days like any other day. So again I said that I would kill them all in the wilderness, and in this way I would stop being angry. ²²But I did not do that. I decided once more to do something so that the other people groups, those that had seen me bring your people out of Egypt, would not laugh and say that I had lost my power. ²³So I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among many people groups, ²⁴because they had rejected and disobeyed all my laws, and because they were treating the Sabbath days like any other day—and because they were eager to worship the idols that their parents had worshiped. ²⁵So I also allowed them to obey laws that were not good, laws that would not help them live a long time. ²⁶I allowed them to do things that made it impossible for me to accept them: I allowed them to sacrifice their firstborn children in fire. I allowed them to do that in order that they would be horrified at themselves, and in order that they would know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

²⁷Therefore, son of man, speak to the Israelite people. Say this to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says to you: This is one way that your ancestors dishonored me by turning away from me.' ²⁸After I brought them into the land that I had sworn to give them, every time that they saw a high hill or a big green tree, they offered sacrifices to idols there. They made offerings to them, and that caused me to become angry. They presented to those idols their fragrant incense, and they poured out wine offerings to them. ²⁹Then I asked them, 'What is this hilltop place where you go to worship idols?' So they are still called Bamah, which means 'hilltop.'

³⁰Therefore, say this to the Israelite people: 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Why do you imitate your ancestors in acting in ways that make me unable to accept you? You act like prostitutes, leaving their husbands for other men. In the same way, you have left me to worship disgusting idols. ³¹When you sacrifice your children in the fire, you make me unable to accept you. It is the same as when you bow down to your idols. You Israelite people, should I allow you to ask me to direct you in any matter? I, Yahweh the Lord, say that as surely as I am alive, I will not answer if you ask me.'

³²You say, 'We want to be like the other people groups in the world. We want to worship idols made of wood and stone like they do.' But what you want will never happen.' ³³I, Yahweh your Lord, say that as surely as I am alive, I will use my great power to rule over you, and to show that I am angry with you. ³⁴With my great power I will gather you from the places to which I scattered you. ³⁵I will bring you to a wilderness that is surrounded by other nations. There, while I am looking at you, I will judge you. ³⁶I will punish you, as I punished your ancestors in the wilderness near Egypt. ³⁷I will make you submit to me; I will force you to obey the covenant that I made with you. ³⁸I will destroy the people among you who rebel against me. Although I will bring them out of Babylonia, where they are now living, they will not enter Israel. Then you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have the power to do what I say that I will do.

³⁹As for you Israelite people, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Go and worship your idols now, each of you. But afterwards, you will surely pay attention to me and no longer dishonor me by taking gifts to your idols. ⁴⁰I, Yahweh your Lord, declare that there on my sacred hill, Zion, that high hill in Israel, you will bring gifts to me, and I will accept them. I will require you to bring to me gifts and offerings there, and your sacrifices that you will set apart for me. ⁴¹When I bring you out from the other nations to which you have been scattered, I will accept you as though you were fragrant incense. I will show the people of other nations that I have set myself apart as holy, that I might be honored. ⁴²Then, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the land that I swore to give to your ancestors, you will know that I, Yahweh, have done it. ⁴³And there in Israel you will remember how you conducted your lives previously, the actions that caused you to become unacceptable to me, and you will hate yourselves for all the evil things that you have done. ⁴⁴When I act toward you Israelite people to protect my reputation, and not because of your evil deeds and corrupt behavior, you Israelite people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do. That is what Yahweh the Lord declares."

⁴⁵Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ⁴⁶"Son of man, turn toward the south. Preach about what will happen to that dry land, to the forest there. ⁴⁷Say to the forest in the southern wilderness of Israel: Listen to this message that Yahweh the Lord is saying about you: I am about to start a fire in your midst, and it will burn up all your trees, both the green trees and the withered trees. Nothing will extinguish the blazing flames. And the fire will scorch the faces of everyone who lives in that area, from the south to the north. ⁴⁸Everyone will see that it is I, Yahweh, who have lit this fire, and no one will be able to put it out."

⁴⁹Then I said, "Yahweh, my Lord, when I tell things like this to people, they do not believe me. They say about me, 'He is only telling parables.'"

Chapter 21

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²"Son of man, turn toward the south. Set yourself against them. Preach against the south and prophesy against the forest in the southern Judean wilderness. ³Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh says: I am opposed to you, and it will be as though I pull my sword from its sheath to kill both the righteous and the wicked people among you! ⁴So what I will do to you will be as though I pull my sword from its sheath and strike you. I will kill everyone, including righteous people and wicked people. I will get rid of everyone, from the south to the north. ⁵Then everyone will know that it is as though I, Yahweh, have struck people with my sword, and I will not put it back in its sheath again.'

⁶Therefore, Son of man, groan! Groan in front of the Israelite people very sadly and sorrowfully. ⁷And when they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' tell them that it is because of the news that they soon will hear. Everyone will be very fearful, and their hands will tremble uncontrollably, while their knees become as weak as water. A great disaster will soon occur. This is what Yahweh the Lord is promising."

⁸Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ⁹"Son of man, prophesy and say to them, 'This is what the Lord says:

I will sharpen my sword

and polish it.

10It will be sharp in order that I can slaughter many people with it;
I will polish it so that it will flash like lightning.

The people of Judah will not celebrate about their king's scepter,
because it will not resist the sword that is coming against it.

11So I will polish the sword,
and the right person will then hold it in his hand.

Now it is sharp; now it shines,
ready for the killer to use!

12So, Son of man, cry and wail,
because I will use my sword to kill my people,
including the leaders of Israel.

That sword will kill them and all the others of my people;
my sword will kill them all,
so beat your chests to show that you are sad.

13I am about to test my people,
and what will happen if the scepter cannot resist?
That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say.

14So, Son of man, prophesy;
clap your hands to show that you are very sad about what is going to happen.
My sword will strike my people again and again;
it is a sword for slaughtering many people,
while I attack them from every side.

15In order that people will be very much afraid
and that many people will die,
I have placed soldiers at every city gate,
ready to slaughter people.
My sword will flash like lightning,
as the soldiers slaughter the people.

16I will tell my sword to slash to the right
and then to the left,
and to turn in every direction until no one remains alive.

¹⁷Then I will clap my hands triumphantly;

and then I will no longer be angry.

That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.”

¹⁸Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ¹⁹“Son of man, draw on a map two roads for the king of Babylonia to march on with his army. When they depart from their own country, they will come to a signpost where a single road divides into those two roads. ²⁰If they take one of those roads, they will attack the city of Rabbah, the capital of the Ammon people group. If they take the other road, they will come to Judah and Jerusalem, a city with walls around it. ²¹When the army of Babylon comes to where the road divides, the army will stop, while the king performs magic rituals to decide which road to go on. He will throw arrows; then he will consult his idols about which road to go on, and he will examine the liver of a sheep. ²²With his right hand he will pick up the arrow marked with the name of Jerusalem. He will then command his soldiers to go to Jerusalem. When they arrive there, they will set up rams to batter down the walls, and then the king will give the command for them to slaughter the people. They will shout the battlecry, and they will set up the rams against the city gates. They will build a dirt ramp against the walls around the city, and set walls against the city. ²³The people in Jerusalem who had promised to be loyal to the king of Babylonia will think that those magic rituals must be wrong. They will think that his army should not be attacking them. But he will remind them of the disloyalty of which they are guilty, and he will say that they have violated their agreement with him.

²⁴Therefore, tell the Israelite people that this is what Yahweh the Lord says: ‘You people have allowed everyone to see that you are openly rebelling against the king of Babylonia, and by doing that you have shown that everything that you do is sinful. Therefore he will capture you and take you to Babylonia.’

²⁵Also, say to the king of Judah, ‘You very wicked king of Israel, it is your time to die. It is the time for Yahweh to punish you.’ ²⁶And this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to you about your king in Jerusalem, ‘Take off the king’s turban and his crown, because now things will be different than they were before. I will give power to those who had none, and I will disgrace those who had power. ²⁷I will cause the Babylonians to destroy everything. No one will be king of Judah again, not until the man comes who deserves to be king. Then I will make him become king.’

²⁸And, Son of man, prophesy and say that this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say about the Ammon people group, and about how I will disgrace them:

‘My soldiers have swords

and they have pulled out those swords to slaughter many people.

They have polished them in order to kill people,

and to flash like lightning.

²⁹Your Ammonite prophets have given you false visions about what will happen to you,

and they have held useless ceremonies that give you false messages.

So swords will strike the necks of those wicked people.

The day when I punish them has come,

because they have not been loyal to me.’

³⁰But later the soldiers of Babylon will have to put their swords back into their sheaths,

because the time for them to slaughter their enemies will end.

I will judge these Babylonians in the country where they were born.

³¹I will pour out my punishment on them.

Because I am very angry with them,
my breath on them will scorch them like a fire.

I will allow brutal men to capture them,
men who are experts at killing people.

³²They will be like fuel that is burned in a fire.

Their blood will flow in their own land.

No one will remember them anymore.

That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.”

Chapter 22

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, are you ready to condemn the people of Jerusalem? It is a city full of murderers. Remind them of all the detestable things that they have done. ³Then say, ‘This is what Yahweh the Lord says: By murdering people and by defiling yourselves, by making idols, you people of this city have brought on yourselves the time when I will destroy you. ⁴You have become guilty by murdering innocent people. You have made it impossible for me to accept you, by making idols for yourselves. You are bringing your time to an end. Therefore I will cause the other people groups to laugh at you and mock you. ⁵People in countries that are near you and people who live far from you will make fun of you, because your city is full of confusion, and because you have made it impossible for me, your own God, to accept you.

⁶Think about how each of your Israelite kings have used his power to murder people. ⁷Your people do not respect their parents; they have oppressed foreigners; they mistreat orphans and widows. ⁸You despise my sacred places and practices, and you treat the Sabbath days like any other day. ⁹Among you are men who tell lies in order to cause others to be executed. There are those who go to the hilltops and eat food offered to idols, and they openly perform evil acts. ¹⁰There are men who sleep with their father’s wife, and men who sleep with women during their monthly menstrual periods. ¹¹There are men who sleep with someone else’s wife. Some of your men sleep with their daughters-in-law or with their own sisters or half-sisters. ¹²There are among you men who accept bribes in order to cause someone to be executed. You charge interest when you lend people money. You become rich by forcing people to give you money. And you have forgotten me, Yahweh.

¹³So I will shake my fist at your unfair profits and at the murderers who live among you. ¹⁴When I finish punishing you, you will no longer be courageous. I, Yahweh, have said what I will do to you, and I will do it. ¹⁵I will scatter you among many people groups, and I will make you stop your sinful behavior. ¹⁶When the people of other nations see that you have been humiliated, you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

¹⁷Yahweh then said to me, ¹⁸“Son of man, your Israelite people have become useless to me. They are like dross to me. They are like the useless copper, tin, iron, and lead that remains after silver is melted in a very hot furnace ¹⁹Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Because you have all become like dross, I will gather you in Jerusalem. ²⁰People put ore containing silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin in a very hot furnace and melt them in a blazing fire to burn up the impurities. Similarly, I will gather you together inside Jerusalem, and because I am very angry with you, what I will do will be as though I am melting you. ²¹It will be as though I am blowing on you with a hot breath that shows that I am very angry, and it will be as though you will melt, ²²as though you will melt like silver melts in a furnace, and then you will know that I, Yahweh, have punished you.”

²³Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²⁴“Son of man, say to the Israelite people, ‘You are disgusting to Yahweh, completely unacceptable to him. So Yahweh is angry with you. There will be no rain in your country.’

²⁵Their leaders are like lions that tear apart the animals that they have killed. The leaders destroy their people. They steal treasures and other valuable things from people, and they murder many men and make their wives into widows. ²⁶Their priests disobey my laws and dishonor my sacred things by saying that there is no difference between things that are sacred and those that are not sacred, and by ignoring my laws about resting on the Sabbath days. As a result, they no longer honor me. ²⁷Their officials are like wolves that tear apart the animals that they have killed. They murder people in order to get their money. ²⁸Their prophets try to cover up those sins by saying they have received visions from God. They say, ‘This is what Yahweh the Lord says,’ when I have said nothing to them. ²⁹The Israelite people force others to give them money, and they rob people. They oppress poor people, and they mistreat foreigners among them by not treating them fairly in the courts.

³⁰I looked among them to find a man who would pray for the people and cause them to repent so that I would not need to destroy them. But I did not find anyone. ³¹So because I am very angry with them, I will severely punish them for all the wicked things that they have done. That will surely happen because I, Yahweh the Lord, have said it.”

Chapter 23

¹Yahweh said to me, ²“Son of man, listen to this parable about Jerusalem and Samaria. Once there were two women, daughters of the same mother. ³They lived in Egypt. And from the time that they were young women, they became prostitutes. In that land, men fondled their breasts and caressed their young bosoms. ⁴The older sister was Oholah, and her younger sister was Oholibah. It was as though they later became my wives. Later they gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah represents Samaria, and Oholibah represents Jerusalem.

⁵Oholah acted like a prostitute while she was still my wife. She desired to sleep with those whom she loved—soldiers from Assyria. ⁶Some of them were army officers and commanders. They wore beautiful purple uniforms. They were all handsome young men who rode horses. ⁷She acted like a prostitute toward all the important Assyrian officials. I could no longer accept her as belonging to me, because she was worshiping all the idols of the men she wanted to sleep with. ⁸When she was a young woman in Egypt, she started being a prostitute, and she allowed young men to caress her breasts and have sex with her. When she became older, she did not quit acting like a prostitute.

⁹So I allowed the Assyrian soldiers, whom she wanted to sleep with, to capture her. ¹⁰They stripped all her clothes off her. They took away her sons and daughters. And then they killed her with a sword. Other women started talking about how she was disgraced, and about how she deserved to suffer.

¹¹Her younger sister Oholibah saw those things that happened to Oholah, but she was also a prostitute, and she desired to sleep with men even more than her older sister had desired. ¹²Oholibah also wanted to sleep with the Assyrian soldiers. Some of them were army officers and commanders. They all wore beautiful uniforms. They were all handsome young men. And they rode horses. ¹³I saw what she did that caused me to be unable to accept her, just like her older sister.

¹⁴But she did even worse things. She saw drawings of men from Babylonia on the walls, painted in red. ¹⁵The men in the drawings had belts around their waists and long turbans on their heads. They all resembled officers from Babylonia who rode in chariots. ¹⁶As soon as she saw those drawings, she wanted to sleep with those men, and she sent messages to them in Babylonia. ¹⁷Then the soldiers from Babylonia came to her, lay in bed with her, and slept with her. Then she became disgusted with them and turned away from them. ¹⁸But when she continued to openly act like a prostitute and to show herself naked to others, I became disgusted with her and rejected her, as I had rejected her older sister. ¹⁹But she became even more immoral, as she remembered when she was a young woman learning to be a prostitute in Egypt. ²⁰There she wanted to sleep with those who loved her, whose private parts were very long, like those of donkeys, and whose reproductive emissions were huge, like those of horses.

