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**Deuteronomy**

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# Deuteronomy

## Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup>In this book is written what Moses had said to all the Israelites, after they had set up their tents east of the Jordan—in the desert plain along the Jordan—near a place named Suph, between Paran on one side of the Jordan River and the towns of Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab on the other side of the river. <sup>2</sup>To walk from Mount Sinai to Kadesh Barnea, people usually travel for only eleven days, going by way of the hill country called Edom.

<sup>3</sup>Forty years after the Israelites had left Egypt, Moses told the Israelite people everything that Yahweh had commanded him. <sup>4</sup>This was after they had defeated Sihon, the king of the Amor people group, who lived in the city of Heshbon, and Og, the king of the region of Bashan, who lived in towns of Ashtaroth and Edrei.

<sup>5</sup>Moses told them these things while the people were in Moab, on the east side of the Jordan River. He explained to them God's instructions. This is what he said to them:

<sup>6</sup>"Yahweh our God said to us when we were at Mount Sinai, 'You have stayed for a very long time at the foot of this mountain. <sup>7</sup>So now continue traveling. Go to the hill country where the Amorites live and to the nearby areas—to the plain along the Jordan, to the hill country, to the western foothills, to the southern Judean wilderness, to the Mediterranean seacoast, to all the land of Canaan, to the Lebanon mountains, and northeast to the great Euphrates River. <sup>8</sup>I will give that land to you. I, Yahweh, promised to your ancestors Abraham and Isaac and Jacob that I would give it to them and to their descendants. So now go and occupy it.'"

<sup>9</sup>Moses also said to the people, "When we were still at Mount Sinai, I said to your ancestors, 'It is a very big task for me to govern all of you. I cannot do it by myself. <sup>10</sup>Yahweh our God has caused us Israelites to become as numerous as the stars in the sky. <sup>11</sup>And I hope that Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors worshiped, will cause us to become a thousand times as numerous as we are now and that he will bless us just like he promised to do. <sup>12</sup>But I certainly cannot deal with all of your complaints and disputes. <sup>13</sup>So choose some men from your tribes who are wise and who have good sense and who are respected. Then I will appoint them to be your leaders.'

<sup>14</sup>Your ancestors replied, 'What you have suggested is good for us to do.'

<sup>15</sup>So I took the wise and respected men that your ancestors chose from your tribes, and I appointed them to be your leaders. I appointed some to rule over one thousand people, some to have authority over one hundred people, some to have authority over fifty people, and some to have authority over ten people. I also appointed other officers from throughout your tribes. <sup>16</sup>I instructed your leaders, 'Listen to the disputes that occur among your people. Judge each dispute, including disputes between close relatives and quarrels between your people and people from other countries who live among you. <sup>17</sup>You must not play favorites. You must treat poor people and important people equally. You must not worry about what anyone will think, because you will decide matters as God wants you to. If any dispute is very difficult and you are unable to decide it, bring it to me, and I will decide.'

<sup>18</sup>At that time I also told to you many other things."

<sup>19</sup>"Then, just like Yahweh our God commanded us, we left Mount Sinai and went through that huge desert that is very dangerous, on the road to the hill country where the Amor people group live. We arrived at Kadesh Barnea. <sup>20</sup>I said to your ancestors, 'We have now come to the hill country where the Amor people group live. This is part of the area that Yahweh our God, the one whom our ancestors worshiped, is giving to us. <sup>21</sup>Note that Yahweh our God is giving this land to us. So go and occupy it as he commanded. Do not be at all afraid.'

<sup>22</sup>But your ancestors all came to me and said, 'Before we go, we should first send some men there to explore the land, in order that they can return and tell us which will be the best road to go there and what kind of towns are there.'

<sup>23</sup>I thought that it would be good to do that, so I chose twelve men, one man from each tribe. <sup>24</sup>They went up into the hill country as far as Eshcol Valley, and they explored all that area. <sup>25</sup>They picked some of the fruit that they found there and brought it to us. They reported that the land that Yahweh our God was giving to us is very good."

<sup>26</sup>"But your ancestors refused to go and conquer that land. They rebelled against what Yahweh our God had commanded them to do, and they would not go into that land. <sup>27</sup>Your ancestors stayed in their tents and complained. They said, 'Yahweh hates us. So he has brought us here from Egypt just to allow the Amor people group to destroy us. <sup>28</sup>We do not want to go there. The men whom we sent there have made us very discouraged. They have told us that the people there are much stronger and taller than we are, and that there are very high walls around their towns. Also they reported that they had seen giants there that are descendants of Anak.'

<sup>29</sup>Then I said to your ancestors, 'Do not be afraid at all of those people! <sup>30</sup>Yahweh our God will go ahead of you, and he will fight for you, just like you saw him do for you in Egypt <sup>31</sup>and in the desert. You saw how he brought you safely here, like a man would carry his son. '

<sup>32-33</sup>I reminded them that he always went ahead of them while they traveled in the desert. He directed them by a pillar of fire during the night and a pillar of cloud during the day. He showed them places to set up their tents. But in spite of what I said, your ancestors would not trust Yahweh our God.

<sup>34</sup>Yahweh heard what they said, and he became angry. He solemnly declared, <sup>35-36</sup>Caleb son of Jephunneh, will enter the land. He has obeyed me completely. So I will give to him and to his descendants some of the land that he explored. He is the only one of all you people who will enter that land. None of these evil people will ever see that good land which I solemnly promised to give to your ancestors.'

<sup>37</sup>But because of what your ancestors did, Yahweh was also angry with me. He said to me, 'You also will not go enter that land. <sup>38</sup>Joshua son of Nun, who is your helper, will enter it. Encourage him, because he is the one who will enable you Israelite people to occupy that land.'

<sup>39</sup>Then Yahweh said to all of us, 'You said that your children would be captured by your enemies. Because they are very young, they do not yet know what is good and what is evil. But they are the ones to whom I will give that land, and they will enter it and occupy it. <sup>40</sup>But as for you, turn around and go back into the desert, toward the Sea of Reeds.'

<sup>41</sup>Then your ancestors replied, 'We have sinned; we have disobeyed Yahweh. So we will go and attack the people who live in that land, just as Yahweh our God has commanded us to do.' And each of their men put on his weapons, and they thought that it would be easy to invade the hill country.

<sup>42</sup>But Yahweh said to me, 'Tell them, "Do not go there and attack those people, because I will not go with you, and if you go, you can be sure that your enemy will defeat you."

<sup>43</sup>So I said that to your ancestors, but they did not want to listen to what I said. They again rebelled against what Yahweh commanded them to do. Their soldiers proudly marched up into that hill country. <sup>44</sup>Then the men of the Amor people group who lived in that region came out of their towns and attacked those soldiers. They chased your ancestors' soldiers like a swarm of bees would chase a person, and they pursued their men south from Edom and defeated them at the city of Hormah. <sup>45</sup>So your ancestors went back to Kadesh Barnea and cried out to request Yahweh to help them, but he did not listen to them. He did not pay any attention to them. <sup>46</sup>So we stayed there at Kadesh Barnea for a long time."

## Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup>“Then we turned around and went through the desert toward the Sea of Reeds as Yahweh told us to do, and we wandered in Edom for many years.

<sup>2</sup>Then Yahweh said to me, <sup>3</sup>“You have been wandering around this hill country for a long enough time. Now turn and travel toward the north. <sup>4</sup>And tell the people that they are about to travel near the land that belongs to the descendants of Esau, who are also descendants of Isaac. They live in the hill country of Edom. They will be afraid of you, <sup>5</sup>but do not start to fight against them, because I am not going to give you even a tiny bit of their land. I have given that land to the descendants of Esau. <sup>6</sup>When you travel near their land, buy food and water from them.’

<sup>7</sup>Do not forget that Yahweh our God has blessed you in everything that you have done. He knows what has happened to you while you have wandered in this huge desert. But he has been with you during those forty years, and as a result you have had everything that you needed.

<sup>8</sup>So we continued to travel. We avoided going through the hill country where the descendants of Esau live. We turned from the road that goes along the plain of the Jordan valley, and comes up from Ezion Geber and Elath, and we traveled along the desert road of Moab.

<sup>9</sup>Yahweh said to me, ‘Do not bother the people of Moab, and do not start to fight against them, because I am not going to give you any of their land. Do not forget that they are descendants of Abraham’s nephew Lot, and I have given to them the city of Ar.’”

<sup>10</sup>A large group of giants called Emim formerly lived there. They were as tall as the giants who were descendants of Anak. <sup>11</sup>They and the descendants of Anak are also called the Repha giants, but the people of Moab call them Emim. <sup>12</sup>The Hor people group also formerly lived in the Edom area, but the descendants of Esau chased them out. They defeated and killed them and settled in their land, just as the Israelite people later expelled their enemies from the land that Yahweh gave to them.)

<sup>13</sup>Moses also said to the Israelite people, “Then we crossed the Zered Gorge, as Yahweh told us to do. <sup>14</sup>It had been thirty-eight years from the time we first left Kadesh Barnea until we crossed the Zered Gorge. During those years, all the Israelite fighting men of that generation died, as Yahweh had solemnly said would happen. <sup>15</sup>They died because Yahweh opposed them until he had gotten rid of all of them.

<sup>16</sup>After all the men who had been old enough to fight in wars had died, <sup>17</sup>Yahweh said to me, <sup>18</sup>“Today you all must travel through the region of Moab, near Ar, their city. <sup>19</sup>When you come near the border of the land where the Ammon people group live, do not bother them or start to fight against them. They are also descendants of Lot, so I am not going to give you any of the land that I have given to them.”

<sup>20</sup>(That region is also called the land of the Repha giants, who formerly lived there. The Ammon people group call them the Zamzum group. <sup>21</sup>They were a large and powerful group, who were as tall as the descendants of Anak. But Yahweh destroyed them, and the Ammon people group drove them away and took their land from them and started to live there. <sup>22</sup>Yahweh had done the same thing for the descendants of Esau who live in the hill country of Edom. He got rid of the Hor people group, with the result that the Edom people group took their land from them and started to live there. They still live there. <sup>23</sup>People who came from the island of Crete got rid of the Av group who previously lived in the land close to the Mediterranean Sea, as far south as Gaza. They took their land from them and started to live there.)

<sup>24</sup>“After we had gone through the region of Moab, Yahweh said to us, ‘Now cross the Arnon River. I will help you to defeat the army of Sihon, the king of the Amor people group, who lives in the city of Heshbon. So attack their army and start to take their land from them. <sup>25</sup>Today I will begin to cause everyone, everywhere, to be afraid of you. Everyone who hears about you will tremble and be terrified.’

<sup>26</sup>Then I sent messengers to go from the desert, where we were, to King Sihon at Heshbon. I told them to give this peaceful message to the king: <sup>27</sup>'Please allow us to travel through your land. We promise that we will stay on the road; we will not turn off to the right or to the left. <sup>28</sup>We will pay for any food or water that you allow us to buy. We want only to walk through your country <sup>29</sup>until we cross the Jordan River into the land that Yahweh our God is giving to us. Do for us just as the descendants of Esau who live in the Edom area and the Moab people group did for us when they allowed us to go through their areas.' <sup>30</sup>But King Sihon would not allow us to go through his country. That was because Yahweh our God caused him to be stubborn. The result was that Yahweh enabled us to defeat his army and take his land, which we still live in.

<sup>31</sup>Yahweh said to me, 'Listen! I am about to allow you to defeat Sihon's army and to take the people's land from them. So start to occupy it!'

<sup>32</sup>Then Sihon came out of the city with all his army to fight against us at the town of Jahaz. <sup>33</sup>But God enabled us to defeat them, and we killed Sihon, his sons, and all his soldiers. <sup>34</sup>We captured their cities and destroyed them all. We killed all the men and women and children; we did not allow any of them to remain alive. <sup>35</sup>We took the valuable things that were in the cities that we captured, and also their cattle. <sup>36</sup>Yahweh our God enabled us to capture all their towns from Aroer in the south, which is at the edge of the Arnon River Valley, to the region of Gilead in the north. Some of their cities had walls around them, but we were still able to capture them. <sup>37</sup>But we did not go near the area where the Ammon people group live, or the banks of the Jabbok River, or the towns of the hill country, or any other place where Yahweh our God told us not to go."

## Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup>"Then we turned north and went toward the region of Bashan. Og, the king of that area, and all his soldiers marched south to fight against us at the city of Edrei. <sup>2</sup>Yahweh said to me, 'Do not be afraid of him, because I will enable your army to defeat him and all his army and to capture all their land. Do to him what you did to Sihon, the king of the Amor people group, who ruled in Heshbon.'

<sup>3</sup>So Yahweh enabled us to defeat King Og and all his army. We killed them all; we did not allow any of them to remain alive. <sup>4</sup>There were sixty cities in that region of Argob, in King Og's kingdom of Bashan. But we captured all of them. <sup>5</sup>All those cities had high walls around them with gates and bars. We also captured many villages that did not have walls around them. <sup>6</sup>We completely destroyed everything, just as we had done in the area that King Sihon ruled. We killed all the men, women, and children. <sup>7</sup>But from those cities we took for ourselves all the livestock and other valuable things.

<sup>8</sup>So at that time we took from those two kings of the Amor people group all the land east of the Jordan River, from the Arnon River gorge in the south to Mount Hermon in the north." <sup>9</sup>(That mountain is called Sirion by the people of the city of Sidon and is called Senir by the Amor people group.) <sup>10</sup>"We captured all the towns on the plateau, and all the region of Gilead, and all of Bashan as far east as the cities of Edrei and Salekah, which also belonged to Og's kingdom." <sup>11</sup>(Og was the last king who was a descendant of the Repha giants. His bed was made of iron. It was four meters long and two meters wide. It was in the city of Rabbah in the region of Ammon.)

<sup>12</sup>"From the land that we captured at that time, I allotted to the tribes of Reuben and Gad the land north of the city of Aroer near the Arnon River, and some of the hill country of Gilead, along with the nearby cities. <sup>13</sup>The other part of Gilead and all of Bashan, which was the region of Argob that King Og had ruled, I allotted to half of the tribe of Manasseh." (The entire region of Bashan is called the land of the Repha giants.) <sup>14</sup>"Jair, a man from the tribe of Manasseh, conquered all of Bashan as far north as the border of the Geshur and Maacath territories. He gave his own name to the villages there, and they are still called the villages of Jair.

<sup>15</sup>The northern part of the Gilead region I allotted to the Machir clan, who are descendants of the tribe of Manasseh. <sup>16</sup>I allotted to the tribes of Reuben and Gad the southern part of Gilead, extending south to the Arnon River. The middle of the river is the southern boundary. The northern boundary is the Jabbok River, which is part of

the border of region of Ammon. <sup>17</sup>The border extends from the plain along the east side of the Jordan valley, from Kinnereth in the north (known as the Sea of Galilee), to the Sea of Arabah (known as the Dead Sea) in the south, and to the slopes of Mount Pisgah on the east.

<sup>18</sup>At that time, I told you three tribes, 'Yahweh our God is giving you this land east of the Jordan River, for you to occupy. So now, your soldiers must take their weapons and go across the Jordan River ahead of the men from the other Israelite tribes to help them to conquer the land that God is going to give to them. <sup>19</sup>But your wives and children and your very numerous cattle must stay in the towns that I have allotted to you. <sup>20</sup>Your men must help your fellow Israelites until Yahweh enables them to live there peacefully after they capture all the land that Yahweh our God is giving to them on the west side of the Jordan River, just like he did for you here on the east side of the river. After that, you all may return to this land that I have allotted to you.'

<sup>21</sup>And I told Joshua, 'You have seen everything that Yahweh our God did to those two kings, Sihon and Og. He will do the same thing to the people who are now in the land that you will be entering. <sup>22</sup>Do not be afraid of those people, because Yahweh our God is the one who will fight for you all.'

<sup>23</sup>'At that time, I earnestly prayed, saying <sup>24</sup>'Yahweh our Lord, you have merely begun to show me that you are very great and to show me the powerful things that you can do. There is certainly no god in heaven or on earth who can do the powerful things that you have done. <sup>25</sup>So please allow me to cross the Jordan River and to see the good land on the east side, the beautiful hill country and the mountains in Lebanon.'

<sup>26</sup>But Yahweh was angry with me because of what your ancestors had done, so he would not pay attention to me. Instead, he said, 'That is enough talk from you! Do not talk to me about that again! <sup>27</sup>You will climb up to the top of Mount Pisgah and look toward the west and to the east, toward the north and to the south. You must look at it all carefully, because you will not cross the Jordan River to see the land from there. <sup>28</sup>But tell Joshua what he must do; encourage him to be strong, because he is the one who will lead the people across the river so they can occupy the land that you will see from the top of the mountain.'

<sup>29</sup>So we remained in the Jordan River valley close to the town of Beth Peor."

## Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup>"Now, you Israelite people, obey all the rules and regulations that I will teach you. If you do that, you will remain alive and you will enter and occupy the land that Yahweh, the God whom your ancestors worshiped, is giving to you. <sup>2</sup>Do not add anything to what I command you, and do not take anything away from what I tell you. Obey all the commands of Yahweh our God that I am giving to you.

<sup>3</sup>You have seen what Yahweh did at Baal Peor. He destroyed all the people who worshiped the god Baal there, <sup>4</sup>but all of you who faithfully continued to worship Yahweh our God are still alive today.

<sup>5</sup>Note that I have taught you all the rules and regulations, just like Yahweh our God told me to do. He wants you to obey them when you are living in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. <sup>6</sup>Obey them faithfully because, if you do that, you will show the people of other nations that you are very wise. When they hear about all these laws, they will say, 'The people of this great nation of Israel are certainly very wise!' <sup>7</sup>Even if other nations are great, there is none of them that has a god who is as near to them as Yahweh our God is to us! <sup>8</sup>And there is no other nation, even if it is a great nation, that has laws that are as just as the laws that I am speaking to you today.

