
מלכים א • 1ST KINGS

INTRODUCTION

The two *Books of Kings*, like those of Samuel, were originally one book in the Hebrew Bible; they correspond to the last two *Books of Kingdoms* in the *Septuagint*, and *Books of Kings* in the *Vulgate*. They are a continuation of the Books of Samuel and 1K 1–2 are the concluding chapters of the lengthy document of 2S 9–20. The long section on the reign of Solomon, 1K 3–11, gives a detailed account of his excelling wisdom, his riches and the magnificence of his building, particularly of the Temple of Jerusalem. Two brief appendices, 2K 25:22–30, end the Books of Kings.

The discovery of ‘The Scroll of the Law’ in the reign of Josiah and the religious reform that this discovery inspired, mark the climax of this entire history and the whole work is a demonstration of the fundamental teaching of Deuteronomy, repeated in 1K 8 and 2K 17, namely, that the nation will be blessed if it respects Gods Covenant, punished if it does not. The influence of Deuteronomy is also traceable in the literary style of the editor’s enlargements of, or comments on, his sources.

The text of the Greek *Septuagint* is significantly longer than that of the *Masoretic Text*; the most significant additions are included herein and other differences are mentioned in the footnotes. Three *Qumran Scrolls* contain text from the books: 5QKgs has parts of 1K 1, 6QpapKgs contains fragments from throughout the books, and 4QKgs has parts of 1K 7–8.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

The books themselves explicitly mention three of their sources: a History of Solomon, the Annals of the Kings of Israel, and the Annals of the Kings of Judah. But there were others: the concluding chapters of the great Davidic document, 1K 1–2; a description of the Temple, ‘Priestly’ in origin, 1K 6–7; and notably an account of Elijah written towards the end of the 9th Century and an account of Elisha of a slightly later date, both of which underlie the Elijah and Elisha cycles (1K 17–2K 1 & 2K 2–13). The narratives of the reign of Hezekiah in which Isaiah figures, 2K 18:17–20:19, are derived from the prophet’s disciples.

It is probable that a first Deuteronomic edition was made before the Exile and before the death of Josiah at Megiddo in 609 BCE, with the eulogy of Josiah in 2K 23:25 (minus the concluding words) marking the end of the original work. A second edition was compiled during the Exile – after 562 BCE if we assign to it the present conclusion of the book (2K 25:22–30) and a little earlier if we suppose that this 2nd edition ended with the story of the second deportation (2K 25:21 reads like a conclusion). Finally, certain additions were made to the work during, or shortly after, the Exile.

מלכים א פרק א

א וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד זָקֵן בָּא בַיָּמִים וַיִּכְסְהוּ בַּבְּגָדִים וְלֹא יָחַם לוֹ: ב וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ עֲבָדָיו יִבְקְשׁוּ לַאֲדֹנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ נַעֲרָה בְּתוּלָה וְעַמְדָּה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְתִהְיֶה לוֹ סִכְנָת וְשֹׁכְבָה בְּחִיקָךְ וְחָם לַאֲדֹנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: ג וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ נַעֲרָה יָפָה בְּכָל גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּמְצְאוּ אֶת־אֲבִישָׁג הַשּׁוֹנֵמִית וַיָּבִיאוּ אֹתָהּ לַמֶּלֶךְ: ד וְהַנַּעֲרָה יָפָה עַד־מְאֹד וְתִהְיֶה לַמֶּלֶךְ סִכְנָת וְתִשְׁרָתָהּ וְהַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא יִדְעָהּ: ה וַאֲדֹנִיָּה בֶן־חַגִּית מִתְנַשֵּׂא לֵאמֹר אֲנִי אֶמְלֹךְ וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ רֶכֶב וּפָרָשִׁים וְחֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ רָצִים לִפְנָיו: ו וְלֹא־עָצְבוּ אָבִיו מִיָּמָיו לֵאמֹר מִדּוּעַ בָּכָה עֲשִׂית וְגַם־הוּא טוֹב־תֵּאֵר מְאֹד וְאִתּוֹ יִלְדָה אַחֲרֵי אֲבִישָׁלוֹם: ז וַיְהִי דְבָרָיו עִם יוֹאָב בֶּן־צְרוּיָה וְעִם אֲבִיתָר הַכֹּהֵן וַיַּעֲזְרוּ אַחֲרָיו אֲדֹנִיָּה: ח וַצִּדּוֹק הַכֹּהֵן

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¹ King David was a very old man and, though they laid coverlets over him, he could not keep warm. ² So, his servants said to him, "Let some young virgin be found for my lord the king, to wait on the king and look after him; she shall lie on your breast and my lord the king will be warm." ³ They searched for a beautiful girl throughout Israel and found Abishag of Shunem and brought her to the king. ⁴ The girl was of great beauty. She looked after the king and waited on him but the king did not sleep with her. ⁵ Now Adonijah son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king;" he procured a chariot and team with fifty men to run before him. ⁶ His father had never crossed him by asking, "Why do you behave like this?" He was also very handsome; he was born right after Absalom. ⁷ He conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah, and with the priest Abiathar who rallied to Adonijah's cause; ⁸ but neither Zadok the

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¹ The literal translation of 'was a very old man' is 'was old, coming into the days'.

² The literal translation of 'young virgin' is 'young girl, a virgin'; the appositional expression is idiomatic: the 2nd term specifically defines the more general 1st term.

³ 'Shunem' was in the Plain of Esdraelon, near Mount Gilboa (1S 28:4).

⁴ The literal translation of 'sleep with her' is 'know her'.

⁵ Adonijah, as David's eldest living son (Chileab seems to have died young, 2S 3:3-4), naturally assumed that he would succeed his father.

⁶ This verse does not imply that Adonijah and Absalom had the same mother: Absalom's mother was Maacah, not Haggith (2S 3:4).

⁷ Joab, David's nephew was still commander-in-chief (2S 19:14); Abiathar, sole survivor of the priests of Nob (1S 22:20) was still loyal to David.

⁸ The factions of Solomon and Adonijah were opposed on personal grounds.

וּבְנֵיהוּ בְּיְהוֹיָדָע וְנָתָן הַנָּבִיא וְשִׁמְעִי וְרֵעִי
וְהַגִּבּוֹרִים אֲשֶׁר לְדָוִד לֹא הָיוּ עִם־אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ: ^ט וַיִּזְבַּח
אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ צֹאן וּבָקָר וּמְרִיא עִם אֲבֹן הַזֹּחֶלֶת אֲשֶׁר־
אֶצֶל עֵין רֹגֵל וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־כָּל־אֲחָיו בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְלִכְל־אֲנָשֵׁי יְהוּדָה עֲבָדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^י וְאֶת־נָתָן הַנָּבִיא
וּבְנֵיהוּ וְאֶת־הַגִּבּוֹרִים וְאֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה אֲחָיו לֹא קָרָא:
^{יא} וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל־בֵּת־שֶׁבַע אִם־שְׁלֹמֹה לֹא־אָמַר
הֲלוֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ כִּי מֶלֶךְ אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ בֶן־חַגִּית וְאֲדֹנִינוּ
דָּוִד לֹא יָדָע: ^{יב} וְעַתָּה לְכִי אִיעֲצֶךָ נָא עֲצָה וּמַלְטִי
אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ וְאֶת־נַפְשׁ בְּנֶךָ שְׁלֹמֹה: ^{יג} לְכִי וּבֹאִין
אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְאָמַרְתְּ אֵלָיו הֲלֹא־אַתָּה אֲדֹנִי
הַמֶּלֶךְ נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לֵאמֹתִי לֵאמֹר כִּי־שְׁלֹמֹה בְנֶךָ
יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרַי וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי וּמִדּוּעַ מֶלֶךְ
אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ: ^{יד} הִנֵּה עוֹדֶךָ מְדַבֵּרֶת שֵׁם עִם־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֲנִי
אָבוֹא אַחֲרֶיךָ וּמִלֹּאתִי אֶת־דְּבָרֶיךָ: ^{טו} וְתָבֵא בֵּת־

priest, nor Benaiah son of Jehoiada, nor the prophet Nathan, nor Shimei and his companions, David's champions, supported Adonijah.
⁹ Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen and fattened calves at the Stone of Zoheleth, near En-Rogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah in the king's service; ¹⁰ but he did not invite the prophet Nathan, or Benaiah, or the champions, or his brother Solomon.
¹¹ Then Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Have you not heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king, unknown to our lord David? ¹² Well, this is my advice if you want to save your life and your son Solomon's life. ¹³ Go to King David and say, "My lord king, did you not make your servant this promise on oath: Your son Solomon shall be king after me; he shall sit on my throne? Why, then, is Adonijah king?" ¹⁴ While you are still there talking to the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words." ¹⁵ So, Bathsheba went to the king in his room (he was very old and Abishag of Shunem was attending to him).

⁹ The NJB uses the translation 'Sliding Stone' in place of 'the Stone of Zoheleth', here following the NRSV & NETB, and 'Fuller's Spring' in place of 'En-Rogel'; the latter, now known as Job's Well, was considered a sacred place, appropriate for affairs of this kind (2S 17:17).

¹⁰ Other readings for 'champions' (here following the NJB) are 'warriors' (as NRSV) and 'bodyguard' (as NETB).

¹¹ Literally translated, this verse ends, "and our lord David does not know."

¹² It is surprising to find Nathan, who once so eloquently denounced David for his affair with Bathsheba (2S 12:1-15), now on Bathsheba's side.

¹³ This oath has not hitherto been mentioned in the history of David. In place of 'go to', here following the NJB, the NRSV opens with 'go in at once to' and NETB has 'visit'; the imperative of הֵלֵךְ is here used as an introductory interjection.

¹⁴ In the MT, the sentence is introduced by the particle הִנֵּה ('look'), which here draws attention to Nathan's concluding word of support.

¹⁵ In place of 'him', here following the NJB, the MT ends the verse by repeating 'the king'.

שָׁבַע אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ הַחֲדָרָה וְהַמֶּלֶךְ זָקֵן מְאֹד וְאַבְיִשָׁג
הַשְּׁוֹנֵמִית מִשְׁרַת אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^{טז} וַתִּקְדּוּ בַת־שָׁבַע
וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ מִה־לֶּךָ: ^{יז} וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ
אֲדֹנָי אַתָּה נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֵאמֹתָ כִּי־
שְׁלֹמֹה בְנִי יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרַי וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי:
^{יח} וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה אֲדֹנִיָּה מֶלֶךְ וְעַתָּה אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא
יֵדְעָתָּ: ^{יט} וַיִּזְבַּח שׂוֹר וּמְרִיא־זָאֵן לָרֶב {פ}

וַיִּקְרָא לְכָל־בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וּלְאַבְיָתָר הַכֹּהֵן וּלְיֹאָב שֹׁר
הַצֹּבֵא וּלְשְׁלֹמֹה עֶבֶדָּךְ לֹא קָרָא: ^כ וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנָי
הַמֶּלֶךְ עֵינַי כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָלֶיךָ לְהַגִּיד לָהֶם מִי יֵשֵׁב
עַל־כִּסֵּא אֲדֹנִיָּה־הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲרָיו: ^{כא} וְהִיא כְּשֹׁכֵב
אֲדֹנִיָּה־הַמֶּלֶךְ עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וְהָיִיתִי אָנֹכִי וּבְנֵי שְׁלֹמֹה
חֹטְאִים: ^{כב} וְהִנֵּה עֹדֶנָּה מְדַבֶּרֶת עִם־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְנָתַן
הַנְּבִיא בָּא: ^{כג} וַיִּגִּידוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה נָתַן הַנְּבִיא
וַיִּבֹא לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־אֶפְיוֹ אֶרְצָה:

¹⁶ Bathsheba knelt down before the king and the king said, “What do you want?” ¹⁷ She replied, “My lord, you swore to your servant by Yahweh your God, “Your son Solomon shall be king after me; he shall sit on my throne.” ¹⁸ Now Adonijah has become king, though you, my lord king, do not know it. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed many oxen, steers, and sheep, and invited all the king’s sons, the priest Abiathar, and Joab the army commander; but he has not invited your servant Solomon.

²⁰ Yet, you are the man, my lord king; the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

²¹ Otherwise, when my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, my son Solomon and I will be counted as offenders.” ²² While she was still speaking with the king, the prophet Nathan came in. ²³ “The prophet Nathan is here,” they told the king; and he came into the king’s presence and bowed down to the ground on his face before the king. ²⁴ “My lord king,” said Nathan, “is this, then, your decree: “Adonijah is to be king

¹⁶ The NJB opens with ‘she’ in place of ‘Bathsheba’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.

¹⁷ But see, again, #13.

¹⁸ The translation follows the Old Greek, Peshitta and many Hebrew MSS, in reading אַתָּה (‘you’) in place of the MT’s עַתָּה (‘now’) after ‘though’.

¹⁹ The NJB & NRSV have ‘fattened calves’ and ‘fatted cattle’, respectively, in place of ‘steers’, here following NETB.

²⁰ The order of succession was not yet legally fixed by statute. Saul and David had been the choice of God and of the people.

²¹ In place of ‘will be counted as offenders’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘will be made to suffer’; the MT has ‘will be guilty’.

²² For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “She was still speaking when the prophet Nathan entered.”

²³ NETB has ‘floor’ in place of ‘ground’, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV; the justification used is that this event took place indoors.

²⁴ In place of ‘is this your decree’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘have you said’ and NETB has ‘did you announce’.

כד וַיֹּאמֶר נָתַן אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶתָּה אִמְרַתְּ אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ
 יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרָי וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי: כה כִּי יֵרֵד הַיּוֹם
 וַיִּזְבַּח שׁוֹר וּמְרִיא־וְצֹאֵן לָרֶב וַיִּקְרָא לְכָל־בְּנֵי
 הַמֶּלֶךְ וּלְשָׂרֵי הָעָבָא וּלְאַבְיָתָר הַכֹּהֵן וְהַנָּס אֲכָלִים
 וְשָׂתִים לִפְנָיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ: כו וְלִי
 אֲנִי־עֲבָדְךָ וּלְצֹדֵק הַכֹּהֵן וּלְבַנְיָהוּ בֶן־יְהוֹיָדָע
 וּלְשִׁלְמָה עֲבָדְךָ לֹא קָרָא: כז אִם מֵאֵת אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ
 נָהִיָּה הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא הוֹדַעְתָּ אֶת־עֲבָדְךָ עַבְדִּיד
 מִי יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא אֲדֹנִי־הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲרָיו: {ס}
 כח וַיַּעַן הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר קְרְאוּ־לִי לְבַת־שֶׁבַע
 וּתְבֹא לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְתַעֲמֵד לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: כט וַיִּשְׁבַּע
 הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר חֲיֵיהוָה אֲשֶׁר־פָּדָה אֶת־נַפְשִׁי מִכָּל־
 צָרָה: ל כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לָךְ בִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר כִּי־שִׁלְמָה בְּנִךְ יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרָי וְהוּא
 יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי תַּחְתָּי כִּי כֵּן אֶעֱשֶׂה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:
 לא וַתִּקֹּד בַּת־שֶׁבַע אַפַּיִם אֲרֶץ וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ
 וַתֹּאמֶר יְחִי אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד לְעֹלָם: {פ}

after me; he is the one who is to sit on my throne?" ²⁵ For he has gone down today and sacrificed quantities of oxen, steers, and sheep, and invited all the royal princes, the army commanders, and the priest Abiathar. They are there now, eating and drinking in his presence and shouting, "Long live King Adonijah!" ²⁶ However, he has not invited me your servant, Zadok the priest, Banaiah son of Jehoiada, or your servant Solomon. ²⁷ Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not let your servant know who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

²⁸ Then King David spoke. "Call Bathsheba to me," he said; so, she came into the king's presence and stood before him. ²⁹ Then the king swore this oath, "As Yahweh lives, who has saved my life from all adversity, ³⁰ just as I swore to you by Yahweh the God of Israel that your son Solomon should be king after me and take my place on the throne, so I will bring it about this very day." ³¹ Bathsheba knelt down, her face to the ground, and did homage to the king. "May my lord King David live forever!" she said.