²¹So she desired to be immoral like she was when she was young, when men in Egypt caressed her bosom and fondled her young breasts.

²²Oholibah represents you people of Jerusalem. Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord say: Those soldiers who loved you but from whom you turned away because you became disgusted with them—I will make them angry with you. I will make them come and attack you from every side— ²³soldiers from Babylon and all the other places in Babylonia, and their allies from the regions of Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and all the army of Assyria. Yes, all of them are handsome young men, army officers and commanders, officers who have great fame, all riding on horses.

²⁴Their huge army will attack you with weapons, riding in chariots and pulling wagons that will carry the army supplies. They will surround you, carrying large and small shields, and wearing helmets. I will allow them to capture you and punish you in the way that they always punish their enemies. ²⁵Because I am very angry with you, I will cause them to act furiously toward you. They will cut off your noses and your ears. Then, those who are still alive, they will kill with their swords. They will take away your sons and daughters, and it will be like a fire that burns up your descendants. ²⁶They will strip off your clothes and your fine jewelry, and they will take them away. ²⁷In that way, I will stop all the immoral behavior that began when you became a prostitute in Egypt. You will no longer desire to do those things; you will no longer think about what you did in Egypt.

²⁸This is what I, Yahweh the Lord say: Those whom you hate, those with whom you became disgusted and from whom you turned away—I am about to allow them to capture you. ²⁹They will be cruel; they will take away everything that you own. They will leave you completely naked, and everyone will see that you truly are a prostitute. ³⁰It is because of what you have done that you will be punished in that way; you have been an immoral prostitute; you have slept with men of other nations, and you have made it impossible for me to accept you, because you have worshiped their idols. ³¹You have behaved like the people of Samaria, who are like your older sister. So I will cause you to be punished as they were punished.

³²This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: You will suffer when you drink from a cup that is deep and large.

It will be as though you will drink from the same cup that the people of Samaria drank from.

And it is because you will drink what it is in that cup, many people will scorn you and make fun of you, because when you drink from the cup it will make you drunk and then you will be overcome with sadness.

³³When you become very drunk, you will become very sad,

because drinking what is in that cup will cause you to be ruined; everyone will leave you.

This is what happened to the people of Samaria, who are like your sister.

³⁴You will drink all the liquid that is in that cup;

then you will break that cup into pieces

and use those pieces to cut your breasts because you will be very sad.

That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.

³⁵Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Because you have forgotten me and rejected me, I must punish you for your immoral behavior and for being a prostitute.”

³⁶Yahweh said to me, “Son of man, judge the people of those two cities represented by Oholah and Oholibah. You must remind them of their detestable behavior. ³⁷It is as though they have committed adultery and have murdered people. They have been unfaithful to me by worshiping idols. They have even sacrificed their own children, who belonged to me, in fire. ³⁸They have done other disgraceful things: they have caused my temple to be an unacceptable place for worship, and they treat the Sabbath days like any other day. ³⁹On the same day that they

sacrificed their children to their idols, they entered my temple, which caused it to be an unacceptable place for worshiping me. They did these things in my own house!

⁴⁰They sent messages to men in countries far away. And as those men were coming, the two sisters bathed themselves for them, painted their eyebrows, and put on jewelry. ⁴¹They sat on a beautiful couch, with a table in front of it on which they had put incense and olive oil that belonged to me.

⁴²Soon there was a noisy crowd around them. Among the crowd there were drunkards who had come from the desert of Arabia. They put bracelets on the arms of the two sisters, and they put beautiful crowns on their heads.

⁴³Then I said about the woman who had become exhausted by sleeping with many men, 'Now those men will act toward her as though she were a prostitute, because that is all that she is.' ⁴⁴So they slept with those two women, Oholah and Oholibah, as men sleep with prostitutes. ⁴⁵But righteous men will condemn them to be punished, as women who commit adultery and who murder others are punished, because those women commit adultery and they murder others.

⁴⁶So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Bring a mob to attack Samaria and Jerusalem, and allow that mob to cause the people of those cities to be terrified; allow the mob to rob them. ⁴⁷The mob will throw stones at them to kill them; they will cut them into pieces with their swords, they will kill their sons and daughters, and they will burn down their houses.

⁴⁸In that way I will cause them to stop their immoral behavior. This will warn other women to not imitate what you people of Jerusalem are doing. ⁴⁹I will punish you people of Jerusalem for your immoral behavior and for worshiping idols. Then you will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

Chapter 24

¹Almost nine years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, on the tenth day of the tenth month of that year, Yahweh gave me this message: ²"Son of man, write down what day of the month this is. On this day the army of the king of Babylon has surrounded Jerusalem. ³Tell those rebellious Israelite people in Babylon a parable. Say this to them: This is what Yahweh the Lord says:

'Pour water into the cooking pot

and put the pot on the fire.

⁴Put into the pot some pieces of meat from one of your best sheep:

put in the leg and shoulder, which are the best pieces.

Then fill the rest of the pot with the best bones.

⁵Pile wood on the fire,

and cook the bones and the meat in the boiling water.'

⁶Do that because this is what Yahweh the Lord says:

'Terrible things will happen to Jerusalem; it is city that is full of murderers,

a city that is like a corroded copper pot,

and the corrosion cannot be removed.

Take the pieces of meat out of the pot,

but do not choose which pieces to take out.

⁷The blood of the people who were murdered in Jerusalem is still there;
they were murdered on the bare rocks,
not on the soil, where their blood could be covered.

⁸But I am the one who caused the blood of those who were murdered to be smeared on the bare rock,
where their blood could not be covered;
I did that in order that I could see it and then be angry and get revenge.'

⁹Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say:
'Terrible things will happen to that city that is full of murderers!
It will be as though I also will pile high the wood in the fire.

¹⁰So heap on the wood
and light the fire!
Cook the meat well,
and mix some spices with it;
cook it until the bones are black.

¹¹Then set the empty pot on the coals of the fire
until the pot becomes very hot and the copper glows,
so that the corrosion will disappear.

¹²It is as though I tried to get rid of that corrosion,
but I was not able to do it,
not even by putting that pot on the fire.

¹³The corrosion in the pot represents your immoral behavior. I tried to cleanse you from your wicked behavior, but you did not allow me to do that. So you will not be cleansed from the guilt of your sin until I have punished you and I am no longer angry.

¹⁴I, Yahweh, have said that I will surely punish you. And it is time for me to do that. I will not change my mind; I will not refrain from punishing you, and I will not pity you. I will judge you and punish you as you deserve to be punished for your sinful behavior. That will surely happen because I, Yahweh the Lord, have said it.'"

¹⁵One day Yahweh gave me this message: ¹⁶"Son of man, I am going to suddenly take from you your wife by means of a disease, your wife, whom you love very much. But when she dies, do not show that you are sad or lament or cry. ¹⁷Groan quietly; do not cry openly for her. Keep your turban wrapped around your head, and instead of being barefoot, keep your sandals on your feet. Do not cover the lower part of your face to show that you are sad. And do not eat the kind of food that people who are mourning usually eat."

¹⁸So one morning I talked to the people as usual, and that evening my wife suddenly died. The next morning I did what Yahweh had told me to do.

¹⁹Then the people asked me, "What do the things that you are doing signify to us?"

²⁰I answered them, "This is what Yahweh told me: ²¹Tell the Israelite people that I am about to destroy the temple, the building that you are very proud of, the building that you delight to look at. Your children whom you left in Jerusalem when you were forced to come to Babylon—your enemies will kill them. ²²When that happens, you will do as I have done: You will not cover the lower part of your faces, or eat the kinds of food that people who are mourning usually eat. ²³You will keep your turbans wrapped around your heads and keep your sandals on your feet. You will not mourn or cry, but your bodies will become very thin and slowly die; I will not forgive your sins at all. And you will groan for each other. ²⁴Ezekiel will be a warning to you, and you must do what he has done. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh the Lord have the power to do what I say that I will do."

²⁵Then Yahweh said to me, "Son of man, soon I will destroy their sacred temple, which they rejoice about and which they respect and delight to look at, and I will get rid of their sons and daughters also. ²⁶On that day, someone will escape from Jerusalem and come and tell you what has happened there. ²⁷When that happens, you will be able to speak again without constraint. You two will talk together. You will be a warning to the people; and they will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

Chapter 25

¹Some time later, Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²"Son of man, turn toward where the Ammon people group lives, and prophesy about the terrible things that will happen to them. ³Say about them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: You shouted joyfully when my temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, and when the country of Israel was ruined, and when the people of Judah were exiled to Babylon. ⁴Therefore, I am going to allow an army of the people in the east to come and conquer you. They will set up their tents in your country and live there. They will eat the fruit from your fruit trees and drink the milk from your cattle. ⁵I will cause your capital city of Rabbah to become a pasture for camels, and the rest of Ammon, where your people are now living, to become only a resting place for sheep. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do. ⁶This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: You clapped your hands joyfully and stomped your feet, and laughed because you despised the people in the land of Israel. ⁷Therefore, I will use my power against you, and I will enable other nations to conquer you and take you away like any other possessions of yours. I will destroy you completely, and you will no longer be one of the nations. When that happens, people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

⁸This is also what the Lord Yahweh says: The people of Moab south of Ammon and the people of Seir south of Moab despised Israel and said, "The people of Israel have become as unimportant as all the other nations!"

⁹Therefore I will destroy the cities that protect the borders of Moab, starting at Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kiriathaim, the finest cities in Moab. ¹⁰I will enable people from the east to conquer Moab and also to conquer Ammon. As the result, just as I will cause Ammon to be no longer remembered by other nations, ¹¹I will also punish the people of Moab. When that happens, people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

¹²This is also what Yahweh the Lord says: "You people of Edom are guilty of getting revenge on the people of Judah.

¹³Therefore this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I will use my power against the people of Edom and will get rid of their men and their animals. I will ruin the land from the region of Teman in central Edom to the region of Dedan in the south of Edom, and their enemies will kill many of their men. ¹⁴The Israelite people will use their power to get revenge on the people of Edom. They will show the people of Edom that I have been angry with them and that I will punish them. I will get revenge on the people of Edom. Then they will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

¹⁵This is also what Yahweh the Lord says: "The Philistia people group wanted very much for a long time to get revenge on the people of Judah. They very maliciously wanted to destroy Judah. ¹⁶Therefore this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I am about to use my power against the Philistia people. I will get rid of the Kereth people group and all those who live along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. ¹⁷I will get great revenge on them and show that I am

angry with them by the way I punish them. And when I get revenge on them, they will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

Chapter 26

¹It was almost eleven years after the Babylonians had taken the Israelites to their land, on the first day of the month, Yahweh gave me another message. He said to me, ²“Son of man, the people of the city of Tyre shouted joyfully and they said about Jerusalem, ‘Jerusalem, the city from which traders went to many nations, is now destroyed. Now people from all over the world will come to us to buy and sell things. We will prosper because Jerusalem has now been ruined!’ ³Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: ‘I am now your enemy, you people of Tyre. I will cause the armies of many nations to come and attack your city, as the waves of the sea beat against the shores. ⁴Their soldiers will destroy the walls around Tyre and tear down your towers. The city will be completely destroyed. Then they will scrape away the rubble and cause the city to become a bare rock. ⁵Out in the sea, the part of your city that is on an island will become a place where men spread their fishing nets to dry them. That will surely happen because I, Yahweh the Lord, have predicted it: People from many nations will carry off everything of value in your city. ⁶The people in small villages on the coast near Tyre—your enemies will kill them with their swords. Then people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.’

⁷This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say is going to happen: From the north, I am going to bring the most powerful king in the world, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, with his army to attack Tyre. They will bring horses and chariots, and men who ride the horses and men who drive the chariots; it will be a huge army. ⁸In the battles in the small villages on the coast, their soldiers will kill many people with their swords. Then they will build up walls outside the city of Tyre. They will build a dirt ramp up to the top of the wall, and they will all hold up shields to protect themselves from arrows being shot from the ground. ⁹The king will direct the soldiers who operate the rams to batter the wall, and those who will use iron bars to tear down the towers in the wall. ¹⁰The king will have a huge number of horses, and the stamping of their hooves will raise dust to cover the whole city. It will be as though the walls tremble because of the noise made by the horses, the supply wagons, and the chariots when they enter the city where the enemy has broken down the walls. ¹¹The horses will trample all of the streets of the city with their hooves. The soldiers will kill the people with their swords; they will cause the monuments that celebrated their strength to collapse. ¹²They will take away all the people’s valuable possessions and steal the things that the merchants sell. They will tear down the walls of the houses and destroy their fine houses. Then they will throw into the sea the stones from the walls of those houses and the timber and the rubble. ¹³No longer will the people sing noisy songs or play their harps. ¹⁴They will cause the city to become a bare rock and only a place where men spread their fishing nets. And the city will never be rebuilt.” Those things will certainly happen because the Lord Yahweh has declared that they will happen.

¹⁵This is also what the Lord Yahweh says about the people of Tyre: When the people in Tyre groan because the enemy has wounded them, when many people die, and when the enemy destroys the city, the people living along the coast will tremble because they are afraid. ¹⁶Then all the kings in the cities along the coast will step down from their thrones and lay aside their robes and their embroidered clothes. They will be terrified, and they will sit on the ground, trembling. They will be shocked because of what has happened to the city of Tyre. ¹⁷Then they will sing a sad song about the city, like this:

‘The famous city, in which many men who sailed on the seas lived,
is now no more!

The people of that city had great power as they sailed, but now they are at the bottom of the sea;
they terrified all the people living near them.

¹⁸But now everyone living along the coast is terrified because the enemy has destroyed the great city.

It is as though the land along the coast itself were trembling;
the people on the islands in the sea are terrified because that city exists no more.'

¹⁹This is also what the Lord Yahweh says: 'When I cause everyone to leave the city of Tyre, like people have left other cities in which no one lives any longer, and when I cause the huge waves of the sea to cover the city, ²⁰then I will bring the people of that city down to be with everyone else who is dead, those who died long ago. I will cause them to live in the place below the earth that is like old ruins, with those who have gone down to that pit previously, and they will never return to the earth, to where people are alive. ²¹I will cause them to die in a horrible way, and that will be the end of them. People will search for that city, but it will no longer exist.'" This is what the Lord Yahweh declares will happen.

Chapter 27

¹Yahweh said this to me: ²"Son of man, sing a funeral song about Tyre. ³The city of Tyre is on an island at the edge of the sea, and their merchants traded with people groups who live along many seacoasts. This is what Yahweh the Lord says that you should tell them:

You people of Tyre said that your city was very beautiful.

⁴You controlled what people bought and sold—the people who lived along the sea.

Those who built your city made it very beautiful.

⁵You and your city were like a huge ship

that you built from fir trees on Mount Hermon.

Then you took cedar wood from Lebanon to make a mast for the ship.