<sup>9</sup>But be very careful! Do not forget what you have seen God do. Remember those things as long as you are alive. Tell them to your children and your grandchildren. <sup>10</sup>Tell them about the day that your ancestors stood in the presence of Yahweh our God at Mount Sinai, when he said to me, 'Gather the people together, in order that they can hear what I say. I want them to learn to respect me and honor me for me as long as they are alive, and I want them to teach their children to do that also.' <sup>11</sup>Tell your children that your ancestors came near to the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with a fire that went up to the sky, and the mountain was covered with dark



clouds and black smoke. <sup>12</sup>Then Yahweh spoke to your ancestors out of the middle of the fire. Your ancestors heard him speak, but they did not see him. They only heard his voice. <sup>13</sup>And he declared to them his covenant that he wants you also to obey. He gave them the Ten Commandments. He wrote those on two stone tablets. <sup>14</sup>Yahweh commanded me to teach all the rules and regulations to you, in order that you would obey them in the land that you are about to enter and occupy.

<sup>15</sup>On the day that Yahweh spoke to your ancestors at Mount Sinai, they did not see him. So be careful! <sup>16</sup>Do not sin by making for yourselves any carved figure! Do not make anything that resembles the likeness of any person, either a man or a woman, <sup>17</sup>or that resembles any animal or any bird <sup>18</sup>or any reptile or any fish in the deep ocean. <sup>19</sup>And be careful to not look up toward the sky and be tempted to worship anything that you see there—the sun or the moon or the stars. Yahweh our God has given those to help all people everywhere, but you must not worship them. <sup>20</sup>Yahweh has brought your ancestors out of Egypt, where they were suffering as though they were in a blazing furnace, in order that they would be people who belong to him, which is what you are today.

<sup>21</sup>But Yahweh was angry with me because of what your ancestors did. And he promised that I would never enter the land that he is giving to you. <sup>22</sup>He swore that I would die here in this land and never cross the Jordan River. But you will go across it, and you will occupy that land. <sup>23</sup>Be sure that you do not forget the covenant that Yahweh our God made with you, and do not make a carved figure in the likeness of anything he has forbidden you. <sup>24</sup>You must not do that because Yahweh your God wants everyone to worship him alone. He will destroy anyone who worships idols.

<sup>25</sup>When you have been in the land of Canaan for a long time and you have children and grandchildren, do not sin by making a carved figure that represents anything, because Yahweh says that is evil, and if you do that, you will cause him to become angry with you and punish you. <sup>26</sup>Today I am requesting everyone who is in heaven and everyone who is on the earth to watch what you are doing. If you disobey what I am telling you, you will soon all die in the land that you will be crossing the Jordan River to occupy. You will not live very long there; Yahweh will completely get rid of many of you. <sup>27</sup>And the rest of you, Yahweh will force you to go and live among the people of many other nations. Only a few of you will survive there. <sup>28</sup>When you are in those nations, you will worship gods that are made of wood and stone, gods made by humans, gods that cannot see anything or hear anything or eat anything or smell anything. <sup>29</sup>But while you are there, you will try to know Yahweh your God, and if you try with your entire heart to know him, he will answer you. <sup>30</sup>In the future, when you are being mistreated there and all those bad things happen to you, you will again worship only Yahweh and obey him. <sup>31</sup>Yahweh is a God who acts mercifully. If you continue to obey him, he will not abandon you or destroy you or forget the agreement that he solemnly made with your ancestors."

<sup>32</sup>"Now think about the past, about the time before you were born, about all the time since God first created people here on the earth. You could search everywhere, in heaven and on the earth. Has anything like this ever happened that is as great as what Yahweh did for us Israelite people? <sup>33</sup>Has any group ever remained alive after they heard a god speak to them from the middle of a fire, like we did? <sup>34</sup>Certainly God has never before tried to take a huge group of people from one nation to another location, like he did for us when he brought us out of Egypt. We saw Yahweh our God use his great power to do miracles to show us who he is, and sent plagues, and did many other things that terrified people, and how he rescued us when the army of Egypt tried to attack us.

<sup>35</sup>Yahweh showed all these things to you, in order that you would know that only he is truly God, and that there is no other God. <sup>36</sup>He allowed your ancestors to hear him speak from heaven in order that he could discipline them. Here on the earth he allowed them to see his great fire on Mount Sinai, and he spoke to them from the middle of the fire. <sup>37</sup>Because he loved our ancestors, he chose you Israelites who are their descendants, and by his great power he brought your ancestors out of Egypt. <sup>38</sup>As they traveled, he expelled the people of nations that were greater and more powerful than they were, in order that they could capture their land and cause it to become yours, which is what is happening now.

<sup>39</sup>So today you should think about the fact that Yahweh is God, that he rules in heaven and also on the earth, and that there is no other god. <sup>40</sup>Obey all the rules and regulations that I am giving to you today, in order that things

will go well for you and for your descendants, and that you will live a long time in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, for it to belong to you forever.”

<sup>41</sup>Then Moses chose three cities that are on the east side of the Jordan River. <sup>42</sup>If someone accidentally killed another person, a person who had not been his enemy previously, he could escape to one of those cities. He would be safe in one of those cities because the people there would protect him. <sup>43</sup>For the tribe of Reuben, Moses chose the city of Bezer in the wilderness; for the tribe of Gad, he chose the city of Ramoth in the region of Gilead. For the tribe of Manasseh, Moses chose the city of Golan in the region of Bashan.

<sup>44</sup>Moses gave God's laws to the Israelite people. <sup>45</sup>They included all the solemn commands, instructions and laws that Moses spoke to the people of Israel after they had come out of Egypt, <sup>46</sup>when they were in the valley east of the Jordan River. They were across from the town of Beth Peor, in the land that previously was ruled by Sihon, the king of the Amor people group, who lived in Heshbon. Moses and the other Israelites had defeated his army when they came out of Egypt. <sup>47</sup>They captured Sihon's land and the land that Og, the king of the region of Bashan, had ruled. Those were the two kings who ruled the Amor people group in the area east of the Jordan River. <sup>48</sup>Their land extended from the city of Aroer in the south along the Arnon River, as far north as Mount Sirion, which most people call Mount Hermon. <sup>49</sup>It also included all the area in the plain east of the Jordan River valley, extending to the Sea of Arabah (known as the Dead Sea) and east to the slopes of Mount Pisgah.

## Chapter 5

<sup>1</sup>Moses summoned all the people of Israel and said to them,

“You Israelite people, listen to all the rules and decrees that I am giving to you today. Learn them and be sure to obey them. <sup>2</sup>When we were at Mount Sinai, Yahweh our God made a covenant with us. <sup>3</sup>But this covenant was not only for our ancestors. He made it also for us, who are alive now. <sup>4</sup>Yahweh spoke with us face to face on that mountain, from the middle of the fire. <sup>5</sup>On that day, I stood between your ancestors and Yahweh to tell them what he said, because they were afraid of the fire, and they did not want to climb up the mountain. This is what Yahweh said:

<sup>6</sup>I am Yahweh your God, the one you worship. I am the one who brought you out of the land of Egypt. I am the one who freed you from being slaves there.

<sup>7</sup>You must worship only me; you must not worship any other god.

<sup>8</sup>You must not make a carved figure of anything that represents any living creature that exists in the skies, or on the earth, in the waters of the earth.

<sup>9</sup>You must not bow down to any idol and worship it, because I am Yahweh God, and I will not tolerate you doing that. I will punish anyone who does that, and their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. <sup>10</sup>But I will steadfastly love thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments.

<sup>11</sup>Do not speak my name carelessly or for wrong purposes, because I am Yahweh God, the one whom you should worship, and I will certainly punish those who do that.

<sup>12</sup>Do not forget that the seventh day of every week is for you to honor me specially, as I, Yahweh your God, am commanding you.

<sup>13</sup>There are six days each week for you to do all your work, <sup>14</sup>but the seventh day is a rest day, a day dedicated to me, Yahweh your God. On that day you must not do any work. You and your sons and daughters and your male and female slaves must not work. You must not even force your livestock to work, and you must not tell foreigners to work, those who are living in your country. You must allow your slaves to rest on that day just like you do. <sup>15</sup>Do not forget that you were slaves in Egypt, and that I, Yahweh your God, brought you out from there by my very great power. That is the reason that I am commanding that all of you must rest on the seventh day each week.

<sup>16</sup>Honor your fathers and your mothers, just like I, Yahweh your God, am commanding you, in order that you as a people group may live a long time in the land that I, Yahweh your God, will give you, and in order that things will go well for you there.

<sup>17</sup>Do not murder anyone.

<sup>18</sup>Do not commit adultery.

<sup>19</sup>Do not steal anything.

<sup>20</sup>Do not tell lies about anyone when you are speaking in court.

<sup>21</sup>Do not covet someone else's wife, someone else's house, someone else's fields, someone else's male slave or female slave, someone else's livestock, someone else's donkeys, or anything else that another person owns.'

<sup>22</sup>Those are the commandments that Yahweh spoke to your ancestors. When they were gathered there at the bottom of the mountain, he spoke with a very loud voice from the middle of the fire, and there were dark clouds surrounding the mountain. He spoke only those Ten Commandments, no more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

<sup>23</sup>After your ancestors heard Yahweh's voice when he spoke to them out of the darkness, while there was a big fire burning on the mountain, their leaders and elders came to me, <sup>24</sup>and one of them said, 'Listen to us! Yahweh our God showed us that he is very great and glorious when we heard him speak from the fire. Today we have realized that it is possible for us human beings to continue to live even though God has spoken to us. <sup>25</sup>But we are afraid that we will die. We are afraid that this immense fire will burn us all up, if we go on hearing Yahweh's voice. <sup>26</sup>We are the only people on earth who have remained alive after hearing the all-powerful God speak to them from a fire! <sup>27</sup>So Moses, you go up the mountain and listen to everything that Yahweh our God says. Then come back and tell us everything that he has said, and we will listen to what he has said and obey it.'

<sup>28</sup>Yahweh heard your leaders say that, so when I went back up the mountain, Yahweh said to me, 'I have heard what your leaders have said, and what they have said is right. <sup>29</sup>I surely wish that they would always think like that and have an awesome respect for me and obey all my commandments, in order that things may go well for them and for their descendants forever.

<sup>30</sup>So go down and tell them to return to their tents. <sup>31</sup>But then you come back up here and stand near me, and I will give to you all the rules and decrees that I want them to obey. Then you can teach them to the people, in order that they will obey them when they are in the land that I am giving to them.'

<sup>32</sup>So I went back down to the people and said to them, 'Be sure that you do everything that Yahweh our God has commanded us to do. Do not disobey any of his laws. <sup>33</sup>Conduct your lives as Yahweh our God has commanded us to do, in order that you may live a long time, and in order that things will go well for you when you are living in the land that you will occupy.'"

## Chapter 6

<sup>1</sup>"These are the commandments and rules and decrees that Yahweh our God commanded me to teach to you. He wants you to obey them in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. <sup>2</sup>He wants you to honor him, and he wants you and your descendants to always obey all these rules and regulations that I am giving to you, in order that you may live for a long time. <sup>3</sup>So, you Israelite people, listen to them carefully and obey them. If you do that, things will go well with you, and you will become a very numerous nation when you are living in that very fertile land. That is what Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors worshiped, promised would happen.

<sup>4</sup>You Israelite people, listen! Only Yahweh is our God. <sup>5</sup>You must love him with all your inner being and with all that you feel and in every way that you can. <sup>6</sup>Never forget these commands that I am giving to you today. <sup>7</sup>Teach them

to your children again and again. Talk about them all the time. When you are in your houses and when you are walking outside, talk about them also when you are lying down and when you wake up. <sup>8</sup>Write them on tiny scrolls and fasten them to your arms, and write them on bands that you fasten to your foreheads to help you to remember them. <sup>9</sup>Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your city gates.

<sup>10</sup>Yahweh our God solemnly promised to your ancestors Abraham and Isaac and Jacob that he would give you a land that already has in it large and prosperous cities that you did not build. <sup>11</sup>He said that the houses in those cities will already be full of many good things that someone else put there; you did not put them there. There will be wells that someone else dug. There will be vineyards and olive trees that someone else planted. So when Yahweh brings you into that land, and you have all that you want to eat, <sup>12</sup>be sure that you do not forget Yahweh, who rescued you from being slaves in Egypt and gave all these things to you.

<sup>13</sup>You must honor Yahweh our God, and you must worship him alone. When you make a solemn oath to tell the truth or to do something, do it in his name. <sup>14</sup>You must not worship any other gods, the gods that the people groups who live in this land worship. <sup>15</sup>Yahweh our God, who lives among you, will not accept people who worship anyone or anything else. So if you worship any other god, Yahweh will be very angry with you, and he will destroy you completely. <sup>16</sup>Do not do sinful things to find out whether Yahweh will punish you or not, like your ancestors did at Massah. <sup>17</sup>Be sure that you always obey all the laws, the weighty instructions, and the regulations that he has given to you. <sup>18</sup>Do what Yahweh says is right and good. If you do that, things will go well with you. You will be able to enter and occupy the good land that Yahweh solemnly promised to give to our ancestors. <sup>19</sup>He will do that by driving out your enemies from that land, just as he promised to do.

<sup>20</sup>In the future, your children will ask you, 'Why did Yahweh our God command us to obey all these rules and decrees?' <sup>21</sup>Then you will tell them, 'Our ancestors were slaves of the king in Egypt, but Yahweh brought them out of Egypt by his great power. <sup>22</sup>They saw him do many kinds of miracles and terrifying things to the people of Egypt and to the king and his officials. <sup>23</sup>He rescued our ancestors from Egypt and brought them here to give them this land, just as he solemnly promised our ancestors that he would do. <sup>24</sup>And he commanded us to obey all these laws and to honor him, so that things would go well with us, and so that he would protect our nation and enable us to prosper, as he is doing now. <sup>25</sup>Yahweh our God will approve of us if we carefully obey everything that he has commanded us to do.'

## Chapter 7

<sup>1</sup>"Yahweh our God will bring you to the land that you will soon enter and occupy. As you advance, he will drive out from that land seven people groups that are more powerful and more numerous than you are. These are the Heth, the Girgash, the Amor, the Canaan, the Periz, the Hiv, and the Jebus people groups. <sup>2</sup>When Yahweh our God enables you to defeat them, you must kill them all. You must make no agreement with them, and you must not act mercifully toward them. <sup>3</sup>You must not marry any of them. You must not allow your daughters to marry any of their sons, or allow your sons to marry any of their daughters. <sup>4</sup>If you did that, those people would persuade your children to stop worshiping Yahweh and to worship other gods. If that happens, Yahweh will be very angry with you and he will destroy you very quickly. <sup>5</sup>This is what you must do to those people: Tear down their altars, break apart the stone pillars that are dedicated to their gods, cut down the poles that they use when they worship the goddess Asherah, and burn their molded idols. <sup>6</sup>You must do that because you are a group of people who belong only to Yahweh our God. He has chosen you from all the people groups in the world to be his own special people.

<sup>7</sup>It was not because you were more numerous than any other people group that Yahweh chose you; you are one of the smallest people groups on the earth. <sup>8</sup>Instead, it is because Yahweh loved you and because he wanted to do what he solemnly promised to your ancestors. That is the reason that he rescued you by his great power from slavery in Egypt and from Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. <sup>9</sup>So do not forget that Yahweh is our God. He is faithful to us; he keeps his covenant for a thousand generations of people who love him and who obey his commandments.

<sup>10</sup>But as for those who hate him, he will pay them back; he will punish them and quickly destroy them.

<sup>11</sup>So you must be sure to obey all the commandments and rules and decrees that I am giving to you today. <sup>12</sup>If you pay attention to these decrees and always obey them, Yahweh our God will do what he has agreed to do for you, and he will faithfully love you, which is what he solemnly promised to your ancestors that he would do. <sup>13</sup>He will love you and bless you. He will enable you to have many children. He will bless your fields, with the result that you will have plenty of grain and grapes to make wine and plenty of olive oil. You will have many cattle and sheep. He will do all these things for you in the land that he promised to your ancestors that he would give to you. <sup>14</sup>He will bless you more than he will bless any other people group. All of you will be able to have children. All of your livestock will be able to produce offspring. <sup>15</sup>And Yahweh will protect you from all illnesses. He will not make you to be sick with any of the dreadful diseases that our ancestors knew about in Egypt, but he will make all your enemies sick with them. <sup>16</sup>You must destroy all the people groups that Yahweh our God enables you to conquer. Do not act mercifully toward any of them. And do not worship their gods, because if you do that, it would be like falling into a trap from which you will never be able to escape.

<sup>17</sup>Do not think to yourselves, 'These people groups are more numerous than we are. We will never be able to drive them out.' <sup>18</sup>Do not be afraid of them. Instead, think about what Yahweh our God did to the king of Egypt and to all the people whom he ruled. <sup>19</sup>Do not forget the terrible plagues that your ancestors saw him inflict on the people of Egypt, and the various kinds of miracles that God did in order to bring your ancestors out of Egypt. Yahweh our God will do the same kind of things to the people groups that you are afraid of now. <sup>20</sup>Furthermore, he will cause them to become terrified, and he will destroy those who remain alive and run away to hide from you. <sup>21</sup>Do not be afraid of those people, because Yahweh our God will be with you. He is a great God; he is the one that people are afraid of. <sup>22</sup>He will gradually drive out those people groups. You should not try to drive all of them out at one time, because if you did that, the number of wild animals would quickly increase, and you would not be able to get rid of them. <sup>23</sup>Instead, Yahweh will enable you to defeat your enemies one people group at a time. He will cause them to panic until they are destroyed. <sup>24</sup>He will enable you to defeat their kings. After you kill them, their names will be forgotten. No people group will be able to stop you; you will destroy all of them. <sup>25</sup>You must burn the carved figures that represent their gods. Do not desire to take the silver or gold decorations that are on those idols, because if you take them for yourselves, they will be like a trap to catch you. Yahweh hates every part of those idols. <sup>26</sup>You must not bring any of those disgusting idols into your houses, because if you do that, God will curse you like he curses them. You must hate and despise those idols, because they are things that Yahweh has cursed and he promises to destroy them."