²⁵ The NRSV has 'Joab, the commander of the army' in place of 'the army commanders', here following the NJB & NETB.

²⁶ The NRSV has 'and' in place of 'or', and also after 'priest'.

²⁷ In place of 'servant', here following the Qere (עֲבָדֶיךָ), the Ketiv has 'servants' (עַבְדֶּיךָ).

²⁸ Bathsheba had apparently gone out while Nathan was speaking.

²⁹ The literal translation of 'saved' is 'ransomed'.

³⁰ David's promise is fulfilled in the next paragraph.

³¹ NETB has 'floor' in place of 'ground', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV; the justification used is that this event took place indoors.

^לב וַיֹּאמֶר | הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד קְרָאוּ-לִי לְצִדּוֹק הַכֹּהֵן וְלִנְתָן
הַנָּבִיא וּלְבִנְיָהוּ בֶן-יְהוֹיָדָע וַיָּבֹאוּ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ:
^לב וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לָהֶם קַחוּ עִמָּכֶם אֶת-עַבְדֵי
אֲדֹנֵיכֶם וְהִרְכַּבְתֶּם אֶת-שְׁלֹמֹה בְנִי עַל-הַפָּרָדָה
אֲשֶׁר-לִי וְהוֹרַדְתֶּם אֹתוֹ אֶל-גִּיחֹן: ^לד וּמִשַּׁח אֹתוֹ
שֵׁם צִדּוֹק הַכֹּהֵן וְנָתַן הַנָּבִיא לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְתִקְעֶתֶם בַּשּׁוֹפָר וְאָמַרְתֶּם יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה:
^לה וְעָלִיתֶם אַחֲרָיו וּבָא ויָשֵׁב עַל-כִּסְאִי וְהוּא יִמְלֹךְ
תַּחְתָּי וְאֹתוֹ צִוִּיתִי לִהְיוֹת נָגִיד עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל-
יְהוּדָה: ^{לו} וַיַּעַן בְּנֵיָהוּ בֶן-יְהוֹיָדָע אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר |
אָמֵן בֶּן יֹאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^{לז} כַּאֲשֶׁר
הָיָה יְהוָה עִם-אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ כֵּן יִהְיֶה עִם-שְׁלֹמֹה
וַיַּגְדֵּל אֶת-כִּסְאוֹ מִכִּסֵּא אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד: ^{לח} וַיֵּרֶד
צִדּוֹק הַכֹּהֵן וְנָתַן הַנָּבִיא וּבִנְיָהוּ בֶן-יְהוֹיָדָע וְהַכֵּרֶתִי
וְהַפִּלְתִּי וַיִּרְכְּבוּ אֶת-שְׁלֹמֹה עַל-פָּרָדָת הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד
וַיֵּלְכוּ אֹתוֹ עַל-גִּיחֹן: ^{לט} וַיִּקַּח צִדּוֹק הַכֹּהֵן אֶת-קָרְן

³² Then King David said, "Summon to me Zadok the priest, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." Then they came into the king's presence ³³ and the king said to them, "Take your master's servants with you, mount my son Solomon on my own mule, and escort him down to Gihon. ³⁴ There Zadok the priest and the prophet Nathan are to anoint him king of Israel; then you are to sound the trumpet and shout, "Long live King Solomon!" ³⁵ Then you shall go up following him. Let him enter and sit on my throne; then he shall be king in place of me; for, he is the man I have appointed to be ruler over Israel and over Judah." ³⁶ Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, "Amen!" he said, "And may Yahweh, the God of my lord the king, so ordain! ³⁷ As Yahweh has been with my lord the king, so may he be with Solomon and make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord King David!" ³⁸ Then Zadok the priest, the prophet Nathan, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and Pelethites went down; they mounted Solomon on King David's mule and escorted him to Gihon. ³⁹ There,

³² When Bathsheba came back, Nathan left and hence had to be recalled.

³³ The MT has the plural form of 'master', to indicate honour and authority.

³⁴ Anointing (with oil) was the official way to designate a king.

³⁵ Another reading of 'appointed' is 'commanded'.

³⁶ The NJB ends this verse, here following the NRSV, with, "And may Yahweh too say Amen to the words of my lord the king!"

³⁷ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

³⁸ The 'Cherethites and Pelethites' were members of David's royal guard (see 2S 8:18).

³⁹ An animal's horn was used as an oil flask in the anointing ceremony.

הַשֹּׁמֵן מִן־הָאֵהָל וַיִּמָּשַׁח אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה וַיִּתְקְעוּ
בַּשּׁוֹפָר וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־הָעָם יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה:
מ וַיַּעֲלוּ כָּל־הָעָם אַחֲרָיו וְהָעָם מַחֲלִלִים בַּחֲלָלִים
וּשְׂמֵחִים שִׂמְחָה גְדוֹלָה וַתִּבָּקַע הָאָרֶץ בְּקוֹלָם:
מא וַיִּשְׁמַע אֲדֹנִיָּהּ וְכָל־הַקְּרָאִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וְהֵם
כָּלוּ לֵאכֹל וַיִּשְׁמַע יוֹאָב אֶת־קוֹל הַשּׁוֹפָר וַיֹּאמֶר
מב מִדּוּעַ קוֹל־הַקְּרִיָּה הַזֶּה: מִבְּעוֹדְנֵנוּ מִדְּבַר וְהִנֵּה
יֹנָתָן בֶּן־אֲבִיָּתָר הַכֹּהֵן בָּא וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנִיָּהּ בָּא כִּי
אִישׁ חֵיל אַתָּה וְטוֹב תִּבְשָׂר: מג וַיַּעַן יֹנָתָן וַיֹּאמֶר
לְאֲדֹנִיָּהּ אֲבָל אֲדִנִּינוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ־דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־
שְׁלֹמֹה: מד וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־צְדוֹק הַכֹּהֵן
וְאֶת־נָתָן הַנָּבִיא וּבְנֵיהֶם בֶּן־יְהוֹיָדָע וְהַכֹּרֶתִי
וְהַפְּלִתִי וַיִּרְכְּבוּ אִתּוֹ עַל פָּרְדֵּת הַמֶּלֶךְ: מה וַיִּמָּשְׁחוּ
אִתּוֹ צְדוֹק הַכֹּהֵן וְנָתָן הַנָּבִיא | לְמֶלֶךְ בְּגִחוֹן וַיַּעֲלוּ
מִשָּׁם שְׂמֵחִים וְתֵהֶם הַקְּרִיָּה הוּא הַקּוֹל אֲשֶׁר
שִׁמְעֶתֶם: מו וְגַם יֵשֵׁב שְׁלֹמֹה עַל כִּסֵּא הַמְּלוּכָה:

Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the Tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, “Long live King Solomon!” ⁴⁰ And all the people went up following him, playing on pipes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth quaked at their noise. ⁴¹ Adonijah and all his guests heard the noise as they finished feasting. Joab too heard the sound of the trumpet and said, “What is that noise of uproar in the city?” ⁴² While he was still speaking, Jonathon the son of Abiathar the priest arrived. Adonijah said, “Come in, you are a worthy man, so you must be bringing good news.” ⁴³ Jonathon answered, “No, our lord King David has made Solomon king. ⁴⁴ With him, the king sent Zadok the priest, the prophet Nathan, Benaiah son of Jehoiada and the Cherethites and Pelethites. They put him on the king’s mule, ⁴⁵ and Zadok the priest and the prophet Nathan have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone back again with shouts of joy, and the city is now in an uproar; that is the noise you hear. ⁴⁶ Furthermore, Solomon now sits on the royal throne. ⁴⁷ Moreover, the

⁴⁰ The verb בָּקַע (literally, ‘to split open’, but here translated ‘quaked’) is obviously an exaggeration for the sake of emphasis.

⁴¹ Literally translated, Joab’s question is, “Why is the city’s sound noisy?”

⁴² In place of ‘worthy’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘honest’ and NETB has ‘important’.

⁴³ The NJB has ‘yes’ in place of ‘no’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB; for a similar use of אֲבָל see Gn 17:19.

⁴⁴ On the ‘Cherethites and Pelethites’, see #38.

⁴⁵ The NJB ends the verse with “this was the noise you heard.”

⁴⁶ Literally translated, this verse reads, “And also Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom.”

⁴⁷ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

מִזֶּה וְגַם־בָּאוּ עֲבָדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת־אֲדֹנָיו הַמֶּלֶךְ
דָּוִד לֵאמֹר יִיטֵב אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־שֵׁם שְׁלֹמֹה
מִשְׁמֶךָ וַיִּגְדֵּל אֶת־כִּסְאוֹ מִכִּסְאוֹךָ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ
עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּב: ^{מח} וְגַם־כָּכָה אָמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר נָתַן הַיּוֹם יֹשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי וְעֵינַי
רְאוּת: ^{מט} וַיַּחֲרִדוּ וַיִּקְמוּ כָּל־הַקְּרָאִים אֲשֶׁר
לְאֲדֹנֵיהוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ אִישׁ לְדַרְכּוֹ: ^נ וְאֲדֹנֵיהוּ יָרָא מִפְּנֵי
שְׁלֹמֹה וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיַּחֲזֹק בַּקֶּרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: ^{נא} וַיִּגְדֵּל
לְשְׁלֹמֹה לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה אֲדֹנֵיהוּ יָרָא אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ
שְׁלֹמֹה וְהִנֵּה אָחִז בַּקֶּרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֵאמֹר יִשְׁבַּע־
לִי כִּי־וְהַיּוֹם הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה אִם־יָמִית אֶת־עַבְדּוֹ בַּחֶרֶב:
^{נב} וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלֹמֹה אִם יִהְיֶה לְבֹן־חַיִּל לֹא־יִפֹּל
מִשְׁעָרְתּוֹ אֶרְצָה וְאִם־רָעָה תִּמְצָא־בּוֹ וּמָת:
^{נג} וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה וַיּוֹרְדוּהוּ מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיָּבֹא
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה וַיֹּאמֶר־לּוֹ שְׁלֹמֹה לֵךְ
לְבֵיתְךָ: {פ}

king's officers have been to congratulate our lord King David with the words, "May your God make the name of Solomon more glorious even than yours, and his throne more exalted than your own!" The king bowed down in worship on his bed, ⁴⁸ and then said, "Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, who has allowed my eyes to see one of my offspring sitting on my throne today." ⁴⁹ At this, all Adonijah's guests, got up trembling and went their own ways. ⁵⁰ Adonijah, in terror of Solomon, rose too and ran off to cling to the horns of the altar. ⁵¹ Solomon was told, "You should know that Adonijah is in terror of King Solomon and is now clinging to the horns of the altar, saying, "Let King Solomon first swear to me that he will not have his servant put to the sword."" ⁵² Solomon said, "Should he bear himself loyally, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground; but if he is found malicious, he shall die." ⁵³ King Solomon then sent to have him brought down from the altar; he came and did homage to King Solomon; Solomon said to him, "Go home."

⁴⁸ In place of 'offspring' (following the NRSV), the NJB has 'own sons'; both follow the LXX (the MT omits).

⁴⁹ The NJB has 'taking fright, rose' in place of 'got up trembling', here following the NRSV.

⁵⁰ An altar was sacred, so that a person touching it was not supposed to be slain; but the taboo was not always honoured (Ex 21:14, 1K 2:28-34).

⁵¹ After 'swear', many translations add 'an oath', but this is redundant in contemporary English.

⁵² The literal translation of 'should he bear himself loyally' is 'if he is a man of strength'; in this context, where Adonijah calls himself a 'servant' (v. 51), implying allegiance to the new king, the phrase probably carries the sense of loyalty.

⁵³ The literal translation of 'go home' is 'go to your house'.

מלכים א פרק ב

^א וַיִּקְרְבוּ יְמֵי־דָוִד לָמוֹת וַיִּצַּו אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה בְנוֹ לֵאמֹר: ^ב אֲנִכִּי הֲלֹךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וְחִזַּקְתָּ וְהָיִיתָ לְאִישׁ: ^ג וְשִׁמְרָתָּ אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָלֶכֶת בְּדַרְכָּיו לְשָׁמֵר חֻקֹּתָיו מִצְוֹתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְעֲדוּתָיו כַּכְתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה לְמַעַן תִּשְׁפִּיל אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר תִּפְנֶה שֵׁם: ^ד לְמַעַן יָקִים יְהוָה אֶת־דְּבָרֹו אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר עָלַי לֵאמֹר אִם־יִשְׁמְרוּ בְנֵיךָ אֶת־דִּרְפָּם לָלֶכֶת לִפְנֵי בְּאֵמַת בְּכָל־לִבָּם וּבְכָל־נַפְשָׁם לֵאמֹר לֹא־יִכָּרֵת לָךְ אִישׁ מֵעַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ה וְגַם אֶתָּה יִדְעָתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לִי יוֹאָב בֶּן־צְרוּיָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְשְׁנֵי־שָׂרֵי צְבָאוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאַבְנֵר בֶּן־נֵר וְלַעֲמָשָׂא בֶן־יֵיתֵר וַיַּהַרְגֵם וַיִּשֶׁם דָּמֵי־מִלְחָמָה בְּשֵׁלֶם וַיִּתֵּן דָּמֵי מִלְחָמָה בַּחֲגֹרֶתֹו אֲשֶׁר בְּמַתְּנוֹ וּבִנְעָלוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּרַגְלָיו:

1 KINGS 2

¹ As the time for David to die approached, he laid this charge on his son Solomon, ² "I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong and show yourself a man. ³ Observe the injunctions of Yahweh your God, following his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it stands written in the Law of Moses, so that you may be successful in all that you do and undertake. ⁴ Then Yahweh will fulfil the promise he made concerning me: "If your sons are careful how they behave, and walk loyally before me with all their heart and soul, then there shall not fail you a successor for the throne of Israel." ⁵ "You know too what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the army of Israel, Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether. He murdered them, shedding the blood of war in time of peace and staining the belt round my waist and the sandals on my feet with the blood of war. ⁶ You will be wise not to let his grey

1 KINGS 2

- ¹ David's 'testament', by which Solomon is appointed to execute vengeance on his personal enemies, reflects the ideas of this period of the Old Testament on blood-vengeance and the lasting efficacy of the curse (see v. 8).
- ² In place of 'show yourself a man', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'be courageous'.
- ³ NETB has 'keeping his instructions' in place of 'following his ways'; a more literal translation is 'walking in his ways'.
- ⁴ The NJB omits 'concerning', here following the NRSV. The literal translation of 'are careful how they behave' (here following the NJB) is 'guard their way'; NETB has 'watch their step'.
- ⁵ The end of this verse has been corrected following the Peshitta and Tg; the MT is corrupt, reading, "... and he shed the blood of battle when he killed which is on his waist and on his sandal[s] which are on his feet."
- ⁶ The reference to 'grey hair' is an allusion to old age.