⁶You carved oars from oak trees from the region of Bashan.

You made the deck from cypress wood from the island of Cyprus,

and you covered the decks with ivory.

⁷You made the sails from fine embroidered linen from Egypt;

those sails were like flags that people could see far away.

⁸Men from the cities of Sidon and Arvad pulled your oars;

the men who steered the ship were experienced sailors from Tyre.

⁹Experienced craftsmen from Gebal were on board. They caulked the seams of your ships.

Sailors from many countries came in their ships to buy and sell goods with you.

¹⁰Men who came from the far away lands of Persia, Lud, and Put were soldiers in your army.

They hung their shields and helmets on the walls of your city;

this caused many people to admire your city.

¹¹Men from the cities of Arvad and Helek were watchmen on your city walls;

men from the city of Gammad were in your towers.

They also hung their shields on your walls;
they also made your city very beautiful.

¹²Because of the many things that you had to trade, men from Tarshish sent merchants who brought silver, iron, tin, and lead to trade for things that you had.

¹³Merchants from the regions of Greece, Tubal, and Meshech brought slaves and things made from bronze to trade for things that you had.

¹⁴Men from Beth Togarmah brought work horses, war horses, and mules to trade for things that you had.

¹⁵Merchants came to you from the island of Rhodes.

People from many nations by the sea traded with you;

they brought ivory and valuable black ebony wood to trade for things that you had.

¹⁶Because you had very many things to trade, people from the land of Aram brought to you valuable turquoise stones, purple cloth, embroidered cloth, fine linen cloth, and jewelry made from coral and rubies to you.

¹⁷Men from Judah and Israel brought wheat from the city of Minnith in Ammon, and cakes, honey, olive oil, and ointment to trade for your things.

¹⁸Because you had very many things to sell, men from the city of Damascus brought wine from the town of Helbon and white wool from the area of Zahar to trade for many things that you had.

¹⁹Men from the tribe of Dan and Greek men from the area of Izal brought things made of iron, cassia spice, and fragrant calamus seeds to trade for things that you had.

²⁰Merchants came from Dedan in southern Edom bringing saddle blankets to trade for things that you had.

²¹Men from Arabia and all the rulers of the region of Kedar sent merchants to trade lambs and rams and male goats for things that you had.

²²Merchants from Sheba and Raamah in Arabia brought many kinds of very good spices and jewels and gold to exchange for things that you had.

²³Men came from Haran, Kanneh, Eden, Sheba, Ashur and Kilmad in Mesopotamia with their goods. ²⁴They brought beautiful things to trade with you: Blue cloth, embroidered cloth, and rugs of many colors that were rolled up and tied with ropes.

²⁵Cargo ships from Tarshish carried all those things that you sold;

the warehouses on your island were full of all those things and brought you great honor.

²⁶The men who row your ships took the ships full of cargo out onto the large seas.

But now the strong east wind has wrecked those ships.

²⁷Everything in the ships has been lost—

all the valuable cargo and many of the sailors and ship pilots,

the ship workers and merchants and soldiers.

On the day that the ships were wrecked,

all their crews sank to the bottom of the sea.

28The people in cities along the coast trembled
when they heard your ship pilots cry out.

29All the men who pulled the oars will leave the ships;
the sailors and pilots will come to the shore and stand on the beach.

30They will cry aloud because of what has happened to you,
and they weep bitterly.

They will throw earth on their heads
and roll around in ashes.

31They shave their heads to show that they are very sad because of what has happened to you,
and they put on rough sackcloth to mourn.

They weep for you very bitterly
and mourn for you.

32While they wail and mourn because of what has happened to you
they sing this sad funeral song:

'There was certainly never a city like Tyre,
which now is silent,
covered by the waves of the sea.'

33The goods that your merchants traded
were things that pleased the people of many countries.
Kings in very distant places became rich
from the money they made by buying and selling with you.

34But now your city is like a ship wrecked in the sea;
and everything in it is broken, and it is now at the bottom of the sea.
All of your cargo and your sailors have sunk to the bottom of the sea.

35All the people who live along the seacoast are appalled
because of what has happened to you.

Their kings are very horrified;
they shake with fear as they watch.

36The merchants of the other nations shake their heads
because it is difficult for them to believe what has happened;
now your city has disappeared,

and it will not exist anymore.”

Chapter 28

¹Then Yahweh gave me another message. He said: ²“Son of man, give to the king of Tyre this message from me, Yahweh the Lord:

‘You have very proudly claimed that you are a god,
and that you are untouchable, since you sit on a throne in a city on an island in the sea!

You boast that you are a god,
but you are in reality only a man, not a god.

³You think that you are wiser than Daniel was,
and you think that you can understand every secret.

⁴Because you were wise and shrewd in business, you have become very rich;
you have acquired much gold and silver for your treasuries.

⁵Yes, it is true that by buying and selling wisely, you have become very rich;
and because you are rich, you have become very proud.

⁶Therefore, Yahweh the Lord says that
because you think that you are as wise as a god,
⁷he will bring a foreign army to attack your country,
an army that causes other nations to be terrified.
They will pull out their swords to strike you,
you who think that you have marvelous wisdom,
and they will ruin all your beautiful things and make them ugly.

⁸They will bring you down to your grave;
you will die violently
like those who died in the sea.

⁹Then you will certainly not tell those who are killing you
that you are a god,
because they will know that you are not a god;
you are only a man.

¹⁰You will die like other people die, those who are unacceptable to God,
those whom foreigners kill. That will surely happen because Yahweh has said it.”

11Yahweh also gave me this message: **12**"Son of man, sing a sad song about the king of Tyre. Tell him that Yahweh the Lord says this to him:

"You were completely perfect,
extremely wise and handsome.

13You had a wonderful life, because you were in my beautiful garden in Eden.
Your clothes were decorated with many kinds of very valuable stones—
ruby, topaz, emerald, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and beryl stones.
Those stones were set in gold mountings
which I prepared for you on the day that I created you.

14I appointed you to be a strong angel to guard the people.
I placed you on my holy mountain,
and you walked among fiery stones.

15You were completely good in all that you did
from the day that you were created,
until you started to do wicked things.

16Then you became busy buying and selling things,
you started to act violently,
and you sinned.
So I disgraced you.

You, the angel who was supposed to guard the people—I forced you to leave my own mountain;
I forced you to leave those fiery stones.

17You were extremely proud
because you were very handsome.
Because you loved beautiful things,
you did things that wise people do not do.
So I threw you to the ground,
and allowed other kings who saw you to laugh at you.

18By committing many sins
and by buying and selling things dishonestly,
you caused the places where people worshiped me to become unacceptable to me.
So I will make a fire that will burn your city down.
Your city will be burned completely,

and the people who watch it will see
that what is left of the city will only be ashes.

¹⁹All the people who knew what your city was like previously
will be appalled.

Now your city will disappear,
and it will not exist anymore.”

²⁰Then Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²¹“Son of man, turn toward the city of Sidon, and announce the terrible things that will happen to it. ²²Give the people of Sidon this message from Yahweh the Lord. Tell them:

‘I am your enemy, you people of Sidon.

By what I do to you,

I will show you how great I am,

and you will know that it is Yahweh who punishes you and judges you with justice.

You will know that I am different from you, and that I will be honored by what I do to you!

²³I will send a plague on you,

and I will send enemies to come and kill you in your streets.

They will attack you from every direction,

and they will slaughter your people inside the walls of your city.

Then everyone will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.’

²⁴No longer will people who live near the people of Israel hurt them as painful briars and sharp thorns hurt people. And then the Israelites will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

²⁵And this is also what Yahweh the Lord says: “I will gather them from distant countries where I have scattered them. And the other people groups will see that I am set apart and honored, when the house of Israel makes their homes in the land I gave my servant Jacob! ²⁶My people will live safely in Israel; they will build houses and plant vineyards. And when I punish the nearby people groups that despised them, my people will know that it is I, Yahweh their God, who has done this.”

Chapter 29

¹Almost ten years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, on the twelfth day of the tenth month of that year, Yahweh gave me another message. He said to me, ²“Son of man, turn toward Egypt and proclaim the terrible things that will happen to the king of Egypt and all his people. ³Give the king this message from me, for I am Yahweh the Lord:

‘Know this, Pharaoh, king of Egypt that I, Yahweh, am your enemy.

You are like a great monster that lies in the streams of the Nile River.

You are so bold to say that the Nile River is yours,

and that you made it for yourself.

⁴But it will be as though I will put hooks in your jaws
and drag you out onto the land,
with fish sticking to your scales.

⁵I will leave you and all those fish to die in the desert;
you will fall to the ground,
and no one will pick up your corpse to bury you,
because I declare that your body will be food for the wild animals and birds.

⁶When that happens, all the people of Egypt will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have the power to do what I say that I will do.

The Israelite people have trusted that you would help them. But you have been like a reed pole in their hands.

⁷And when they leaned on that pole, it broke and tore open their shoulders. When they leaned on you, you were like a pole that broke in their hand, and as a result you caused their legs to be wrenched and that made it impossible for them to stand.'

⁸Therefore Yahweh the Lord says, 'I will bring Egypt's enemies to attack them with their swords; they will kill Egypt's people and animals. ⁹Egypt will become an empty desert. Then the people of Egypt will know that it is I, Yahweh, who has the power to do what he says he will do, and that he will punish the people of Egypt for saying that the Nile River is theirs because they made it. ¹⁰I am against you and your streams, and I will ruin Egypt and make it into an empty desert, from the city of Migdol in the north to Syene in the south, as far south as the border of Cush. ¹¹For forty years no one will walk through that area, and no one will live there. ¹²Egypt will be barren, and it will be surrounded by other abandoned nations. The cities of Egypt will be empty and without people for forty years, and the surrounding lands will be the same. I will scatter the people of Egypt to countries far away.'

¹³But Yahweh the Lord also says this: 'At the end of forty years, I will enable the people of Egypt to return home again. ¹⁴I will bring back the people of Egypt whom their enemies had captured, and I will allow them to live again in the region of Pathros in the south, where they lived previously. But Egypt will continue to be a very unimportant kingdom. ¹⁵It will be the least important of all the nations; it will never again be greater than the nearby countries. I will cause Egypt to be very weak, and they will never again rule over other nations. ¹⁶When that happens, the leaders of Israel will no longer think of asking Egypt to help them. When I punish Egypt, the Israelites will be reminded that they previously sinned by trusting that Egypt could help them. And the people of Israel will know that Yahweh the Lord has the power to do what he says he will do.'"

¹⁷Almost twenty-seven years after we Israelites prisoners had been taken to Babylonia, on the first day of the new year, Yahweh gave me this message: ¹⁸"Son of man, the army of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon fought very hard against Tyre, with the result that their heads were rubbed bare under their helmets, and their shoulders became raw. But Nebuchadnezzar and his army did not get any valuable things from Tyre to reward them for their hard work in that campaign. ¹⁹Therefore, Yahweh the Lord says that he will enable King Nebuchadnezzar's army to conquer Egypt. They will carry away from there all the valuable things, in order that the king can give them to his soldiers. ²⁰Yahweh says that he will enable them to conquer Egypt as payment for what they did to Tyre, because Nebuchadnezzar and his army were working for him, doing what he wanted them to do, which was to destroy Tyre."

²¹Yahweh said to me, "Some day I will make Israel become a mighty nation. When that happens, I will make them listen to what you tell them. Then they will know that all this has happened because I, Yahweh, will have done this."

Chapter 30

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, prophesy about what will happen to Egypt. Say that this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, say:

‘Weep and wail,

because terrible things will happen one day that is coming.

³That day is near,

the day when I, Yahweh, will punish people;

it will be like a day of full of storm clouds and disaster for many nations.

⁴An enemy army will come to attack Egypt with their swords,

and there will be great distress for the people in Cush.

The enemy army will kill many people in Egypt;

they will take away everything of value,

and they will even tear the buildings down to their foundations.

⁵Soldiers of Cush, Libya, Lydia, and all the foreigners in the land of Egypt, together with the Jews living in Egypt—they will all die because of war.’

⁶This is what Yahweh says:

‘This army will defeat Egypt’s allies,

and the power that the people of Egypt are so proud of will end.

From the city of Migdol in the north to the city of Syene in the south, they will kill the soldiers of Egypt’s allies.

This is what Yahweh the Lord declares.

⁷Egypt’s allies’ soldiers will be shocked, and her allies’ cities will be destroyed, surrounded by ruined cities in nearby nations.

⁸Then, when I cause everything in Egypt to be burned down,

and when I cause their enemies to defeat all their allies,

people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

⁹At that time, I will send messengers to go swiftly up the Nile River in boats to terrify the people of Cush, who still think they are safe. They will be horrified when they hear that Egypt has been destroyed. This will soon happen!

¹⁰This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say:

By the power of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon

I will destroy very many people in Egypt.

¹¹Nebuchadnezzar and his army, whose soldiers have no pity on anyone,

will come to destroy Egypt.

They will pull out their swords
and fill Egypt with the corpses of those whom they have killed.

¹²I will cause the streams of the Nile River to become dry,
and I will sell the nation of Egypt to evil men.
By the power of foreigners
I will ruin the land and everything that is in it.
That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it will happen.

¹³This is also what I, Yahweh the Lord, say:
I will cause the enemy to destroy the idols
in the city of Memphis.
No longer will there be a king in Egypt,
and I will terrify everyone in the land of Egypt.

¹⁴I will cause all people to leave the region of Pathros in southern Egypt.
I will start fires in the city of Zoan in northeast Egypt
and punish the people in the city of Thebes in southern Egypt.

¹⁵I will punish the soldiers in the fortress of Pelusium in northern Egypt,
and I will destroy the people in Thebes.

¹⁶I will burn Egypt with fire;
the people in Pelusium will suffer severe pain.
Enemies will conquer Thebes,
and the enemies of Memphis will attack the people who live there every day.

¹⁷The enemy will kill many young men in the cities of Heliopolis and Bubastis in northern Egypt,
and the people who are left will have to go to Babylon.

¹⁸It will be a dark day of destruction at the city of Tahpanhes in northeast Egypt
when I cause the power of Egypt to end;
that country will no longer be strong.
It will be as though a dark cloud will cover Egypt,
because the people of its villages will go to Babylon as prisoners.