## Chapter 8

<sup>1</sup>"You must faithfully obey all the commandments that I am giving you today. If you do that, you will live a long time, you will become very numerous, and your people will occupy the land that Yahweh solemnly promised your ancestors that he would give to you. <sup>2</sup>And do not forget how Yahweh our God led us as we traveled through the desert during these past forty years. He caused you to have many problems, because he wanted to cause you to realize that you needed to trust him and not yourselves. And he wanted to test you, to find out what you intended to do, whether you would obey his commandments or not. <sup>3</sup>So he caused you to have difficulties. He allowed you to become hungry. Then he gave you manna, food from heaven, food that you and your ancestors had never eaten before. He did that to teach you that people need food for their bodies, but they also need food for their spirits, which comes from paying attention to everything that Yahweh says. <sup>4</sup>During those forty years, our clothes did not wear out, and our feet did not swell from walking through the desert. <sup>5</sup>Do not forget that Yahweh our God corrects us and punishes us, like parents correct their children.

<sup>6</sup>So obey the commandments of Yahweh our God, and conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and honor him.

<sup>7</sup>He is about to bring you into a good land, which has streams which flow down from the hills and flow out of springs in the valleys. <sup>8</sup>It is a land on which wheat and barley grow, a land where there are fig trees and

pomegranates, and a land where there are olive trees and honey. <sup>9</sup>It is a land where there will be plenty of food for you, where you will not lack anything, a land which has iron ore in its rocks and from which you can dig copper ore

from its hills. <sup>10</sup>Every day you will eat until your stomachs are full, and you will thank Yahweh our God for the fertile land that he has given you.

<sup>11</sup>But when that happens, be sure not to forget Yahweh our God by disobeying his commandments and rules and regulations that I am giving to you today. <sup>12</sup>Your stomachs will be full every day, and you will build good houses and live in them. But you might forget Yahweh's commandments. <sup>13</sup>Indeed, when the number of your cattle and sheep has greatly increased, and when you have accumulated a large amount of silver and gold, and the amount of all your other possessions has greatly increased, <sup>14</sup>be sure that you do not become proud and forget Yahweh our God, who rescued your ancestors from being slaves in Egypt and brought them out from there. <sup>15</sup>Do not forget that he led them while they traveled through that huge and terrible desert, where there were poisonous snakes and scorpions. And do not forget that where the ground was very dry and there was no water, he caused water to flow for them out of solid rock. <sup>16</sup>Do not forget that in that desert he gave your ancestors manna to eat, food that they had never eaten. He caused them to have, because he wanted to cause them to realize that they needed to trust him and not themselves. And he wanted to test them, to find out what they intended to do, in order that when those difficulties ended, he would do many good things for them. <sup>17</sup>Be sure that you do not think to yourselves, 'I have acquired all these things by my own power and ability.' <sup>18</sup>Do not forget that it is Yahweh our God who has enabled you to become rich. He does this because he faithfully does what he solemnly promised our ancestors that he would do.

<sup>19</sup>I solemnly warn you, that if you forget Yahweh our God and turn to other gods and start to bow down to them and worship them, he will certainly destroy you. <sup>20</sup>If you do not obey Yahweh our God, he will certainly destroy you just like he will destroy the people groups that you will fight against.

## Chapter 9

<sup>1</sup>You people of Israel, listen to me! You will soon cross the Jordan River. In the land that you will enter, there are large cities that have very high walls around them that seem to extend up to the sky. There are people groups in that land that are more numerous and more powerful than you are. <sup>2</sup>Those people are very tall and strong. Some of them are giants who are descendants of Anak. You know about them, and you have heard people say that no one can defeat the descendants of Anak. <sup>3</sup>I want you to know that Yahweh our God will go ahead of you. He will be like a raging fire. While you advance, he will defeat and destroy them. As a result, you will quickly be able to drive out some of them and kill the others, which is what Yahweh promised that you would do.

<sup>4</sup>After Yahweh our God has expelled them for you, do not say to yourselves, 'It is because we are righteous that Yahweh has enabled us to capture this land.' The truth is that it is because the people in that land are wicked that Yahweh will drive out them as you advance. <sup>5</sup>I say again that it is not because you are righteous within yourselves or because you do things that are righteous that you will enter and capture that land. It is because those people groups are very wicked that Yahweh our God will expel them as you advance, and because he intends to do what he solemnly promised to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would do. <sup>6</sup>I want you to know that it is not because you are righteous that Yahweh our God is giving you this good land. I say that because you are not righteous; you are a very stubborn people."

<sup>7</sup>"Never forget what your ancestors did in the desert that caused Yahweh our God to become angry. From the day that we left Egypt until the day that we arrived here, you also have continually rebelled against him. <sup>8</sup>Even at Mount Sinai your ancestors caused Yahweh to become angry. Because he was very angry, he was ready to get rid of all of them. <sup>9</sup>When I climbed the mountain to receive from him the stone tablets on which he had written the Ten Commandments, I stayed there forty days and nights, and during that time I did not eat or drink anything. <sup>10</sup>Yahweh gave me the two stone tablets on which he had written the commandments with his own fingers. They were the words that he had spoken to your ancestors from the fire on that mountain, when they were gathered together at the bottom of the mountain.

<sup>11</sup>At the end of those forty days and nights, Yahweh gave me those two stone tablets on which he had written those commandments. <sup>12</sup>But then he said to me, 'Go down the mountain immediately, because the people whom you are leading, the people whom you led out of Egypt, have committed a terrible sin! They have very quickly done what I commanded them not to do. They have made for themselves a cast figure of a calf to worship.'

<sup>13</sup>Then Yahweh said to me, 'I have been watching these people, and I see that they are very stubborn. <sup>14</sup>So do not try to stop me. I am going to destroy all of them, with the result that no one anywhere will remember their names. Then I will enable you to become the ancestor of a nation that will be more numerous and more powerful than they are.'

<sup>15</sup>So I turned and went down the mountain, carrying in my hands the two stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written. Fire was burning all over the mountain. <sup>16</sup>I looked, and I was shocked to see that your ancestors had committed a great sin against Yahweh. They very quickly had begun to do what Yahweh our God had commanded them not to do. They had requested Aaron to make for them a metal image of a calf to worship. <sup>17</sup>So while they were watching, I lifted up those two stone tablets and threw them on the ground, and they broke into pieces.

<sup>18</sup>Then I prostrated myself on the ground in Yahweh's presence as I had done before, and I did not eat or drink anything for forty days and nights. I did that because your ancestors had sinned against Yahweh and caused him to become very angry. <sup>19</sup>I was afraid that because Yahweh was very angry with them, he would get rid of all of them. But again I prayed that he would not do that, and again he listened to me and answered my prayer.

<sup>20</sup>Yahweh was also very angry with Aaron for making that golden calf and was ready to kill him. But at the same time I prayed for Aaron also, and Yahweh answered my prayer. <sup>21</sup>Your ancestors had sinned by requesting Aaron to make a metal statue of a calf. So I took that statue and I melted it in a fire and crushed it and ground it into very tiny pieces. Then I threw those tiny pieces into the stream that flowed down the mountain.

<sup>22</sup>Your ancestors also caused Yahweh to become very angry by what they did at places that they named Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth Hattaavah.

<sup>23</sup>And when we were at Kadesh Barnea, Yahweh said to your ancestors, 'Go up and capture the land that I am about to give to you!' But they rebelled against him. They did not trust him, and they did not obey what he told them to do. <sup>24</sup>Your ancestors rebelled against Yahweh from the first day that I knew them, in Egypt, and you have been exactly the same as your ancestors.

<sup>25</sup>So, as I said, I lay on the ground in Yahweh's presence for forty days and nights, because Yahweh had said that he would destroy your ancestors. <sup>26</sup>And I prayed to Yahweh, saying, 'Lord Yahweh, these people belong to you; do not destroy them. They are people whom you rescued and brought out of Egypt by your very great power. <sup>27</sup>Do not forget what you promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Ignore how stubborn and wicked these people have been, and the sin that they have committed. <sup>28</sup>If you do not do that, and if you destroy them, the people of Egypt will hear about it and say that you were not able to bring them into the land that you promised to give to them. They will say that you took them into the desert only to kill them there because you hated them. <sup>29</sup>Do not forget that they are your people. You chose them to belong to you. You brought them out from Egypt by your very great power.'"

## Chapter 10

<sup>1</sup>"Then Yahweh said to me, 'Cut two stone tablets like the first ones. And make a wooden chest to put them in. Then bring the tablets up to me on this mountain. <sup>2</sup>I will write on those tablets the same words that I wrote on the first tablets, the ones that you broke. Then you can put them in the chest.'

<sup>3</sup>So I made a chest. I used wood from an acacia tree to make it. Then I cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I went up the mountain carrying the tablets. <sup>4</sup>There Yahweh wrote on the tablets the same Ten Commandments that he had written on the first tablet. They are the commandments that he had spoken to your

ancestors from the midst of the fire on the mountain, when they had gathered at the bottom of the mountain. Then Yahweh gave the tablets to me. <sup>5</sup>Carrying the tablets, I turned and went down the mountain. Then, just as he had commanded, I put them in the chest that I had made. And they are still there."

<sup>6</sup>(Then, from the wells that belonged to the people of Jaakan, the Israelite people traveled to Moserah. There Aaron died and was buried, and his son Eleazar took his place and became the high priest. <sup>7</sup>From there, the Israelites traveled to Gudgodah, and from there to Jotbathah, which was a place that had many streams. <sup>8</sup>At that time, Yahweh chose the tribe of Levi to carry the chest that contained the tablets on which were written the Ten Commandments, and to stand in Yahweh's presence in the sacred tent, to offer sacrifices, and to pray for Yahweh to bless the people. They are still doing those things at the present time. <sup>9</sup>That is the reason that the tribe of Levi did not receive any land like the other tribes did. What they received was the honor of being Yahweh's priests, which is what he said that they should do.)

<sup>10</sup>Moses continued to speak: "I stayed on the mountain forty days and nights, just like I did the first time. I prayed to Yahweh, and he answered my prayers again and said that he would not destroy your ancestors. <sup>11</sup>Then Yahweh said to me, 'Continue your journey, going in front of the people, to occupy the land that I solemnly promised your ancestors that I would give to you.'"

<sup>12</sup>"Now, you Israelite people, I will tell you what Yahweh our God says that you do. He requires you to honor him, to conduct your lives as he wants you to, to love him, and to serve him with all that you desire and all that you feel, <sup>13</sup>and to obey all of his commandments which I am giving to you today, so they will help you.

<sup>14</sup>Do not forget that Yahweh our God owns even the sky and everything that is in it. He also owns the earth and everything that is on it. <sup>15</sup>But although he owns all those things, Yahweh also loved your ancestors; from all the people groups on the earth he chose us, their descendants, and we are still his people. <sup>16</sup>So you must change your inner beings and stop being stubborn. <sup>17</sup>Yahweh our God is greater than all gods, and he is greater than all rulers. He is very powerful, more than others, and he does not accept bribes. <sup>18</sup>He makes sure that orphans and widows are treated fairly. He loves even foreigners who live among us Israelite people, and he gives them food and clothes. <sup>19</sup>So you must love those foreigners too, because you were once foreigners when you were living in Egypt. <sup>20</sup>Be sure to honor Yahweh our God and worship only him. Be faithful to him, and say that he should punish you if you do not do what you promise. <sup>21</sup>He is the one whom you must praise. He is our God, and we have seen the great and awesome things that he has done for us. <sup>22</sup>When our ancestors, Jacob and his family, went down to Egypt, there were only seventy of them. But now Yahweh our God has caused us to be as numerous as the stars in the sky."

## Chapter 11

<sup>1</sup>"Because of all that Yahweh your God has done for you, you must love and continually obey all his rules and decrees and commandments. <sup>2</sup>It was you and your ancestors, not your children, whom he punished because you disobeyed him, putting you through many difficulties to teach and train you. So starting today, continue to think about how his punishment, his mighty power, and his great strength to do whatever he wants to do to you. <sup>3</sup>Remember the many different miracles that he performed in Egypt, miracles that showed how powerful and great he is. Think about what he did to the king of Egypt and to all the land that he ruled. <sup>4</sup>Your children did not see the army of Egypt, or their horses and their chariots destroyed by Yahweh's power. Your children did not see how Yahweh caused the Sea of Reeds to flood and sweep away the army of Egypt as they were coming after their ancestors. Your children did not understand that Yahweh continues to make Egypt's army weak even to this day. <sup>5</sup>Your children do not know how Yahweh took care of their ancestors in the desert before they all came to this place. <sup>6</sup>Think about what he did to Dathan and Abiram, the two sons of Eliab from the tribe of Reuben. While all of your ancestors were watching, the earth split open, and they fell into the opening and disappeared, along with their families and their tents, their servants, and their animals. <sup>7</sup>You and your ancestors have seen all these miracles that Yahweh performed.



<sup>8</sup>So obey all the commandments that I am giving you today, in order that you will be strong and able to cross the river and occupy the land that you are about to enter, <sup>9</sup>and in order that you will live for a long time in that land, a land that Yahweh solemnly promised your ancestors that he would give to them and to their descendants, a land that is very fertile. <sup>10</sup>The land that you are about to enter and occupy is not like the land of Egypt, where your ancestors lived. In Egypt, after they planted seeds, it was necessary for them to work hard to water the plants that grew. <sup>11</sup>But the land that you are about to enter is a land where there are many hills and valleys, where there is plenty of rain. <sup>12</sup>Yahweh takes care of that land. He watches over it every day, from the beginning of each year to the end of each year.

<sup>13</sup>Today I am commanding you to love Yahweh our God and to serve him with your entire inner beings. If you do that, <sup>14</sup>each year he will send rain on your land at the right times. As a result, you will have grain and grapes to make wine and olives to make olive oil. <sup>15</sup>And he will cause grass to grow in your fields for your livestock to eat. You will have all the food that you want.

<sup>16</sup>But I warn you, do not stop worshiping Yahweh our God; do not start to worship other gods, <sup>17</sup>because if you do that, Yahweh will become very angry with you. He will prevent any rain from falling. As a result, the crops will not grow, and you will soon die from hunger in the good land that Yahweh is about to give to you. <sup>18</sup>So, keep thinking about what Yahweh has commanded you. Write these words on tiny scrolls and fasten them to your arms, and write them on bands that you fasten to your foreheads to help you to remember them. <sup>19</sup>Teach them to your children again and again. Talk about them all the time: When you are in your houses and when you are walking outside; talk about them when you are lying down and when you are doing things. <sup>20</sup>Write them on the doorposts and on the gates of your cities. <sup>21</sup>Do that in order that you and your children will live for such a very long time in the land that Yahweh promised to our ancestors that he would give to them. That land will belong to you and your descendants as long as there is a sky above the earth.

<sup>22</sup>Faithfully continue to obey what I am commanding you to do—to love Yahweh our God, and to conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and to be faithful to him. <sup>23</sup>If you do that, Yahweh will drive out all the people groups in that land as you advance, people groups that are more numerous and more powerful than you are. <sup>24</sup>All the ground in that land on which you walk will be yours. Your territory will extend from the desert in the south to the Lebanon Mountains in the north, and from the Euphrates River in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. <sup>25</sup>Yahweh our God will cause all the people in that land to be very afraid of you, which is what he promised, with the result that no people group will be able to stop you.

<sup>26</sup>Listen carefully: Today I am telling you that Yahweh will either bless you or he will curse you. <sup>27</sup>If you obey the commandments of Yahweh our God that I am giving to you today, he will bless you. <sup>28</sup>But if you do not obey them, and if you stop worshiping him and start worshiping other gods to whom you were never faithful before, he will curse you. <sup>29</sup>And when Yahweh brings you into the land that you are about to enter and occupy, some of you must stand on top of Mount Gerizim and proclaim what will cause Yahweh to bless you, and the others must stand on top of Mount Ebal and proclaim what will cause Yahweh to curse you.” <sup>30</sup>(Those two mountains are west of the Jordan River, west of the plain along the Jordan, in the land where the Canaanites live. They live close to the sacred trees near Gilgal.) <sup>31</sup>“You will soon cross the Jordan River to occupy the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you. When you enter that land and start to live there, <sup>32</sup>be sure to obey all the rules and decrees that I am giving to you today.”

## Chapter 12

<sup>1</sup>“I will now tell you the rules and decrees that you must faithfully obey in the land that Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors worshiped, is giving to you to occupy. You must obey these laws all the time that you are alive. <sup>2</sup>When you drive out those people groups whose land you will take, you must destroy all the places where they worshiped their gods, places on the tops of mountains and hills and beside large trees. <sup>3</sup>You must tear down their altars and

smash their pillars. Burn the statues of their goddess Asherah and chop down their carved figures, in order that no one will ever worship them in those places again.

<sup>4</sup>Do not worship Yahweh like the people in Canaan worship their gods. <sup>5</sup>Instead, you must go to the place that Yahweh will choose. It will be in the area where one of your tribes will live. That is where you must enter Yahweh's presence and worship him. <sup>6</sup>That is the place where you must bring your sacrifices that the priests will burn whole on the altar, and your other sacrifices that you yourselves present to me, your tithes, other offerings that you promise to give me, the firstborn animals from your cattle and sheep, or any other kind of offering. <sup>7</sup>There, in the presence of Yahweh our God, you and your families will eat the good things that you have worked to produce, and you will be happy, because he has blessed you very, very much.

<sup>8</sup>When you are in that land, you must not do some of the things that we have been doing. Until now, you have all been worshiping Yahweh the way you want to, <sup>9</sup>because you have not yet arrived in the land which he will allow you to permanently possess, where you will be able to live peacefully. <sup>10</sup>But when you cross the Jordan River, you will start to live in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you. He will protect you from all your enemies that will surround you, and you will live peacefully.