וְעָשִׂיתָ בְּחֶכְמָתְךָ וְלֹא־תוֹרֵד שְׂיִבְתּוֹ בְּשָׁלָם שְׁאֵל:
וּלְבָנֵי בָרְזַלִּי הַגִּלְעָדִי תַעֲשֶׂה־חֶסֶד וְהִיוּ בְּאֹכְלֵי
שְׁלַחְנֶךָ כִּי־כֵן קָרְבוּ אֵלַי בְּבִרְחִי מִפְּנֵי אַבְשָׁלוֹם
אַחִיךָ: ^ח וְהִנֵּה עָמָךְ שִׁמְעִי בֶן־גֵּרָא בֶן־הִימִינִי
מִבְּחָרִים וְהוּא קָלָלָנִי קָלָלָה נִמְרָצָת בַּיּוֹם לְכַתִּי
מִחַתָּנִים וְהוּא־יָרַד לִקְרֹאתִי הִירְדֵן וְאַשְׁבַּע לוֹ
בִּיהוָה לֵאמֹר אִם־אֶמִּיתְךָ בַּחֶרֶב: ^ט וְעַתָּה אֵל־
תִּנָּקְהוּ כִּי אִישׁ חָכָם אַתָּה וַיִּדְעַתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר
תַּעֲשֶׂה־לוֹ וְהוֹרְדָתָ אֶת־שְׂיִבְתּוֹ בַּדָּם שְׁאֵל:
וַיִּשְׁכַּב דָּוִד עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר בְּעִיר דָּוִד: {פ}

^{יא} וְהַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ דָּוִד עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים
שָׁנָה בַּחֲבֵרוֹן מָלַךְ שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים וּבִירוּשָׁלַם מָלַךְ
שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים: ^{יב} וּשְׁלֹמֹה יָשָׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא דָּוִד
אָבִיו וַתִּכֶּן מַלְכָּתוֹ מָאֵד: {ס} ^{יג} וַיָּבֹא אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ בֶן־
חַגִּית אֶל־בֵּת־שֶׁבַע אִם־שְׁלֹמֹה וַתֹּאמֶר הַשָּׁלוֹם
בָּאָךְ וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁלוֹם: ^{יד} וַיֹּאמֶר דְּבַר לִי אֵלֶיךָ וַתֹּאמֶר

hair go down to Sheol in peace. ⁷ But deal loyally with the sons of Barzillai of Gilead; let them be among those who eat at your table, for they were loyal to me when I fled from your brother Absalom. ⁸ You also have with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim. He called down a terrible curse on me the day I left for Mahanaim, but he came down to meet me at the Jordan and I swore to him by Yahweh I would not put him to the sword. ⁹ So now, do not let him go unpunished; you are a wise man and will know how to deal with him to bring his grey beard down to Sheol in blood.” ¹⁰ Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the City of David.

¹¹ The time that David reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned in Hebron for seven years and in Jerusalem for thirty-three years. ¹² Thus, Solomon sat upon the throne of David, and his sovereignty was securely established. ¹³ Adonijah son of Haggith went to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon and bowed down before her. “Do you come in peace?” she asked. He replied, “Yes, in peace.” ¹⁴ Then he said, “I have

⁷ On the friendship of Barzillai, see 2S 17:27–29, 19:31–39.

⁸ Shimei’s curse will lie heavy on David’s descendants; only by being turned against its originator can it be undone (vv. 44–45).

⁹ The NJB, following the Vg and the Lucianic recension of the LXX, opens with ‘but you’ in place of ‘so now’.

¹⁰ The phrase ‘the City of David’ refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem; see 2S 5:7.

¹¹ David reigned 1000–965 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 1000–961 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

¹² In place of ‘sovereignty’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘kingdom’ and NETB has ‘royal authority’.

¹³ The word ‘yes’ is not in the MT but is here added for clarity.

¹⁴ The NRSV replaces Adonijah’s statement with a question, “May I have a word with you?”

דָּבַר: ^{טו} וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת יְדַעַת כִּי־לִי הִיְתָה הַמְּלוּכָה וְעָלִי שָׁמוֹ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל פְּנִיָּהֶם לַמֶּלֶךְ וְתִסָּב הַמְּלוּכָה וְתִהְיֶה לְאָחִי כִּי מִיְּהוָה הִיְתָה לוֹ: ^{טז} וְעַתָּה שְׁאַלָה אַחַת אֲנֹכִי שְׁאַל מֵאַתָּה אֶל־תִּשְׁבִּי אֶת־פָּנַי וְתֹאמֶר אֵלָיו דָּבַר: ^{יז} וַיֹּאמֶר אֲמַר־נָא לְשִׁלְמָה הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי לֹא־יֵשִׁיב אֶת־פָּנָיָהּ וְיִתֵּן־לִי אֶת־אַבְיִשָׁג הַשֹּׁנַמִּית לְאִשָּׁה: ^{יח} וְתֹאמֶר בַּת־שֶׁבַע טוֹב אֲנֹכִי אֲדַבֵּר עִלָּיִךְ אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^{יט} וְתָבֹא בַת־שֶׁבַע אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה לְדַבֵּר־לוֹ עַל־אַדְנִיָּהּ וַיִּקָּם הַמֶּלֶךְ לִקְרֹאתָהּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לָהּ וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל־כִּסְאוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁם כִּסֵּא לְאִם הַמֶּלֶךְ וַתֵּשֶׁב לִימִינוֹ: ^כ וְתֹאמֶר שְׁאַלָה אַחַת קְטָנָה אֲנֹכִי שְׁאַלָה מֵאַתָּה אֶל־תִּשְׁבִּי אֶת־פָּנַי וַיֹּאמֶר־לָהּ הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁאַלִי אֲמִי כִּי לֹא־אֲשִׁיב אֶת־פָּנָיָהּ: ^{כא} וְתֹאמֶר יִתֵּן אֶת־אַבְיִשָׁג הַשֹּׁנַמִּית לְאַדְנִיָּהּ אֶחָיִךְ לְאִשָּׁה: ^{כב} וַיַּעַן הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה

something to say to you.” And she replied, “Speak up!” ¹⁵ He said “You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel expected me to be king; but the crown eluded me and fell to my brother, since it came to him from Yahweh. ¹⁶ Now I have one request to make you; do not refuse me.” And she said to him, “Speak up!” ¹⁷ And he went on, “Please ask King Solomon – for, he will not refuse you – that he should give me Abishag the Shunammite in marriage.” ¹⁸ “Very well,” Bathsheba replied, “I will speak to the king about you.” ¹⁹ So, Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him about Adonijah; the king rose to meet her and bowed before her; he then sat down on his throne; a seat was brought for the king’s mother, and she sat down at his right hand. ²⁰ Then she said, “I have one small request to make you; do not refuse me.” The king answered, “My mother, make your request; for, I will not refuse you.” ²¹ And she said, “Let Abishag the Shunammite be given in marriage to your brother Adonijah.” ²² King Solomon replied to his

¹⁵ Adonijah was the elder brother.

¹⁶ The literal translation of ‘do not refuse me’ is ‘do not turn back my face’.

¹⁷ See #16 on the verb ‘refuse’.

¹⁸ The literal translation of ‘very well’ is simply ‘good’ (in casual English, it could be rendered ‘OK’).

¹⁹ Solomon treats Bathsheba with due honour.

²⁰ NETB has ‘favour to ask’ in place of ‘request to make’, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV.

²¹ Bathsheba faithfully carries out Adonijah’s request, perhaps not knowing the full implications (see #22).

²² The NJB, following the LXX, ends with, “since he is my elder brother and Abiathar the priest and Joab son of Zeruiah are on his side.” (ὅτι οὗτος ἀδελφός μου ὁ μέγας ὑπὲρ ἐμέ, καὶ αὐτῷ Ἀβιαθαρ ὁ ἱερεὺς καὶ αὐτῷ Ἰואβ ὁ υἱὸς Σαρουίας ὁ ἀρχιστράτηγος ἐταῖρος)

וַיֹּאמֶר לְאִמּוֹ וּלְמָה אֶת שְׂאֵלֶת אֶת־אַבִּישָׁג
הַשְּׁנַמִּית לְאַדְנִיָּהוּ וְשְׂאֵלֵי־לוֹ אֶת־הַמְּלוּכָה כִּי הוּא
אֶחָי הַגָּדוֹל מִמֶּנִּי וְלוֹ וּלְאַבִּיָּתָר הַכֹּהֵן וּלְיֹאָב בֶּן־
צְרוּיָה: {פ}

כַּג וַיִּשָּׁבַע הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בַּיהוָה לֵאמֹר כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה־
לִי אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסִיף כִּי בִנְפֹשׁוֹ דִּבֶּר אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ אֶת־
הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה: כַּד וַעֲתָה חִי־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הִכִּינִי
וַיּוֹשִׁיבֵנִי וַיּוֹשִׁיבֵנִי עַל־כִּסֵּא דָוִד אָבִי וְאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה־
לִי בֵּית כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר כִּי הַיּוֹם יוֹמַת אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ:
כַּה וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בְּיַד בְּנֵיהוּ בֶן־יְהוֹיָדָע
וַיִּפְגַּע־בּוֹ וַיָּמַת: {ס}

כַּו וּלְאַבִּיָּתָר הַכֹּהֵן אָמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ עֲנֵתָת לְךָ עַל־שְׂדֵיךָ
כִּי אִישׁ מָוֶת אָתָּה וּבַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לֹא אֲמִיתְךָ כִּי־
נָשָׂאת אֶת־אֲרוֹן אֲדֹנִי יְהוָה לִפְנֵי דָוִד אָבִי וְכִי
הִתְעַנִּית בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר־הִתְעַנָּה אָבִי: כַּז וַיִּגְרַשׁ שְׁלֹמֹה
אֶת־אַבִּיָּתָר מִהִיזֹת כֹּהֵן לַיהוָה לְמַלֵּא אֶת־דְּבָר
יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר עַל־בֵּית עֲלִי בְּשִׁלֹּה: {פ}

mother, "And why do you request Abishag of Shunem for Adonijah? You might as well request the kingdom for him, since he is my elder brother; ask not only for him but also for the priest Abiathar and for Joab son of Zeruiah!"

²³ Then King Solomon swore by Yahweh, saying, "May God do this to me and more, if Adonijah does not pay for these words he has spoken with his life! ²⁴ Now, therefore, as Yahweh lives, who has set me securely on the throne of David my father, and who, as he promised, has given him a dynasty, Adonijah shall be put to death this very day." ²⁵ Therefore, King Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada; he struck him down, and he died.

²⁶ As for Abiathar the priest, the king said to him, "Go to Anathoth to your estate. You deserve to die, but I am not going to put you to death now, since you carried the Ark of Yahweh in the presence of David my father and shared in all my father's hardships." ²⁷ Solomon deprived Abiathar of the priesthood of Yahweh, thus fulfilling the oracle Yahweh had uttered against the House of Eli at Shiloh.

²³ Literally translated, this verse ends, "if with his life Adonijah has not spoken this word."

²⁴ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁵ After 'sent', the MT adds 'by the hand of'.

²⁶ 'Anathoth' was a Levitical town near Jerusalem. Since Abiathar was a priest, and hence a sacrosanct personality, Solomon possibly did not want to execute him, although the narrator suggests that Abiathar's loyalty to David is the reason.

²⁷ On this oracle, see 1S 2:27-36.

כח והשמעה באה עד-יואב כי יואב נטה אחרי
 אדניה ואחרי אבשלום לא נטה וינס יואב אל-
 אהל יהוה ויחזק בקרנות המזבח: כט ויגד למלך
 שלמה כי נס יואב אל-אהל יהוה והנה אצל
 המזבח וישלח שלמה את-בניהו בן-יהוידע
 לאמר לך פגע-בו: ל ויבא בניהו אל-אהל יהוה
 ויאמר אליו כה-אמר המלך צא ויאמר לא כי פה
 אמות וישב בניהו את-המלך דבר לאמר כה-
 דבר יואב וכה ענני: לא ויאמר לו המלך עשה
 כאשר דבר ופגע-בו וקברתו והסירתו דמי חנם
 אשר שפך יואב מעלי ומעל בית אבי: לב והשיב
 יהוה את-דמו על-ראשו אשר פגע בשני-אנשים
 צדקים וטבים ממנו ויהרגם בחרב ואבי דוד לא
 ידע את-אבנר בן-נר שר-צבא ישראל ואת-
 עמשא בן-יתר שר-צבא יהודה: לג ושב דמיהם

28 When the news reached Joab – for Joab had lent his support to Adonijah, though he had not supported Absalom – he fled to the Tent of Yahweh and clung to the horns of the altar. 29 King Solomon was told, “Joab has fled to the Tent of Yahweh; he is there beside the altar.” Then Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada. “Go,” he said, “and strike him down.” 30 So, Benaiah went to the Tent of Yahweh and said to him, “By order of the king, “Come out!”” He said, “No, I will die here.” Then Benaiah brought back word to the king, “This is what Joab said, and the answer he gave me.” 31 “Do as he says,” the king replied. “Strike him down and bury him, and so rid me and my family today of the innocent blood Joab has shed. 32 Yahweh will bring his blood down on his own head, because he struck down two more honourable and better men than he, and put to the sword, without my father David’s knowledge, Abner son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah. 33 May their blood come down

28 The ‘horns’ of the altar were the horn-shaped projections on the 4 corners of the altar (see Ex 27:2).

29 At the end of this verse, following the LXX (*καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Σαλωμων πρὸς Ἰωαβ λέγων Τί γέγονέν σοι, ὅτι πέφευγας εἰς τὸ θυσιαστήριον; καὶ εἶπεν Ἰωαβ Ὅτι ἐφοβήθη ἀπὸ προσώπου σου, καὶ ἔφυγον πρὸς κύριον*), the NJB adds, “Then Solomon sent word to Joab, “What reason did you have for fleeing to the altar?” Joab replied, “I was afraid of you and fled to Yahweh.”” Here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

30 Benaiah tries to adopt the procedure of Ex 21:14, which is precisely Joab’s case: “However, should a man dare to kill his fellow by treacherous intent, you must take him even from my altar to be put to death.” Joab, however, is determined that Solomon shall incur the odium of profanation.

31 Literally translated, this verse ends, “take away the undeserved bloodshed which Joab spilled from upon me and from upon the house of my father.”

32 Literally translated, this verse opens, “Yahweh will cause his blood to return upon his head.”

33 The literal translation of ‘dynasty’ is ‘throne’. The NJB has ‘descendants’ in place of ‘seed’ and the WEBBE has ‘offspring’.

בְּרֹאשׁ יוֹאָב וּבְרֹאשׁ זֶרְעוֹ לְעֹלָם וּלְדָוִד וּלְזֶרְעוֹ
וּלְבֵיתוֹ וּלְכִסְאֹו יִהְיֶה שָׁלוֹם עַד־עוֹלָם מִעַם יְהוָה׃
לְדָוִד וַיַּעַל בְּנֵיהוּ בֶן־יְהוֹיָדָע וַיַּפְגֵּעֵבּוֹ וַיִּמָּתְהוּ וַיִּקְבֹּר
בְּבֵיתוֹ בַּמִּדְבָּר׃ לֵה וַיִּתֵּן הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־בְּנֵיהוּ בֶן־
יְהוֹיָדָע תַּחְתָּיו עַל־הַצָּבָא וְאֶת־צָדוֹק הַכֹּהֵן נָתַן
הַמֶּלֶךְ תַּחַת אֲבִיתָר׃

on the head of Joab and his seed forever, but may David, his descendants, his dynasty, his throne, have peace forever from Yahweh.”

³⁴ Whereupon Benaiah son of Jehoiada went out, struck him down and put him to death; he was buried at his home in the desert. ³⁵ In his place as head of the army, the king appointed Benaiah son of Jehoiada and, in place of Abiathar, Zadok the priest.

^{35a} Καὶ ἔδωκεν κύριος φρόνησιν τῷ Σαλωμων καὶ σοφίαν πολλήν σφόδρα καὶ πλάτος καρδίας ὡς ἡ ἄμμος ἡ παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν, ^{35b} καὶ ἐπληθύνθη ἡ φρόνησις Σαλωμων σφόδρα ὑπὲρ τὴν φρόνησιν πάντων ἀρχαίων υἱῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντας φρονίμους Αἰγύπτου. ^{35c} καὶ ἔλαβεν τὴν θυγατέρα Φαραω καὶ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτὴν εἰς τὴν πόλιν Δαυιδ ἕως συντελέσαι αὐτὸν τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν οἶκον κυρίου ἐν πρώτοις καὶ τὸ τεῖχος Ἱερουσαλημ κυκλόθεν· ἐν ἑπτὰ ἔτεσιν ἐποίησεν καὶ συνετέλεσεν. ^{35d} καὶ ἦν τῷ Σαλωμων ἐβδομήκοντα χιλιάδες αἰρόντες ἄρσιν καὶ ὀγδοήκοντα χιλιάδες λατόμων ἐν τῷ ὄρει. ^{35e} καὶ ἐποίησεν Σαλωμων τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὰ ὑποστηρίγματα καὶ τοὺς λουτήρας τοὺς μεγάλους καὶ τοὺς στύλους καὶ τὴν κρήνην τῆς αὐλῆς καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν τὴν χαλκῇν. ^{35f} καὶ ὠκοδόμησεν τὴν ἄκραν καὶ

^{35a} And the Lord gave understanding to Solomon and a great deal of wisdom, and generosity of heart, like the sand by the seashore.