¹⁹That is how I will punish Egypt,
and people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

²⁰Almost eleven years after the Babylonians took us Israelites to their country, Yahweh gave me another message on the seventh day of the first month of that year. He said, ²¹“Son of man, I have enabled the army of Nebuchadnezzar to defeat the army of the king of Egypt. It is as though I have broken one of the arms of the king of Egypt, and it has not been bandaged in order that it could be healed, and it has not been put in splints in order that after it heals the arm will be strong enough to hold a sword. ²²Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I am the enemy of the king of Egypt. I will completely destroy Egypt’s power; it is as though now I will break both of the king’s arms, the good one and the broken one, and cause the sword to fall from his hand. ²³I will scatter the people of Egypt among the nations. ²⁴It is as though I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put a sword in his hand, and as though I will break the arms of the king of Egypt, and he will groan in front of the king of Babylon like a soldier who is wounded and about to die. ²⁵I will cause the king of Babylon to become stronger and stronger, and the king of Egypt to become completely weak. When that happens, when I make the Babylonian army strong, they will use that power to attack Egypt. ²⁶I will scatter the people of Egypt among the nations. And when that happens, people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

Chapter 31

¹Almost eleven years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, Yahweh gave me another message, on the first day of the third month of that year. He said, ²“Son of man, say to the king of Egypt and to the immense numbers of his people,

“You think that there is no country whose power is as great as the power of your country.

³You think that your country is as great as Assyria was.

Well, Assyria was like a tall cedar tree in Lebanon;

it had big beautiful branches

that provided shade for other trees in the forest.

It was very tall;

and the branches of the tallest trees made a treetop that was a roof over the forest.

⁴Water came to it from deep springs,

and as a result that cedar tree grew tall and very green.

Then water flowed around the base of the tree

into channels that took water to other nearby trees in the open countryside.

⁵That huge tree grew very tall,

higher than all the other trees around it.

Its branches grew very thick and long

because of the abundant water at the base of the tree.

⁶Birds built their nests in the branches,

and wild animals gave birth to their young under those branches.

And it was as though people of all the great nations lived in the shade of that tree.

⁷It was majestic and beautiful;

its branches spread out widely

because the roots of the tree grew down into the ground where there was a plentiful supply of water.

⁸The cedar trees in my garden in Eden were not as great as that tree,

and the branches of the fir trees were not as long and thick as the branches of that cedar tree.

And the branches of the plane trees were not as long and thick, either.

No tree in my garden was as beautiful as that cedar tree.

⁹Because I caused that tree to become very beautiful

because of its magnificent green branches,

all the leaders of other countries represented by those other trees in Eden envied the country represented by that tree.'

¹⁰Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: 'That tree, which represents Assyria, grew very tall; its top was higher than the other trees, and it became very proud because it was so tall. ¹¹Therefore, I enabled another mighty nation to conquer it, to destroy it as it deserved to be destroyed. I have already discarded it. ¹²A foreign army, one that has caused people of other nations to be terrified, cut it down and left it. Its branches fell on the mountains and in the valleys. Some of its branches lay broken in all the ravines in the land. All the people of other nations came out from being under its shade and left it. ¹³Birds of the sky settled on the fallen tree, and wild animals lived among its branches. ¹⁴As a result, no other tree, even if the tree has plenty of water, will ever grow to such great height, or lift its top above the branches higher than other trees. They will all certainly die and decay; they will go to the place of the dead; they will go to the grave.'

¹⁵This is what Yahweh the Lord says: "When that great tree was cut down, it was as though the springs that watered it mourned for it, because I caused the plentiful water from the springs to dry up. It was as if I had caused the mountains in Lebanon to mourn for it, and all the trees there to weep. ¹⁶I caused the people of other nations to tremble when they heard that tree fall to the ground—when they heard that Assyria had been destroyed. All the other people groups had also been like beautiful, well-watered trees in Lebanon, but they were comforted when the king represented by that cedar tree arrived among them in the place where they were as dead people. ¹⁷The people represented by the trees that grew in the shade of that huge tree, the allies of the great nation that the cedar tree represents, had also died and gone down to where the dead people are.

¹⁸This parable is a warning to you people of Egypt. You think that there is no other nation that is as great and glorious as yours is. But your nation will also be destroyed, along with those other nations. Your people will be there among the other people who are not fit to worship me, people who have been killed by their enemies' swords. That is what will happen to the king of Egypt and all his many people." This is what the Lord Yahweh has declared will happen.

Chapter 32

¹Almost twelve years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, Yahweh gave me another message, on the first day of the twelfth month of that year. He told me, ²"Son of man, sing a sad song about Pharaoh the king of Egypt. Sing this to him:

'People think that you are like a lion among the nations;

but you are like a sea monster in the river

thrashing around in the water,

churning up the water with your feet
and making all the water muddy.

³But I, the Lord Yahweh, say to you
that I will send many people to throw my net over you,
and that they will haul you up onto the land.

⁴They will throw you into a field, where I will leave you to your fate.
I will allow the birds to sit on you,
and all the wild animals will eat the flesh of your corpse until their stomachs are full.

⁵I will cause them to scatter your flesh on the hills
and fill the valleys with the parts of your rotting body.

⁶I will cause them to fill the land with your blood,
and also the mountains;
they will fill the ravines with your blood.

⁷When I kill you,
I will cover the sky and not allow the stars to shine.
I will put a dark cloud in front of the sun,
and the moon will not shine.

⁸I will cause the stars in the sky to be dark,
and there will be darkness over your entire land;
this will surely happen because I, Yahweh the Lord, have said it.

⁹And I will terrify the people of many nations when they hear how I destroy you,
there where I will send you,
in countries that you have never known about.

¹⁰I will cause many people to be shocked because of what has happened to you;
their kings will be horrified and shudder because I destroyed you,
when I swung my sword in front of them to kill you.
At the time that you die,
all of them will tremble,
fearing that I will kill them, too.

¹¹I, the Lord Yahweh tell you, Egypt,
that the swords of the army of the king of Babylon will strike you.

¹²I will cause the mighty soldiers of Babylonia to kill your best soldiers—the soldiers of Babylonia, who are more ruthless than those of any other nation. They will cause the people of Egypt to quit being proud, because they will kill very many of your people.

¹³I will destroy all the cattle in Egypt, which graze alongside the streams. As a result, the water in those streams will never again become muddy because of people and cattle walking in them.

¹⁴Then I will allow the streams in Egypt to become calm again and to flow as smoothly as olive oil flows.” This is what the Lord Yahweh announces.

¹⁵He also says this: “When I cause Egypt to become empty, when I strip off everything that grows on the land, and when I get rid of all the people who live there, people will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have the power to do what I say that I will do.

¹⁶There will be a sad song that people will sing about Egypt. Women of many nations will sing it; they will chant it about Egypt and all its many people.”

This will surely happen because Yahweh has said that it would happen.

¹⁷On the fifteenth day of that same month, Yahweh gave me another message. He said,

¹⁸“Son of man, wail about the many people of Egypt, because I will send them to the place under the earth, where they and people of other mighty nations will be. I will send them there, along with others, down to the place where the dead are. ¹⁹Say to them, ‘You people of Egypt, you think that you are more beautiful than the people of other nations. But you also will descend to the place where the godless dead people are. ²⁰You will die along with many others whom their enemies have killed. Their enemies have begun to attack, and they will drag away a huge number people of Egypt. ²¹In the place where the dead people are, mighty leaders of other countries will make fun of you people of Egypt and your allies. They will say that you have come to lie dead with them, those godless people whom their enemies killed.

²²The dead of the people of Assyria and their army will also be there. They will be surrounded by the dead of others whom their enemies killed. ²³Their graves will be there in the deep pit, and the dead soldiers of their army will lie around their graves. The dead of all those who had terrified so many others will also be there, for their enemies will have killed them, too.

²⁴Many, many people from the country of Elam will be there, too, and Elam’s servants, because their enemies will have killed them. These were soldiers who had terrified people in many places. At that time they will lie there in that deep pit below the earth, and they, along with the others who have gone there, will be disgraced.

²⁵The people of Elam in their huge numbers will lie there among others who were slaughtered, surrounded by the graves of a huge crowd of other people. While they were alive, they caused people of other nations to be terrified; but they were godless, and now, because their enemies will have killed them, they will lie with others in that deep pit, disgraced.

²⁶The dead of all the soldiers of the lands of Meshech and Tubal will be there, surrounded by the graves of a huge crowd. While they were alive, they also caused people in many places to be terrified. They are uncircumcised people whom their enemies will have killed. ²⁷They will not lie there beside the uncircumcised warriors who have gone to the grave highly honored with their shields over their bodies and their swords under their heads. While they were alive, they terrified many people on the earth.

²⁸You king of Egypt, I will kill you also, and you will lie there with other godless people whom their enemies will have killed.

²⁹People of Edom will be there, along with their kings and leaders. They were powerful, but I will kill them. They will lie there in the place where the other godless people lie.

³⁰All the rulers of countries north of Israel, including people from the city of Sidon, will be there. Because of their power, they terrified other people, but they will lie there. They were godless, and they will lie there along with others whom their enemies will have killed. They, along with everyone else who goes down into that deep pit, will be disgraced.

³¹The king of Egypt and all his army will see them, and they will be comforted about the death of their many people, because they know that there were other huge groups of people whom their enemies killed. ³²While that king was living, I allowed him to terrify others in many countries, but he and his huge army will be there among other godless people whom their enemies have killed." This will certainly surely happen because the Lord Yahweh has said that it would happen.

Chapter 33

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²"Son of man, speak to your fellow Israelites and say this to them: 'Suppose that I bring an enemy army to attack a country, and the people of that country choose one of their own people to be a watchman. ³And suppose that he sees the enemy army come into view, and that he blows a trumpet to warn everyone. ⁴If anyone hears the trumpet but pays no attention, and if that person then dies because of the enemy, that person is responsible for his own death. ⁵If he had paid attention, he would have saved his own life. But as it is, he will die, and it will be his own fault.

⁶Now suppose that the watchman sees the enemy army coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people. Then suppose that one of his people dies because of the enemy. That person will die because of his own mistake, but I will hold the watchman responsible for it.

⁷Son of man, this parable has a meaning for you. I have appointed you to be a watchman for the Israelites. So always listen to what I say, and warn the people for me. ⁸When I say to some wicked person, 'You wicked person, you will surely die because of your sins,' you must tell him what I said. If you do not speak to that person to warn him to turn away from his sins, that wicked person will die because of his sins, but I will make you responsible for his death. ⁹But if you warn that wicked person that he should turn away from his sins, but if he does not do so, then he will die because of his sins, but you will have saved your own life.

¹⁰Son of man, say to the Israelite people, 'This is what you all are saying: "The guilt that we feel for disobeying God's laws and sinning is like a heavy weight on us, and our sins are hurting us, and we are slowly dying. So what can we do to continue to remain alive?"' ¹¹Say to them, 'Yahweh the Lord says, "As surely as I am alive, I am not happy when wicked people die; I would prefer that they turn away from their wicked behavior and continue to live. So repent! Turn away from your evil behavior! You Israelite people, do you really want to die?"'

¹²Therefore, Son of man, say to your fellow Israelites that if good people start to disobey me, the fact that they were previously righteous will not keep me from punishing them. Similarly, if wicked people turn away from their wicked behavior, they will not die because of those sins. And if good people start to sin, I will not allow the fact that they had been good to keep me from punishing them now. ¹³If I tell those who do what is right that they will surely remain alive because of all the good they do, but then if they turn away and become proud of all their good deeds, then I will ignore all the good things that they had done before. I will make sure that they will die because of the evil things that they have done. ¹⁴Continue to tell the people these things: If I say to some wicked person, 'You will surely die because of your sins,' perhaps that person will stop doing evil and start doing what is just and right.

¹⁵For example, he might return what he took from another person to guarantee that that person would pay back what he owes, or he might return things that he has stolen, or he might obey the laws that will enable those who obey them to remain alive. If this happens, he will surely remain alive; he will not die because of the sins that he committed previously. ¹⁶I will ignore the sins that he previously committed; he will surely remain alive.

¹⁷Tell the people this: That they say that what I do is not fair, but that it is really what they do that is not fair. Then tell them these things, also: ¹⁸If a good person stops doing what is good and starts to do what is evil, it is fair that he should die because of his sins. ¹⁹And if a wicked person turns away from his wicked behavior and does what is right and fair, it is fair for him to remain alive because of doing that. ²⁰Remind the people that they are still saying that what I do is not fair. They can talk all they want, but I will punish each of them for what they do. Tell them this."

²¹Almost twelve years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, on the fifth day of the tenth month of that year, a man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me in Babylon and said, "Jerusalem has been captured!" ²²The evening before that man arrived, Yahweh took control of me. So when that man arrived, Yahweh enabled me to speak again; I was no longer forced to be silent.

²³Then Yahweh gave a message to me. He said, ²⁴"Son of man, the people who are living in the ruins in Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one person, but Yahweh promised him that he and his descendants would possess this land. But we are many; so surely Yahweh has given us this land to possess.' ²⁵So send a message to them. Say, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: "You eat meat that still has the animal's blood in it. You still worship idols. And you still murder others. So should this land belong to you? ²⁶You rely on using your swords to obtain things that you want. You do many detestable things. Each of you sleeps with other men's wives. So should you really possess the land of Israel?"'

²⁷Send this message to them and tell them that this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, say to them: 'As surely as I am alive, those who are left in the ruins in Jerusalem—their enemies will also kill them. And those who are living in the countryside—wild animals will kill them. Those who are living in forts and caves will die from disease. ²⁸I will cause your country to become a desolate wasteland. You will no longer be proud of being a strong country. The mountains of Israel will become very desolate, with the result that no one will walk across them.' ²⁹Then, when I have caused their country to become a desolate wasteland because of all the disgusting things that you have done, they will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

³⁰As for you, Son of man, your fellow Israelites here in Babylon stand beside the city wall or at the doors of their houses and are talking with each other. They are saying, 'Come and listen to the message that has come from Yahweh.' ³¹My people come to you as they often have done, and they sit in front of you to listen to what you say. But they do not do what you tell them that they must do. With their mouths they say that they love me, but in their inner beings they are eager to acquire things by doing what is unjust. ³²To them, you are only a man who sings them beautiful songs and plays a musical instrument well. They hear what you say, but they do not do what you tell them to do.

³³The terrible things that I have said will happen to them will surely happen. And then they will know that a prophet has been among them, and that you are that prophet."

Chapter 34

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, speak my message against the leaders of Israel. They should be taking care of my people, like shepherds take care of their flocks. Say to them that this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, have to tell them: ‘You shepherds of Israel, terrible things will happen to you because you take care only of yourselves. You should certainly take care of my sheep. ³But you are like shepherds who eat the fat sheep, who slaughter the best animals for their wool. You are not real shepherds at all. ⁴You have not taken care of the sick sheep; you have paid no attention to those who are wounded. You have not looked for the sheep who have wandered off. You rule over them with force and violence. ⁵Because you did not take care of them, my people have wandered away like sheep. And while they are scattered, wild animals attack and kill them, and then eat their flesh. ⁶My people wander like sheep all over the high hills and mountains. They are scattered all over the earth, and no one is searching for them.