<sup>11</sup>Yahweh will choose one place where he wants you to worship him. That is the place to which you must bring all the offerings that I command you to bring: The sacrifices that the priests will burn whole on the altar, your other sacrifices, other offerings that you yourselves decide to present, your tithes, and all the special offerings that you will solemnly promise to give to Yahweh. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice there in the presence of Yahweh, along with your children, your male and female servants, and the descendants of Levi who live in your towns. Do not forget that the descendants of Levi will not have their own land, like you do. <sup>13</sup>Be sure that you do not offer burnt animals as sacrifices anywhere you want to. <sup>14</sup>You must offer them only in the place that Yahweh will choose for you, in an area that belongs to one of your tribes. That is the only place where he wants you to offer sacrifices that the priests will burn whole on the altar, and to do the other things that I am commanding you to do when you worship him.

<sup>15</sup>However, God will permit you to kill and eat the meat of your animals in the places where you live. As often as you want to, you may eat meat from the animals that Yahweh our God will bless you by giving them to you. Those who are at that time clean or unclean may all eat that meat, just like you would eat the meat of a deer or an antelope. <sup>16</sup>But you must not eat the blood of any animal; you must let the blood drain onto the ground before you cook the meat. <sup>17</sup>In the places where you live, you must not eat the things that you are offering to Yahweh: You must not eat the tithes of your grain or of your wine, or of your olive oil, or the firstborn of your cattle and sheep, or the offerings that you yourselves decide to present to Yahweh, or any other offerings. <sup>18</sup>Instead, you and your children and your male and female servants and the descendants of Levi who live in your towns must eat those things in the presence of Yahweh in the place that he chooses. And you should be happy about everything that you have done. <sup>19</sup>Be sure that you take care of the descendants of Levi all during the time that you live in your land.

<sup>20</sup>When Yahweh our God gives you much more land than you will have at first—and he has promised to do this, and when you say, 'I would like some meat to eat,' you are permitted to eat meat whenever you want to. <sup>21</sup>If the place that Yahweh our God chooses to be the place for you to worship him is far from where you live, you are permitted to kill some of your cattle or sheep that Yahweh has given to you, and you may eat that meat in the town where you live, just like I have told you to do. <sup>22</sup>Those who are either clean or unclean at the time may eat that meat, just like you would eat the meat of a deer or an antelope. <sup>23</sup>But be sure that you do not eat the blood of any animal, because it is the blood that sustains life in living beings. You must not eat the life along with the meat. <sup>24</sup>Do not eat the blood; instead, let it drain onto the ground. <sup>25</sup>If you obey this command and do what Yahweh says is right for you to do, things will go well for you and for your descendants.

<sup>26</sup>But the offerings that Yahweh has told you to set aside for him, and the other offerings that you yourselves decide to give, you must take to the place that he will choose. <sup>27</sup>There the priest will burn those offerings on Yahweh's altar. He will kill the animals, drain out the blood, and throw some of it onto the sides of the altar. And you may eat some of that meat. <sup>28</sup>Faithfully obey all these things that I have commanded you. If you do that, things will

go well forever for you and your descendants, because you will be doing what Yahweh our God says is right for you to do and what pleases him.

<sup>29</sup>When you enter the land that you will occupy, as you advance, Yahweh our God will destroy the people groups that live there. <sup>30</sup>After he does that, be sure that you do not worship the gods that they have been worshiping, because if you do that, it will be like a trap that will catch you. Do not ask anyone about those gods, saying, 'Tell me how they worshiped their gods, in order that I can worship Yahweh in the same way.' <sup>31</sup>Do not try to worship Yahweh our God like they have worshiped their gods, because when they worship them, they do disgusting things, things that Yahweh hates. The worst thing that they do is that they sacrifice their own children and burn them on their altars.

<sup>32</sup>Be sure to do everything that I have commanded you to do. Do not add anything to these commands, and do not take anything away from them.

## Chapter 13

<sup>1</sup>Possibly there will be people among you who say that they are prophets. They may say that they are able to interpret the meaning of dreams or perform various kinds of miracles. <sup>2</sup>They will say those things in order to induce you to worship gods that you have never known about before. But even if what they predict happens, <sup>3</sup>do not pay attention to what they say. Yahweh our God will be testing you to find out if you love him with all your inner being. <sup>4</sup>You must conduct your lives as Yahweh our God wants you to, and you must honor him, do what he tells you to do, and trust in him.

<sup>5</sup>But you must execute anyone who falsely says that he is a prophet, or someone who falsely says that he can interpret dreams, or who tells you to rebel against Yahweh our God, who rescued your ancestors from being slaves in Egypt. People like that are only wanting to cause you to stop living as Yahweh has commanded you to do. Execute them to get rid of this evil among you. <sup>6</sup>It does not matter if even your brother or your daughter or your wife or some close friend secretly urges you and says 'Let us worship other gods, gods that neither you nor your ancestors have never known about.' <sup>7</sup>Some of them may encourage you to worship gods that people groups that live near you worship, or gods that groups who live far away worship. <sup>8</sup>Do not do what they suggest. Do not even listen to them. Do not act mercifully toward them, and do not keep secret what they have done. <sup>9</sup>Execute them! You be the first one to throw stones at them to kill them; then everyone else must throw stones at them, too. <sup>10</sup>Kill such people by throwing stones at them, because they are trying to cause you to stop worshiping Yahweh our God, who rescued your ancestors from being slaves in Egypt. <sup>11</sup>When they are executed, all the Israelite people will hear what happened, and they will become afraid, and none of them will do such an evil thing again.

<sup>12</sup>When you are living in one of the towns in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, you may hear <sup>13</sup>that some worthless people among you are deceiving the people of their town, saying, 'Let us go and worship other gods.' <sup>14</sup>Examine the facts about it thoroughly. Suppose you find out that it is true that such a disgraceful thing has happened. <sup>15</sup>Then kill all the people in that town. And kill all their livestock, too. Destroy the town completely. <sup>16</sup>Gather all the possessions that belonged to the people who lived there and pile them up in the city plaza. Then burn the town and everything in it, as though it were an offering to Yahweh that was completely burned on the altar. The ruins must stay there forever; the town must never be rebuilt. <sup>17</sup>You must not take for yourselves anything that Yahweh has said must be destroyed, because if you do what I say, Yahweh will stop being angry with you, and he will act mercifully toward you. And he will cause you to have many children, which is what he promised our ancestors that he would do. <sup>18</sup>Yahweh our God will do all those things if you do what he is telling you to do, and if you obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today and do what Yahweh says is right for you to do.

## Chapter 14

<sup>1</sup>We are people who belong to Yahweh our God. So when people die, do not show that you are grieving by gashing yourselves or by shaving the hair on your foreheads like the other people groups do. <sup>2</sup>We belong to Yahweh alone. Yahweh chose us from all the other people groups on the earth to be his special people.

<sup>3</sup>Do not eat anything that Yahweh detests. <sup>4</sup>The animals whose meat you are permitted to eat are cattle, sheep, goats, <sup>5</sup>all kinds of deer, gazelles, wild goats, and mountain sheep. <sup>6</sup>Those are animals that have split hooves and that also chew the cud. <sup>7</sup>But there are other animals that chew the cud that you must not eat. Those are camels, rabbits, and rock badgers. They chew the cud, but their hooves are not split. So they are not acceptable for you to eat. <sup>8</sup>Do not eat pigs. They are unacceptable for you to eat; their hooves are split, but they do not chew the cud. Do not eat the meat of those animals; do not even touch their dead bodies. <sup>9</sup>You are permitted to eat any fish that has scales and fins. <sup>10</sup>But anything else that lives in the water that does not have scales and fins, you must not eat, because they must be unacceptable to you.

<sup>11</sup>You are permitted to eat the flesh of any bird that is acceptable to Yahweh. <sup>12</sup>But eagles, vultures, osprey, <sup>13</sup>buzzards, and all kinds of kites you may not eat. <sup>14</sup>You are not permitted to eat all kinds of crows and ravens, <sup>15</sup>and the ostrich, and the night hawk, the sea gull, no kind of hawk, <sup>16</sup>the little owl, the great owl, the white owl, <sup>17</sup>pelicans, vultures that eat dead animals, cormorants. <sup>18</sup>And you are not permitted to eat the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe, and the bat you must not eat.

<sup>19</sup>All insects with wings and which swarm are unacceptable to Yahweh; do not eat them. <sup>20</sup>But other insects with wings are acceptable to eat.

<sup>21</sup>Do not eat any animal that has died naturally. You may allow foreigners who live among you to eat those things, or you may sell them to other foreigners. But you belong to Yahweh our God; those who belong to him are not permitted to eat the flesh of animals whose blood has not been drained out.

You must not cook a young sheep or goat in its mother's milk."

<sup>22</sup>"Once each year you must set apart a tenth of all the crops that are produced in your fields. <sup>23</sup>Take them to the place that Yahweh our God will choose for you to worship him. There you must eat the tenth of your grain, your wine, your olive oil, and the meat of the firstborn male animals of your cattle and your sheep. Do this in order that you may learn to always honor Yahweh, the one who has blessed you by giving you these things. <sup>24</sup>If the place that Yahweh has chosen for you to worship him is very far from your home, with the result that you are not able to take there the tithes of your crops with which Yahweh has blessed you, do this: <sup>25</sup>Sell the tenth of your crops, wrap the money carefully in a cloth, and take it with you to the place of worship that Yahweh has chosen. <sup>26</sup>There, with that money, you may buy whatever you want to—beef or lamb or wine or fermented drinks. And there, in the presence of Yahweh, you and your families should eat and drink those things and be happy. <sup>27</sup>But be sure to not neglect to help the descendants of Levi who live in your towns, because they will not own any land.

<sup>28</sup>At the end of every three years, bring a tithe of all your crops that have been produced in that year and store it in your towns. <sup>29</sup>That food will be for the descendants of Levi, because they will not have their own land, and for the foreigners who live among you, and for orphans and widows who live in your towns. They are permitted to come to where the food is stored and take what they need. Do that in order that Yahweh our God will bless you in everything that you do.

## Chapter 15

<sup>1</sup>At the end of every seven years, you must cancel all debts. <sup>2</sup>Do it like this: Each of you who has lent money to a fellow Israelite must cancel that debt. You must not insist that he pay it back. You must do that because Yahweh has declared that the debts must be canceled every seven years. <sup>3</sup>During that year you may require foreigners who

live among you to pay what they owe you, but you must not demand that from any fellow Israelite. <sup>4-5</sup>Yahweh our God will bless you in the land that he is giving to you. If you obey Yahweh our God and obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today, there will not be any poor people among you. <sup>6</sup>Yahweh our God will bless you like he has promised to do, and you will be able to lend money to people of other people groups, but you will not need to borrow from any of them. You will control the finances of many people groups, but they will not control your finances.

<sup>7</sup>In the towns that Yahweh our God is giving to you, if there are any Israelites who are poor, do not be selfish and refuse to help them. <sup>8</sup>Instead, be generous and lend them the money that they need. <sup>9</sup>Be sure that you do not say to yourself, 'The year when debts will be canceled is near, so I do not want to lend anyone any money now, because he will not need to pay it back when that year comes.' It would be evil to even think that. If you act in an unfriendly way toward a needy fellow Israelite, and give him nothing, he will cry out to Yahweh against you, and Yahweh will say that you have sinned by not helping that person. <sup>10</sup>Give freely to poor people and give generously. If you do that, Yahweh will bless you in everything that you do. <sup>11</sup>There will always be some poor people in your land, so I command you to give generously to poor people, to your fellow Israelites.

<sup>12</sup>If any of your fellow Israelite men or women sell themselves to one of you to become your slave, you must free them after they have worked for you for six years. When the seventh year comes, you must free them. <sup>13</sup>When you free them, do not allow them to go empty-handed. <sup>14</sup>Instead, give to them generously from the things with which Yahweh has blessed you—sheep, grain, and wine. <sup>15</sup>Do not forget that your ancestors were once slaves in Egypt and that Yahweh our God freed them. That is the reason that I am now commanding you to do this.

<sup>16</sup>But one of your slaves may say, 'I do not want to leave you.' Perhaps he loves you and your family because you have treated him well. <sup>17</sup>If he says that, take him to the door of your house and, while he is standing against the doorway, pierce one of his earlobes with an awl. That will indicate that he will be your slave for the rest of his life. Do the same thing to any female slave who does not want to leave you.

<sup>18</sup>Do not complain when you are required to free your slaves. Keep in mind that they served you for six years, and that you paid them only half as much as you pay the servants that you hire. If you free them, Yahweh our God will bless you in everything that you do.

<sup>19</sup>Set aside for the honor of Yahweh our God the firstborn male animals from your cattle and sheep. Do not force them to do any work for you, and do not shear the wool of the firstborn animals. <sup>20</sup>You and your family must kill them and eat their meat in the presence of Yahweh at the place that he chooses for you to worship him. <sup>21</sup>But if the animals have any defects, if they are lame or blind, or if they have any other serious defect, you must not sacrifice them to Yahweh our God. <sup>22</sup>You may kill and eat the meat of those animals in your towns. Those who have done things that cause them to become unacceptable to God and those who have not done such things are permitted to eat that meat, just like anyone is permitted to eat the meat of a gazelle or a deer. <sup>23</sup>But you must not eat any of the blood; you must drain all the blood on the ground when you kill those animals.

## Chapter 16

<sup>1</sup>Each year honor Yahweh our God by celebrating the Passover Festival in the month of Aviv in early spring. It was on a night in that month that Yahweh rescued your ancestors from Egypt. <sup>2</sup>In order to celebrate that festival, go to the place that Yahweh will choose for you to worship him, and offer there one young animal from your cattle or your sheep to be the Passover sacrifice. <sup>3</sup>When you eat the Passover meal, the bread that you eat must not have yeast in it. You must eat this kind of bread, which will be called the bread of suffering, for seven days. This is to help you to remember all during the time that you are alive that when your ancestors left Egypt, where they were suffering because they were slaves, they left very quickly. They did not have time to put in yeast and wait for the dough to swell up. <sup>4</sup>During that festival, which will last for seven days, you must not have any yeast in any house in your land. Furthermore, the meat of the animal that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day of the Passover Festival must be eaten during that night; do not allow any of it to remain until the next day.

<sup>5-6</sup>To honor Yahweh our God, you must offer the Passover sacrifice only at the place that he chooses for you to worship him; do not offer that sacrifice in any other town in the land that Yahweh is giving to you. Offer that sacrifice when the sun is setting, at the same time of day that your ancestors started to leave Egypt. <sup>7</sup>Boil the meat and eat it at the place of worship that Yahweh our God chooses. The next morning, you may return to your tents. <sup>8</sup>Each day for six days the bread that you eat must have no yeast in it. On the seventh day, you must all gather to worship Yahweh our God. It will be a day of rest, you must not do any work on that day.

<sup>9</sup>Each year, from the day that you start to harvest your grain, count seven weeks. <sup>10</sup>Then, to honor Yahweh our God, celebrate the Festival of Pentecost. Do that by bringing to him an offering of grain. Yahweh has blessed you by causing it to grow in your fields during that year. If you had a big harvest, bring a big offering. If you had a small harvest, bring a small offering. <sup>11</sup>Each married couple should be joyful in the presence of Yahweh. Their children, their servants, the descendants of Levi who are in that town, and the foreigners, orphans, and widows who are living among you, should also be joyful. Bring those offerings to the place of worship that Yahweh will choose.

<sup>12</sup>When you celebrate these festivals by obeying these commands, remember that your ancestors were slaves in Egypt.

<sup>13</sup>Each year, after you have threshed all your grain and pressed the juice from all your grapes, you must celebrate the Festival of Shelters for seven days. <sup>14</sup>Each married couple along with their children, their servants, the descendants of Levi who are in that town, and the foreigners, orphans, and widows who are living among you, should be joyful in the presence of Yahweh. <sup>15</sup>Honor Yahweh our God by celebrating this festival for seven days in the place that he chooses for you to worship him. You should all be joyful, because Yahweh will have blessed your harvest and all the other work that you have done.

<sup>16</sup>So, each year all of you Israelite men must gather to worship Yahweh our God at the place that he will choose, to celebrate three festivals: The Festival of Bread with no Yeast, the Festival of Pentecost, and the Festival of Shelters. No one should come before Yahweh without an offering. Each of you men must bring an offering for Yahweh to these festivals. <sup>17</sup>The offerings should be in proportion to the blessings that Yahweh has given you during that year.

<sup>18</sup>Appoint judges and other officials throughout your tribes, in all the towns in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you. They must judge people fairly. <sup>19</sup>They must not judge unjustly. They must not favor one person more than another. The judges must not accept bribes, because if a judge accepts a bribe, even if he is wise and honest, it will be very difficult for him to judge fairly; he will do what the person who gave him the bribe wants him to do and declare that the innocent people must be punished. <sup>20</sup>You must be completely fair and just, in order that you may live long enough to occupy the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you.

<sup>21</sup>When you make an altar to worship Yahweh our God, do not put next to it any wooden pole that represents the goddess Asherah. <sup>22</sup>And do not set up any stone pillar to worship any idol, because Yahweh hates them.

## Chapter 17

<sup>1</sup>Do not sacrifice to Yahweh our God any cattle or sheep or goats that have any defects, because Yahweh detests that kind of gift.

<sup>2</sup>When you are living in any of the towns in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, suppose some man or woman sins by disobeying the covenant that Yahweh has made with you. <sup>3</sup>Suppose that person has worshiped and bowed down to other gods, or the sun, or the moon, or the stars. They do what I did not command. <sup>4</sup>If someone tells you that some person has been doing that, you must investigate it thoroughly to see whether this detestable thing has happened in Israel. <sup>5</sup>If it has happened, then you must take outside the town the man or woman who has done it. Then you must kill that person by throwing stones at him or her. <sup>6</sup>But you are allowed to execute such people only if at least two witnesses testify that they saw them doing that. They must not be executed if there is

only one witness. <sup>7</sup>The witnesses should throw stones at the guilty person. Then the other people should throw stones until that person dies. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice from among you.