^{35b} And the wisdom of Solomon abounded exceedingly beyond the wisdom of all the ancients and beyond all the sages of Egypt; ^{35c} and he took the daughter of Pharaoh and brought her into the city of David, until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the Lord first, and the wall of Jerusalem round about. In seven years, he made and finished them. ^{35d} And Solomon had seventy thousand bearers of burdens, and eight thousand cutters of stone in the mountain. ^{35e} And Solomon made the sea, and the supports, and the great baths, and the pillars, and the fountain of the court, and the bronze sea; ^{35f} and he built the citadel as a defence above it; and

³⁴ The NJB & NETB have the name ‘Joab’ in place of ‘him’, here following the MT & NRSV.

³⁵ The LXX includes after v. 35 some 14 verses that are absent from the MT; the Slavonic Bible also includes these (as 10 extra verses).

^{35a} Cf. 5:9 – much of the content of vv. 35^a–35^o is found elsewhere in the book.

^{35b} Cf. 5:10.

^{35c} Cf. 3:1, 6:38.

^{35d} Cf 5:29.

^{35e} Cf. 7:24, 38.

^{35f} Cf. 11:27, 9:24.

τὰς ἐπάλξεις αὐτῆς καὶ διέκοψεν τὴν πόλιν Δαυιδ· οὕτως θυγάτηρ Φαραω ἀνέβαινεν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως Δαυιδ εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτῆς, ὃν ὠκοδόμησεν αὐτῇ· τότε ὠκοδόμησεν τὴν ἄκραν. ^{35g} καὶ Σαλωμων ἀνέφερεν τρεῖς ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ ὀλοκαυτώσεις καὶ εἰρηνικὰς ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον, ὃ ὠκοδόμησεν τῷ κυρίῳ, καὶ ἐθυμία ἐνώπιον κυρίου. καὶ συνετέλεσεν τὸν οἶκον. ^{35h} καὶ οὗτοι οἱ ἄρχοντες οἱ καθεσταμένοι ἐπὶ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Σαλωμων· τρεῖς χιλιάδες καὶ ἑξακόσιοι ἐπιστάται τοῦ λαοῦ τῶν ποιούντων τὰ ἔργα. ³⁵ⁱ καὶ ὠκοδόμησεν τὴν Ἀσσουρ καὶ τὴν Μαγδω καὶ τὴν Γαζερ καὶ τὴν Βαιθωρων τὴν ἐπάνω καὶ τὰ Βααλαθ. ^{35k} πλὴν μετὰ τὸ οἰκοδομῆσαι αὐτὸν τὸν οἶκον τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τὸ τεῖχος Ἱερουσαλημ κύκλῳ, μετὰ ταῦτα ὠκοδόμησεν τὰς πόλεις ταύτας. ^{35l} Καὶ ἐν τῷ ἔτι Δαυιδ ζῆν ἐνετείλατο τῷ Σαλωμων λέγων Ἰδοὺ μετὰ σοῦ Σεμει υἱὸς Γηρα υἱὸς σπέρματος τοῦ Ἰεμινι ἐκ Χεβρων. ^{35m} οὗτος κατηράσατό με κατάραν ὀδυνηράν ἐν ᾗ ἡμέρα ἐπορευόμην εἰς Παρεμβολάς, ³⁵ⁿ καὶ αὐτὸς κατέβαινεν εἰς ἀπαντὴν μοι ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην, καὶ ὤμοσα αὐτῷ κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου λέγων Εἰ θανατωθήσεται ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ· ^{35o} καὶ νῦν μὴ ἀθωώσης αὐτόν, ὅτι ἀνὴρ φρόνιμος σὺ καὶ γνώση ἃ ποιήσεις αὐτῷ, καὶ κατὰξεις τὴν πολιὰν αὐτοῦ ἐν αἵματι εἰς ἄδου.

he made a breach in the wall of the city of David. Thus, the daughter of Pharaoh went up out of the city of David to her house, which he built for her; then he built the citadel. ^{35g} And Solomon offered up three whole burnt offerings in the year, and peace-offerings on the altar which he built to the Lord, and he burnt incense before the Lord; and he finished building the House. ^{35h} And these are the chief persons who presided over the works of Solomon; three thousand and six hundred masters of the people that wrought the works. ³⁵ⁱ And he built Assur, and Magdo, and Gazer, and upper Beth-Horon, and Baalath. ^{35k} Only after he had built the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about, afterwards he built these cities. ^{35l} And when David was yet alive, he charged Solomon, saying, “See, there is with you Semei the son of Gera, of the seed of Benjamin of Hebron.” ^{35m} He cursed me grievously on the day I went into the camp; ³⁵ⁿ and he came down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, saying, “He shall not be put to the sword. ^{35o} But now do not hold him guiltless; for, you are a wise man and know what you will do to him; and you will bring his grey hairs with blood to the grave.”

^{35g} Cf. 9:25

^{35h} Cf. 9:23, 5:30.

³⁵ⁱ Cf. 9:15–18.

^{35k} The text of this verse is unique to the LXX addition.

^{35l} Cf 2:8a.

^{35m} Cf 2:8.

³⁵ⁿ Cf. 2:8.

^{35o} Cf. 2:9.

לֹא וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּקְרָא לְשִׁמְעִי וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בְּנֵה-לָךְ
בַּיִת בִּירוּשָׁלַם וַיֵּשְׁבֶת שָׁם וְלֹא-תֵצֵא מִשָּׁם אָנָּה
וְאָנָּה: לֹא וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם צֵאתְךָ וְעִבְרַתְךָ אֶת-נַחַל קִדְרוֹן
יָדַע תִּדַּע כִּי מוֹת תָּמוּת דָּמְךָ יִהְיֶה בְּרֹאשְׁךָ:
לֹא וַיֹּאמֶר שִׁמְעִי לַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב הַדָּבָר כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה עַבְדְּךָ וַיֵּשֶׁב שִׁמְעִי בִירוּשָׁלַם
יָמִים רַבִּים: {ס}

לֹא וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים וַיִּבְרָחוּ שְׁנֵי-עַבְדָּיִם
לְשִׁמְעִי אֶל-אַכִּישׁ בֶּן-מַעַכָּה מֶלֶךְ גֹּת וַיִּגִּדּוּ
לְשִׁמְעִי לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עַבְדֶּיךָ בְּגֹת: מ וַיָּקָם שִׁמְעִי
וַיַּחְבֹּשׁ אֶת-חֲמֹרוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ גֹּתָה אֶל-אַכִּישׁ לְבַקֵּשׁ
אֶת-עַבְדָּיו וַיֵּלֶךְ שִׁמְעִי וַיָּבֵא אֶת-עַבְדָּיו מִגֹּת: {ס}
מֵא וַיֵּגֵד לְשִׁלְמָה בִּי-הֶלֶךְ שִׁמְעִי מִירוּשָׁלַם גֹּת
וַיֵּשֶׁב: מֵב וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּקְרָא לְשִׁמְעִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו
הֲלוֹא הִשְׁבַּעְתִּיךָ בַּיהוָה וְאָעֵד בְּךָ לֵאמֹר בַּיּוֹם
צֵאתְךָ וְהִלַּכְתָּ אָנָּה וְאָנָּה יָדַע תִּדַּע כִּי מוֹת תָּמוּת

³⁶ Next, the king sent for and summoned Shimei to him and he told him, “Build yourself a house in Jerusalem; you are to live there. Do not move anywhere else. ³⁷ For, on the day you go out and cross the Wadi Kidron, be sure that you will certainly die. Your blood will be on your own head.” ³⁸ Shimei answered the king, “Very well. Your servant will do as my lord the king orders.” Therefore, for a long time, Shimei lived in Jerusalem.

³⁹ However, when three years had gone by, it happened that two of Shimei’s slaves ran away to King Achish, son of Maacah of Gath; Shimei was told, “Your slaves are in Gath.” ⁴⁰ At this, Shimei set about saddling his donkey and went to Achish at Gath to find his slaves. Shimei went off and brought his slaves back from Gath.

⁴¹ When Solomon was informed that Shimei had left Jerusalem for Gath and had come back, ⁴² the king had Shimei summoned to him and said, “Did I not make you swear by Yahweh, and did I not solemnly warn you, saying: On the day that you go out to go anywhere else, know for

³⁶ On pain of death, Solomon orders Shimei to take up residence in Jerusalem and binds him with an oath. Having broken his oath (v. 40), Shimei is ‘justly’ executed. However, Solomon reveals (v. 44) that the real reason is the curse he once pronounced against David.

³⁷ The ‘Wadi Kidron’ marked the eastern boundary of the city.

³⁸ Literally translated, Shimei’s answer is, “Good is the word, as my master the king has spoken.”

³⁹ In place of ‘King Achish, son of Maacah of Gath’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath’.

⁴⁰ The NJB replaces the 2nd occurrence of the name ‘Shimei’ with the pronoun ‘he’; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

⁴¹ The NJB lacks the opening conjunction, ‘when’, here following the NRSV.

⁴² The literal translation of ‘anywhere else’ is ‘here or there’.

וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלַי טוֹב הַדְּבָר שְׁמַעְתִּי: מִגַּם וּמִדָּוִד לֹא
 שָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת שְׁבַעַת יְהוָה וְאֶת־הַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר־צִוִּיתִי
 עָלֶיךָ: מִדַּם וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־שְׁמַעִי אֵתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֵת
 כָּל־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר יָדַע לְבַבְךָ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ לְדָוִד אָבִי
 וְהָשִׁיב יְהוָה אֶת־רַעְתָּךְ בְּרֹאשְׁךָ: וְהַמֶּלֶךְ
 שָׁלַמָּה בְּרוּךְ וְכִסֵּא דָוִד יִהְיֶה נָכוֹן לִפְנֵי יְהוָה עַד־
 עוֹלָם: מוֹ וַיֵּצֵא הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־בְּנֵיהוּ בֶן־יְהוֹיָדָע וַיֵּצֵא
 וַיִּפְגַּע־בּוֹ וַיִּמָּת וְהַמַּמְלָכָה נָכוֹנָה בְּיַד־שָׁלֹמֹה:

certain that you shall die? ⁴³ Why, then, did you not keep your oath to Yahweh and the commandment with which I charged you? ⁴⁴ You know in your own heart all the evil you did to my father David,” the king went on. “Yahweh will bring your wickedness down on your own head. ⁴⁵ But may King Solomon be blessed and may the throne of David be kept secure before Yahweh forever.” ⁴⁶ Then the king gave orders to Benaiah son of Jehoiada; he went out and struck him down; and he died. Thus, the sovereignty was established in the hands of Solomon.

^{46a} Καὶ ἦν ὁ βασιλεὺς Σαλωμων φρόνιμος σφόδρα καὶ σοφός, καὶ
 Ιουδα καὶ Ἰσραηλ πολλοὶ σφόδρα ὡς ἡ ἄμμος ἡ ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης
 εἰς πληθός, ἐσθίωντες καὶ πίνοντες καὶ χαίροντες. ^{46b} καὶ Σαλωμων
 ἦν ἄρχων ἐν πάσαις ταῖς βασιλείαις, καὶ ἦσαν προσφέροντες δῶρα
 καὶ ἐδούλευον τῷ Σαλωμων πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ.
^{46c} καὶ Σαλωμων ἤρξατο διανοίγειν τὰ δυναστεύματα τοῦ Λιβάνου,
^{46d} καὶ αὐτὸς ὑποκόμνησεν τὴν Θερμαι ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ. ^{46e} καὶ τοῦτο τὸ
 ἄριστον τῷ Σαλωμων· τριάκοντα κόροι σεμιδάλεως καὶ ἐξήκοντα
 κόροι ἀλεύρου κεκοπανισμένου, δέκα μόσχοι ἐκλεκτοὶ καὶ εἴκοσι βόες

^{46a} And King Solomon had great understanding and was very wise; and the people of Judah and of Israel, numerous as the sand on the seashore, were eating, drinking, and making merry. ^{46b} And Solomon ruled over all the nations, and they were offering gifts to Solomon and they were serving him for all the days of his life. ^{46c} And Solomon began to build supply cities in Lebanon. ^{46d} And he built Thermai in the desert. ^{46e} And this was the total of what was provided for Solomon each day: thirty homers of fine flour and sixty measures of grain, ten fattened calves and twenty cows from the

⁴³ In place of ‘the commandment with which I charged you’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘the order I laid on you’.

⁴⁴ The NJB lacks the phrase ‘in your own heart’, here following the NRSV.

⁴⁵ As in v. 33, Solomon immediately adds a blessing, so that his curse may not recoil on himself.

⁴⁶ The NJB has ‘Shimei’ in place of ‘him’, here following the MT & NRSV.

^{46a} As in the earlier LXX addition, much of the content of vv. 46^a–46ⁱ is found elsewhere in the book.

^{46b} Cf. 5:1 & 46^k.

^{46c} Cf. 9:18. The word, *δυναστεύματα*, is a Hapax Legomenon in the LXX; here, we (conjecturally) translate as ‘supply cities’.

^{46d} Cf. 9:18.

^{46e} Cf. 4:22–23.

νομάδες καὶ ἑκατὸν πρόβατα ἐκτὸς ἐλάφων καὶ δορκάδων καὶ ὀρνίθων ἐκλεκτῶν νομάδων. ^{46f} ὅτι ἦν ἄρχων ἐν παντὶ πέραν τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἀπὸ Ραφι ἕως Γάζης, ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν πέραν τοῦ ποταμοῦ. ^{46g} καὶ ἦν αὐτῷ εἰρήνη ἐκ πάντων τῶν μερῶν αὐτοῦ κυκλόθεν, καὶ κατῴκει Ἰουδα καὶ Ἰσραηλ πεποιθότες, ἕκαστος ὑπὸ τὴν ἄμπελον αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑπὸ τὴν συκὴν αὐτοῦ, ἐσθίωντες καὶ πίνοντες, ἀπὸ Δαν καὶ ἕως Βηρσαβее πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας Σαλωμων. – ^{46h} καὶ οὗτοι οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ Σαλωμων· Ἀζαριον υἱὸς Σαδωκ τοῦ ἱερέως καὶ Ορνιου υἱὸς Ναθαν ἄρχων τῶν ἐφεστηκότων καὶ Εδραμ ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καὶ Σουβα γραμματεὺς καὶ Βασα υἱὸς Αχιθαλαμ ἀναμιμνήσκων καὶ Αβι υἱὸς Ἰωαβ ἀρχιστράτηγος καὶ Αχιρε υἱὸς Εδραι ἐπὶ τὰς ἄρσεις καὶ Βαναια υἱὸς Ἰωδαε ἐπὶ τῆς αὐλαρχίας καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ πλινθείου καὶ Ζαχουρ υἱὸς Ναθαν ὁ σύμβουλος. – ⁴⁶ⁱ καὶ ἦσαν τῷ Σαλωμων τεσσαράκοντα χιλιάδες τοκάδες ἵπποι εἰς ἄρματα καὶ δώδεκα χιλιάδες ἵππέων. ^{46k} καὶ ἦν ἄρχων ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ καὶ ἕως γῆς ἀλλοφύλων καὶ ἕως ὁρίων Αἰγύπτου. ^{46l} Σαλωμων υἱὸς Δαυιδ ἐβασίλευσεν ἐπὶ Ἰσραηλ καὶ Ἰουδα ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ.

pastures, and a hundred sheep, as well as deer and gazelles and fattened birds. ^{46f} For, he was the ruler of all the places beyond the River, from Raphi to Gazis, in all the kingdoms beyond the River. ^{46g} And he had peace in all his provinces round about; and the inhabitants of Judah and of Israel were secure, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, eating and drinking, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. ^{46h} And these are the chiefs of Solomon: Azariah the son of Zadok the priest, and Azariah the son of Nathan, the chief of the officers, and Ahishar was over his household and Shuba was the secretary, and Basa the son of Ahithalam, and Abi the son of Joab, the commander-in-chief, and Ahir the son of Edrai over the constructions, and Banaia the son of Jodae on the housekeeping and on the plinth, and Zahur the son of Nathan, the counsellor. ⁴⁶ⁱ And Solomon has eighty thousand chariot horses and twelve thousand cavalrymen. ^{46k} And he was ruler over all the kings, from the River to other nations up to the border with Egypt. ^{46l} Solomon the son of David reigned over Israel and Judah in Jerusalem.