⁷Therefore, you who should be acting like shepherds, listen to what I, Yahweh the Lord, have to say to you. ⁸As surely as I am alive, my people are like a flock of sheep without any shepherd, and as a result it is as though wild animals have attacked my people and eaten them. You shepherds did not search for them; instead, you only wanted to provide food for yourselves. ⁹Therefore, you who should be shepherds of my people, listen to me. ¹⁰I am opposed to you leaders. I will punish you for mistreating my people. I will remove you from taking care of my people; you will no longer feed yourselves while ignoring them. I will rescue my people from you, and you will no longer be able to butcher them and eat them.

¹¹I, the Lord Yahweh, tell you leaders that I myself will search for my sheep and take care of them. ¹²As a shepherd takes care of his sheep, I will rescue my people from all the places to which you scattered them, when disasters struck them and they were afraid. ¹³I will bring them back from those countries and gather them together again in their own land. I will lead my sheep to good pastureland on the hills of Israel, in the ravines, and in the villages of Israel. ¹⁴My sheep will graze in good pastures on the mountaintops. They will lie down in good grazing areas. ¹⁵I myself will take care of my people and allow them to lie down and rest. This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, promise. ¹⁶I will search for those who are lost; I will bring back the ones who have strayed away. I will bandage those who have been injured and strengthen those who are weak. But I will destroy those who are fat and powerful. I will act fairly toward my sheep, my people.

¹⁷And as for you, my people, my sheep, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: ‘I will judge between each of you; I will separate those who are peaceful from those who are cruel and powerful. ¹⁸You leaders, you who are like strong sheep who do evil to the others: It is bad that you keep the best pastures for yourselves. It is even worse that you trample the good grass with your feet. It is bad that you yourselves drink the clear water. It is even worse that with your feet you cause the rest of the water to become muddy. ¹⁹You are forcing my flock to eat the grass that you have trampled and to drink the water that you have caused to become muddy!

²⁰Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to you: I myself will judge between those of you who are like the fat sheep and the rest of my people, those who are like the thin sheep. ²¹You who are like strong sheep, with your shoulders and buttocks you have shoved the others away. You butted them with your horns, until you chased them all away from the good pastureland. ²²But I will rescue my people, and you will no longer steal from them. I will judge between one person and another. ²³And I will appoint one leader for them, someone who will be like King David, who served me very well. That leader will take care of them and be like their shepherd. ²⁴I, Yahweh, will be their God, and the one who is like King David will be their king. That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.

²⁵I will make a covenant with the people of Israel. I will promise to give them peace. I will promise to get rid of all the wild animals in Israel, in order that my people may live safely, even in the wilderness and in the forests. ²⁶I will bless them, and I will bless all the region close to Mount Zion, where they will worship me in my temple. I will bless them by sending them rain showers at the right season; they will be showers to bless them. ²⁷The fruit trees will produce fruit, and the ground will produce crops. And my people will live safely in their land. When I rescue them from people who made them slaves, they will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

²⁸Soldiers from other nations will no longer take away their valuable possessions, and wild animals will no longer attack them. They will live safely, and no one will make them afraid. ²⁹I will cause their land to be peaceful and to produce good crops. There will no longer be famines in the land, and people in other nations will no longer mock them. ³⁰Then they will know that I, Yahweh their God, am helping them, and they will know that they, the Israelite people, are my people. ³¹It is as though you, my people, are my sheep whom I take care of, and I am your God. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.”

Chapter 35

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ²“Son of man, turn toward Edom and prophesy what will happen to its people. Say this to them: ³You who live near Mount Seir in Edom, I am your enemy. I will use my power to strike you and ruin your country. ⁴I will destroy your cities, and everyone will leave them. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

⁵You have always been enemies of the Israelite people. You rejoiced when they experienced a great disaster, when their enemies attacked them, when I was punishing them most severely for the sins that they had committed.

⁶Therefore, I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that as surely as I am alive, I will allow your enemies to slaughter you. They will attack you again and again. You enjoyed watching other people die, so I will slaughter you. ⁷I will therefore make everyone leave Mount Seir, and I will destroy anyone who enters it or leaves it. ⁸I will cause your mountains to be filled with the corpses of those who have been killed. The corpses of those whom your enemies have killed will lie on your hills, in your valleys, and in all your ravines. ⁹I will cause your land to be forever without people. No one will live in your towns again. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.

¹⁰Your people said, ‘Israel and Judah will become ours. We will take over their territory!’ You said that even though I, Yahweh, was still there and protecting them. ¹¹Therefore, I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that as surely as I am alive, I will punish you for being angry with my people, for envying them, and for hating them. And when I punish you, I will make sure that the Israelites know that it is I who have punished you. ¹²Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have heard all the disgusting things that you have said about the land of Israel; you said that the land was ruined, and that you could capture it for yourselves. ¹³You insulted me; I heard everything that you said about me. ¹⁴So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: You people who live on Mount Seir and in all the other places in Edom, when I make everyone leave your land, everyone else in the world will rejoice. ¹⁵You were happy when the land of the Israelite people was ruined, so I will do the same thing to your land. When that happens, people will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.”

Chapter 36

¹Yahweh said to Ezekiel, “Son of man, give a message to the hill country and mountains in Israel just as if they were people. Tell them to listen to my message for them. ²This is it: The enemies of Israel, those people groups who live nearby, are now very happy, because they are saying that Jerusalem has been destroyed, so the ancient mountains of Israel will now belong to them. ³So you, Ezekiel, must tell the mountains of Israel what I, the Lord Yahweh, am saying to them: ‘Armies of other nations attacked you from every direction, and everyone has left you. Those foreign armies are now in your land. They have spoken very maliciously about your people, the Israelites, and have told all kinds of lies about them. ⁴⁻⁶Therefore, you mountains of Israel, listen to this message from me. I, Yahweh the Lord, have something to say to you, the hills and mountains, and to you, the ravines and valleys, and to you, the towns and cities which the enemy burned down, where no one is living any longer, from where the enemy has taken everything valuable, and whose people the people groups all around are mocking. “This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare: I am very angry with the people of Edom and the other people groups; they have insulted your Israelite people and happily taken all their land as pastures. So Ezekiel must speak for me to you, the land of Israel, mountains and hills, valleys and ravines: I, Yahweh the Lord, am very angry because the enemy has insulted you.

⁵⁶⁷Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I solemnly declare I will shame the people of the nations that are around you.

⁸But I say to you mountains of Israel that huge crops of fruit will grow on your trees for my Israelite people, because they will soon return home from Babylonia. ⁹I will work to help you, and I will be kind to you. I will enable farmers to plow the ground and plant seed in you. ¹⁰I will cause the number of people who live there on you mountains and everywhere else in Israel to greatly increase. People will live in the cities and rebuild houses where there are now only ruins. ¹¹I will cause the number of people and domestic animals to increase. People will have many children. I will enable people to live there as they did previously, and I will enable them to prosper as they did before. Then you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have the power to do what I say that I will do. ¹²I will enable my Israelite people to walk through your mountains. They will own the land on you; you will belong to them forever. You will always grow enough food for them to eat, so they will never again go hungry and die.

¹³I, Yahweh the Lord, am telling you mountains this: It is true that people have said they could not grow many crops on you, and so they died from hunger. ¹⁴But that will no longer happen. ¹⁵No longer will the other people groups ridicule you mountains. No longer will they laugh at you; no longer will you mountains make your nation suffer defeat. I, the Lord Yahweh, am telling you this myself.”

¹⁶Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ¹⁷“Son of man, when the Israelite people were living in their own land, they defiled it by the things that they did. They made it unacceptable to me. I considered that their behavior was as disgusting as the rags that women use during their monthly menstrual periods. ¹⁸So I severely punished them, because they had murdered many people and because they had worshiped idols there. They made their entire land unacceptable to me. ¹⁹So I made their enemies scatter them into other lands. I punished them as they deserved to be punished because they had done so many evil things. ²⁰Wherever they went among those lands, they caused other people to mock me, when they should have honored me. Those people have been saying, ‘The Israelites belong to Yahweh, but he was not strong enough to protect them. They had to leave the land that he had given to them.’ ²¹The people of Israel had disgraced me among the people groups to which they had to go, but I deserve that those people groups worship me instead.

²²So you, Ezekiel, say to the Israelite people that I, the Lord Yahweh, am telling them this: ‘You Israelite people, it is not for your sake that I am going to rescue you from your enemies. Instead, I will do this so that the people in these other lands will worship me as God. You have done your best to disgrace me wherever you have gone. ²³I will show that these other people groups should worship me as God, even though they would never know it by watching how you act. When I prove to them that I am powerful and can do anything, then they will know that I will carry out everything that I say I will do. And they will see you honor me as the God who is holy.

²⁴I will take you out of those distant lands. I will gather you from all those places where you had to go, and I will bring you back to your own land. ²⁵It will be as though I will sprinkle clean water on you, and then you will be clean. I will make you clean from everything that has made me reject you, and I will cause you to stop worshiping idols. ²⁶I will give you a completely new way of thinking. I will enable you to stop being stubborn, and I will enable you to obey me from your inner beings. ²⁷I will put my Spirit within you and enable you to carefully obey all my laws. ²⁸You will again live in the land that I gave to your ancestors. You will be my people, and I will be your God. ²⁹I will free you from everything that made me reject you. I will cause your grain to be plentiful, and I will not send a famine to you again. ³⁰I will cause your fruit trees to produce plenty of fruit and your ground to produce plenty of good crops, with the result that the people of other lands will not mock you because you do not have enough food. ³¹When that happens, you will think about your previous evil behavior and wicked deeds, and you will be very displeased with yourselves for your sins and the detestable things that you did. ³²But I, the Lord Yahweh, tell you this: It is not for your sake that I will do those things. You Israelite people ought to be ashamed of your behavior.

³³I, the Lord Yahweh, also tell you this: At the time that I cleanse you from all the sins that you have committed, I will enable you to live in your cities again and to build houses where there are now only ruins. ³⁴People who walk through your country will see that you are once again cultivating your land, and that your people are living in it again. ³⁵Then they will say, “This land that was ruined has become very fertile, like the garden of Eden. The cities

that were piles of ruins, empty and destroyed, now have houses around them, and people are living in those cities."

³⁶When that happens, the people who are still left in the lands that are around you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have enabled you to rebuild what was destroyed, and to again plant crops in the fields that had nothing growing in them. I, Yahweh, have said that it will happen, and I will cause it to happen.

³⁷This is also what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Again I will answer your pleas for me to make your people become as numerous as sheep. ³⁸I will make them as numerous as the flocks of sheep that will be needed for offerings in Jerusalem during your regular festivals. The cities that are now ruined will be filled with people, and then you will know that I, Yahweh, have done this."

Chapter 37

¹One day Yahweh gave me another vision. In the vision I felt the power of God on me, and by his Spirit he took me to the middle of a valley. It was full of bones of people who had been killed. ²He led me to walk back and forth among those bones. I saw that there were very many bones there, bones that were very dry. ³He asked me, "Son of man, do you think that these bones can become living people again?"

I replied, "Yahweh my Lord, only you know if that can happen."

⁴Then he said to me, "Speak a message for me to these bones. Say to them, 'You dry bones, listen to what Yahweh says. ⁵This is what Yahweh the Lord says to you bones: I am going to put my breath into each of you, and you will become alive again. ⁶I will fasten tendons to your bones and cause your bones to be covered with flesh. I will cover the flesh with skin. Then I will breathe into you, and you will become alive. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.'"

⁷So I spoke to the bones as Yahweh commanded me to speak. As I was speaking, there was a noise, a sound of shaking, and the bones came together, bones joining to each other. ⁸While I was looking, I saw tendons fastening to them and flesh covering them, and then skin covered the flesh, but they were not breathing.

⁹Then he said to me, "Son of man, speak a message for me to the wind. Say to the wind, 'Wind, Yahweh says to you, blow from all four directions. Breathe into these people who have been killed, in order that they can come alive again!'" ¹⁰So I said what he commanded me to say, and then breath entered them, and they began to breathe. They became alive and stood up, like a huge army.

¹¹Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones represent all the Israelite people. The people say, 'It is as though our bones are dried up; we can hope for nothing good any longer; our nation is destroyed.' ¹²So speak my message to them and say, 'This is what the Lord Yahweh says: My people, it will be as though I will open your graves and cause your corpses to become alive again. I will bring you back to Israel. ¹³Then when that happens, you my people will know that I, Yahweh, have done this. ¹⁴I will put my spirit in you, and it will be as though you will become alive again, and I will enable you to live in your own land again. Then you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who said that it would happen and who has caused it to happen. That is what I, Yahweh, declare.'"

¹⁵Yahweh gave me another message. He said, ¹⁶"Son of man, take a wooden stick and write on it, 'This represents Judah and all the tribes of Judah.' Then take another one and write on it, 'This represents Israel and all the tribes of Israel.' ¹⁷Then join them together to become as though they were one larger wooden stick in your hand.

¹⁸When your fellow Israelites ask you, 'What does this action mean?', ¹⁹tell them, 'This is what the Lord Yahweh says: One of the pieces of wood in Ezekiel's hand represents Israel and all the tribes of Israel. I am joining it to the piece of wood that represents Judah, to form one stick in his hand.' ²⁰Then, Son of man, hold up the pieces of wood that you have written on, in order that the people can see them. ²¹Say to the people, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: I will take you Israelite people out of the countries to which you have been forced to go. I will gather you from all those lands, back to your own land. ²²And I will cause you to again be one nation in your land, on the mountains of Israel. And there will be one king to rule over all of you. Never again will you be two nations or divided into two

kingdoms. ²³No longer will you defile yourselves by worshiping idols and disgusting statues of your gods, because I will enable you to stop sinning and to stop rejecting me. You will be my people, and I will be your God.'

²⁴The king who rules over them will always come from the family of King David. David was the one who served me well. There will be one shepherd to watch over them and to take care of all of them. They will carefully obey all my laws. ²⁵They will live in the land that I gave to Jacob, who also served me well; they will live in the land where your ancestors lived. They and their children and their grandchildren will live there forever, and the one who will be like King David will be their king forever. ²⁶I will make a covenant with them to give them peace; it will be a covenant that will last forever. I will give them that land again and cause their population to increase. And I will put my temple among them forever. ²⁷My home, where I will live, will be among them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. ²⁸Then, when my temple is there again among them, the people of nations will know that I, Yahweh, set apart Israel for my honor."

Chapter 38

¹Yahweh gave me another message. He said to me, ²"Son of man, turn and face Magog, the country where Gog is the king. He is also the ruler of the nations of Meshech and Tubal. Announce my message about the terrible things that will happen to him. ³Say this: 'This is what the Lord Yahweh says: Gog, you who rule Meshech and Tubal, I am your enemy. ⁴It will be as though I will turn you around and put hooks in your jaws and bring you to Israel—you and all of your army, including your horses and the men carrying weapons who ride those horses, and many other soldiers carrying large shields and small shields, all of them carrying swords. ⁵Your soldiers also include armies from Persia, Ethiopia, and Put, all of them with shields and helmets— ⁶also all the soldiers from Gomer and an army from Beth Togarmah—both of these lands that are far north of Israel. Armies of many nations will come with you.'