<sup>8</sup>Sometimes it will be very difficult for a judge to decide what really happened. He might be trying to decide whether, when someone injured or killed another person, that person did it accidentally or deliberately. Or he might be trying to decide if some person is taking another person to court unfairly. If in any town it is very difficult to know what really happened, and if the judge cannot decide it, you should go to the place that Yahweh our God has chosen for you to worship him. <sup>9</sup>There you should present the case to the descendants of Levi who are priests, and to the judge who is serving at that time, and they should decide what should be done. <sup>10</sup>After they make their decision, you must do what they tell you to do. <sup>11</sup>Accept what they have decided, and do what they say that you should do. Do not try to change in any way what they have decided. <sup>12</sup>You must execute anyone who proudly disobeys the judge or the priest who stands there in the presence of Yahweh and decides what should be done. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice from among you. <sup>13</sup>Then after that person is executed, all the people will hear about it, and they will be afraid, and none of them will act that way anymore.

<sup>14</sup>I know that after you have occupied the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, and you are living there, you will say, 'We should have a king to rule over us, like the kings that other nations around us have.' <sup>15</sup>Yahweh our God will permit you to have a king, but be sure that you appoint someone whom he has chosen. That man must be an Israelite; you must not appoint someone who is a foreigner to be your king. <sup>16</sup>After he becomes the king, he should not acquire a large number of horses for himself. He should not send people to Egypt to buy horses for him, because Yahweh said to you, 'Never return to Egypt for anything!' <sup>17</sup>And he must not have a lot of wives, because if he did that, they would turn him away from worshiping only Yahweh. And he must not acquire a lot of silver and gold.

<sup>18</sup>When he becomes your king, he must appoint someone to copy these laws. He must copy them from the scroll that is kept by the priests descended from Levi. <sup>19</sup>He must keep this new scroll near him and read from it every day of his life, in order that he may learn to have an awesome respect for Yahweh, and to faithfully obey all the rules and regulations that are written in these laws. <sup>20</sup>If he does that, he will not think that he is more important than his fellow Israelites, and he will completely obey Yahweh's commands. As a result, he and his descendants will rule as kings in Israel for many years."

## Chapter 18

<sup>1</sup>"The priests, who are all from the tribe of Levi, will not receive any land in Israel. Instead, they will receive some of the food that other people offer to be burned on the altar to be sacrificed to Yahweh and some of the other sacrifices that will be offered to Yahweh. <sup>2</sup>They will not be allotted any land like the other tribes will be. What they will receive is the honor of being Yahweh's priests, which is what he said that they should have.

<sup>3</sup>When the people bring an ox or a sheep to be sacrificed, they must give to the priests the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach of those animals. <sup>4</sup>You must also give to them the first part of the grain that you harvest, and the first part of the wine that you make, and the first part of the olive oil that you make, and the first part of the wool that you shear from your sheep. <sup>5</sup>You must do this because Yahweh our God has chosen the tribe of Levi from all of your tribes, in order that it would be ones from that tribe who would always be the priests who would serve him.

<sup>6</sup>If any man from the tribe of Levi who has been living in one of the towns in Israel wants to come from there to the place of worship that Yahweh has chosen, and to start living there, <sup>7</sup>he is permitted to serve Yahweh there as a priest, just like the other men from the tribe of Levi who have been serving there. <sup>8</sup>He must be given the same amount of food that the other priests receive. He is permitted to keep the money that his relatives receive for selling some of their possessions and send to him.

<sup>9</sup>When you enter the land that Yahweh our God is giving you, you must not imitate the disgusting things that the people groups who are there now do. <sup>10</sup>You must not sacrifice any of your children by burning them on your altars.

Do not try to use supernatural power to discover what will happen in the future. Do not try to use magic to find out what will happen in the future. Do not interpret omens to find out what will happen. Do not practice sorcery. Do not put spells on people. <sup>11</sup>Do not try to talk with spirits of dead people. Do not do magic. <sup>12</sup>Yahweh hates people who do any of those disgusting things. And as you advance through that land, he is going to drive out the people groups because they do those disgusting things. <sup>13</sup>But you must always be faithful to Yahweh and avoid doing any of those disgusting things.

<sup>14</sup>The people groups that you are about to expel from the land that you will occupy consult soothsayers and those who practice divination. But as for you, Yahweh our God does not allow you to do that. <sup>15</sup>Some day he will send from among you a prophet like me. He will tell you what will happen in the future, and you must obey him. <sup>16</sup>On the day that your ancestors were gathered at the bottom of Mount Sinai, they pleaded with me saying, 'We do not want Yahweh to speak to us again, and we do not want to see this huge fire that is burning on the mountain!' Your ancestors said that because they were afraid that they would die if Yahweh spoke to them again.

<sup>17</sup>Then Yahweh said to me, 'What they have said is true. <sup>18</sup>So I will send from among them a prophet like you. I will tell him what to say, and then he will tell people everything that I tell him to say. <sup>19</sup>He will speak for me. And I will punish anyone who does not heed what he says. <sup>20</sup>But if any person says that he is a prophet and dares to speak a message which he falsely says comes from me but which I did not tell him to speak, or anyone who speaks a message that he says other gods have revealed to him, he must be executed for doing that.'

<sup>21</sup>But perhaps you will say to yourself, 'How can we know if a message that someone tells us does not come from Yahweh?' <sup>22</sup>The answer is that when someone speaks a message about what will happen in the future, a message that he says was revealed by Yahweh, if what he says does not happen, you will know that the message did not come from Yahweh. That person has wrongly claimed that it was revealed to him by Yahweh. So you do not need to be afraid of anything that he says.

## Chapter 19

<sup>1</sup>After Yahweh our God has destroyed the people groups from the land that he is giving to you, and after you have driven them out from their cities and you start to live in their houses, <sup>2-3</sup>you must divide into three parts the land that he is giving to you. Then select a city in each part. You must make good roads in order that people can get to those cities easily. Someone who kills another person can escape to one of those cities to be safe.

<sup>4</sup>This is the rule about someone who has killed another person. If someone accidentally kills another person who was not his enemy, he may escape to one of those cities and be safe. <sup>5</sup>For example, if two men go into the forest to cut some wood, if the axe head comes off the handle while one of them is chopping down a tree and the ax head strikes and kills the other man, the man who was using the ax will be allowed to run to one of those cities and be safe there, because the people of that city will protect him. <sup>6</sup>Because he accidentally killed someone, and because the man was not his enemy, he can try to run to one of those cities. If there were only one city, it may be a long distance to that city. Then if the relative of the man who was killed to get revenge, is very angry, he may be able to catch the other person before he arrives at that city. <sup>7</sup>Therefore, I give you this command, that you select three cities for this purpose.

<sup>8-9</sup>If you do everything that I am today commanding you to do, and if you love Yahweh our God, and if you conduct your lives as he wants you to do, Yahweh our God will give you much more land than you will have when you first occupy it, which is what he promised to do. He will give you all the land which he promised your ancestors that he would give to you. When he gives you that land, you must select three more cities to which people may escape.

<sup>10</sup>Do this in order that people who are innocent will not die, and you will not be guilty for allowing them to be executed, in the land that Yahweh is giving to you.

<sup>11</sup>But suppose someone hates his enemy and hides and waits for that person to come along the road. Then when he passes by, suddenly he attacks him and murders him. If the attacker flees to one of those cities to be protected there, <sup>12</sup>the elders of the city where the murdered man lived must not protect the attacker. They must send



someone to the city to which the other man escaped, and bring him to to get revenge, so that he may execute that man. <sup>13</sup>You must not pity those who murder other people! Instead, you must execute them, in order that the people in the land of Israel will not be punished for murdering innocent people, and in order that things will go well for you.

<sup>14</sup>When you are living in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, do not move the markers of your neighbors' property boundaries that were placed there long ago.

<sup>15</sup>If someone is accused of committing a crime, one person who says, 'I saw him do it' is not enough to find him guilty. There must be at least two people who say, 'We saw him do it.' If there is only one witness, the judge must not believe that what he says is true.

<sup>16</sup>Or suppose that someone tries to do wrong to another person by falsely accusing him. <sup>17</sup>Then both of them must go to the place where the people worship, to talk to the priests and judges who are serving at that time.

<sup>18</sup>The judges must investigate the case carefully. If the judges determine that one of them has accused the other falsely, <sup>19</sup>that person must be punished in the same way that the other one would have been punished if the judges had decided that he was guilty. By punishing such people, you will get rid of this evil practice from among you. <sup>20</sup>And when that person is punished, everyone will hear what has happened, and they will be afraid, and no one will dare to act that way anymore. <sup>21</sup>You must not pity people who are punished like that. The rule should be that a person who has murdered someone else must be executed; one of a person's eyes must be gouged out if he has gouged out someone else's eye, one tooth of a person who has knocked out the tooth of another person must be knocked out; one hand of a person who has cut off the hand of another person must likewise be cut off; one foot of a person who has cut off the foot of another person must also be cut off.

## Chapter 20

<sup>1</sup>When your soldiers go to fight your enemies, and you see that they have many horses and chariots and that their army is much bigger than yours, do not be afraid of them, because Yahweh our God, who brought your ancestors safely out of Egypt, will be with you. <sup>2</sup>When you are ready to start the battle, the high priest must stand in front of the troops. <sup>3</sup>He must say to them, 'You Israelite men, listen to me! Today you are going to fight against your enemies. Do not be timid or afraid, <sup>4</sup>because Yahweh our God will go with you. He will fight your enemies for you, and he will enable you to defeat them.'

<sup>5</sup>Then the army officers must say to the troops, 'If anyone among you has just built a new house and has not dedicated it to God, he should go home and dedicate the house. If he does not do that, if he dies in the battle, someone else will dedicate the house and live in it. <sup>6</sup>If anyone among you has planted a vineyard and has not yet harvested any grapes from it, he should go home. If he stays here and dies in the battle, someone else will harvest the grapes and enjoy the wine made from them. <sup>7</sup>If anyone among you has become engaged to marry a woman but has not married her yet, he should go home. If he stays here and dies in the battle, someone else will marry her.'

<sup>8</sup>Then the officers must also say, 'If anyone among you is afraid or timid, he should go home, in order that he does not cause his fellow soldiers to also stop being courageous.' <sup>9</sup>When the officers have finished speaking to the troops, they must appoint commanders over them.

<sup>10</sup>When you go up to a city that is far away to attack it, first tell the people there that if they surrender, you will not attack them. <sup>11</sup>If they open the gates of the city and surrender, they will all become your slaves to work for you.

<sup>12</sup>But if they refuse to surrender peacefully and decide instead to fight against you, your troops must surround the city and break through the walls. <sup>13</sup>Then, when Yahweh our God enables you to capture the city, you must kill all the men in the city. <sup>14</sup>But you are allowed to take for yourselves the women, the children, the livestock, and everything else that you want to take from the city. You will be allowed to enjoy all the things that belonged to your

enemies, the things that Yahweh our God has given to you. <sup>15</sup>You should do that in all the cities that are far from the land in which you will settle.

<sup>16</sup>But in the cities that are in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you forever, you must kill all the people and all the animals. <sup>17</sup>You must get rid of them completely. Get rid of the Heth, the Amor the Canaan, the Periz, the Hiv, and the Jebus people groups; that is what Yahweh our God commanded you to do. <sup>18</sup>If you do not do that, they will teach you to sin against Yahweh our God and do the disgusting things that they do when they worship their gods.

<sup>19</sup>When you surround a city for a long time, trying to capture it, do not cut down the fruit trees outside the city. You are allowed to eat the fruit from the trees, but do not destroy the trees, because they certainly are not your enemies. <sup>20</sup>You are permitted to cut down the other trees and use the wood to make ladders and towers to enable you to go over the walls and capture the city."

## Chapter 21

<sup>1</sup>"Suppose someone has been murdered in a field in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, and you do not know who killed that person. <sup>2</sup>If that happens, your elders and judges must go out to where that person's corpse was found and measure the distance from there to each of the nearby towns. <sup>3</sup>Then the elders in the closest town must select a young cow that has never been used for doing work. <sup>4</sup>They must take it to a place near a stream where the ground has never been plowed or planted. There they must break its neck. <sup>5</sup>The priests must go there also, because Yahweh our God has chosen them from the tribe of Levi to serve him and to be his representatives when they bless people. And he has also chosen them to settle disputes in which someone has been injured. <sup>6</sup>The elders from the closest town must wash their hands over the young cow whose neck was broken, there in the valley, <sup>7</sup>and they must say, 'We did not murder this person, and we did not see who did it. <sup>8</sup>Yahweh, forgive us, your Israelite people whom you rescued from Egypt. Do not consider us to be guilty. Instead, forgive us.' <sup>9</sup>By doing that, you will be doing what Yahweh considers to be right, and you will not be considered to be guilty for murdering that person.

<sup>10</sup>When you who are soldiers go to fight against your enemies, and Yahweh our God enables you to defeat them, and they become your prisoners, <sup>11</sup>one of you may see among them a beautiful woman that he likes, and he may want to marry her. <sup>12</sup>He should take her to his home, and there she must shave all the hair off her head and cut her fingernails to signify that now she does not belong to her people group anymore, but now she is becoming an Israelite. <sup>13</sup>She must take off the clothes that she was wearing when she was captured, and put on Israelite clothes. She must stay in that man's house and mourn for a month because of leaving her parents. After that, he will be allowed to marry her. <sup>14</sup>Later, if he no longer is pleased with her, he will be permitted to allow her to leave him. But because she was shamed and was forced to sleep with him, he will not be allowed to treat her like a slave and sell her to anyone else.

<sup>15</sup>Suppose that a man has two wives, but he likes one of them and dislikes the other one. And suppose that they both give birth to sons, and that the oldest son is the child of the woman that he does not like. <sup>16</sup>On the day when that man decides which of his possessions each son will obtain after he dies, he must not favor the son of the wife that he loves by giving him the larger share that should go to the firstborn son. <sup>17</sup>He must give two-thirds of his possessions to the older son, the son of the wife whom he does not like. That son is his firstborn son, and he must be given the largest share.

<sup>18</sup>Suppose there is a boy who is very stubborn and is always rebelling against his parents, and who will not heed what they say to him. And suppose that they punish him but he still does not pay attention to what they tell him. <sup>19</sup>If that happens, his parents must take him to the gate of the city where they live and have him stand in front of the elders of the city. <sup>20</sup>Then the parents must say to the elders of that city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and always rebelling against us. He will not pay attention to what we tell him. He eats too much, and he gets drunk.' <sup>21</sup>Then all the elders of that city must execute him by throwing stones at him. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil

practice from among you. And everyone in Israel will hear about what happened and they will be afraid to do what he did.

<sup>22</sup>If someone is executed for having committed a crime for which he deserves to die, and you hang his corpse on a post, <sup>23</sup>you must not allow his corpse to remain there all night. You must bury it on the day that he died, because if you keep the corpse on a post, God will curse the land. You must bury the corpse that day, in order that you do not defile the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you.

## Chapter 22

<sup>1</sup>If you see an Israelite's ox or sheep that has strayed away, do not act as though you did not see it. Take it back to its owner. <sup>2</sup>But if the owner does not live near you, or if you do not know who he is, take the animal to your house. It can stay with you until the owner comes, searching for it. Then you must give the animal to him. <sup>3</sup>You must do that same thing if you see a donkey, a piece of clothing, or anything else that someone has lost. Do not refuse to do what you should do. Do not pretend to know nothing about the matter.

<sup>4</sup>And if you see a fellow Israelite's donkey or cow that has fallen down on the road, do not act as though you did not see it. Help the owner to lift the animal up so that it can stand on its feet again.

<sup>5</sup>Women must not wear men's clothes, and men must not wear women's clothes. Yahweh our God hates people who do things like that.

<sup>6</sup>If you happen to find a bird's nest in a tree or on the ground, and the mother bird is sitting in the nest on its eggs or with the baby birds, do not take the mother bird and kill it. <sup>7</sup>You are permitted to take the baby birds, but you must allow the mother bird to fly away. Do this in order that things will go well for you and that you will live for a long time.

<sup>8</sup>If you build a new house, you must put a railing around the roof. In this way, you will not be guilty of having caused someone's death if a person falls from it and dies.

<sup>9</sup>Do not plant any crop in the area where your grapevines are growing. If you do, the priests in Yahweh's sanctuary will seize both the seed and the harvest of that vineyard.

<sup>10</sup>Do not hitch together an ox and a donkey for plowing your fields.

<sup>11</sup>Do not wear clothing that is made by weaving together wool and linen.

<sup>12</sup>Twist threads together to make tassels and sew them on the four bottom corners of your cloak.

<sup>13</sup>Suppose a man marries a young woman and sleeps with her and later decides that he does not want her anymore, <sup>14</sup>and suppose that he says false things about her, and claims that she was not a virgin when he married her. <sup>15</sup>If that happens, the young woman's parents must take the sheet that was on the bed when the man and their daughter were married, which still has bloodstains on it, and show it to the elders of the city at the gate of the city. <sup>16</sup>Then the father of the young woman must say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man to be his wife. But now he says that he does not want her anymore. <sup>17</sup>And he has falsely said that she was not a virgin when he married her. But look! Here is what proves that my daughter was a virgin! Look at the bloodstains on the sheet where they slept the night that they were married!' And he will show the sheet to the elders. <sup>18</sup>Then the elders of that city must take that man and whip him. <sup>19</sup>They shall require that he pay a fine of one hundred pieces of silver and give the money to the father of the young woman, because the man has brought shame on an Israelite young woman. Also, that woman must continue to live with him; she is his wife. He is not allowed to divorce her during the rest of his life.

<sup>20</sup>But if what the man said is true, and there is nothing to prove that she was a virgin when he married her, <sup>21</sup>they must take that young woman to the door of her father's house. Then the men of that city must execute her by

throwing stones at her. They must do that because she has done something in Israel that is very disgraceful, by sleeping with some man while she was still living in her father's house. By executing her like that, you will get rid of this evil practice from among you.