^{46f} Cf. 5:4.

^{46g} Cf. 5:4–5.

^{46h} Cf. 4:2, 5–6. The LXX here reads *Ορνιου* for ‘Azariah’.

⁴⁶ⁱ Cf. 5:6.

^{46k} Cf. 5:1, 10:26.

^{46l} Cf. 4:1.

1 KINGS 3

מלכים א פרק ג

^א וַיִּתְּחַתֵּן שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־פַּרְעֹה מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וַיִּקַּח אֶת־בַּת־פַּרְעֹה וַיְבִיאָהּ אֶל־עִיר דָּוִד עַד כִּלְתּוֹ לִבְנוֹת אֶת־בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה וְאֶת־חוֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַם סָבִיב: ^ב רַק הָעָם מִזְבְּחִים בְּבָמוֹת כִּי לֹא־נִבְנָה בַּיִת לַשֵּׁם יְהוָה עַד הַיָּמִים הָהֵם: {פ}

^ג וַיֵּאָהֵב שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־יְהוָה לִלְכֹּת בְּחֻקֹּת דָּוִד אָבִיו רַק בְּבָמוֹת הוּא מִזְבֵּחַ וּמִקְטִיר: ^ד וַיֵּלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ גִּבְעֹנָה לִזְבֹּחַ שֵׁם כִּי־הָיָא הַבָּמָה הַגְּדוֹלָה אֵלֶּף עֲלוֹת יַעֲלֶה שְׁלֹמֹה עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַהוּא: ^ה בְּגִבְעֹן נִרְאָה יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁלֹמֹה בַּחֲלוֹם הַלַּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים שְׂאֵל מֶה אֶתְּנֶלֶךְ: ^ו וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלֹמֹה אַתָּה עֹשִׂיתָ עִם־עַבְדְּךָ דָּוִד אָבִי חֶסֶד גָּדוֹל כַּאֲשֶׁר הָלַךְ לִפְנֶיךָ בְּאַמֶּת וּבְצִדְקָה וּבִישֻׁרִית לִבָּב עִמָּךְ וַתִּשְׁמַר־לּוֹ אֶת־הַחֶסֶד הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה וַתִּתֵּן־לּוֹ בֶן

¹ Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt; he took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his palace and the Temple of Yahweh and the wall around Jerusalem. ² The people were still sacrificing on the high places, because no house had yet been built for the name of Yahweh.

³ Solomon loved Yahweh: he followed the precepts of David his father, except that he offered sacrifice and incense on the high places. ⁴ The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, since that was the greatest of the high places – Solomon would offer up a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon, Yahweh revealed himself in a dream to Solomon during the night; and God said, "Ask what you would like me to give you." ⁶ And Solomon replied, "You showed great and steadfast kindness to your servant David, my father, because he lived his life before you in faithfulness and righteousness and integrity of heart; and

1 KINGS 3

- ¹ 'Pharaoh' was probably Psusennisi, last king of the 21st dynasty. The 'City of David' was the part of Jerusalem that had been the old Jebusite town (see #2S 5:9).
- ² The 'high places' were places of worship that were naturally or artificially elevated.
- ³ Worship at the 'high places' was not outlawed until the time of Josiah (2K 23:8); Solomon did so at the 'principal high place', at Gibeon (v. 4).
- ⁴ The verb form translated 'would offer up' is an imperfect, which is probably used here in a customary sense to indicate continued or repeated action in past time.
- ⁵ Before the prophetic period, dreams were one of God's main channels of communication with humanity (Gn 20:3, 28, 31:11, 24, 37:5 & Nb 12:6).
- ⁶ The NJB omits the words 'and steadfast' (twice in this verse), here following the NRSV.

יָשַׁב עַל־כִּסֵּאֵוּ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ^ז וְעַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲתָהּ
הַמְּלִכָה אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ תַּחַת דָּוִד אָבִי וְאַנְכִי נָעַר קָטָן
לֹא אֲדַע צֶאֱת וּבֹא: ^ח וְעַבְדְּךָ בְּתוֹךְ עַמֶּךָ אֲשֶׁר
בַּחֲרַת עִם־רָב אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָמְנָה וְלֹא יִסְפֹּר מְרֹב:
^ט וְנָתַתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ לְשֹׁפֵט אֶת־עַמֶּךָ לְהִבִּין
בֵּין־טוֹב לְרָע כִּי מִי יוֹכֵל לְשֹׁפֵט אֶת־עַמֶּךָ הַכָּבֵד
הַזֶּה: ^י וַיִּטֵּב הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנָיִי כִּי שָׁאַל שְׁלֹמֹה
אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: ^{יא} וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֵלָיו יְעֹן אֲשֶׁר
שָׁאַלְתָּ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא־שָׁאַלְתָּ לְךָ יָמִים רַבִּים
וְלֹא־שָׁאַלְתָּ לְךָ עֹשֶׁר וְלֹא שָׁאַלְתָּ נַפְשׁ אִיבִיךָ
וְשָׁאַלְתָּ לְךָ הִבִּין לְשֹׁמֵעַ מִשְׁפָּט: ^{יב} הִנֵּה עֹשִׂיתִי
כְּדַבְרִיךָ הַנֶּה. נָתַתִּי לְךָ לֵב חָכָם וְנִבְּזוֹן אֲשֶׁר כְּמוֹךָ
לֹא־הָיָה לְפָנֶיךָ וְאַחֲרֶיךָ לֹא־יִקְוֶם כְּמוֹךָ: ^{יג} וְגַם
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁאַלְתָּ נָתַתִּי לְךָ גַּם־עֹשֶׁר גַּם־כְּבוֹד
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הָיָה כְּמוֹךָ אִישׁ בַּמְּלָכִים כָּל־יְמֶיךָ:

you have continued this great and steadfast kindness to him by allowing a son of his to sit on his throne today. ⁷ Now, Yahweh my God, you have made your servant king in succession to David my father, although I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership. ⁸ And your servant finds himself in the midst of your chosen people, a great people so numerous they cannot be counted or reckoned. ⁹ Give your servant therefore a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil, for who could govern this people of yours that is so great? ¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon should have asked for this. ¹¹ And Yahweh said, "Since you have asked for this, and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies, but have asked for a discerning judgement for yourself, ¹² here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd, as no one has had before and none will have after you. ¹³ What you have not asked I shall give you too; such riches and glory all your life as no other king ever had. ¹⁴ And I will give you a long life,

⁷ The expression, 'a very young man' (the NRSV has 'only a little child') denotes humility; Solomon was probably about 20 years old.

⁸ There is no verb expressed in the MT of the opening part of this verse: 'finds himself' is supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁹ Solomon asks for practical wisdom, not in his own interest, but in that of the nation (see #5:13 and #Ex 31:3).

¹⁰ The Hebrew term translated 'the Lord' here (and in v.15) is אֲדֹנָיִי.

¹¹ Literally translated, God's speech reads, "because you asked for this thing, and did not ask for yourself many days and did not ask for yourself riches and did not ask for the life of your enemies, but you asked for yourself understanding to hear judgment."

¹² This statement is introduced by the particle הִנֵּה, which draws attention to and emphasizes what follows.

¹³ The NJB, following the LXX, omits 'all your life'.

¹⁴ The literal translation of 'give you a long life' is 'lengthen your days'.

יָדְךָ וְאִם | תִּלְךָ בְּדַרְכֵי לְשֹׁמֵר חֻקִּי וּמִצְוֹתַי כַּאֲשֶׁר
הִלַּךְ דָּוִיד אָבִיךָ וְהָאֲרֻכָּתִי אֶת־יָמָיךְ: {ס}

טו וַיִּקַּץ שְׁלֹמֹה וְהִנֵּה חֲלוֹם וַיָּבֹא יְרוּשָׁלַם וַיַּעֲמֵד |
לִפְנֵי | אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־אֲדֹנָי וַיַּעַל עֹלוֹת וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלָמִים
וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֶּה לְכָל־עַבְדָּיו: {פ}

טז אִזּוֹ תָּבֹאנָה שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים זָנוֹת אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְתַעֲמִדְנָה לִפְנָיו: י' וְתֹאמַר הָאִשָּׁה הָאֶחָת בִּי אֲדֹנָי
אֲנִי וְהָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת יָשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית אֶחָד וְאֶלֶד עָמָה
בַּבַּיִת: י" וְהִיא בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לִלְדָתִי וְתֵלֵד גַּם־
הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת וְאֲנַחְנוּ יָחִידוּ אֵין־זֶר אֲתָנּוּ בַּבַּיִת
זֹלָתִי שְׁתֵּי־אֲנַחְנוּ בַּבַּיִת: י" וַיָּמָת בֶּן־הָאִשָּׁה
הַזֹּאת לַיְלָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְבָה עָלָיו: כ' וְתִקֶּם בְּתוֹךְ
הַלַּיְלָה וְתִקַּח אֶת־בְּנִי מֵאֶצְלִי וְאִמָּתִי יִשְׁנָה
וְתִשְׁכַּיְבֶהּ בְּחִיקָה וְאֶת־בָּנָה הַמָּת הַשְּׁכִיבָה
בְּחִיקִי: כא וְאִקֶּם בְּבֹקֶר לְהִינִיק אֶת־בְּנִי וְהִנֵּה־מָת
וְאֶתְּבוֹנֵן אֵלָיו בְּבֹקֶר וְהִנֵּה לֹא־הָיָה בְּנִי אֲשֶׁר

if you follow my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as
your father David followed them.”

¹⁵ Then Solomon awoke; it was a dream. He returned to Jerusalem and
stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; he offered burnt and
peace offerings and held a banquet for all his servants.

¹⁶ Then two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. ¹⁷ One
woman said, “Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house,
and while she was in the house I gave birth. ¹⁸ Then on the third day
after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. We were alone together;
there was no one else in the house with us: just the two of us in the
house. ¹⁹ Now one night this woman’s son died because she lay on him.
²⁰ In the middle of the night, she got up and took my son from beside
me while your servant slept; she put him to her breast and put her dead
son to mine. ²¹ When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he
was, dead. But, in the morning, I looked at him closely and he was not
the child I had borne.” ²² But the other woman said, “No! My son is the

¹⁵ See 2S 6:17-18.

¹⁶ The story of vv. 16-28 is the most famous of all those of Solomon’s wisdom.

¹⁷ At the end of this verse, the NJB adds ‘to a child’ (as also in v. 18).

¹⁸ In other words, there was no other witness to the births who could identify which child belonged to which mother.

¹⁹ The NJB omits the word ‘because’.

²⁰ In place of ‘to her breast’, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘in her arms’.

²¹ The NJB, following the LXX, omits ‘in the morning’.

²² In place of the opening ‘no’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘that is not true’.

יִלְדָּתִי: כִּי וְתֹאמַר הָאִשָּׁה הָאַחֲרָת לֹא כִי בְנִי הַחַי
וּבְנֶךָ הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אִמֶּרְתָּ לֹא כִי בְנֶךָ הַמֵּת וּבְנִי
הַחַי וְתִדְבְּרָנָה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: כִּי וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ זֹאת
אִמֶּרְתָּ זֶה־בְנִי הַחַי וּבְנֶךָ הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אִמֶּרְתָּ לֹא כִי
בְנֶךָ הַמֵּת וּבְנִי הַחַי: {פ}

כִּד וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ קָחוּ לִי־חֶרֶב וַיָּבֹאוּ הַחֶרֶב לִפְנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ: כִּה וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ גְּזְרוּ אֶת־הַיֵּלֶד הַחַי
לְשֵׁנַיִם וְתָנוּ אֶת־הַחֲצִי לְאַחַת וְאֶת־הַחֲצִי לְאַחַת:
כִּו וְתֹאמַר הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר־בָּנָה הַחַי אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי־
נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמֶיהָ עַל־בָּנָהּ וְתֹאמַר | בִּי אֲדֹנִי תִּנּוּלָהּ
אֶת־הַיֵּלֶד הַחַי וְהַמֵּת אֶל־תִּמְיתָהוּ וְזֹאת אִמֶּרְתָּ
גַּם־לִי גַם־לְךָ לֹא יִהְיֶה גְזָרוֹ: כִּז וַיֵּעַן הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר
תִּנּוּלָהּ אֶת־הַיֵּלֶד הַחַי וְהַמֵּת לֹא תִמְיתָהוּ הִיא
אִמּוֹ: {ס} כִּח וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ כָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַמִּשְׁפָּט
אֲשֶׁר שָׁפַט הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֵּרְאוּ מִפְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי רָאוּ כִי־
חֲכָמָת אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבּוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט: {ס}

live one, yours is the dead one;" and the first retorted, "No! Your son is the dead one, mine is the live one." Thus, they wrangled before the king.

²³ "This one says:" the king observed, "'My son is the one who is alive; your son is dead," while the other says, "Not so! Your son is the dead one, mine is the live one."

²⁴ Bring me a sword," said the king; and they brought a sword before the king. ²⁵ "Cut the living child in two," the king said, "and give half to one, half to the other."

²⁶ At this, the woman who was the mother of the living child addressed the king, for she burned with pity for her son. "If it please you, my lord," she said, "let them give her the child; only do not let them think of killing him!" The other said, "He shall belong to neither of us. Cut him up." ²⁷ Then the king gave his decision. "Give the child to the first woman," he said, "and do not kill him. She is his mother."

²⁸ All Israel came to hear of the judgement the king had pronounced, and held the king in awe, recognising that he possessed divine wisdom for dispensing justice.

²³ Solomon here merely recapitulates the argument before passing judgement.

²⁴ In place of 'before the king', here following the MT, NRSV & NETB, the NJB has 'into the king's presence'.

²⁵ The NRSV has 'divide' in place of 'cut', here following the NJB.

²⁶ In the phrase, 'do not let them think of killing him', the infinitive absolute before the negated jussive emphasises the main verb.

²⁷ Solomon's wisdom is thus demonstrated, and word quickly spreads throughout the country (v. 28).

²⁸ Throughout the ancient East, the first of all royal qualities was fair government. For Israel, see Ps 72:1-2, Pr 16:12, 25:5, 29:14, Is 9:6). Solomon asked for this quality (v. 9), God granted it (vv. 11-12), and the story of vv. 16-28 shows it in action.