⁷Tell Gog this: 'Get ready, and be prepared to be the commander of all those soldiers. ⁸At some future time, Yahweh will command you to lead those armies to attack Israel, a country whose buildings have been rebuilt after they were destroyed in wars. Their people will have been brought back from many nations to live again on the hills of Israel, where no one had been living for a long time. Yahweh will bring the Israelites back from other lands, and they will be living peacefully. ⁹You and all those armies from many nations will go up to Israel, advancing like a great storm. Your army will be like a huge cloud that covers the land.

¹⁰But this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: On that day, you will plan to do something very evil. ¹¹You will say this to yourself: "My army will invade a country where the villages do not have walls around them. We will attack people who are peaceful and think that no one will harm them. Their towns and villages do not have walls with gates and bars. ¹²So it will be easy for us to attack these people. They are people who come back together from many countries where they had lived for many years, people who now live safely in their land with all their livestock and other possessions. They are living in the country that is in the middle of the most important countries in the world. Our soldiers will take away all their valuable possessions." ¹³Then people of Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish will come and say to you, "Are you gathering all your soldiers in order to attack Israel and take away all their silver and gold? Do you plan to take away their livestock and all their other valuable possessions?"

¹⁴Therefore, Son of man, take my message about Gog and say to him, 'This is what the Lord Yahweh says: At that time, when my people of Israel are living safely, you will certainly think about them. ¹⁵You will come from your place far north of Israel, with the armies of many other nations, all riding horses, a huge army. ¹⁶You will march toward my Israelite people, and your soldiers will cover the land like a huge cloud. Gog, I will bring your army to attack the country that belongs to me, but what I will do to you will show the people of other nations that I am holy.

¹⁷This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to Gog: In past years, when I gave messages to my servants, the prophets in Israel, there were messages about you. At that time, they said for many years that I would bring your armies to attack my people. ¹⁸So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say will happen: When your army attacks Israel, I will be

very angry with you. ¹⁹I will be furious, and to show that I am angry, there will be a great earthquake in Israel, where your armies will be. ²⁰The fish in the sea, the birds, the wild animals, and the animals that crawl on the ground, and all the people on the earth will tremble because of what I will do. Mountains will fall down, cliffs will crumble, and walls everywhere will fall to the ground. ²¹Gog, on all the mountains in the country that belongs to me I will cause your soldiers to fight against each other. ²²I will punish you and your soldiers with plagues, and I will kill them. I will send down from the sky, on you and your troops who have come from many lands, huge amounts of rain, hail, and burning sulfur. ²³In this way, I will cause the people of many nations to know that I am very great, and I will show them my holiness. And they will see who I am and they will know that I am Yahweh.”

Chapter 39

¹Yahweh said to me, “Son of man, speak for me about the terrible things that will happen to Gog. Say this to him: ‘Gog, I am your enemy, you who rule Meshech and Tubal. ²I will turn you around and drag you and your armies from far north of Israel and send you to fight on the mountains of Israel. ³When you are there, I will snatch your bows from your left hands and cause your arrows to fall from your right hands. ⁴You and all the soldiers that are with you will die on the mountains of Israel. I will give your corpses to be food for the birds that eat dead flesh, and to the wild animals. ⁵You will die in the open fields. This will certainly happen because I, Yahweh the Lord, have said that it will happen. ⁶I will cause many fires to burn in Magog and to all those who live safely in the areas along their coasts, and they will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have the power to do what I say that I will do.

⁷I will enable my Israelite people to know that I am holy. I will no longer allow them to mock me, and the people groups in the other lands will know that I am Yahweh, the God whom Israel worships and honors. ⁸That day is fast approaching. I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that those things will happen soon.

⁹At that time, the people who live in the cities of Israel will go out and gather the weapons from the dead soldiers, and will use them to make fires to cook their food. They will burn the small and large shields, the bows and arrows, the war clubs, and spears. There will be enough weapons to use as firewood for seven years. ¹⁰They will not need to gather firewood in the fields or cut wood from trees in the forests, because those weapons will be all the firewood that they will need. And they will take valuable things from those who took valuable things from them, and steal things from people who stole things from them. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare will happen.

¹¹At that time I will create a graveyard for you, Gog, and your soldiers, in the valley east of the Dead Sea. That graveyard will block the road that travelers usually walk on, because you, Gog and all the soldiers of your huge army will be buried there. So it will be named the Valley of Hamon Gog.

¹²For seven months the people of Israel will be burying your corpses. It will be necessary to bury all of them, in order that the land will not be defiled because of any unburied corpses. ¹³All the people of Israel will do the work of burying them. The day when I win that victory they will honor me, and they will remember that day forever.

¹⁴After those seven months are ended, the Israelite people will designate men to go throughout the land to bury any remaining corpses, in order that the land might not remain defiled. ¹⁵When they go through the land, whenever one of them sees a human bone, he will set up a marker beside it. When the gravediggers see the markers, they will pick up the bones and bury them in the Valley of Hamon Gog. ¹⁶There will be a city there named Hamonah. And by doing this work of burying the corpses, they will cleanse the land.”

¹⁷Yahweh said to me, “Son of man, this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, say: Summon every kind of bird and wild animal. Say to them, ‘Gather together from everywhere and come to the feast that Yahweh is preparing for you. It will be a great feast on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat men’s flesh and drink their blood. ¹⁸You will eat the flesh of strong soldiers and drink the blood of kings as if they were fat animals from the region of Bashan—as if they were male sheep, lambs, goats, and bulls. ¹⁹At the feast that Yahweh is preparing for you, you will eat fat until your stomachs are full, and you will drink blood until it is as though you are drunk. ²⁰It will be as though you are eating

at a table that I have set up for you. You will eat all you want of the flesh of horses and their riders, strong soldiers of every kind.' That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.

²¹I will show people of the nations that I am powerful, and all the nations will see how I punish them. ²²At that time, the Israelite people will learn that I, Yahweh their God, have the power to do what I say that I will do. ²³And the people of the other lands will know that the Israelites had been forced to go to other countries because they sinned by not being faithful to me. I turned away from them, and I allowed their enemies to capture them and kill many of them. ²⁴I punished them as they deserved because of their disgusting behavior and sins, and I turned away from them.

²⁵Therefore, this is now what I, the Lord Yahweh say: I will now bring back from exile the descendants of Jacob; I will have mercy on all the Israelite people, and I will also make sure that they honor me. ²⁶When the Israelite people are back in their own country, they will live safely in their land, with no one to cause them to be afraid. They will forget about the disgraceful and unfaithful things that they did previously. ²⁷When I have brought them back from their enemies' countries and gathered them together in Israel, the people of many nations will know how holy I am because of what I did for my people. ²⁸The Israelite people will know that I, Yahweh, have done this. They will know that because I forced them to go to other countries, and then I gathered them together in their own country. I will not leave any of them in those countries. ²⁹I will no longer turn away from them; I will give my Spirit to the Israelite people. This will certainly happen because I, Yahweh the Lord, have said it."

Chapter 40

¹Almost twenty-five years after the Babylonians had taken us Israelites to their land, on the tenth day of the first month of that year, almost fourteen years after Jerusalem had been destroyed, Yahweh grabbed hold of me with his power, and he took me in a vision to Israel. ²He set me on a very high mountain. On the south side of that mountain there were some buildings that looked like part of a city. ³When he took me there, I saw a man who looked as if he had been made of bronze. He was standing inside the city gate, and he was holding a linen cord and a measuring stick in his hand. ⁴He said to me, "Son of man, look carefully at everything that I am going to show you, and pay attention to everything that I say and everything that I will show you, because that is why God brought you here. And then later you must tell the Israelite people everything that you have seen here."

⁵In the vision I saw that there was a wall that completely surrounded the temple area. The measuring stick in the man's hand was three and one-tenth meters long. He measured the wall and it was three and one-tenth meters thick and three and one-tenth meters high.

⁶Then he went to the gate in the temple wall on the temple's east side. He climbed the steps and measured the gateway that faced outward; it was three and one-tenth meters deep. ⁷Next, there were alcoves for the temple guards, each being three and one-tenth meters long and deep. The distance of the wall between each alcove was two and three-quarters meters. The gateway that faced inward, which led to the temple portico, was also three and one-tenth meters deep.

⁸Then he measured the portico that was after the gate; it was three and one-tenth meters long. ⁹He also measured the depth, which was three and one-tenth of a meter. The doorposts on either side were one meter thick. This was the portico attached to the temple gate on the gate's inner side, facing the temple. ¹⁰Inside the east gate there were three alcoves for guards on each side of the gate. They all had the same length and depth. And the distance of wall between them was the same.

¹¹Then he measured the opening of the gate; it was five and two-fifths meters wide, and the entrance from the gate was seven meters long. ¹²Running along in front of the alcoves was a low wall one-half meter high. Each of the alcoves was three and one-tenth meters long on all sides. ¹³Then the man measured the gateway's width from the roof of the alcove on one side, to the roof of the alcove on the other side. The distance was 13 and one-half, from one alcove's entrance to that of the other. ¹⁴Then the man measured along the wall that separated the alcoves

from each other; it was thirty-two meters long. He measured them as far as the gate's portico. ¹⁵The distance from the entrance of the gate to the far end of its portico was twenty-seven meters. ¹⁶There were narrow windows in the walls of all the alcoves, and also in the inner walls between the alcoves. The portico also had these same windows on its inner side. The wall that ran between the alcoves was decorated with carvings of palm trees.

¹⁷Then the man brought me to the temple's outer courtyard. There I saw some rooms, and a stone pavement in the courtyard. There were thirty rooms facing the courtyard. ¹⁸The stone pavement was all around the courtyard, and it extended out from the walls into the courtyard for the same distance as the gate entrances. That was the lower pavement. ¹⁹Then the man measured the distance across the outer courtyard of the temple, between the outer gate and inner courtyard; it was fifty-four meters on the east side, and the same distance on the north side of the courtyard.

²⁰Then he measured how long and how wide was the gateway on the north side, which was an entrance into the outer courtyard of the temple complex. ²¹There were three alcoves for guards on each side of that gateway. From the gateway to the end of its portico was twenty-seven meters, and they were thirteen and one-half meters wide. ²²It had the same windows, portico, guard alcoves, and palm tree decorations as the east gate had. Like the east gate, there were seven steps leading up to it and its portico. ²³Across the outer courtyard from the north gate was a gate leading to the inner courtyard, just as there was on the east side. The man measured the distance from the north gate to the gate leading to the inner courtyard; it was fifty-four meters in distance.

²⁴Then he brought me through the south gateway into the inner courtyard, and he measured the entrance. It measured the same as the other gateways. Its alcoves, its walls between the alcoves, and its entry room measured the same as the ones on the other sides. ²⁵The gateway and its portico had narrow windows along the walls, as on the other sides. The gateway and its portico measured twenty-five meters long and thirteen and one-half wide. ²⁶There were seven steps leading up to that gate and its portico. It also had carvings of palm trees on the walls that were between the rooms. ²⁷Across the outer courtyard from the south gate was a gate opening onto the inner courtyard. The man measured from that gateway to the entrance on the south side of the outer courtyard; it was also fifty-four meters in distance.

²⁸Then the man brought me through the south entrance into the inner courtyard, and he measured the south entrance. It measured the same as the other gates. ²⁹He measured its alcoves, its walls, and its portico with the same measuring standards he had been using. The gate and its portico had windows all around. The gate and its portico measured twenty-seven meters long and thirteen and one-half wide. ³⁰The porticos of the inner gates, which led to the inner courtyard, were about thirteen and one-half meters long and two and three-quarters meters wide. ³¹The portico's entrance faced the outer courtyard. Carvings of palm trees decorated the walls, and there were eight steps leading up to it.

³²Then the man led me to the east side of the inner courtyard, and he measured the gate. It had the same measurements as the other gates. ³³Its alcoves, walls, and portico measured the same as the others. The gate and its portico had windows all around. The gate and its portico measured twenty-seven meters long and thirteen and one-half wide. ³⁴Its portico faced the outer courtyard. It also had carvings of palm trees decorating the walls, and it had eight steps leading up to it.

³⁵Then he led me to the entrance on the north side and measured it. It measured the same as the other entrances. ³⁶And its alcoves and walls between them and the entry room all had small windows in the walls. It all measured the same as the other gates. The gate and its portico measured twenty-seven meters long and thirteen and one-half meters wide. ³⁷Its portico faced the outer courtyard. It also had carvings of palm trees decorating the walls, and it had eight steps leading up to it.

³⁸In each of the inner entrances there was a room with a door. They were rooms where the carcasses of the animals that were to be completely burned on the altar were washed. ³⁹In each portico were four tables, two on each side. On those tables would be slaughtered the animals that were to be completely burned, also the animals for offerings of sins that people had committed, and offerings that acknowledged their guilt for having sinned

against other people. ⁴⁰Just outside the inner courtyard, to the left of the steps leading up to its north gate, there were two tables, and to the right of the steps were two more tables. ⁴¹There were four tables on the outer side of each inner courtyard gate, and there were also four tables on the inner side. The animals to be sacrificed were slaughtered on these tables. ⁴²There were also four tables of cut stone for the preparation of the offerings that were to be completely burned, four-fifths of a meter long on each side and one-half meter high. The priests would put on those stone tables the tools for slaughtering all the animals. ⁴³The meat for the offerings would be placed on those stone tables. There were hooks on which the meat was hung, each with two prongs, each eight centimeters long, fastened to the walls of the porticos.

⁴⁴Outside two of the inner gateways, on the inner courtyard side, there were rooms for those who led in singing during the worship, one on the north side and one on the south side. ⁴⁵The man said to me, "The room whose door faces south is for the priests who are working in the temple. ⁴⁶The room whose door faces north is for the priests who are in charge of the work at the altar. They are the descendants of Zadok; they are the only descendants of Levi who are permitted to approach Yahweh while they work for him."

⁴⁷Then he measured the courtyard; it was square, fifty-four meters long and fifty-four meters wide. The altar was in front of the sanctuary.

⁴⁸Then he brought me to the portico of the sanctuary and measured the doorposts and their walls on each side of the entrance; they were about two and three-quarters meters thick. The doorway was seven meters wide, and the sides on each side of it were one and three-fifths meters wide. ⁴⁹The portico was eleven meters wide, and its depth was six meters on each side. There were steps leading up to it, and there were columns on each side of the portico.

Chapter 41

¹Then in the vision the man brought me to into the holy place in the temple and measured the doorposts on either side of the entrance; they were each three and one-tenth meters wide. ²The entrance was five and two-fifths meters wide, and the walls of each side of it were two and three-quarters meters long. He also measured the holy place. It was twenty-two meters long and eleven meters wide.

³Then he entered the inner room of the temple, the very holy place, and measured the walls to either side of the entrance; each was one meter wide. The doorway was three and one-tenth meters wide, and each of the walls on each side of the entrance was three and four-fifths meters long. ⁴Then he measured the inner room; it was eleven meters long and eleven meters wide. Then he said to me, "This is the very holy place."