<sup>22</sup>If a man is caught while he is sleeping with another man's wife, both of them must be executed. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice from Israel.

<sup>23</sup>Suppose in some town a man sees a young woman who is promised to be married to another man, and he is caught sleeping with her. <sup>24</sup>You must take both of them to the gate of that town, where the town leaders decide important matters. There you must execute them both by throwing stones at them. You must execute the young woman because she did not shout for help even though she was in the town. And the man must be executed because he slept with someone who was already promised to be married. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice from among you

<sup>25</sup>But suppose out in the open countryside a man meets a young woman who is engaged to be married, and he forces her to sleep with him. If that happens, only that man must be executed. <sup>26</sup>You must not punish the young woman, because she did not do anything for which she deserves to be executed. This case is like when one man attacks another man in the countryside and murders him, <sup>27</sup>because the man who forced her to sleep with him saw her when she was in the open countryside, and even though she called out for help, there was no one there who could rescue her.

<sup>28</sup>If a man forces a young woman who is not engaged to be married to sleep with him, and if someone sees him while he is doing that, <sup>29</sup>that man must pay fifty pieces of silver to the young woman's father, and he must marry her, because he shamed her by forcing her to sleep with him. He is not allowed to divorce her during the rest of his life.

<sup>30</sup>A man must not take what belongs to his father by sleeping with any of his father's wives.

## Chapter 23

<sup>1</sup>Any male person whose reproductive organs have been destroyed may not be included as one of Yahweh's people.

<sup>2</sup>No illegitimate person or descendant of an illegitimate person, extending to the tenth generation, shall be included as one of Yahweh's people.

<sup>3</sup>No one from the Ammon or Moab people groups shall be included as one of Yahweh's people, extending to the tenth generation. <sup>4</sup>One reason for this is that their leaders refused to give your ancestors food and water when they were traveling from Egypt to Canaan. Another reason is that they paid Balaam son of Beor from the town of Pethor in Mesopotamia, to curse you Israelites. <sup>5</sup>But Yahweh our God did not pay attention to Balaam; instead, he caused Balaam to bless your ancestors, because Yahweh loved them. <sup>6</sup>As long as Israel is a nation, you must not do anything to cause things to go well for those two people groups to enable them to prosper.

<sup>7</sup>But do not despise anyone from the Edom people group, because they are descendants of your ancestor Isaac, just like you are. And do not despise people from Egypt, because they treated your ancestors well when they first lived in Egypt. <sup>8</sup>The grandchildren of people from Edom and Egypt who live among you now may be included among Yahweh's people.

<sup>9</sup>When your soldiers are living in camp in time of war, they must avoid doing things that would make them unacceptable to God. <sup>10</sup>If any soldier becomes unacceptable to God because semen comes out of his body during the night, the next morning he must go outside the camp and stay there during that day. <sup>11</sup>But in the evening of that day, he must bathe himself, and at sunset he will be allowed to come back into the camp.

<sup>12</sup>Your soldiers must have a toilet area outside the camp where you can go when you need to. <sup>13</sup>When you go to fight against your enemies, carry a stick along with your weapons, in order that when you need to defecate, you can dig a hole with the stick, and then cover up the hole when you have finished defecating. <sup>14</sup>You must keep the camp acceptable to Yahweh our God, because he is with you in your camp to protect you and to enable you to defeat your enemies. Do not do anything disgraceful that would cause Yahweh to turn away from you.

<sup>15</sup>If slaves who escape from their masters come to you and request you to protect them, do not send them back to their masters. <sup>16</sup>Allow them to stay among you, in whatever town they choose, and do not mistreat them.

<sup>17</sup>Do not allow any Israelite man or woman to become prostitutes at the temple. <sup>18</sup>Also, do not allow any people who earned money from being a prostitute to bring any of that money into the temple of Yahweh our God, even if they solemnly promised to pay that money to him. Yahweh hates those who are prostitutes.

<sup>19</sup>When you lend money or food or anything else to a fellow Israelite, do not charge them interest. <sup>20</sup>You are allowed to charge interest when you lend money to foreigners who live in your land, but not when you lend money to Israelites. Do this in order that Yahweh our God will bless you in everything that you do in the land that you are about to enter and occupy.

<sup>21</sup>When you solemnly promise to give something to Yahweh your God or to do something for him, do not delay in doing it. Yahweh expects you to do what you promised, and if you do not do it, you will be committing a sin. <sup>22</sup>But if you do not solemnly promise to do something, that is not sinful. <sup>23</sup>But if you voluntarily promise to do something, you must do it.

<sup>24</sup>When you walk through someone else's vineyard, you are allowed to pick and eat as many grapes as you want, but you must not put any in a container and take them away. <sup>25</sup>When you walk along a path in someone else's field of grain, you are allowed to pluck some of the grain and eat it, but you must not cut any grain with a sickle and take it with you.

## Chapter 24

<sup>1</sup>Suppose a man marries a woman and later decides that he does not want her because there is something offensive, and he sends her away from his house. And suppose he writes a paper in which he says that he is divorcing her, and he gives the paper to her and sends her away from his house. <sup>2</sup>Then suppose that she goes away. She is allowed to marry another man. <sup>3</sup>Suppose that that man later also decides that he does not like her, and that he also writes a paper in which he says that he is divorcing her, and he sends her away from his house. Or, suppose that the second husband dies. <sup>4</sup>If either of those things happen, her first husband must not marry her again. He must consider that she has become unacceptable to Yahweh. Yahweh would consider it to be disgusting if he married her again. You must not sin by doing that in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you.

<sup>5</sup>When a man has just become married, he must not be required to become a soldier in the army or be required to do any other work for the government. He must be exempt from such work for one year after being married. He should stay at home and make his wife happy for that year.

<sup>6</sup>Anyone who lends money to someone else is allowed to require that person to give him something to guarantee that he will pay back the money that he borrowed, but he must not take from him his millstone because that would be taking from the other person the millstone that his family needs to make flour for baking bread to stay alive.

<sup>7</sup>If someone kidnaps a fellow Israelite to make that person his slave or to sell him to become someone else's slave, you must execute the person who did that. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil from among you.

<sup>8</sup>If you are suffering from leprosy, be sure to do everything that the priests, who are from the tribe of Levi, tell you to do. Obey carefully the instructions that I have given to them. <sup>9</sup>Do not forget what Yahweh our God did to Miriam, when she became a leper, as your ancestors were coming out of Egypt.

<sup>10</sup>When you lend something to someone, do not go into his house to take the cloak that he says that he will give you to guarantee that he will return what he has borrowed. <sup>11</sup>Stand outside his house, and the man to whom you are lending something will bring the cloak out to you. <sup>12</sup>But if he is poor, do not keep that cloak overnight. <sup>13</sup>When the sun sets, take the cloak back to him, in order that he may wear it while he sleeps. If you do that, he will ask God to bless you, and Yahweh our God will be pleased with you.

<sup>14</sup>Do not mistreat any servants whom you have hired who are poor and needy, whether they are Israelites or foreigners who are living in your town. <sup>15</sup>Every day, before sunset, you must pay them the money that they have earned. They are poor and they need to get their pay. If you do not pay them right away, they will cry out against you to Yahweh, and he will punish you for having sinned like that.

<sup>16</sup>Parents must not be executed for crimes that their children have committed, and children must not be executed for crimes that their parents have committed. People should be executed only for the crimes that they themselves have committed.

<sup>17</sup>You must do for foreigners who live among you and for orphans the things that the laws state that must be done for them. And if you lend something to a widow, do not take her coat from her as a guarantee that she will return it. <sup>18</sup>Do not forget that you had great troubles when you were slaves in Egypt, and that Yahweh our God rescued you from there. That is why I am commanding you to help others who have troubles.

<sup>19</sup>When you harvest your crops, if you have forgotten that you left one bundle in the field, do not go back to get it. Leave it there for foreigners, orphans, and widows. If you do that, Yahweh will bless you in everything that you do.

<sup>20</sup>And when you have harvested all your olives from the trees once, do not go back to pick the ones that are still on the trees. <sup>21</sup>Similarly, when you pick the grapes in your vineyard, do not go back a second time to try to find more. Leave them for the foreigners, orphans, and widows among you. <sup>22</sup>Do not forget that Yahweh acted kindly toward you when you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I am commanding you to be kind to those who are needy."

## Chapter 25

<sup>1</sup>"If two Israelites have a dispute and they go to a court, the judge will probably decide that one is innocent and that the other one is guilty. <sup>2</sup>If the judge says that the guilty person must be punished, he shall command him to lie with his face on the ground and be whipped. The number of times he is struck with a whip will depend on what kind of crime he committed. <sup>3</sup>It is permitted that he be struck as many as forty times, but no more than that. If he is struck more than forty times, he would be humiliated publicly.

<sup>4</sup>When your ox is walking on the grain to separate it from the chaff, do not prevent it from eating some of grain.

<sup>5</sup>If two brothers live on the same property, and one of them who has no son dies, the man's widow should not marry someone who is not a member of his family. The dead man's brother must marry her and sleep with her. It is his duty to do that. <sup>6</sup>If she later gives birth to a son, that son is to be considered the son of the man who died, in order that the dead man's name will not disappear from Israel.

<sup>7</sup>But if the dead man's brother does not want to marry that woman, she must stand at the city gate. She must say to the city leaders, 'My husband's brother refuses to marry me in order that I may give birth to a son who will prevent the dead man's name from disappearing in Israel.' <sup>8</sup>Then the elders must summon that man and talk to him. Perhaps he will still refuse to marry that widow. <sup>9</sup>In that case, she must go up to him while the elders are watching, and take off one of his sandals to symbolize that he would not receive any of her property, spit in his face, and say to him, 'This is what happens to the man who refuses to do what is needed to allow his dead brother to have a son in order that our family name does not disappear.' <sup>10</sup>After that happens, that man's family will be known as 'the family of the man whose sandal was pulled off.'

<sup>11</sup>When two men are fighting with each other, and the one man's wife comes up to help her husband by grabbing hold of the other man's private parts, <sup>12</sup>do not act mercifully toward her; cut off her hand.

<sup>13-14</sup>When you are buying or selling things, do not try to cheat people by having two kinds of weights, one which you use when you buy something and one which you use when you sell something, or two kinds of measuring baskets, one which you use when you buy something and one which you use when you sell something. <sup>15</sup>Always use correct weights and correct measuring baskets, in order that Yahweh our God will allow you to live a long time in the land that he is giving to you. <sup>16</sup>Yahweh hates all those who act dishonestly, and he will punish them.

<sup>17</sup>Continue to remember what the Amalek people group did to your ancestors when they were coming out of Egypt. <sup>18</sup>They attacked your ancestors as they were traveling, when they were weak and exhausted. Those people were not afraid of God at all, so they attacked your ancestors from the rear and killed all those who were unable to walk as fast as the others. <sup>19</sup>Therefore, when Yahweh our God has given you the land that he promised to give you, and when he has enabled you to rest from fighting all your enemies around you, kill all the Amalek people group, with the result that no one will remember them anymore. Do not forget to do this!

## Chapter 26

<sup>1</sup>After you occupy the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, and you have settled there, <sup>2</sup>each of you must take some of the first crops that you harvest, put it in a basket, and take it to the place that Yahweh will have chosen for you to worship there. <sup>3</sup>Go to the high priest who is serving at that time and say to him, 'By giving you this first part of my harvest today, I am declaring to Yahweh our God that I have picked it in the land that he solemnly promised to our ancestors to give to us.' <sup>4</sup>Then the priest must take the basket of food from your hand and put it on the altar where sacrifices are offered to Yahweh our God. <sup>5</sup>Then in Yahweh's presence you must say this: 'My ancestor Jacob was a man from Aram and powerful nation. He took his family to Egypt. They were a small group when they went there, but they lived there and their descendants became a very large and powerful nation. <sup>6</sup>Then the people of Egypt acted very harshly toward them, and they forced them to become their slaves and to work very hard. <sup>7</sup>Then our ancestors cried out to you, Yahweh our God, and you heard them. You saw that they were suffering, and that they were forced to work very hard, and were being oppressed. <sup>8</sup>Then by your great power and by performing many kinds of miracles, and other terrifying things, you brought them out of Egypt. <sup>9</sup>You brought us to this land and gave it to us, a land that is very fertile. <sup>10</sup>So now, Yahweh, I have brought to you the first part of the harvest from the land that I received.' Then you must set the basket down in Yahweh's presence and worship him there. <sup>11</sup>And you must celebrate by eating a meal together to thank Yahweh our God for all the good things that he has given to you and to your family. And you must invite the descendants of Levi and the foreigners who are living among you to also rejoice and eat with you.

<sup>12</sup>Every third year, you must bring to the descendants of Levi and to the foreigners who are living among you and the orphans and the widows a tithe of your crops, in order that in every town they will have plenty to eat. <sup>13</sup>Then you must say to Yahweh, 'I have brought to you, from my house, all of the tenth from my harvest this year, the tenth that I have set aside for you. I am giving it to the descendants of Levi, to the foreigners, the orphans, and the widows, as you commanded us to do. I have not disobeyed any of your commands about the tenth portion, and I have not forgotten any of your commands about it. <sup>14</sup>I declare that I have not eaten any food from the tenth portion while I was mourning for someone who died. And I have not taken any of it out of my house while I was in any condition unacceptable to you; I have not offered any of it to spirits of dead people. Yahweh, I have obeyed you and done everything that you have commanded us concerning the tenth portion. <sup>15</sup>So please look down from your holy place in heaven, and bless us, your Israelite people. Also bless this very fertile land which you have given to us, which is what you promised our ancestors that you would do.'

<sup>16</sup>Today Yahweh our God is commanding you to obey all these rules and decrees. So obey them faithfully, with all your inner being. <sup>17</sup>Today you have declared that he is your God, and that you will conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and that you will obey all his commands and rules and decrees, and that you will do all that he tells you to do. <sup>18</sup>And today Yahweh has declared that you are his people, which is what he promised that you would be, and he commands you to obey all his commands. <sup>19</sup>If you do that, he will cause you to become greater than any other

nation that he has established, and he will enable you to praise him and honor him. You are a special people to Yahweh, set apart and holy to him, just as he promised.”

## Chapter 27

<sup>1</sup>Moses, along with the other Israelite leaders, said this to the people: “Obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today. <sup>2</sup>Soon you will cross the Jordan River and enter the land that Yahweh, your God, promised to give to you. There, set up some large stones and cover them with plaster. <sup>3</sup>Write on those stones all these laws and teachings, when you enter that very fertile land that Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors worshiped, promised to give to you. <sup>4</sup>When you have crossed the Jordan River, set up some large stones on Mount Ebal, just as I told you, and cover them with plaster. <sup>5</sup>And build a stone altar there to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, but do not do any work on those stones with iron tools. <sup>6</sup>The altar that you make to burn sacrifices to Yahweh our God must be made with uncut stones. <sup>7</sup>And there you must sacrifice offerings to restore fellowship with Yahweh, and you must eat your share of those offerings and rejoice in the presence of Yahweh. <sup>8</sup>And, when you write these laws on those stones, you must write them very clearly.”

<sup>9</sup>Then Moses, along with the priests, said to all the Israelite people, “You Israelite people, be quiet and listen to what I am saying. Today you have become the people who belong to Yahweh, our God. <sup>10</sup>So you must do what he tells you, and obey all the rules and regulations that I am giving to you today.”

<sup>11</sup>On that same day Moses said to the Israelite people, <sup>12</sup>“After you have crossed over the Jordan River, the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin must stand on Mount Gerizim and request Yahweh to bless the people. <sup>13</sup>And the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali must stand on Mount Ebal and listen to the things that Yahweh will do when he curses the people.

<sup>14</sup>The descendants of Levi must shout these words loudly:

<sup>15</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who carves a figure from wood or stone or casts a figure from metal, and secretly sets it up and worships it.

Yahweh considers that those things are detestable.’

And all the people must reply, ‘Amen.’

<sup>16</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.’

And all the people must reply, ‘Amen.’

<sup>17</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who removes someone else’s markers of property boundaries.’

And all the people must reply, ‘Amen.’

<sup>18</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who leads a blind person to go in the wrong direction.’

And all the people must reply, ‘Amen.’

<sup>19</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who deprives foreigners or orphans or widow of the things that the laws state must be done for them.’

And all the people must reply, ‘Amen.’

<sup>20</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who shows no respect for his father

by sleeping with any of his father’s wives.’

And all the people must reply, ‘Amen.’



<sup>21</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who sleeps with any animal.'

And all the people must reply, 'Amen.'

<sup>22</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who sleeps with his sister or with his half-sister.'

And all the people must reply, 'Amen.'

<sup>23</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who sleeps with his mother-in-law.'

And all the people must reply, 'Amen.'

<sup>24</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who secretly murders someone else.'

And all the people must reply, 'Amen.'

<sup>25</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who, because someone else has given him a bribe, murders someone who is innocent.'

And all the people must reply, 'Amen.'

<sup>26</sup>Yahweh will curse anyone who by disobeying these laws refuses to declare that those laws are good.'

And all the people must reply, 'Amen.'"

## Chapter 28

<sup>1</sup>"If you do what Yahweh our God tells you to do and faithfully obey everything that I am today commanding you to do, he will cause you to become greater than any other nation on the earth. <sup>2</sup>If you obey Yahweh, all these blessings will come to you.

<sup>3</sup>He will bless everything that you do when you are in the cities

and he will bless every thing that you do when you are working in the fields.

<sup>4</sup>He will bless you by giving you many children and by giving you abundant crops, and plenty of cattle and sheep.

<sup>5</sup>He will bless you by giving you plenty of grain to make bread.

<sup>6</sup>He will bless you everywhere—when you go out of your houses and when you come into your houses.