1 KINGS 4

מלכים א פרק ד

- ^א וַיְהִי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מֶלֶךְ עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל: {ס} ¹ King Solomon was king over all Israel,
- ^ב וְאֵלֶּה הַשָּׂרִים אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ ² and these were his high officials:
- ^ג עֲזַרְיָהוּ בֶן-צָדוֹק הַכֹּהֵן: {ס} Azariah son of Zadok was the priest.
- ^ד אֶלִּיהוֹרֶפֶת וְאַחִיָּה בְנֵי שִׁישָׁה סֹפְרִים {ס} ³ Elihoreph and Ahijah, sons of Shisha, were secretaries.
- ^ה יְהוֹשָׁפָט בֶּן-אֲחִילוּד הַמִּזְכִּיר: {ס} Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder.
- ^ו וּבְנֵיָהוּ בֶן-יְהוֹיָדָע עַל-הַצָּבָא {ס} ⁴ Benaiah son of Jehoiada was commander of the army;
- ^ז וְצָדוֹק וְאַבְיָתָר כֹּהֲנִים: {ס} Zadok and Abiathar were priests.
- ^ח וְעֲזַרְיָהוּ בֶן-נָתָן עַל-הַנְּצָבִים {ס} ⁵ Azariah son of Nathan was chief administrator;
- ^ט וְזָבֻד בֶּן-נָתָן כֹּהֵן רֵעֵה הַמֶּלֶךְ: {ס} Zabud son of Nathan was priest and Friend of the King.
- ^י וְאַחִישָׁר עַל-הַבַּיִת {ס} ⁶ Ahishar was master of the palace;
- ^{יא} וְאַדְנִירָם בֶּן-עֲבָדָא עַל-הַמָּס: {ס} Adoniram son of Abda was in charge of forced labour.
- ^{יב} וְלִשְׁלֹמֹה שְׁנֵים-עָשָׂר נָצָבִים עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל ⁷ Solomon had twelve administrators for the whole of Israel who saw to the provisioning of the king and his household; each had to provide for one month in the year.
- ^{יג} וְכָל-כֹּלְלוֹ אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶת-בֵּיתוֹ חֹדֶשׁ בַּשָּׁנָה יִהְיֶה ⁷ Solomon had twelve administrators for the whole of Israel who saw to the provisioning of the king and his household; each had to provide for one month in the year.
- ^{יד} עַל-הָאֶחָד אֶחָד לְכָל-כֹּל: {ס}

1 KINGS 4

- ¹ The phrase 'all Israel' is here used to distinguish the United Monarchy from the 2 separate monarchies of Israel and Judah.
- ² 'Azariah son of Zadok' was probably not 'the priest'; that honour belonged to (another?) 'Zadok' (2:35) alone, Abiathar (v. 4) having been deposed (2:27). The (High) Priest, chief representative of the priestly class, ranked with the royal officials.
- ³ The NJB uses the name 'Elihaph' in place of 'Elihoreph'.
- ⁴ This verse is parenthesised in the NJB, which dismisses it as a gloss (the 2nd part of which contradicts v. 2 and 2:26ff).
- ⁵ The NJB, following some LXX MSS, omits the words 'priest and'. The title, 'Friend of the King', was one of honour rather than jurisdiction.
- ⁶ The 'master of the palace' was the prime minister. The NJB, following the LXX (?), inserts a 2nd line: "Eliab son of Joab was commander of the army," (*καὶ Ἐλιαβ υἱὸς Σαφ ἐπὶ τῆς πατρῴας*) and, in the last line, uses the name 'Adoram' in place of 'Adoniram'.
- ⁷ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

ח	וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹתֵם בְּנֵי־חֹר בְּהַר אֶפְרַיִם: {ס}	8	Their names: Son of Hur, in the mountain country of Ephraim;
ט	בֶּן־דֶּקֶר בְּמַקַּז וּבְשַׁעֲלָבִים וּבֵית שֶׁמֶשׁ	9	Son of Deker, in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-Shemesh
	וְאֵילֹן בֵּית חָנוֹן: {ס}		and Elon-Beth-Hanan;
י	בֶּן־חֶסֶד בְּאַרְבּוֹת	10	Son of Hesed, in Arubboth;
	לֹו שֹׁכָה וְכָל־אֶרֶץ חֶפֶר: {ס}		his district was Socoh and all the land of Hephher;
יא	בֶּן־אֲבִינָדָב כָּל־נֶפֶת דָּאֹר	11	Son of Abinadab: the whole region of Dor;
	טַפַּת בַּת־שְׁלֹמֹה הָיְתָה לֹו לְאִשָּׁה: {ס}		Taphath, Solomon's daughter, was his wife.
יב	בָּעֲנָא בֶּן־אֲחִילוּד תַּעֲנָךְ וּמִגִּדּוֹ וְכָל־בֵּית שָׁאֵן	12	Baana son of Ahilud, in Taanach and Megiddo as far as the other side
	אֲשֶׁר אֶצֶל צִרְתָּנָה מִתַּחַת לִיזְרְעֵאל מִבֵּית שָׁאֵן		of Jokmeam, and all Beth-Shean below Jezreel, from Beth-Shean as far
	עַד אֲבֵל מְחֹלָה עַד מַעְבֵּר לִיקְמָעַם: {ס}		as Abel-Meholah, which is beside Zarethan.
יג	בֶּן־גֵּבֶר בְּרַמֹּת גִּלְעָד לֹו חֹת יֶאִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה	13	Son of Geber, in Ramoth-Gilead: his district was the Encampments of
	אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלְעָד לֹו חֶבֶל אֲרָגָב אֲשֶׁר בְּבָשָׁן שְׁשִׁים		Jair, son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead; he had the region of Argob,
	עָרִים גְּדֻלוֹת חֹמָה וּבְרִיחַ נְחֹשֶׁת: {ס}		which is in Bashan, sixty fortified towns, with walls and bronze bars.
יד	אֲחִינָדָב בֶּן־עֲדָא מַחְנֵימָה: {ס}	14	Ahinadab son of Iddo, in Mahanaim;
טו	אֲחִימָעַז בְּנַפְתָּלִי גַם־הוּא לָקַח	15	Ahimaaz in Naphtali; he too married
	אֶת־בִּשְׁמַת בַּת־שְׁלֹמֹה לְאִשָּׁה: {ס}		a daughter of Solomon, Basemath.

⁸ This document was damaged at the edges; this explains why, for the first administrators, only their fathers' names are preserved.

⁹ The place name, 'Makaz' is an emendation.

¹⁰ The NRSV places the 2nd line in parentheses.

¹¹ The NRSV & NETB parenthesise the 2nd line.

¹² The translation of this verse follows the NJB, which corrects the confused geographical order of the MT; the NRSV reads, "Baana son of Ahilud, in Taanach, Megiddo, and all Beth-Shean, which is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, and from Beth-Shean to Abel-Meholah, as far as the other side of Jokmeam."

¹³ The NJB has 'bolts' in place of 'bars', here following the NRSV.

¹⁴ Throughout this list, NETB adds 'charge of' between the word 'in' and the place names.

¹⁵ The NRSV & NETB parenthesise the 2nd part of this verse.

טז בַּעֲנָא בֶן־חוּשִׁי בְּאֶשֶׁר וּבְעֵלוֹת: {ס}

יז יְהוֹשָׁפָט בֶּן־פְּרוּחַ בִּישָׁשָׁכָר: {ס}

יח שִׁמְעִי בֶן־אֵלָא בְּבִנְיָמִן: {ס}

יט גִּבֵּר בֶּן־אֲרִי בְּאֶרֶץ גִּלְעָד אֶרֶץ סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ
הָאֱמֹרִי וְעַל מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן וְנָצִיב אֶחָד אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ:
כ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל רַבִּים כְּחֹל אֲשֶׁר־עַל־הַיָּם לְרַב
אֲכָלִים וְשָׁתִים וְשִׂמְחִים:

¹⁶ Baana son of Hushai, in Asher and in Bealoth;

¹⁷ Jehoshaphat son of Paruah, in Issachar;

¹⁸ Shimei son of Ela, in Benjamin;

¹⁹ Geber son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the land of King Sihon of the Amorites, and of King Og of Bashan. In addition, there was one governor in the country. ²⁰ Judah and Israel were like the sand by the sea for number; they ate, and drank, and lived happily.

¹⁶ The *NJB*, possibly following the *LXX* (τῆς Μαιαλαῖ), has 'the highlands' in place of 'Bealoth'.

¹⁷ The *LXX* misplaces this verse, adding it after v. 19.

¹⁸ This is v. 17 in the *LXX* (see #17).

¹⁹ The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, has 'Gad' in place of 'Gilead'.

²⁰ The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, transposes this verse to after 5:5; the order of the text used herein follows that of the *MT* & *NRSV*.

מלכים א פרק ה

א וְשֹׁלֹמֹה הָיָה מוֹשֵׁל בְּכָל־הַמַּמְלָכוֹת מִן־הַנָּהָר
אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְעַד גְּבוּל מִצְרַיִם מִגָּשִׁים מִנְחָה
וְעַבְדִּים אֶת־שֹׁלֹמֹה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּיו: {פ}

ב וַיְהִי לֶחֶם־שֹׁלֹמֹה לְיוֹם אֶחָד שְׁלֹשִׁים כֹּר סֵלֶת
וְשֵׁשִׁים כֹּר קֶמַח: ג עֲשָׂרָה בָקָר בְּרָאִים וְעֹשְׂרִים
בָּקָר רְעִי וּמֵאָה צֹאן לְבָד מְאִיל וְצִבִּי וַיְחַמְּמוּ
וּבְרִבְרִים אַבּוּסִים: ד כִּי־הָיָה רִדְהָן בְּכָל־עֵבֶר
הַנָּהָר מִתַּפְסָח וְעַד־עֲזָה בְּכָל־מַלְכֵי עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר
וְשָׁלוֹם הָיָה לוֹ מִכָּל־עֵבְרָיו מִסְבִּיב: ה וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוּדָה
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְבֶטֶח אִישׁ תַּחַת גִּפְנוֹ וְתַחַת תְּאֵנָתוֹ מִדָּן
וְעַד־בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע כָּל יְמֵי שֹׁלֹמֹה: {ס} וַיְהִי לְשֹׁלֹמֹה
אַרְבָּעִים אֲלָף אֲרוֹת סוּסִים לְמָרְכָבוֹ וּשְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר

1 KINGS 5

¹ Solomon extended his power over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines and the Egyptian border. They brought tribute and served him all his long life.

² The daily provisions for Solomon were: thirty kors of fine flour and sixty kors of meal, ³ ten fattened oxen, twenty free-grazing oxen, one hundred sheep, besides deer and gazelles, roebucks, and fattened birds.

⁴ For he had dominion over all Transeuphrates – of all the kings of Transeuphrates from Tiphseh to Gaza – and he enjoyed peace on all his frontiers. ⁵ Judah and Israel lived in security, each man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheba, throughout the lifetime of Solomon. ⁶ For his chariots, Solomon had forty thousand stalls or

horses and twelve thousand cavalrymen. ⁷ These administrators

1 KINGS 5

¹ This verse is included as 4:21 in the NRSV, which follows the numbering scheme of the LXX; the numbers used herein follow those of the MT. The 'River' is the Euphrates (see v. 24).

² As a unit of dry measure, a 'kor' (the WEBBE has 'cors') was roughly equivalent to 6 bushels.

³ The NJB has 'cuckoos' in place of 'birds', but the exact species referred to is uncertain.

⁴ 'Transeuphrates' was the official title for the area between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean during the Persian period, when the verse was added. (The NRSV uses 'west of the Euphrates'.) The remainder of the paragraph is late and missing from the LXX.

⁵ Literally, this verse reads, "Judah and Israel lived securely, each under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon."

⁶ The NJB, following 2Ch 9:25 has 'four thousand stalls'; here, the text follows the NRSV. These stalls may have been similar to those of the time of Ahab, found in the excavations at Megiddo.

⁷ The NJB, following the LXX, transposes vv. 7–8, which appear immediately after 4:19. The order used herein follows that of the MT.

אֶלֶף פְּרָשִׁים: ^ז וְכָל־כָּלֹו הַנֶּצְבִּים הָאֵלֶּה אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ
שְׁלֹמֹה וְאֵת כָּל־הַקָּרֵב אֶל־שִׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ־שְׁלֹמֹה
אִישׁ חֲדָשׁוֹ לֹא יַעֲדֵרוּ דָבָר: ^ח וְהַשְּׁעָרִים וְהַתְּבֹן
לְסוּסִים וְלָרֶכֶשׁ יָבֹאוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה־שָׁם
אִישׁ כַּמִּשְׁפָּטוֹ: {ס}

^ט וַיֵּתֶן אֱלֹהִים חֲכָמָה לְשְׁלֹמֹה וְתְבוּנָה הִרְבֵּה מְאֹד
וְרָחֵב לֵב כַּחֲלוֹל אֲשֶׁר עַל־שֹׁפֶת הַיָּם: ^י וַתֵּרֶב
חֲכָמַת שְׁלֹמֹה מִחֲכָמַת כָּל־בְּנֵי־קֶדֶם וּמִכָּל חֲכָמַת
מִצְרַיִם: ^{יא} וַיְחַכֵּם מִכָּל־הָאָדָם מֵאִיתָן הָאֶזְרָחִי
וְהַיִּמִּן וְכָל־כָּל וְדָדַע בְּנֵי מַחֲוֹל וַיְהִי־שְׁמוֹ בְּכָל־
הַגּוֹיִם סָבִיב: ^{יב} וַיִּדְבֹּר שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים מָשָׁל וַיְהִי
שִׁירוֹ חֲמִשָּׁה וָאֶלֶף: ^{יג} וַיִּדְבֹּר עַל־הָעֵצִים מִן־הָאֶרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְנוֹן וְעַד הָאֲזוֹב אֲשֶׁר יֵעָא בְּקִיר וַיִּדְבֹּר
עַל־הַבְּהֵמָה וְעַל־הָעוֹף וְעַל־הָרֶמֶשׂ וְעַל־הַדְּגָיִם:
^{יד} וַיָּבֹאוּ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים לִשְׁמֹעַ אֵת חֲכָמַת שְׁלֹמֹה

provided the food for Solomon and for all those who came to the royal table, each for the period of a month; they saw to it that nothing was wanting. ⁸ They also provided the barley and straw for the horses and draught animals, where required, each according to his own assignment.

⁹ Yahweh gave Solomon immense wisdom and understanding, and a heart as vast as the sand on the seashore. ¹⁰ The wisdom of Solomon surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt. ¹¹ He was wiser than any other, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, wiser than the sons of Mahol, Heman, Calcol and Darda; his fame spread throughout all the surrounding nations. ¹² He composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five. ¹³ He could talk about plants from the cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop growing on the wall; and he could talk of animals, and birds, and reptiles, and fish. ¹⁴ Men from all nations came to hear Solomon's

⁸ Literally, this verse reads, "barley and straw for the horses and the steeds they brought to the place which was there, each according to his measure."

⁹ The term translated 'heart' often refers to mental faculties (as here).

¹⁰ Egypt and 'the East' were famed for their sages.

¹¹ 'Ethan the Ezrahite' was the author of Ps 89.

¹² With regard to the attribution of songs to Solomon, compare Ps 72, 127 and Sg 1:1. The number 'a thousand and five' suggests "The Thousand and One Nights" of Arabic literature or the number of Solomon's wives and concubines (11:3).

¹³ Solomon is the first of the 'sages of Israel'. That he engaged in literary and poetic activity there is no doubt (see 8:12-13), and part of Proverbs may derive from him. Ps 72 & 127, Qo, Sg and Ws all bear his name.

¹⁴ In place of 'he received gifts', the NRSV has 'they came'.

מֵאֵת כָּל־מְלָכֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר שָׁמְעוּ אֶת־
חִכְמָתוֹ: {ס}

טו וַיִּשְׁלַח חִירָם מֶלֶךְ־צֹר אֶת־עֲבָדָיו אֶל־שְׁלֹמֹה בִּי
שִׁמְעֵי בִּי אֲתוּ מִשְׁחוּ לְמֶלֶךְ תַּחַת אֲבִיהוּ בִּי אֱהִי
הֵיאָה חִירָם לְדוֹד כָּל־הַיָּמִים: {ס}

טז וַיִּשְׁלַח שְׁלֹמֹה אֶל־חִירָם לֵאמֹר: "אֲתָה יָדַעְתָּ
אֶת־דָּוִד אָבִי בִּי לֹא יָכֹל לְבַנּוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה
אֱלֹהָיו מִפְּנֵי הַמִּלְחָמָה אֲשֶׁר סָבְבוּ עַד תַּת־יְהוָה
אֲתָם תַּחַת כַּפּוֹת רַגְלֹי רַגְלִי: "יְיָ וְעַתָּה הִנֵּחַ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי לִי מִסְבִּיב אֵין שָׁטָן וְאֵין פֶּגַע רָע: "ט וְהִנֵּנִי
אֹמֵר לְבַנּוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
יְהוָה אֶל־דָּוִד אָבִי לֵאמֹר בְּנֵךְ אֲשֶׁר אֶתֶּן תַּחְתִּיךָ
עַל־כִּסְאֶךָ הוּא־יִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת לְשְׁמִי: כ וְעַתָּה צִוָּה
וַיְכַרְתּוּ־לִי אֲרָזִים מִן־הַלְּבָנוֹן וְעַבְדֵי יְהוָה עִם־

wisdom, and he received gifts from all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.