⁵Then he measured the wall of the temple; it was three and one-tenth meters thick. There was a row of rooms along the outside wall of the temple. Each of those rooms was two meters wide. ⁶There were three stories of rooms, with thirty rooms on each story. There were ledges all around the wall of the temple that were supports for the side rooms above. There were no extra supports built into the sanctuary wall. ⁷Each of the side rooms was wider than the one below it. The most narrow rooms were built first, at the bottom. Then a wider set of rooms was built over it, and the widest set was at the top. A set of stairs was built from the lowest level through the middle level to the highest level.

⁸I saw that there was a terrace around the temple. The terrace was the foundation for those side rooms; it was three and one-tenth meters high. ⁹The outer wall of those side rooms was two and three-quarters meters thick. All around the sanctuary there was an open area between those side rooms. ¹⁰The open areas were near the priests' rooms that were surrounding the courtyard; there was a distance of eleven meters between the two sets of side rooms all around the sanctuary. ¹¹There were two doors from those side rooms into another open area; one faced north and one faced south. This open area was two and three-quarters meters wide.

¹²There was a large building on the west side of the temple area. It was thirty-eight meters wide, and it had a wall two and three-quarters meters thick and forty-nine meters long.

¹³Then the man measured the temple. It was fifty-four meters long, and the temple courtyard, where the large building was, was fifty-four meters wide. The building and its wall measured the same. ¹⁴The courtyard on the east side of the temple, across the front of the temple, was also fifty-four meters wide.

¹⁵Then he measured the building on the west side. Including its walls, it was also fifty-four meters long.

The outer walls of the holy place, of the very holy place, and the portico, ¹⁶the inner walls above and below the narrow windows, and the galleries on all the stories—all these things were covered with thin panels of wood. ¹⁷All the walls inside the temple were decorated with carvings of winged creatures and palm trees; between each figure of a winged creature was a carving of a palm tree. ¹⁸⁻¹⁹Each winged creature had two faces. One face was the face of a human, and one was the face of a lion. Those figures were carved on the walls all around the inside of the temple, and each face looked at the carving of a palm tree. ¹⁹⁻²⁰They covered all the walls, from the floor to the wall above the entryway.

²¹At the entrance to the main room of the temple there were square doorposts, all the same in appearance. ²²In front of the very holy place there was a wooden altar. It was one and three-fifths meters high and one meter wide on all four sides. Its corners and base and sides were all made of wood. The man said to me, “This is the table that is in the presence of Yahweh.” ²³The holy place and the very holy place had folding doors. ²⁴Each door consisted of two parts that swung on hinges. ²⁵On these doors there were carvings of winged creatures and palm trees. There was also a wooden roof over the front portico of the sanctuary. ²⁶On the side walls of the portico were narrow windows with figures of palm trees carved on the sides of the windows. The side rooms around the temple also had projecting roofs.

Chapter 42

¹Then in the vision the man led me out of the inner courtyard, through the gate on the north side. We entered the outer courtyard and came to rooms that were facing the northern outer wall. ²The building with those rooms was fifty-four meters long and twenty-seven meters wide. ³In that building there was one group of rooms that faced the inner courtyard. The distance between those rooms and the sanctuary, the main temple building, was eleven meters. These rooms were built on three stories. Each set of rooms had a walkway over the set of rooms below it. There were rooms that overlooked the open area of the outer courtyard. ⁴To one side of the rooms was a walkway that was five and two-fifths meters wide and fifty-four meters long. All the doors of the rooms were on their north side. ⁵Each set of rooms was narrower than the set of rooms below them, because each upper set had a walkway in front. ⁶The rooms on the upper levels had no pillars to support them as there were in the courtyard, because those rooms were supported by the walls of the rooms below. ⁷The outer wall ran parallel to the rooms that faced the outer courtyard; this part of the outer wall was twenty-seven meters long. ⁸The row of rooms that was along the outer courtyard was twenty-seven meters long, and the row of rooms that faced the temple was fifty-four meters long. ⁹The bottom story had an entrance on its east side, coming from the outer courtyard.

¹⁰On the eastern side, along the outer wall of the outer courtyard, next to the temple courtyard, there was also a set of rooms. ¹¹There was a walkway in front of them. These rooms were like the rooms on the north side. They had the same length and width, and also the same kind of entrances. ¹²There were also doorways into rooms on the south side that were similar to what was on the north side. There was an inside passage with an outer door; the passage had doors into all the rooms. At the east end of the passage was an outside door leading into it.

¹³Then the man said to me, “The rooms on the northern and southern sides that overlook the temple sanctuary are only for Yahweh’s special purposes. Here the priests who offer sacrifices to Yahweh will eat their portions of those offerings. Because these rooms are special, they will be used to store the offerings for Yahweh: The flour for the flour offerings, for the offerings for the sins that people have committed, and for the offerings that people make for their sins. ¹⁴When the priests leave the temple, they will not be allowed to immediately enter the outer courtyard. First they must remove the clothes that they had been wearing inside the holy place, because those

clothes are special, reserved for their work. They must put on other clothes before they enter the parts of the temple area where the other people gather.”

¹⁵When the man had finished measuring the inside of the temple area, he led me out through the east entrance and measured all the surrounding area. ¹⁶¹⁶⁻¹⁹He measured the four sides of the area. There was a wall around the area that was two-hundred and seventy meters long on each side. ¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹²⁰He measured the wall that separated what was sacred from the areas that were not sacred on four sides. The wall was five hundred cubits long and five hundred cubits wide.

Chapter 43

¹Then the man brought me to the entrance on the east side. ²Suddenly I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. The sound of his coming was like the roar of a rushing river, and all that area shone with his glory. ³What I saw in this vision was like what I had seen in my earlier visions, first by the Kebar Canal and later when God came to destroy Jerusalem. I prostrated myself on the ground. ⁴The glory of Yahweh entered the temple through the east entrance, ⁵and then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner courtyard, while the glory of Yahweh filled the temple.

⁶Then, while the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speak to me from inside the temple. ⁷He said, “Son of man, this is my temple, the place where I sit on my throne and where I rest my feet. This is where I will live with the Israelite people forever. The Israelite people and their kings will never again disgrace me by worshiping other gods at their hilltop places of idol worship, or by building lifeless idols of their past kings. ⁸Your people placed their altars near mine, and the doorposts of their temples were next to the doorposts of my temple. There was only a wall between them. And they disgraced me by the detestable things that they did. So I was angry and destroyed them. ⁹Now they must stop this disgusting worship of idols and these rituals to honor kings’ idols. If they stop doing those things, I will live among them forever.

¹⁰Son of man, describe to the Israelite people what this temple that I have shown you in a vision is like, in order that they will be ashamed of the sins. ¹¹If they are ashamed of all the evil things that they have done, tell them all about the temple that I showed you: Its design, the exits and entrances, and everything else about it. And tell them all my laws and regulations about worshiping me there. Write all these things down while they watch you, in order that they will be able to faithfully obey them.

¹²And this is the supreme law about the temple: All of the area on top of the hill where the temple will be built must be kept sacred and holy.

¹³These are the measurements of the altar, using the same kind of measuring stick that was used for the temple area: There is a gutter around the altar that is one-half meter deep and one-half meter wide. There is a rim around it that is twenty-three centimeters wide. This will compose the base for the rest of the altar. ¹⁴The lower part of the gutter is one meter high to the lower ledge that surrounds the altar. The lower ledge is one-half meter wide. From that ledge to the upper ledge, it is two meters. That ledge is also one-half meter wide. ¹⁵The hearth at the top of the altar is another two meters high, and there is a hornlike projection that juts up from each of the four corners. ¹⁶That place at the top of the altar is square, six and one-half meters long on each side. ¹⁷The upper ledge that borders the hearth is also a square, seven and three-fifths meters long on each side, and has a rim all around that is twenty-seven centimeters wide. There is a gutter measuring one-half meter at the bottom of the altar. There are steps leading up to the east side of the altar.”

¹⁸Then the man said to me, “Son of man, this is what Yahweh the Lord says: These are the regulations for sacrificing offerings that will be completely burned and for sprinkling the blood against the sides of the altar when it is built: ¹⁹You must present to the priests a young bull to be an offering for the sins of the priests, the descendants of Levi, from the clan of Zadok, who come near to the altar to serve me. ²⁰You must take some of the blood from the bull and smear it on the four projections of the altar and on the four corners of the upper ledge,

and all around the rim, so I will accept the altar, and to make the altar belong only to me. ²¹You must burn that bull outside the temple in the part of the temple area designated for that purpose.

²²The next day you must offer a male goat that has no defects, to be an offering, so I will accept the altar. Then you must purify the altar again, as you did with the bull that was sacrificed. ²³When you have finished doing all that, you must offer a young bull and a ram, both of them without any defects. ²⁴You must offer them to me, Yahweh. The priests must sprinkle salt on them and burn them completely on the altar as a sacrifice to me.

²⁵Then, each day for seven days you must bring to the priest a male goat to be sacrificed for an offering, so I will accept the altar. You must also sacrifice a young bull and a ram, each without any defect, that the priests will provide. ²⁶For seven days the priests will consecrate the altar, so I will accept the altar. By doing that they will set it apart for my honor. ²⁷At the end of those seven days, starting on the following day, the priests will continue to put on the altar offerings to be completely burned and offerings to promise friendship with me. Then I will accept you. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare."

Chapter 44

¹Then the man brought me back to the outer entrance to the temple area, the one on the east side, but the gate was shut. ²Yahweh said to me, "This gate must remain shut. It must not be opened by anyone; no one will be permitted to enter it. It must remain shut because I, Yahweh, the God of Israel, made it to be special to me when I came in through it. ³Only the ruler of Israel will be permitted to sit inside this entrance to eat food in my presence. He must enter and leave the temple area through this gate."

⁴Then the man brought me through the north entrance to the front of the temple. I looked and saw that the glory of Yahweh filled his temple, and I prostrated myself on the ground.

⁵Yahweh said to me, "Son of man, look carefully, and listen carefully to everything that I tell you about all the regulations concerning the temple. Note carefully the temple entrance and all the exits. ⁶Say this to the rebellious Israelite people: 'This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: You Israelite people, I will no longer endure the detestable things that you do! ⁷In addition to all the other detestable things that you do, you brought into my temple foreign men who had not been circumcised and who knew nothing about how to honor me. By doing that, you caused my temple to be an unacceptable place to worship me, while you offered food and fat and blood, and you disobeyed my covenant with you. ⁸Instead of doing what I commanded you to do in regard to my holy things, you appointed foreigners to be in charge of my temple. ⁹But this is what I, Yahweh, have said: No foreigners, no men who are not circumcised, no godless people are permitted to enter my temple, not even foreigners who live among you Israelites permanently.

¹⁰Many of the descendants of Levi deserted me along with most of the Israelite people, and started to worship idols. I will punish them for their sin. ¹¹I will permit them to work in my temple and to be in charge of the temple gates. They will be able to slaughter the animals that will be completely burned on the altar, and to burn other sacrifices for the people, and they will be able to help the people. ¹²But because they helped the people to worship idols and caused many of the people of Israel to sin by worshiping idols, I swear that I will punish them for their sin. ¹³They must not come near me to serve as priests. They must not come near any sacred things or the holy offerings. They will be ashamed of the things that they did, of which they are guilty. ¹⁴But I will still put them in charge of the work in the temple, and allow them to do all the work that needs to be done there.

¹⁵But the priests who are descended from Levi and from the clan of Zadok faithfully worked in my temple when the other Israelites deserted me. So they must come near to me to work for me. They will stand in my presence to offer sacrifices of animals' fat and blood. ¹⁶They are the only ones who are permitted to enter my temple. They are the only ones who are permitted to come near my altar to serve me and do what I tell them to do.

¹⁷When they enter the gateway into the inner courtyard, they must wear white linen clothes. They must not wear any clothes made of wool while they do their work at the gates of the inner courtyard or inside the temple. ¹⁸They must wear white linen turbans on their heads and linen undergarments around their waists. They must not wear anything that would cause them to perspire. ¹⁹Before they go out into the courtyard where other people are, they must take off the clothes that they have been wearing and leave them in the sacred rooms, and put on other clothes, in order that the people are not consecrated by touching the sacred clothes.

²⁰The priests must not shave their heads or let their hair become long; but they must keep their hair trimmed.

²¹Priests must not drink wine before they enter the inner courtyard. ²²Also, priests must not marry widows of men who were not priests or women who have been divorced. They are permitted to marry only virgins or widows of other priests. ²³They must teach the people the difference between things that are holy and things that are not, and teach them how to know what things are acceptable to me and what things are not.

²⁴If there is a dispute between people, the priests are the ones who must serve as judges and decide matters according to my laws. They must obey all my laws and decrees concerning the sacred festivals, and they must treat my Sabbath days as special for me.

²⁵Priests are permitted to go near the corpse of a father or mother or son or daughter or brother or unmarried sister. But they must not defile themselves by going near a corpse of anyone else. ²⁶If a priest touches the corpse of a close relative, he must perform the rituals to become acceptable to serve me again. After he performs those rituals, he must wait seven days. ²⁷Then, on the day that he enters the inner courtyard again to serve me in the temple, he must give an offering to remove his guilt for having sinned. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.

²⁸The priests will not own any land. They will have only what I provide for them. ²⁹They will eat the offerings made from flour, offerings to remove people's guilt for having sinned, and offerings made when people fail to give to me the things that they are required to give. Everything else in Israel that is dedicated to me will belong to the priests.

³⁰The best fruits of the first part of each harvest and all the other special gifts will belong to the priests. You must give them the first part of your ground flour, in order that I will bless the people who live in your house. ³¹Priests must not eat the flesh of any bird or animal that is found dead or that has been killed by wild animals.

Chapter 45

¹When the land of Israel is divided among the twelve tribes, you must present to Yahweh one part of the land to be a sacred district. It will be thirteen and one-half kilometers long and five and two-fifths kilometers wide. This entire area will be reserved for Yahweh. ²Part of that area, a square about 270 meters long on each side will be left empty all around the temple area. An additional strip of ground, about twenty-seven meters wide, will be left empty all around the temple area. ³Inside the sacred district, measure a section thirteen and one-half kilometers long and five and two-fifths kilometers wide. It will be where the sanctuary is, and that is the most holy place. ⁴It will be the sacred portion of the land for the priests who work in the temple, those who come near to Yahweh to serve him. It will be a place very special for Yahweh, for the priests' houses, as well as for the temple. ⁵An area thirteen and one-half kilometers long and five and two-fifths kilometers wide will be for the descendants of Levi who work in the temple. That area will belong to them, and they can build towns there to live in.

⁶Alongside this sacred area will be a section of land that is thirteen and one-half kilometers long and two and three-quarters kilometers wide. It will be for a city where anyone in Israel may live.