<sup>7</sup>Yahweh will enable you to defeat the armies of your enemies;

they will attack you from one direction, but they will run away from you in seven directions.

<sup>8</sup>Yahweh will bless you by filling your barns with grain, and he will bless all the work that you do;

he will bless you in the land that he is giving to you.

<sup>9</sup>If you obey all the commandments that Yahweh our God has given to you and if you live your lives by following his commandments, he will make you his own, his holy people, which is just as he promised.

<sup>10</sup>Then all the people groups on the earth will realize that you belong to Yahweh, and they will be afraid of you.

<sup>11</sup>And Yahweh will cause you to prosper very much. He will give you many children, many cattle, and abundant crops in the land that he solemnly promised to our ancestors that he would give to you.

<sup>12</sup>At the time that rain is needed, Yahweh will send it from where he stores it in the sky, and he will bless all your work, with the result that you will be able to lend money to many other nations, but you will not need to borrow money from them.

<sup>13</sup>If you faithfully obey all of the commands of Yahweh our God that I am giving you today, Yahweh will cause your nation to be superior to other nations, not inferior to them; you will always be prosperous and you will never be needy.

<sup>14</sup>Yahweh will do all these things for you if you do not stop obeying what I am commanding you today, and if you never worship other gods.

<sup>15</sup>But if you do not do what Yahweh our God is telling you to do, and if you do not faithfully obey all his rules and regulations that I am giving to you today, he will bring these curses upon you and he will let them have their full force against you.

<sup>16</sup>He will curse you when you are in the cities

and he will curse you when you are working in the fields.

<sup>17</sup>He will curse you by not giving you much grain to make bread.

<sup>18</sup>He will curse you by giving you only a few children, by giving you poor crops, and by not giving you many cattle and sheep.

<sup>19</sup>He will curse you everywhere—when you go out of your houses and when you come into your houses.

<sup>20</sup>If you do evil things and reject Yahweh,

he will curse you by causing you to be confused, and to be frustrated in all that you do,  
until your enemies quickly and completely destroy you.

<sup>21</sup>Yahweh will send terrible diseases on you,

until not one of you remains alive in the land that you are about to enter and occupy.

<sup>22</sup>Yahweh will afflict you with diseases that shrivel your bodies, with fever, with inflammation.

It will be extremely hot, and it will not rain.

There will be scorching winds, and he will cause your crops to rot.

All these things will strike you until you die.

<sup>23</sup>No rain will fall from the sky, with the result that the ground will be as hard as iron.

<sup>24</sup>Instead of sending rain, Yahweh will send strong winds to blow sand and dust over your land, until your land is ruined.

<sup>25</sup>Yahweh will enable your enemies to defeat you;

your soldiers will attack them from one direction, but will run away from them in seven directions,  
and when the people of other nations see what is happening to you, they will say that it is horrible.

<sup>26</sup>You will die, and birds and wild animals will come and eat your corpses,

and there will not be anyone to scare them away.

<sup>27</sup>Yahweh will cause you to have boils on your skin, like he caused the people of Egypt to have many years ago.

He will cause you to have tumors, open sores, and your skin will itch, but there will be nothing that will cure those diseases.

<sup>28</sup>Yahweh will cause some of you to become insane; he will cause some of you to become blind, and he will cause some of your minds to become confused.

<sup>29</sup>Because you will not be able to see where you are going, at midday you will grope around with your hands, like people do in the darkness.

You will not prosper in anything that you do.

You will continually be oppressed and robbed, and there will not be anyone to help you.

<sup>30</sup>Some of you men will be engaged to marry a young woman, but someone else will forcibly sleep with her.

You will build houses, but you will never live in them.

You will plant grapevines, but you will not eat the grapes; someone else will eat them.

<sup>31</sup>Your enemies will butcher your cattle while you watch them, and you will not get any of the meat to eat.

They will drag away your donkeys while you watch them do it, and they will not give them back to you.

They will take away your sheep; and there will not be anyone to help you rescue them.

<sup>32</sup>While you watch, your sons and daughters will be given to foreigners to become their slaves. Every day you will watch for your children to return, but you will watch in vain.

<sup>33</sup>People from a foreign nation will take all the crops that you worked hard to produce, and they will constantly treat you harshly and cruelly.

<sup>34</sup>The result will be that all these terrible things that you see will cause you to become insane.

<sup>35</sup>Yahweh will cause your legs to be covered with painful boils that cannot be healed, and you will have boils from the bottom of your feet to the top of your head.

<sup>36</sup>Yahweh will cause your king and the rest of you to be taken to another country, to a place in which you and your ancestors have never lived,

and there you will worship and serve gods that are made of wood or stone.

<sup>37</sup>When the people groups in nearby countries see what has happened to you, they will be shocked; they will taunt you and make fun of you in every place where Yahweh drives you.

<sup>38</sup>You will plant plenty of seeds in your fields, but you will reap only a small harvest, because locusts will eat the crops.

<sup>39</sup>You will plant grapevines and take care of them, but you will not pick any grapes to make wine, because worms will eat the vines.

<sup>40</sup>Olive trees will grow everywhere in your land, but you will not get any olive oil to rub on your skin because the olives will drop on the ground before they are ripe.

<sup>41</sup>You will have sons and daughters, but they will not stay with you, because they will be captured and taken away.

<sup>42</sup>Swarms of locusts will eat your crops and the leaves of all your trees.

<sup>43</sup>Foreigners who live in your land will become more and more powerful, and you will become less and less powerful.

<sup>44</sup>They will have money to lend to you, but you will not have any money to lend to them.

They will be superior to you, and you will be inferior to them.

<sup>45</sup>All these disasters will happen to you and continue to happen to you until you are destroyed, if you do not do what Yahweh your God told you to do, and do not obey all the rules and regulations that he gave to you.

<sup>46</sup>These disasters will solemnly warn you and your descendants forever what happens to groups who disobey Yahweh.

<sup>47</sup>Because Yahweh blessed you abundantly in many ways, you should have served him very joyfully, but you did not do that.

<sup>48</sup>Therefore, you will work for the enemies whom Yahweh will send to attack you. You will be hungry and thirsty; you will not have clothes to wear; and you will lack everything else that you need. And Yahweh will cause you to become slaves and work hard until he destroys you.

<sup>49</sup>Yahweh will bring against you an army from very far away, soldiers who speak a language that you do not understand. They will swoop down on you quickly like an eagle. <sup>50</sup>They will be fierce looking. They will not act mercifully toward anyone, not even young children and old people. <sup>51</sup>They will kill and eat your livestock, and they will eat your crops, and you will starve. They will not leave for you any grain or wine or olive oil or cattle or sheep; and you will all die from hunger. <sup>52</sup>Your enemies will surround your towns throughout the land that Yahweh your God is about to give to you, and they will break down the high and strong walls around your towns, walls which you trusted would protect you.

<sup>53</sup>When your enemies are surrounding your towns, you will be extremely hungry, with the result that you will eat the flesh of your own sons and daughters that Yahweh your God has given to you. <sup>54-55</sup>When your enemies have surrounded your towns, even the most gentle and sensitive men among you will want food very desperately, with the result that they will kill their own children and eat their flesh, because they will not have anything else to eat. They will not even share any of it with their brothers or wives whom they love very much or with any of their other children who are still alive. <sup>56-57</sup>Even the most gentle and kind women among you, who are very rich with the result that they have never been forced to walk anywhere, will do the same thing. When your enemies have surrounded your towns, those women will be extremely hungry, with the result that after they give birth to a child, they will secretly kill the baby and eat its flesh and also eat the afterbirth. And they will not share any of it with their husbands whom they love very much or with any of their other children.

<sup>58</sup>If you do not faithfully obey all of the laws that I am writing, and if you do not have the utmost respect for Yahweh our glorious God, <sup>59</sup>he will punish you by sending on you and on your descendants great afflictions and plagues which will last for many years. <sup>60</sup>He will bring on you the plagues that he sent on the people of Egypt, and you will never be healed. <sup>61</sup>He will also send on you many other sicknesses and diseases that I have not talked about in these laws, until you all will die. <sup>62</sup>You became as numerous as the stars in the sky, but only a few of you will remain alive, if you do not obey Yahweh your God. <sup>63</sup>Yahweh was very happy to do good things for you and to cause you to become very numerous, but now he will be happy to ruin you and get rid of you. Those of you who do not die from these plagues will be snatched away from the land that you will soon be entering to possess.

<sup>64</sup>Yahweh will scatter you among many people groups, all over the earth, and in those places you will worship other gods that are made of wood or stone, gods which you and your ancestors have never known. <sup>65</sup>In those areas you will not have any peace. You will feel hopeless and be discouraged. <sup>66</sup>You will always be afraid that your enemies will kill you. You will be very fearful, all day and all night. <sup>67</sup>Because you will be very fearful and because you will very distressed because of the terrible things that you see, each morning you will say 'I wish it were

evening already!' and each evening you will say 'I wish it were morning already!' <sup>68</sup>Yahweh will send some of you back to Egypt in ships, even though he promised that you would never be forced to go there again. There in Egypt you will try to sell yourselves to become slaves of your enemies in order to have food to eat, but no one will buy you."

## Chapter 29

<sup>1</sup>These are the covenantal commands of Yahweh that the Israelites were required to obey. When they were in the region of Moab on the east side of the Jordan River, Moses commanded them to keep these regulations. These regulations became part of the covenant that Yahweh had made with them at Mount Sinai.

<sup>2</sup>Moses summoned all the Israelite people and said to them, "You saw for yourselves what Yahweh did to the king of Egypt and to his officials and to his entire country. <sup>3</sup>You saw all the plagues that Yahweh sent on them, and all the various miracles that he performed. <sup>4</sup>But to this day, Yahweh has not enabled you to understand the meaning of all that you have seen and heard. <sup>5</sup>For forty years Yahweh has led you while you traveled through the desert. During that time, your clothes and your sandals have not worn out. <sup>6</sup>You did not have bread to eat or wine or other fermented drinks to drink, but Yahweh took care of you, in order that you would know that he is your God.

<sup>7</sup>And when we came to this place, Sihon, the king who ruled in the city of Heshbon, and Og, the king who ruled the region of Bashan, came out with their armies to attack us, but we defeated them. <sup>8</sup>We took their land and divided it among the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh.

<sup>9</sup>So obey faithfully all of this covenant, in order that you will prosper in everything that you do. <sup>10</sup>Today all of us are standing in the presence of Yahweh our God—I, the leaders of all your tribes, your elders, your officials, all you Israelite men, <sup>11</sup>your wives, your children, and the foreigners who live among us and cut wood for us and carry water for us. <sup>12</sup>You are all here today to agree to accept this covenant with Yahweh, and to bind yourselves to it. <sup>13</sup>He is making this agreement with you in order to make sure that you are his people, and that he is your God. This is what he promised to do for you, and what he solemnly promised to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that he would do. <sup>14</sup>This covenant is not only with you. <sup>15</sup>God is making this agreement with us who are here today and also with our descendants who are not yet born.

<sup>16</sup>You remember the things that our ancestors suffered in Egypt, and how they traveled through the land that belonged to other nations after they came out of Egypt. <sup>17</sup>In those countries they saw those disgusting idols made of wood and stone and decorated with silver and gold. <sup>18</sup>So be sure that no man or woman or family or tribe that is here today turns away from Yahweh our God, to worship any of the gods of those people groups. If you do that, you will bring disaster on yourselves.

<sup>19</sup>Be sure that no one here today who hears the words of this covenant says to himself, 'Everything will go well with me, even if I stubbornly do what I want to.' If you do that, the result will be that Yahweh will eventually destroy all of you, both good people and evil people. <sup>20</sup>Yahweh will not forgive anyone who is stubborn like that. Instead, he will be extremely angry with that person, and all the curses that I have told you about will happen to that person, until Yahweh destroys that person and his family forever. <sup>21</sup>From all the tribes of Israel, Yahweh will choose that individual to suffer all the disasters that I have listed in the covenant—all the bad things that will happen to anyone whom Yahweh curses for disobeying the laws that I have written in this scroll.

<sup>22</sup>In future years, your descendants and people from other countries will see the disasters and the illnesses that Yahweh has caused to happen to you. <sup>23</sup>They will see that all your land has been ruined by burning sulfur and salt. Nothing will have been planted. Not even weeds will be there. Your land will resemble the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of Admah and Zeboyim, which Yahweh destroyed when he was very angry with those people. <sup>24</sup>And the people from those other nations will ask, 'Why did Yahweh do this to this land? Why was he so angry with the people who lived here?'

<sup>25</sup>Then other people will reply, 'It is because they refused to obey the covenant that they had made with Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors worshiped, when he brought them out of Egypt. <sup>26</sup>Instead, they worshiped other gods that they had never worshiped before, gods that Yahweh had not told them to worship. <sup>27</sup>So Yahweh became very angry with the people of this land, and he has caused to happen to them all the disasters that their leader warned them about. <sup>28</sup>Yahweh became extremely angry with them and took them out of their land, and threw them into another land, and they are still there.'

<sup>29</sup>There are some things that Yahweh our God has kept secret, but he has revealed his law to us, and he expects us and our descendants to obey it forever.

## Chapter 30

<sup>1</sup>I have now told you about the ways that Yahweh our God will bless you if you obey him and the ways that he will curse you if you disobey him. But if you choose not to obey his laws, some day you will be living in the countries to which he will have scattered you, and you will remember what I told you. <sup>2</sup>Then, if you and your children begin to worship Yahweh our God and faithfully obey all that I have today commanded you to do, <sup>3</sup>he will again act mercifully toward you. He will bring you back from the nations to which he scattered you, and he will cause you to be prosperous again. <sup>4</sup>Even if you have been scattered to the most distant places on the earth, Yahweh our God will gather you from there and bring you back to your land. <sup>5</sup>He will enable you to possess again the land where your ancestors lived. And he will cause you to be more prosperous and more numerous than you are now. <sup>6</sup>Yahweh our God will change your inner beings, with the result that you will love him with all that you desire and with all that you feel. And then you will continue to live in that land. <sup>7</sup>Yahweh our God will send all the disasters that I have told you about on your enemies and on those who oppressed you. <sup>8</sup>As you did before, you will do what Yahweh wants you to do, and you will obey all the commands that I have given to you today. <sup>9</sup>Yahweh our God will cause you to be very prosperous in all that you do. You will have many children and many cattle, and you will produce abundant crops. He will again be happy to enable you to prosper, just like he was happy to enable your ancestors to prosper. <sup>10</sup>But he will do those things only if you do what he has told you to do, and only if you obey all his rules and regulations that I have written about in this book, and only if you turn to Yahweh with all that you desire and with all that you feel.

<sup>11</sup>The commands that I am giving to you today are not very difficult for you to obey, and they are not difficult to know. <sup>12</sup>They are not hidden in heaven. You do not need to say, 'Who can go up to heaven for us to bring them down here to us so we can learn them?' <sup>13</sup>And they are not on the other side of the sea. You do not need to say, 'Who will cross the sea for us and bring them back to us, so we can learn them?' <sup>14</sup>No, his commands are here with you. You know them, and you can say them again and again. So you can easily obey them.

<sup>15</sup>So listen! Today I am allowing you to choose between doing what is evil and doing what is good, between what will enable you to live for a long time and what will cause you to die while you are still young. <sup>16</sup>I say again, if you obey the decrees of Yahweh our God that I am giving to you today, and if you love him and conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and if you obey all his rules and regulations, you will prosper and become very numerous, and Yahweh our God will bless you in the land that you are about to enter and possess.

<sup>17</sup>But if you stop worshipping Yahweh, and if you refuse to obey what he says, and if you allow others to persuade you to worship other gods, <sup>18</sup>I am warning you today that you will soon die. Your people will not live for very long in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan River to enter and possess.

<sup>19</sup>I am requesting everyone in heaven and on the earth to testify to you, that today I am allowing you to choose whether you want to live for a long time or to soon die, whether you want Yahweh to bless you or to curse you. So choose to live. <sup>20</sup>Decide to love Yahweh our God and to obey him. If you do that, you and your descendants will live for a long time in the land that Yahweh solemnly promised to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he would give to them."

## Chapter 31

<sup>1</sup>When Moses finished saying all that to the Israelite people, <sup>2</sup>"I am 120 years old. I am no longer able to go everywhere that you need to go, so I cannot be your leader any longer. Furthermore, Yahweh has told me that I will not cross the Jordan River. <sup>3</sup>But Yahweh our God will go ahead of you. He will enable you to destroy the nations that are living there, in order that you can occupy their land. Joshua will be your leader, which is what Yahweh has already told me. <sup>4</sup>Yahweh will do to those nations what he did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amor people group when he destroyed their armies and their people groups. <sup>5</sup>Yahweh will enable you to conquer those people groups, but you must kill all of those people, which is what I have commanded you to do. <sup>6</sup>Be brave and confident. Do not be afraid of those people. Do not forget that it is Yahweh our God who will go with you. He will always help you and never abandon you."

<sup>7</sup>Then Moses called Joshua to his side and said to him, "Be brave and confident. You are the one who will lead these people into the land that Yahweh promised to our ancestors that he would give to them, and you will enable them to occupy it. <sup>8</sup>It is Yahweh who will go ahead of you. He will be with you. He will always help you. He will never abandon you. So do not be afraid or dismayed."

<sup>9</sup>Moses wrote down all these laws and gave the scroll to the priests, who carried the sacred chest. He also gave the scroll to all the Israelite elders. <sup>10</sup>Moses told them, "At the end of every seven years, at the time that all debts are canceled, read this to the people during the Festival of Shelters. <sup>11</sup>Read it to all the Israelite people when they gather at the place that Yahweh chooses for them to worship him. <sup>12</sup>Gather together everyone—men, women, children, even the foreigners who are living in your towns—in order that they may hear these laws and learn to have an awesome respect for Yahweh our God, and to faithfully obey everything that is written in these laws. <sup>13</sup>If they do that, your descendants, who have never known these laws, will hear them and will also learn to have an awesome respect for Yahweh our God, during all the years that they live in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan River to occupy."