¹⁵ Hiram the king of Tyre sent an embassy to Solomon, having learnt that he had been anointed king in succession to his father and because Hiram had always been a friend of David.

¹⁶ And Solomon sent a message to Hiram, saying ¹⁷ "You are aware that David my father was unable to build a temple for the name of Yahweh, his God, because his enemies waged war on him from all sides, until Yahweh should put them under the soles of his feet. ¹⁸ Now, Yahweh my God has given me rest on every side: not one enemy, no misfortune.

¹⁹ I therefore plan to build a temple for the name of Yahweh my God, just as Yahweh said to David my father, "Your son whom I will place on your throne to succeed you shall be the man to build a temple for my name." ²⁰ So now have cedars of Lebanon cut down for me; my servants

¹⁵ This verse is numbered 5:1 in the NRSV (see #1); all subsequent verse numbers therein are appropriately decreased. On the friendship of King Hiram of Tyre to David, see 2S 5:11–12.

¹⁶ The NJB lacks the word 'saying', which could be considered redundant in contemporary English.

¹⁷ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation. The Tg and Vg (*pedum ejus*) have 'my feet' in place of 'his feet'.

¹⁸ The NJB has 'calamities' in place of 'misfortune', here following the NRSV.

¹⁹ The word 'name' sometimes refers to one's reputation or honour; the 'name of Yahweh' sometimes designates Yahweh himself, being indistinguishable from the proper name.

²⁰ The 'Sidonians' were the Phoenicians as a whole. From their two chief cities, Tyre and Sidon, they carried on a vast maritime enterprise, two of their chief articles of commerce being cedar wood and purple dye. About a century after the time of Solomon, they established their most famous colony, Carthage, in North Africa.

עֲבָדֶיךָ וְשֹׁכְרֵי עֲבָדֶיךָ אֶתֶּן לָךְ כָּל־אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר
כִּי אֶתָּה יֹדַעְתָּ כִּי אֵין בָּנוּ אִישׁ יָדַע לַכְרֶת-עֵצִים
כַּצִּדְּנִים: ^{כא} וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַע חִירָם אֶת-דִּבְרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה
וַיִּשְׂמַח מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן
לְדָוִד בֶּן חָכִם עַל-הָעַם הָרָב הַזֶּה: ^{כב} וַיִּשְׁלַח חִירָם
אֶל-שְׁלֹמֹה לֵאמֹר שְׁמַעְתִּי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַחְתָּ אֵלַי
אֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת-כָּל-חֲפָצְךָ בַּעֲצֵי אֲרָזִים וּבַעֲצֵי
בְּרוֹשִׁים: ^{כג} עֲבָדֶי יֵרְדוּ מִן-הַלְּבָנוֹן יָמָּה וְאֲנִי
אֲשִׁימָם דְּבָרוֹת בָּיִם עַד-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-תִּשְׁלַח אֵלַי
וְנִפְצָתִים שָׁם וְאֶתָּה תִּשָּׂא וְאֶתָּה תַעֲשֶׂה אֶת-
חֲפָצִי לָתֵת לֶחֶם בֵּיתִי: ^{כד} וַיְהִי חִירוֹם נֹתֵן לְשְׁלֹמֹה
עֲצֵי אֲרָזִים וְעֲצֵי בְּרוֹשִׁים כָּל-חֲפָצָיו: ^{כה} וּשְׁלֹמֹה נָתַן
לְחִירָם עֶשְׂרִים אֲלָף כָּר חֲטִיִּם מִכֹּלֶת לְבֵיתוֹ
וְעֶשְׂרִים כָּר שֶׁמֶן כָּתִית כֹּה-יִתֵּן שְׁלֹמֹה לְחִירָם
שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה: {פ}

^{כו} וַיְהִי וְנָתַן חֲכֵמָה לְשְׁלֹמֹה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר-לּוֹ וַיְהִי
שָׁלֵם בֵּין חִירָם וּבֵין שְׁלֹמֹה וַיִּכְרְתוּ בְרִית שְׁנֵיהֶם:

will work with your servants, and I will pay for the hire of your servants at whatever rate you fix. As you know, we have no one as skilled in felling trees as the Sidonians.” ²¹ When Hiram heard what Solomon had said, he was delighted. “So blessed be Yahweh,” he said, “who has given David a wise son to rule over this great people!” ²² And Hiram sent word to Solomon, saying, “I have received your message. For my part, I will supply all you want in the way of cedar wood and cypress timber. ²³ Your servants will bring this down from Lebanon to the sea; I shall make it into rafts to go by sea to any place you name; I shall discharge it there, and you will take it over. For your part, you will see to the provisioning of my household as I direct. ²⁴ So, Hiram provided Solomon with all the cedar wood and cypress timber he wanted, ²⁵ while Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand kors of wheat to feed his household, and twenty kors of pure oil. Solomon gave Hiram this every year.

²⁶ Yahweh gave Solomon wisdom as he had promised him; there was peace between Solomon and Hiram, and the two of them made a treaty.

²¹ ‘Hiram’ was king of Tyre and Sidon.

²² In place of ‘cypress timber’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘juniper’.

²³ Hiram may mean he would send the wood by raft, or that he would tie it into in raft-like bundles and have ships tow them to an Israelite port.

²⁴ In place of ‘cypress timber’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘juniper’.

²⁵ The NJB, following 2Ch 2:9, has ‘twenty thousand kors of pure oil’; 20,000 kors of liquid would be over four million litres.

²⁶ The NJB has ‘good relations’ in place of ‘peace’, here following the NRSV.

כז וַיַּעַל הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מִס מְכַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהִי הַמָּס
שְׁלָשִׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ: כח וַיִּשְׁלַחם לְבָנוֹנָה עֲשָׂרַת
אַלְפִים בַּחֹדֶשׁ חֲלִיפוֹת חֹדֶשׁ יִהְיוּ בַלְבָּנוֹן שְׁנַיִם
חֳדָשִׁים בְּבֵיתוֹ וְאַדְנִירָם עַל־הַמָּס: {ס}

כט וַיְהִי לְשְׁלֹמֹה שְׁבַעִים אֶלֶף נָשָׂא סִבָּל וּשְׁמָנִים
אֶלֶף חֲצֵב בָּהָר: ל לִבְד מְשָׁרֵי הַנֹּצְבִים לְשְׁלֹמֹה
אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמְּלָאכָה שְׁלֹשֶׁת אַלְפִים וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת
הָרֹדִים בָּעָם הָעֹשִׂים בַּמְּלָאכָה: {ס}

לא וַיֵּצֵאוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּסְעוּ אַבְנִים גְּדֹלוֹת אַבְנִים יְקָרוֹת
לִיסֹד הַבַּיִת אַבְנֵי גִזִּית: לב וַיִּפְסְלוּ בְנֵי שְׁלֹמֹה וּבְנֵי
חִירֹם וְהַגְּבָלִים וַיְכִינוּ הָעֵצִים וְהָאֲבָנִים לְבִנוֹת
הַבַּיִת: {פ}

²⁷ King Solomon raised a levy throughout Israel for forced labour: the levy numbered thirty thousand men. ²⁸ He sent these to Lebanon in relays, ten thousand a month; they spent one month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the forced labour.

²⁹ Solomon also had seventy thousand porters and eighty thousand stone cutters in the mountains, ³⁰ as well as the administrators' officials who supervised the work, three thousand three hundred of them in charge of the men employed in the work.

³¹ At the king's orders they quarried huge stones, special stones, for laying the temple foundations: dressed stones. ³² Solomon's workmen and Hiram's workmen, and the Gebalites, cut and assembled the wood and stone for the building of the Temple.

²⁷ Vv. 27–32 are additions. One of the causes of the later disruption of the kingdom was forced labour (12:4).

²⁸ The NJB has 'Adoram' in place of 'Adoniram', here following the MT & NRSV.

²⁹ The NJB has 'quarrymen' in place of 'stone cutters', here following the NRSV.

³⁰ The LXX has 'three thousand six hundred' (τρὲς χιλιάδες καὶ ἑξακόσιοι) in place of 'three thousand three hundred' (cf. 2Ch 2:2).

³¹ An alternative translation for 'dressed' is 'chiselled'.

³² The NJB uses 'Giblites' in place of 'Gebalites' (workmen from Gebal – the Greek Byblos – to the north of Beirut).

מלכים א פרק ו

^א וַיְהִי בַשְּׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה וָאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה לֵצֵאת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ־מִצְרַיִם בַּשָּׁנָה הָרְבִיעִית בַּחֹדֶשׁ זֶה הוּא הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּבֶן הַבַּיִת לַיהוָה: ^ב וְהַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה לַיהוָה שְׁשִׁים־אַמָּה אָרְכוֹ וְעֶשְׂרִים רָחְבוֹ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה קוֹמָתוֹ: ^ג וְהָאוֹלָם עַל־פְּנֵי הַיֵּכָל הַבַּיִת עֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה אָרְכוֹ עַל־פְּנֵי רֹחַב הַבַּיִת עֲשָׂר בְּאַמָּה רָחְבוֹ עַל־פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת: ^ד וַיַּעַשׂ לַבַּיִת חֲלוֹנֵי שְׁקָפִים אֲטוּמִים: ^ה וַיִּבֶן עַל־קִיר הַבַּיִת יִצְוֹעַ יִצְעַל סָבִיב אֶת־קִירוֹת הַבַּיִת סָבִיב לַהֵיכָל וּלְדָבִיר וַיַּעַשׂ צִלְעוֹת סָבִיב: ^ו הַיִּצְוֹעַ הַיִּצְעַל הִתְחַתְּנָה חֲמֵשׁ בְּאַמָּה רָחְבָּהּ וְהִתִּיכְנָה שֵׁשׁ בְּאַמָּה רָחְבָּהּ וְהַשְּׁלִישִׁית שִׁבְעַת בְּאַמָּה רָחְבָּהּ כִּי

1 KINGS 6

¹ In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the temple of Yahweh. ² The Temple that King Solomon built for Yahweh was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. ³ The portico in front of the nave of the Temple was twenty cubits long across the width of the Temple and ten cubits wide along the length of the Temple. ⁴ He made windows for the Temple with frames and latticework. ⁵ He also built an annexe against the Temple wall, running around the walls of the house, both the nave and the inner Sanctuary, and made side chambers all around. ⁶ The lowest storey was five cubits wide, the middle one six cubits and the third one seven cubits, for, round the Temple on the outside he placed offsets so that the beams

1 KINGS 6

- ¹ This was, in fact, April-May 966 BCE; the chronological system used is one by which the Tabernacle, Solomon's Temple, and the post-Exilic Temple were equidistant in time – the date for the Exodus in this system (1440 BCE) is now considered too early.
- ² The Temple was an oblong building consisting of three successive compartments: the 'portico', the great chamber for worship, later called the 'Holy Place', and the 'Sanctuary', later called the 'Holy of Holies', containing the Ark of the Covenant (v. 19).
- ³ The NRSV uses 'vestibule' for 'portico', here following the NJB, and NETB has 'porch'.
- ⁴ For this verse, the NRSV reads: "For the house he made windows with recessed frames." The sense of the Hebrew is uncertain, as with other technical terms in vv. 5–10.
- ⁵ The NJB, following the LXX, omits 'the walls of the house, both'. In place of יִצְעַל, here following the Qere, the Kethib has יִצְוֹעַ.
- ⁶ The MT has 'structure' in place of 'storey', here following the LXX (πλευρά). The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

מִגִּרְעוֹת נָתַן לְבֵית סָבִיב חוּצָה לְבִלְתִּי אַחֲזוּ
בְּקִירוֹת־הַבַּיִת: ^ז וְהַבַּיִת בְּהִבְנָתוֹ אֲבָן־שְׁלֵמָה מִסֵּעַ
נִבְנָה וּמִקְבּוֹת וְהִגְרוֹן כָּל־כְּלִי בְרִזָּל לֹא־נִשְׁמַע
בְּבֵית בְּהִבְנָתוֹ: ^ח פֶּתַח הַצֶּלַע הַתִּיכְנָה אֶל־כַּתֵּף
הַבַּיִת הַיְמָנִית וּבָלוּלִים יַעֲלוּ עַל־הַתִּיכְנָה וּמִן־
הַתִּיכְנָה אֶל־הַשְּׁלֵשִׁים: ^ט וַיִּבֶן אֶת־הַבַּיִת וַיְכַלֶּהוּ
וַיִּסָּפֶן אֶת־הַבַּיִת גָּבִים וּשְׁדָרֶת בְּאַרְזִים: ^י וַיִּבֶן אֶת־
הַיְצִיעַ הַיְצוּעַ עַל־כָּל־הַבַּיִת חֲמֵשׁ אַמּוֹת קוֹמָתוֹ
וַיַּאֲחֲזוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת בַּעֲצֵי אֲרָזִים: {פ}

^{יא} וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁלֹמֹה לֵאמֹר: ^{יב} הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה
אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בֹנֶה אֶסְתַּלֵּךְ בְּחֻקָּתַי וְאֶת־מִשְׁפָּטַי
תַּעֲשֶׂה וּשְׁמַרְתָּ אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי לִלְכֹת בָּהֶם
וְהִקְמַתִי אֶת־דְּבָרִי אִתָּךְ אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל־דָּוִד
אָבִיךָ: ^{יג} וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא אֶעָזֵב אֶת־
עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

were not inserted in the Temple walls. ⁷ The building of the Temple was done with stone finished at the quarry, so that no sound of hammer, pick or any iron tool was heard in the Temple while it was being built. ⁸ The entrance to the lower story of side rooms was on the south side of the Temple, and access to the middle story was by winding stairs, and so from the middle story to the third. ⁹ He built the Temple, completed it, and roofed it with rafters and planks of cedar. ¹⁰ He built the annex on to the whole length of the Temple, five cubits high and attached to the Temple by beams of cedar.

¹¹ Now the word of Yahweh came to Solomon, ¹² "Concerning this house you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my ordinances and faithfully keep all my commandments by walking in them, I will fulfil that promise I made about you to your father David. ¹³ I will make my home among the sons of Israel, and never forsake Israel my people."

⁷ This verse is parenthesised in *NJB*: there is no reason to doubt that the stone was finished at the quarry, though the writer has probably exaggerated the silence of the building operations.

⁸ The *MT* (and *NRSV*) has 'middle' in place of 'lower', but the remainder of the verse suggests this is an error. The word translated 'winding stairs' (following the *NRSV*) occurs only here; other options are 'trapdoors' (as *NJB*) and 'ladders'.

⁹ The word translated 'rafters' occurs only here; the precise meaning is uncertain.

¹⁰ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹¹ The *LXX* lacks vv. 11-14.

¹² Literally translated, this verse ends, "I will establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father."

¹³ In place of 'make my home', here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* has 'dwell'.