⁷The ruler of Israel will have the land that is on each side of the area formed by the temple district and the city. It will extend to the west from the western end of those areas, and to the east from the eastern end of those areas. The far eastern and far western borders of the king's land will measure the same as the parallel borders of those other tracts. ⁸This portion of land will belong to the ruler. So the rulers will no longer have any excuse for oppressing my people and stealing their land. They will assign the remaining parts of the land in Israel to each tribe, to be divided up among the people.

⁹This is what Yahweh the Lord says: You rulers of Israel must stop acting violently and oppressing the people! You must do what is fair and right. Stop taking land from the people; stop forcing them off their land! ¹⁰Also, you must use accurate scales and accurate containers for measuring things. ¹¹The baskets for measuring dry things and containers for measuring liquids must be the same size; each must hold twenty-two liters—called an ephah (for dry measure) and a bath (for liquid measure). ¹²When you weigh things, you must use weights that everyone accepts as being correct. The shekel is to be divided into twenty gerahs, and a mina will be worth sixty shekels.

¹³You must present to the ruler one measure of wheat or barley for every sixty measures that you harvest. ¹⁴You must give him one measure of olive oil for every one hundred measures that you produce. ¹⁵Also, Yahweh declares that you must take one sheep or goat from every two hundred in your flocks in the lush pastures of Israel. You must offer a sheep or a goat for various offerings: Burnt offerings and offerings to promise friendship with Yahweh, offerings to atone for the people's sins. "This is the Lord Yahweh's command." ¹⁶All the people in the land must join in bringing these offerings to the ruler of Israel. ¹⁷The ruler must provide the animals to be completely burned on the altar, flour for the offerings made from grain, and wine for the sacred festivals that Yahweh has appointed for the people Israel—including the festivals to celebrate the new moons, and the offerings for the Sabbath days. He must provide the animals for the offerings for the people to become acceptable to God, offerings of flour made from grain, offerings to be completely burned, and offerings to promise friendship with Yahweh, to atone for the sins of the people of Israel."

¹⁸This is also what the Lord Yahweh declares: "On the first day of the first month of each year you must take one young bull that has no defects and sacrifice it to purify the temple. ¹⁹The priest must take some of the blood of the offering to atone for the people's sins, and he must smear it on the temple doorposts, on the four corners of the upper ledge surrounding the altar, and on the gateposts of the inner courtyard. ²⁰You must do the same thing on the seventh day of the month for any people who sin accidentally or without knowing that they sinned. By doing that you will purify the temple.

²¹In the first month of each year, on the fourteenth day of the month, you must start to celebrate the Passover festival. The festival will last for seven days. During that time you must not eat any bread made with yeast. ²²On the first day, the ruler must provide a bull as an offering for himself and for the other people of the country. ²³And every day during those seven days he must provide seven bulls and seven rams that have no defects, to be an offering to make it possible for Yahweh to accept the people. ²⁴He must also provide twenty-two liters of flour as an offering with each bull, and the same amount of flour with each ram, and also four liters of olive oil with each offering of flour.

²⁵During the seven days of the festival celebrating when the Israelites lived in tents during the exodus from Egypt, which starts on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of each year, the ruler must provide the same things for offerings to make it possible for God to accept the people, for offerings to be completely burned, for offerings of things made from grain, and for offerings of olive oil.

Chapter 46

¹This is also what Yahweh the Lord declares: 'The east gateway of the inner courtyard must be shut during the six days you work each week, but on the Sabbath days and on the days when there is a new moon, the gateway must be open. ²The ruler must enter the courtyard through the entry room of the gateway, and stand alongside the gateposts of the inner courtyard. Then the priests must sacrifice the animal that will be completely burned on the altar, and also his offering to promise friendship with me. The ruler must worship me at the entrance of the inner gateway, and then he must leave. But the gate will not be shut until that evening. ³On the Sabbath days and on the days when there is a new moon, the people also must worship me at the entrance of this gate. ⁴The offering that the ruler brings to be completely burned on the Sabbath day must be six male lambs and one ram, all with no defects. ⁵The offering that he gives with the ram is twenty-two liters of flour, and the flour that he offers with the lambs should be as much as he pleases, along with one liter of olive oil for every twenty-two liters of flour. ⁶Then each day that there is a new moon, he must offer a young bull, six lambs and a ram, all with no defects. ⁷He must

also provide twenty-two liters of flour with the bull, the same amount of flour with the ram, and as much flour as he wants with the lambs, along with one liter of olive oil with every twenty-two liters of flour. ⁸When the ruler enters the temple area, he must enter through gate and its entry room, and he must go out by the same way.

⁹When the people come to worship me at the festivals that I, Yahweh, have commanded, those who enter the temple area through the north gateway must go out through the south gateway. And those who enter through the south gateway must go out through the north gateway. People must not go out through the gateway through which they entered; they must go out through the opposite gateway. ¹⁰The ruler must go in when the other people go in, and go out when the people go out.

¹¹During the festivals that you hold for me, the king must present twenty-two liters of flour along with a bull or a ram, and as much flour as he wants to with the lambs, along with one liter of olive oil with every twenty-two liters of flour. ¹²When the ruler gives an offering that is not required, either one to be completely burned or an offering to celebrate fellowship with me, the gate on the east side must be opened for him. He must then present his offerings like he does on the Sabbath days. Then he will go out, and after he goes out, they must shut the gateway.

¹³In the morning of every day, someone must provide a one year old lamb with no defects to be an offering to me, one that the priests will completely burn. ¹⁴Someone must also provide each morning an offering of flour. It must be three and one-half liters of flour mixed with one liter of olive oil. You must never stop presenting these offerings of flour and olive oil to me, Yahweh, each day. ¹⁵The lamb and the offering of flour and olive oil must be presented to me every morning, to be completely burned on the altar.

¹⁶This is what Yahweh the Lord declares: If the ruler gives some of his land to one of his sons, to belong to him permanently, it will then eventually belong to his son's descendants. ¹⁷However, if he gives some of his land to one of his servants, the servant is allowed to keep that land until the year of the celebration of Jubilee. Then the ruler must take possession of it again. But if the ruler gives land to his sons, that land will belong to them permanently. ¹⁸The ruler must not take any land that the people own and force them to live somewhere else. The land that he gives to his sons must be from his own property, not from anyone else's property, in order that none of my people will be separated from his own property."

¹⁹Then, in the vision, the man brought me through the entrance alongside the gateway to the sacred rooms on the north side, the rooms that belonged to the priests, and he showed me a place at the western end. ²⁰He said to me, "This is the place where the priests will cook the meat of the offerings that people make because they failed to do what they promised Yahweh that they would do, and offerings to cause people to become acceptable to God, and where they will bake bread made with the flour brought as offerings. They will cook those things in their rooms in order to avoid bringing them into the outer courtyard to cook them there, lest someone might be consecrated by touching them."

²¹Then the man brought me to the outer courtyard and led me around to its four corners. In each corner I saw an enclosed area; ²²each was twenty-two meters long and sixteen meters wide. ²³Around the inside of each of these enclosed areas was a stone ledge, with places to make fires all around under the ledge. ²⁴The man said to me, "These are the kitchens where the descendants of Levi who work in the temple will cook the sacrifices that the people bring."

Chapter 47

¹Then in the vision, the man brought me back to the entrance of the temple. There I saw water coming out from under the entrance and flowing toward the east. The water was flowing down the south side of the entrance, to the right of the altar. ²Then he brought me out through the north gate and led me around to the eastern gate at its exterior side.

³As the man continued walking toward the east, I saw that he had a measuring line in his hand. He measured off 540 meters and then led me through water that covered my ankles. ⁴Then he measured off another 540 meters

and led me through water that was up to my knees. Then he measured off another 540 meters and led me through water that was up to my waist. ⁵Then he measured off another 540 meters and led me through water that was now a river that I could not cross, because the water was so deep; to continue farther would have required me to swim. ⁶Then he asked me, "Son of man, think about this carefully." Then he led me onto the bank of the river

⁷and back along it toward in the direction from where we had come. There I saw many trees growing on each side of the river. ⁸He said to me, "This water flows east and goes down into the Dead Sea. And when the water enters the Dead Sea, it stays fresh and restores the water of the Sea and makes it fresh again. ⁹Swarms of fish will live in the water wherever the river flows. There will be many fish in the Dead Sea, because the water that flows into it will cause the salt water to become fresh water. Wherever the river flows, everything alongside it will flourish.

¹⁰Fishermen will stand along the riverbank to catch fish. From En Gedi on the western side to En Eglaim there will be places to spread fishing nets. There will be many kinds of fish, as there are in the Great Sea. ¹¹But the swamps and marshes along the shore will not become fresh; they will be left to make salt. ¹²Many kinds of fruit trees will grow on both sides of the river. Their leaves will not wither, and they will always have fruit. They will bear new fruit every month, because the water that comes from the temple flows continually to the trees. Their fruit will be good to eat and their leaves will be good for healing."

¹³In the vision, Yahweh also said this to me: "Here is a list of the twelve tribes of Israel and the territory that each tribe is to receive. The descendants of Joseph will receive two portions. ¹⁴Divide the land equally among all of the tribes. I lifted up my hand to swear to your ancestors that I would give them this land to own permanently.

¹⁵These will be the boundaries of the land:

On the north side, it will extend from the Mediterranean Sea east along the road to Hethlon, and then on to Zedad,

¹⁶to Berothah, and then on to Sibraim, which is on the border between Damascus and Hamath. The boundary will run as far as Hazer Hattikon, which is on the border of the region of Hauran. ¹⁷So the boundary will extend from the Mediterranean Sea to Hazar Enan on the border between Hamath to the north and Damascus to the south. That will be the northern boundary.

¹⁸On the east side, the boundary will extend between Hauran and Damascus, south along the Jordan River between the region of Gilead and the territory of Israel, along the Dead Sea as far as Tamar. That will be the eastern boundary.

¹⁹On the south side, the boundary will extend from Tamar to the springs near Meribah Kadesh. Then it will extend west along the brook of Egypt to the Great Sea. That will be the southern boundary.

²⁰On the west side, the boundary will be the Mediterranean Sea, north to a point near Lebo Hamath.

²¹You must distribute this land among yourselves, among the tribes of Israel. ²²You must assign the land as a permanent possession for yourselves and also for any foreigners who are living and raising their children among you. You must consider them to be like native born Israelites, and they must be assigned land among the tribes of Israel. ²³Wherever foreigners are living, you must give them some land to belong to them permanently.' That is what the Lord Yahweh declares."

Chapter 48

¹Here is a list of the tribes of Israel and the territory that each tribe is to receive. The northern boundary of Israel will start at the Mediterranean Sea and go east to the city of Hethlon, then to Lebo Hamath, and farther on to Hazar Enan, which is south of Damascus, and it will continue to Hamath. Each tribe will receive land that will extend from the eastern boundary of Israel west to the Great Sea.

The tribe of Dan will receive land alongside the northern border of Israel.

²South of their area will be the territory for the tribe of Asher.

³South of Asher's land will be territory for the tribe of Naphtali.

⁴South of Naphtali's land will be territory for the tribe of Manasseh.

⁵South of Manasseh's land will be territory for the tribe of Ephraim.

⁶South of Ephraim's land will be territory for the tribe of Reuben.

⁷South of their land will be territory for the tribe of Judah.

⁸South of Judah's land will be an area that the entire nation will give to me; you will set it apart for special use. The temple will be in the center of this area. It will be as long as any of the portions of land assigned a tribe of Israel.

⁹This special area will be thirteen and one-half kilometers long and five and two-fifths kilometers wide. This is what you will give to Yahweh. ¹⁰Within this special area, these will what you will assign to the priests: you will assign them an area of land measuring thirteen and one-half kilometers on the northern and southern side; and five and two-fifths kilometers on the western and eastern sides. The temple of Yahweh will be in the middle of this special area. ¹¹The temple area will be for the priests, those set apart for my honor, who are descendants of Zadok. They are ones who served me faithfully and did not turn away from Yahweh as the descendants of Levi did. ¹²When the land is distributed, you will offer that special area to me, for it to be the priests' special portion; it is land that you will treat as very special to me. Next to the priests' territory will be where the other descendants of Levi will live.

¹³The land that you will assign to the descendants of Levi will be the same size as the land that the priests will receive. So together, these two portions of land will be thirteen and one-half kilometers long and about eleven kilometers wide. ¹⁴None of this special land, this best land, may ever be sold or traded or used by other people, because it belongs to Yahweh. It is set apart for him.

¹⁵Another strip of land thirteen and one-half kilometers long and about two and three-quarters kilometers wide will be allotted for other people living in the special area to use. There they may build homes and have pasturelands, and there will be a city in the middle of this area. ¹⁶The city will be square, two and two-fifths kilometers long on each side. ¹⁷There will be an open area around the city, within the special area, that will be about 135 meters deep in each direction. ¹⁸Outside the city there will be a farming area that will extend five and two-fifths kilometers on the east side and five and two-fifths kilometers on the west side. Men who work there will produce food for the people who work in the city. ¹⁹Those who come from the various tribes to work in the city may also work in this farmland. ²⁰This entire special area, including the land given for Yahweh's use and the city, will be a square that is thirteen and one-half kilometers long on each side.

²¹The tracts of land to the east and to the west of Yahweh's area and the city will belong to the ruler. One area will extend east to the eastern boundary of Israel, and the other will extend west to the Great Sea. Yahweh's area, which contains the temple, will be in the middle. ²²The area that belongs to the ruler will be between the tribe of Judah to the north and the tribe of Benjamin to the south.

²³South of Yahweh's area, each of the other tribes will receive one portion of land that extends from the eastern boundary of Israel west to the Great Sea.

Just south of Yahweh's area will be territory for the tribe of Benjamin.

²⁴South of Benjamin's land will be the land for the tribe of Simeon.

²⁵South of Simeon's land will be the land for the tribe of Issachar.

²⁶South of Issachar's land will be the land for the tribe of Zebulun.

²⁷South of Zebulun's land will be the land for the tribe of Gad.

²⁸The southern boundary of Gad's land will extend south from En Gedi to the springs at Meribah Kadesh, and then to the west along the brook of Egypt to the Great Sea.

²⁹This is a description of the land that you must assign to the tribes of Israel, for it to belong to them permanently.' That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.

³⁰Here are the city gates: On the north side, which is two and two-fifths kilometers long, ³¹there will be three gates. Each gate will have the name of one of the tribes of Israel. The first one will be named for Reuben, the next for Judah, the next for Levi.

³²On the east side, also two and two-fifths kilometers long, will be gates named for Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan.

³³On the south side, also two-fifths of a kilometer long, will be gates named for Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun.

³⁴On the west side, also two-fifths of a kilometer long, will be gates named for Gad, Asher, and Naphtali.

³⁵The distance around the city would be nine and three-quarters kilometers.

From that time on, the name of the city will be "Yahweh is there."

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