<sup>14</sup>Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Listen carefully. You will soon die. Summon Joshua, and you will go to the sacred tent with him, in order that I may appoint him to be the new leader." So Joshua and Moses went to the sacred tent.

<sup>15</sup>There Yahweh appeared to them in a pillar of cloud, and that cloud was over the entrance to the tent. <sup>16</sup>Yahweh said to Moses, "You will soon die. Then these people will become unfaithful to me. They will stop obeying the covenant that I made with them. They will begin to worship the foreign gods that are worshiped by the people of the land that they will enter. <sup>17</sup>When that happens, I will become very angry with them. I will abandon them and refuse to help them any longer. Many bad things will happen to them, and they will be destroyed. Then they will say among themselves, 'These things are happening to us because our God is no longer with us.' <sup>18</sup>And because of all the evil things that they will have done, and especially because they will have started to worship other gods, I will refuse to help them.

<sup>19</sup>So I am going to give you, Moses, a song. Write it on a scroll and teach it to the Israelite people and make them memorize it. It will be like a witness that accuses them. <sup>20</sup>I am about to take them into a very fertile land, a land that I solemnly promised their ancestors that I would give to them. There they will have plenty to eat, with the result that their stomachs will always be full and they will become fat. But then they will turn to other gods and start to worship them, and they will despise me and break the covenant that I have made with them. <sup>21</sup>And many terrible disasters will happen to them. After that happens, their descendants will remember this song, and it will be like a witness that says, 'Now you know why Yahweh punished your ancestors.' I will soon take them into the land that I solemnly promised that I would give to them; but even now, before I do that, I know what they are thinking that they will do when they are living there." <sup>22</sup>So on the very day that Yahweh gave Moses that song, Moses also taught it to the Israelite people.

<sup>23</sup>Then Yahweh appointed Joshua as leader and said to him, "Be brave and confident, because you will lead the Israelite people into the land that I solemnly promised that I would give to them. And I will be with you."

<sup>24</sup>Moses finished writing all the law onto a scroll. <sup>25</sup>Then he told the descendants of Levi, who were carrying the Sacred Chest that contained the Ten Commandments, <sup>26</sup>“Take this scroll on which these laws are written, and place it beside the Sacred Chest that contains the covenant that Yahweh our God made with you, in order that it may remain there to testify about what Yahweh will do to the people if they disobey him. <sup>27</sup>I say this because I know that these people are very stubborn. They have rebelled against Yahweh all during the time that I have been with them, and they will rebel much more after I die! <sup>28</sup>So gather all the elders of the tribes and your officials, in order that I can teach them the words of this song, and so that I can request all those who are in heaven and on the earth to be witnesses to testify against these people. <sup>29</sup>I say this, because I know that after I die, the people will become very wicked. They will stop doing everything that I have commanded them to do. And in the future, because of all the evil things that they will do, they will cause Yahweh to become angry with them. Then he will cause them to experience disasters.”

<sup>30</sup>Then, while all the Israelite people listened, Moses sang this entire song to them:

## Chapter 32

<sup>1</sup>“Listen to me, all you who are in the heavens,  
and all you who are on the earth, listen to what I say.

<sup>2</sup>I wish that my song may help you like the rain helps you,  
or like the dew on the ground in the morning,  
or like a gentle rain on the young plants,  
like showers of rain on the grass.

<sup>3</sup>I will praise Yahweh.  
And all you people should praise how great our God is.

<sup>4</sup>He is like a rock on top of which we are protected;  
everything that he does is perfect and completely just.  
He always does what he says that he will do;  
he never does anything that is wrong.

<sup>5</sup>But you Israelite people have been very unfaithful to him;  
because of your sins, you no longer deserve to be his children.  
You are extremely wicked and deceitful.

<sup>6</sup>You foolish and senseless people,  
is this the way that you should repay Yahweh for all that he has done for you?  
He is your father; he created you;  
he caused you to become a nation.

<sup>7</sup>Think about what happened long ago;  
consider what happened to your ancestors.



Ask your parents, and they will inform you;  
ask the older people, and they will tell you.

<sup>8</sup>When God, who is greater than any other god, long ago divided the people into groups,  
he assigned to the nations their land.

He determined where each people group should live  
and limited to each people group their own gods.

<sup>9</sup>But Yahweh decided that we would be his people;  
he chose us, the descendants of Jacob, to belong to him.

<sup>10</sup>He saw our ancestors when they were in a desert,  
wandering in a land that was desolate.

He protected them and took care of them,  
as every person takes good care of his own eyes.

<sup>11</sup>Yahweh protected his people just like an eagle encourages its babies to fly  
and flutters over them,  
spreading its wings and catching them if they start to fall.

<sup>12</sup>Yahweh was the only one who led them;  
no other foreign god helped them.

<sup>13</sup>After they entered the land that Yahweh promised to give to them,  
Yahweh enabled them to rule the hill country;  
they ate the crops that grew in the fields.  
They found honey in the rocks,  
and their olive trees grew even in stony ground.

<sup>14</sup>The cows gave them plenty of curds; the goats gave them plenty of milk,  
they had well fed sheep and cattle,  
they had very good wheat,  
and they made delicious wine from their grapes.

<sup>15</sup>The Israelite people became rich and prosperous,  
but then they rebelled against God;  
they abandoned him, the one who created them,  
the one who powerfully saves them.

<sup>16</sup>He abandoned them because they started to worship other gods.

Because of their worshiping disgusting idols,  
he became angry.

<sup>17</sup>They offered sacrifices to gods who were really demons,  
gods that their ancestors had never known;  
they offered sacrifices to gods that they had recently found out about,  
gods whom your ancestors had never had any respect for.

<sup>18</sup>They forgot the true God, the one who protects them,  
the one who created them and caused them to live.

<sup>19</sup>When Yahweh saw that they had abandoned him, he became angry,  
so he rejected the Israelite people who were like his sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup>He said, 'They are very wicked people,  
very unfaithful;  
so I will no longer help them,  
and then I will watch and see what happens to them.

<sup>21</sup>Because they now are worshiping idols, which are not really gods,  
they have caused me to be like a jealous husband because I want them to worship only me.  
So now, in order to cause them to become angry,  
I will now send to attack them an army of a nation of worthless and foolish people.

<sup>22</sup>I will be very angry, and I will destroy them  
like a fire that will burn all the way down to the place where dead people are;  
that fire will destroy the earth and everything that grows on it,  
and it will even burn what is down under the mountains.

<sup>23</sup>I will pile up on them many disasters;  
they will feel as though I am shooting all my arrows on them.

<sup>24</sup>They will die because of being hungry and because of having hot fevers  
and because of terrible diseases;  
I will send wild animals to attack them,  
and poisonous snakes to bite them.

<sup>25</sup>Outside their houses, their enemies will kill them with swords,  
and in their homes, their enemies will cause them to be terrified.  
Their enemies will kill young men and young women,

and they will kill infants and old people with gray hair.

<sup>26</sup>I wanted only to scatter them to distant countries  
in order that no one would ever remember them.

<sup>27</sup>But if I did that, their enemies would wrongly boast  
that they were the ones who had gotten rid of my people;  
they would say, "We are the ones who defeated them;  
it was not Yahweh who has done all these things."

<sup>28</sup>You Israelites are a nation of people who do not have any sense.  
None of you are wise.

<sup>29</sup>If you were wise, you would understand why you would be punished;  
you would have realized what was going to happen to you.

<sup>30</sup>You would have realized why a thousand of your soldiers would be defeated by only one of the enemy soldiers,  
and why two of your enemies would chase away ten thousand Israelite soldiers.

You would realize that this would happen only if God, the one who always defended you, had put you in the hands  
of your enemies,

that Yahweh had abandoned you.

<sup>31</sup>Your enemies know that their gods are not powerful like Yahweh, our God,  
so their gods could not have defeated us Israelites.

<sup>32</sup>Your enemies are like grapevines planted near the ruins of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah;  
the grapes from those vines are bitter and poisonous.

<sup>33</sup>The wine from those grapes is like the poison of snakes.

<sup>34</sup>Yahweh says, 'I know what I have planned to do to the Israelite people and to their enemies,  
and I have locked up those plans as someone would lock up his valuable possessions.

<sup>35</sup>I am the one who will get revenge and pay those enemies back for what they have done to my people,  
at the right time for them to be punished;  
they will soon experience disasters,  
and I will punish them quickly.'

<sup>36</sup>But Yahweh will say that you who are truly his people are innocent,  
and he will act mercifully toward you who serve him,  
when he sees that you are helpless,  
and that there are very few of you, slaves or free people, who are still alive.

<sup>37</sup>Then Yahweh will ask you, 'Where are the gods  
that you thought would protect you?

<sup>38</sup>You gave to those gods the best parts of the animals that you sacrificed,  
and you poured out wine for them to drink.  
So they should rise and help you;  
they should be the ones who will protect you!

<sup>39</sup>But now you will realize that I, only I, am God;  
there is no other god who is a real god.  
I am the one who can kill people and who can cause people to live;  
I can wound people, and I can heal people,  
and there is no one who can prevent me from doing those things.

<sup>40</sup>I raise my hand toward heaven and solemnly declare  
that just as sure as I live forever, I will act.

<sup>41</sup>When I sharpen my sword  
and prepare to punish people,  
I will get revenge on my enemies,  
and I will pay back those who hate me.

<sup>42</sup>I will kill all of my enemies with a sword;  
it will be as though I had arrows that were covered with their blood.  
I will kill all those whom I capture  
and cut off their heads.'

<sup>43</sup>You people of all nations, you should praise Yahweh's people,  
because Yahweh gets revenge on those who kill the people who serve him,  
and he cleanses his people's land  
which has become defiled because of their sins."

<sup>44</sup>Joshua and Moses sang that song while the Israelite people were listening. <sup>45</sup>Then they finished singing to them this song. <sup>46</sup>Moses said, "Never forget all these commands that I have been giving you today. Teach these laws to your children, in order that they will faithfully obey all of them. <sup>47</sup>These instructions are very important. If you obey them, you will live a long time in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan River to occupy."

<sup>48</sup>On that same day, Yahweh said to Moses, <sup>49</sup>"Go to the Abarim mountain range here in the region of Moab, across from Jericho. Climb Mount Nebo and look toward the west to see Canaan, the land that I am about to give to the Israelite people. <sup>50</sup>You will die on that mountain, like your older brother Aaron died on Mount Hor. <sup>51</sup>You will die because both of you disobeyed me in the presence of the Israelite people, when you all were at the springs of Meribah near Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin. You did not honor and respect me in the presence of the Israelite

people in the way that I deserve because I am God. <sup>52</sup>When you are on that mountain where I told you to go, you will see in the distance in front of you the land that I am about to give to the Israelite people, but you will not enter it."

## Chapter 33

<sup>1</sup>Before God's prophet Moses died, he asked God to bless the Israelite people. <sup>2</sup>This is what he said:

"Yahweh came and spoke to us at Mount Sinai;

he came like the sun rises in the region of Edom

and like his light shone on us when we were in the desert near Mount Paran after we left Mount Sinai.

He came with ten thousand angels,

and there was a flaming fire at his right side.

<sup>3</sup>Yahweh truly loves his people

and protects all those who belong to him.

So they prostrate themselves in front of him,

and they listen to his instructions.

<sup>4</sup>I gave them laws to obey,

laws that would forever be for the descendants of Jacob.

<sup>5</sup>So Yahweh became the king of his Israelite people

when all the tribes and their leaders had gathered together.

<sup>6</sup>I say this about the tribe of Reuben:

I desire that their tribe will never disappear,

but that they will never become numerous.

<sup>7</sup>I say this about the tribe of Judah:

Yahweh, listen to them when they call out for help;

and after they separate from the other tribes, unite them with the other tribes again.

Fight for them,

and help them to fight against their enemies.

<sup>8</sup>I say this about the tribe of Levi:

Yahweh, give to those who are dedicated to you the sacred stones that they will use to find out what you want to be done;

You tested them at a spring in the desert, a spring that they named Massah and also named Meribah

to find out if they would remain loyal to you.

<sup>9</sup>The tribe of Levi did what you told them to do  
and obeyed the covenant that you had made with the Israelite people;  
those laws were more important to them  
than their siblings and parents and children.

<sup>10</sup>The tribe of Levi will teach the Israelite people your decrees and your laws,  
and they are the ones who will burn incense and who will completely burn on the altar the offerings that the people bring.

<sup>11</sup>Yahweh, bless their work  
and accept all that they do.  
Crush all their enemies;  
do not enable their enemies to be able to fight against them again.

<sup>12</sup>I say this about the tribe of Benjamin:  
They are the tribe that Yahweh loves;  
he keeps them safe.  
He protects them continually,  
and he lives among their hills.

<sup>13</sup>I say this about the tribes of Joseph:  
I desire that Yahweh will bless their land  
by giving them rain from the sky  
and water from deep down in the ground.

<sup>14</sup>I desire that Yahweh will bless their land by giving them good fruit ripened by the sun  
and good crops in the right months.

<sup>15</sup>I desire that Yahweh give them that very nice fruit that will grow on trees in their ancient mountains.

<sup>16</sup>I desire that Yahweh will bless their land and that he fill the land with many good crops.  
I desire that Yahweh will bless the tribes of Joseph in all those ways,  
because he was the leader over his older brothers when they were in Egypt.

<sup>17</sup>The descendants of Joseph will be as strong as a bull;  
with their weapons they will wound their enemies like a wild ox gores other animals with its horns.  
They will push other people groups,  
all of them, to the most distant places on the earth.  
That is what the descendants of the two sons of Joseph will do,  
the ten thousands of the tribe of Ephraim and the thousands of the tribe of Manasseh.

<sup>18</sup>I say this about the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar:

I desire that the people of Zebulun will prosper in their travels across the seas,  
and that the people of Issachar will prosper while they stay at home and take care of their cattle and crops.

<sup>19</sup>They will invite people from the other Israelite tribes to the mountain where they worship Yahweh,  
and they will offer correct sacrifices to him.

They will become rich from the trade that they carry out on the seas  
and from using the sand along the sea to make things.

<sup>20</sup>I say this about the tribe of Gad:

Praise Yahweh, the one who made their territory large.  
The people of their tribe will attack their enemies fiercely like a lion that crouches,  
waiting to tear off the arm or the scalp of some animal.

<sup>21</sup>They chose the best part of the land for themselves;  
a large share of the land, a share that should be given to a leader was allotted to them.

When the leaders of the tribes of Israel gathered together,  
they decided that the tribe of Gad should have a large share of the land.  
The tribe of Gad obeyed the commands of Yahweh and the things that he decided that they should do.

<sup>22</sup>I say this about the tribe of Dan:

The people of the tribe of Dan are like a young lion;  
they leap out from their caves in the region of Bashan to attack their enemies.

<sup>23</sup>I say this about the tribe of Naphtali:

The people of the tribe of Naphtali have been blessed by Yahweh, who has been very kind to them;  
their land extends far south from Lake Galilee.

<sup>24</sup>I say this about the tribe of Asher:

Yahweh will bless the descendants of Asher more than he will bless the other tribes.  
Yahweh will favor them most of all.  
I desire that their land will be filled with olive trees that will produce a lot of olives to make olive oil.

<sup>25</sup>Their towns will be protected by high walls with gates that have bronze and iron bars;  
I desire all the time that they live and not be harmed by anyone.

<sup>26</sup>You people of Israel, there is no god like your God,  
who rides majestically across the sky to help you.

<sup>27</sup>God, who lives forever, is the one who gives you refuge;

it is as though he puts his everlasting arms under you to support you.

He will drive out your enemies while you advance;

he has told you to destroy all of them.

<sup>28</sup>So you Israelite people will live safely;

you descendants of Jacob will not be disturbed by others;

in the land where you will live, there will be plenty of grain and wine,

and plenty of rain will fall from the sky.

<sup>29</sup>You people of Israel, how fortunate are you.

There is certainly no nation like your nation,

whom Yahweh has rescued from being slaves in Egypt.

He will be like a shield to protect you

and like a sword to enable you to defeat your enemies.

Your enemies will come to you begging for you to act mercifully toward them,

but you will trample on their backs."

## Chapter 34

<sup>1</sup>Then Moses climbed up from the plains in the region of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the highest point on Mount Pisgah, which is across the Jordan River from Jericho. There Yahweh showed him all the land that the Israelites would occupy. He showed him the region of Gilead as far north as the city of Dan; <sup>2</sup>all the land that the tribe of Naphtali would occupy; all the land that the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh had occupied; all the land that the tribe of Judah would occupy as far west as the Mediterranean Sea; <sup>3</sup>the desert area in the south part of Judah; and the Valley of the Jordan that extends from Jericho in the north to the city of Zoar in the south. <sup>4</sup>Then Yahweh said to him, "You have now seen this land that I solemnly promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have allowed you to see it from a distance, but you will not go there."

<sup>5</sup>So Moses, who always served Yahweh faithfully, died there in the land of Moab, which is what Yahweh said would happen. <sup>6</sup>Yahweh buried Moses' body in the valley in the land of Moab, across from the town of Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where he is buried. <sup>7</sup>Moses was 120 years old when he died, but he was still very strong, and he could still see very well. <sup>8</sup>The Israelite people mourned for him in the plains of Moab for thirty days.

<sup>9</sup>God caused Joshua to be very wise, because Moses had put his hands on Joshua to appoint him to be their new leader. The Israelite people obeyed Joshua, and they obeyed all the commands that Yahweh had given to Moses to tell to the Israelite people.

<sup>10</sup>Since the time that Moses lived, there has never been a prophet in Israel like him, for Yahweh spoke with him face to face. <sup>11</sup>No other prophet has performed all the kinds of powerful miracles that Yahweh caused him to do against Pharaoh, king of Egypt, against all his servants, and against the people of Egypt. <sup>12</sup>No other prophet has been able to perform all the great and terrifying deeds that Moses performed while all the Israelites watched.



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