י^ד וַיִּבֶן שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־הַבַּיִת וַיְכַלֶּהוּ: טו וַיִּבֶן אֶת־קִירוֹת הַבַּיִת מִבֵּיתָהּ בַּצִּלְעוֹת אֲרָזִים מִקְרָקֶה הַבַּיִת עַד־קִירוֹת הַסָּפֶן צִפָּה עֵץ מִבַּיִת וַיֵּצֵף אֶת־קְרָקֶה הַבַּיִת בַּצִּלְעוֹת בְּרוֹשִׁים: טז וַיִּבֶן אֶת־עֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה מִירְכוּתִי מִירְכַּתִּי הַבַּיִת בַּצִּלְעוֹת אֲרָזִים מִן־הַקְרָקֶה עַד־הַקִּירוֹת וַיִּבֶן לוֹ מִבַּיִת לְדָבִיר לְקֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדָשִׁים: יז וְאַרְבַּעִים בָּאֻמָּה הָיָה הַבַּיִת הוּא הַהֵיכָל לִפְנֵי: יח וְאַרְזוֹ אֶל־הַבַּיִת פְּנִימָה מִקְלַעַת פָּקְעִים וּפְטוּרֵי צָצִים הָכֹל אֲרָז אֵין אֵבֶן נִרְאָה: יט וַדְּבִיר בְּתוֹךְ־הַבַּיִת מִפְּנִימָה הָכִין לְתֵתָן שָׁם אֶת־אֲרוֹן בְּרִית יְהוָה: כ וּלְפָנַי הַדְּבִיר עֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה אֶרֶץ וְעֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה רָחֵב וְעֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה קוֹמָתוֹ וַיֵּצְפֶהוּ זָהָב סָגוֹר וַיֵּצֵף מִזְבַּח אֲרָז: כא וַיֵּצֵף שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־הַבַּיִת מִפְּנִימָה זָהָב סָגוֹר וַיַּעֲבֹר בְּרֵתִיקוֹת בְּרֵתִיקוֹת זָהָב לְפָנַי הַדְּבִיר וַיֵּצְפֶהוּ זָהָב: כב וְאֶת־

¹⁴ So, Solomon built the Temple and completed it. ¹⁵ He lined the inside of the Temple walls with panels of cedar wood – panelling them on the inside from the floor of the Temple to the rafters in the roof – and laid the floor of the Temple with boards of cypress. ¹⁶ The twenty cubits measured from the end of the Temple be built of cedar plank from the floor to the rafters, and he built this part within as the Inner Sanctuary, the Holy of Holies. ¹⁷ The Temple – that is the nave, in front of the Inner Sanctuary – was forty cubits long. ¹⁸ There was cedar wood round the inside of the Temple, ornamentally carved with gourds and flowers in bloom; all was cedar wood, with no stone showing. ¹⁹ In the innermost part of the Temple, he designed the Inner Sanctuary, to contain the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh. ²⁰ The Sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide and twenty high; he plated it on the inside with pure gold. He made an altar of cedar wood ²¹ in front of the Sanctuary and plated it with gold. ²² He plated the whole Temple with gold, so that the

¹⁴ Throughout this section, the literal translation of 'Temple' is 'house'.

¹⁵ For 'rafters' (קורות), the MT reads קירות ('walls'), as also in v. 16.

¹⁶ The *Kethib/Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁷ Throughout this description of the Temple, the *NJB* lacks the word 'Inner' before 'Sanctuary'; here, we follow the *NRSV*.

¹⁸ The *NJB* has 'rosettes' in place of 'flowers in bloom', here following *NETB*.

¹⁹ The *NJB* has simply 'inner' in place of 'innermost', here following the *NRSV*.

²⁰ The 'altar of cedar wood' was the altar of incense (see #Ex 30:1).

²¹ The MT has some extra words at the start of this verse but the sense is unclear. The *Kethib/Qere* difference would benefit from an explanation.

²² From 'so that', the *NJB*, following the *LXX* (ἕως συντελείας παντὸς τοῦ οἴκου), ends the verse with, "the whole Temple entirely."

כָּל־הַבַּיִת צִפָּה זָהָב עַד־תֵּם כָּל־הַבַּיִת וְכָל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
אֲשֶׁר־לְדָבִיר צִפָּה זָהָב:

כג וַיַּעַשׂ בַּדָּבִיר שְׁנֵי כְרוּבִים עֲצֵי־שֵׁמֶן עֵשׂר אַמּוֹת
קוֹמָתוֹ: כד וְחֲמֵשׁ אַמּוֹת כַּנֹּף הַכְּרוּב הָאֶחָת וְחֲמֵשׁ
אַמּוֹת כַּנֹּף הַכְּרוּב הַשֵּׁנִית עֵשׂר אַמּוֹת מִקְצוֹת
כִּנְפָיו וְעַד־קְצוֹת כִּנְפָיו: כה וְעֵשׂר בְּאַמָּה הַכְּרוּב
הַשֵּׁנִי מִדָּה אֶחָת וְקָצֵב אֶחָד לְשְׁנֵי הַכְּרָבִים:
כו קוֹמַת הַכְּרוּב הָאֶחָד עֵשׂר בְּאַמָּה וְכֵן הַכְּרוּב
הַשֵּׁנִי: כז וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הַכְּרוּבִים בְּתוֹךְ הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי
וַיִּפְרְשׂוּ אֶת־כִּנְפֵי הַכְּרָבִים וַתִּגַּע כַּנֹּף־הָאֶחָד
בְּקִיר וְכַנֹּף הַכְּרוּב הַשֵּׁנִי נִגְעַת בְּקִיר הַשֵּׁנִי
וְכַנְפֵיהֶם אֶל־תּוֹךְ הַבַּיִת נִגְעַת כַּנֹּף אֶל־כַּנֹּף:
כח וַיִּצָּף אֶת־הַכְּרוּבִים זָהָב: כט וְאֵת כָּל־קִירוֹת
הַבַּיִת מִסָּבִיל קָלַע פְּתוּחֵי מְקִלְעוֹת כְּרוּבִים וְתַמָּרֹת
וּפְטוּרֵי צִצִּים מִלְּפָנִים וְלַחֲצִצּוֹן: ל וְאֶת־קִרְקַע
הַבַּיִת צִפָּה זָהָב לְפָנֶיהָ וְלַחֲצִצּוֹן:

whole Temple might be perfect, and he plated the whole altar of the Sanctuary with gold.

²³ In the Inner Sanctuary, he made two cherubim of wild olive wood, each ten cubits high. ²⁴ Five cubits was the length of one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the length of the other wing of the cherub: it was ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. ²⁵ The second cherub also measured ten cubits; both cherubim had the same measurements and the same shape. ²⁶ The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was that of the other cherub. ²⁷ He placed the cherubim in the middle of the inner chamber; their wings were spread out so that the wing of one touched one of the walls and the wing of the other touched the other wall, while their wings met in the middle of the chamber, wing to wing. ²⁸ He also plated the cherubim with gold. ²⁹ All round the Temple walls he carved figures of cherubim, palm trees and rosettes, both inside and outside. ³⁰ He plated the floor of the Temple with gold, both inside and outside.

²³ The NRSV & NETB lack the word 'wild', here following the NJB. The 'cherubim' were high, winged, angelic beings.

²⁴ The NJB shortens the opening (here following the MT & NRSV), reading, "One cherub's wing was five cubits long and the other wing five cubits."

²⁵ The literal translation of 'the same' (twice in this verse) is 'one'.

²⁶ In the light of v. 25, the latter part of this verse seems redundant.

²⁷ Literally translated, this verse ends, "and their wings were in the middle of the room, touching wing to wing."

²⁸ The NJB lacks 'also', here following the NRSV.

²⁹ Here, 'inside' means the Sanctuary and 'outside' means the nave.

³⁰ Here, 'inside and outside' probably refers to the inner and outer rooms within the building.

^{לא} וְאֵת פֶּתַח הַדְּבִיר עָשָׂה דִלְתוֹת עֲצֵי־שֹׁמֶן הָאֵיל
מְזֻזוֹת חֲמִשִּׁית: ^{לב} וְשְׁתֵּי דִלְתוֹת עֲצֵי־שֹׁמֶן וְקָלַע
עֲלֵיהֶם מְקֻלְעוֹת כְּרוּבִים וְתַמְרֹת וּפְטוּרֵי צָצִים
וְצִפָּה זָהָב וַיִּרְדּוּ עַל־הַכְּרוּבִים וְעַל־הַתַּמְרוֹת אֶת־
הַזָּהָב: ^{לג} וְכֵן עָשָׂה לַפֶּתַח הַהֵיכָל מְזֻזוֹת עֲצֵי־שֹׁמֶן
מֵאֵת רַבְעִית: ^{לד} וְשְׁתֵּי דִלְתוֹת עֲצֵי בְרוֹשִׁים שְׁנֵי
צָלְעִים הַדֶּלֶת הָאֶחָת גְּלִילִים וְשְׁנֵי קָלְעִים הַדֶּלֶת
הַשֵּׁנִית גְּלִילִים: ^{לה} וְקָלַע כְּרוּבִים וְתַמְרוֹת וּפְטוּרֵי
צָצִים וְצִפָּה זָהָב מִיָּשָׁר עַל־הַמַּחֲקָה: ^{לו} וַיִּבֶן אֶת־
הַחֲצָר הַפְּנִימִית שְׁלֹשָׁה טוּרֵי גִזִּית וְטוֹר כֶּרֶת
אַרְצִים: ^{לז} בַּשָּׁנָה הָרְבִיעִית יָסַד בֵּית יְהוָה בִּירַח זוֹ:
^{לח} וּבַשָּׁנָה הָאֶחָת עָשְׂרָה בִּירַח בּוֹל הוּא הַחֹדֶשׁ
הַשְּׁמִינִי כָּלָה הַבֵּית לְכָל־דְּבָרָיו וּלְכָל־מִשְׁפָּטוֹ
וַיִּבְנֶהוּ שִׁבְעַ שָׁנִים:

³¹ He made the door of the Sanctuary with uprights of olive wood, and five-sided doorposts, ³² and the two leaves of olive wood. He carved figures of cherubim, palm trees and flowers in bloom, which he plated with gold; he put a gold surface on the cherubim and palm trees. ³³ Similarly, he made uprights of olive wood for the door of the nave, and four-sided doorposts, ³⁴ and the two leaves of cypress: one leaf had two ribs binding it, and the other had two ribs binding it. ³⁵ He carved cherubim, palm trees and flowers in bloom, which he overlaid with gold evenly applied over the carvings. ³⁶ He built the wall of the inner court in three courses of dressed stone and one course of cedar beams. ³⁷ In the fourth year, in the month of Ziv, the foundations of the Temple were laid; ³⁸ in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul – that is, the eighth month – the Temple was completed exactly as it had been planned and designed. Solomon took seven years to build it.

³¹ The meaning of the Hebrew, here translated as 'five-sided doorposts' is uncertain; the descriptive text of vv. 31–36 is hard to understand and seems to have been corrected.

³² In place of 'flowers in bloom', here following NETB, the NJB has 'rosettes'.

³³ The meaning of the Hebrew, here translated as 'four-sided doorposts' is uncertain.

³⁴ The NJB has 'juniper' in place of 'cypress', here following the NRSV.

³⁵ In place of 'flowers in bloom', here following NETB, the NJB has 'rosettes'.

³⁶ The 'inner court' refers to the Temple court itself, as distinct from the 'Great Court' (7:12), surrounding the Temple and palace.

³⁷ The date is April-May 962 BCE;

³⁸ The month of 'Bul' was in the autumn (October–November).

1 KINGS 7

מלכים א פרק ז

א וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ בָּנָה שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וַיִּכַּל
אֶת־כָּל־בֵּיתוֹ: ב וַיִּבֶן אֶת־בֵּית יְעַר הַלְבָּנוֹן מֵאָה
אַמָּה אָרְכוֹ וְחֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה רָחְבוֹ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה
קוֹמָתוֹ עַל אַרְבַּעַת טוֹרֵי עַמּוּדֵי אֲרָזִים וְכִרְתּוֹת
אֲרָזִים עַל־הָעַמּוּדִים: ג וְסָפֵן בְּאֶרֶז מִמַּעַל עַל־
הַצְּלֻעוֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־הָעַמּוּדִים אַרְבַּעִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה
חֲמִשָּׁה עֶשֶׂר הַטּוֹר: ד וּשְׁקָפִים שְׁלֹשָׁה טוֹרִים
וּמַחְזָה אֶל־מַחְזָה שְׁלֹשׁ פַּעַמִּים: ה וְכָל־הַפִּתְחִים
וְהַמְּזוּזוֹת רַבְעִים שְׁקָף וּמוֹל מַחְזָה אֶל־מַחְזָה
שְׁלֹשׁ פַּעַמִּים: ו וְאֵת אוֹלָם הָעַמּוּדִים עָשָׂה
חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה אָרְכוֹ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה רָחְבוֹ וְאוֹלָם
עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם וְעַמּוּדִים וְעַב עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם: ז וְאוֹלָם

¹ As regards his palace, Solomon spent thirteen years on it before building the palace was finished. ² He built the House of the Forest of Lebanon, a hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, on four rows of cedar wood pillars, with cedar capitals on the pillars. ³ The upper part was panelled with cedar right down to the tie beams on forty-five pillars, fifteen in each row. ⁴ There were window frames in the three rows, facing each other in the three rows. ⁵ All the doors and all the uprights were of rectangular design, facing one another from three sides. ⁶ He made the Hall of Pillars, fifty cubits long and thirty cubits wide. There was a porch in front with pillars, and a canopy in front of them. ⁷ He also made the Hall of the Throne where he used to dispense justice, that is, the Hall of Justice; it was panelled in cedar wood

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- ¹ The description of Solomon's palace is confined to the public rooms. The buildings lay to the south of the Temple area. The palace and administrative complex took thirteen years to build, the Temple only seven (6:38); compare 9:10.
- ² The 'House of the Forest of Lebanon' was a great, pillared hall; the columns were of cedar. It served as a guardroom (see 10:17, 21) and as an antechamber for audience with the king. A cubit is the length from the tip of the middle finger to the elbow on a man's arm, or about 46 cm.
- ³ There is inconsistency here: possibly, the numbers should be transposed to v. 4, but the sense of vv. 4–5 is itself in doubt.
- ⁴ The meaning of 'facing each other' is uncertain; another option might be 'overhung', which might mean they were positioned high on the walls.
- ⁵ 'Rectangular' here means not arched.
- ⁶ The end of the verse is doubtful; the NJB uses 'cornice' in place of 'canopy'; the precise meaning of the term is uncertain: it occurs only here and in Ezk 41:25–26.
- ⁷ The phrase 'floor to rafters' follows the Peshitta and NJB; the MT (and NRSV) has 'floor to floor'; the 2nd occurrence of the term הַקֶּרְקַע ('the floor') is probably an error and could be emended to הַקּוֹרוֹת ('the rafters').

הַכֶּסֶּא אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁפֹּט־שָׁם אֶלֶם הַמִּשְׁפָּט עָשָׂה וְסָפוֹן
בָּאָרְז מֵהַקֶּרֶקַע עַד־הַקֶּרֶקַע: ^ח וּבֵיתוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יֵשֵׁב
שָׁם חָצֵר הָאֲחֵרֶת מִבֵּית לְאוֹלָם כַּמַּעֲשֶׂה הַזֶּה הִיָּה
וּבֵית יַעֲשֶׂה לְבֵת־פָּרְעָה אֲשֶׁר לָקַח שְׁלֹמֹה כְּאוֹלָם
הַזֶּה: ^ט כָּל־אֵלֶּה אֲבָנִים יִקְרָת כַּמְדֹּת גְּזִית
מִגִּרְרוֹת בַּמִּגְרָה מִבֵּית וּמִחוּץ וּמִמַּסָּד עַד־
הַטַּפְחוֹת וּמִחוּץ עַד־הַחֹצֵר הַגְּדוֹלָה: ^י וּמִיֶּסֶד
אֲבָנִים יִקְרָת אֲבָנִים גְּדֵלוֹת אֲבָנִי עֶשֶׂר אַמּוֹת
וְאֲבָנֵי שְׁמֹנֶה אַמּוֹת: ^{יא} וּמִלְמַעְלֶה אֲבָנִים יִקְרָת
כַּמְדֹּת גְּזִית וְאָרְז: ^{יב} וְחָצֵר הַגְּדוֹלָה סָבִיב שְׁלֹשָׁה
טוּרִים גְּזִית וְטוּר כְּרֶתֶת אֲרָזִים וְלַחֲצֵר בֵּית־יְהוָה
הַפְּנִימִית וּלְאֶלֶם הַבֵּית: {פ}

^{יג} וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה וַיִּקַּח אֶת־חִירָם מִצֹּר:
^{יד} בֶּן־אִשָּׁה אֲלֻמָּנָה הוּא מִמַּטֵּה נַפְתָּלִי וְאָבִיו אִישׁ־
צֹרִי חָרָשׁ נְחֹשֶׁת וַיְמַלֵּא אֶת־הַחֲכָמָה וְאֶת־
הַתְּבוּנָה וְאֶת־הַדַּעַת לַעֲשׂוֹת כָּל־מְלָאכָה בְּנִחָשֶׁת

from floor to rafters. ⁸ His own living quarters, in the other court and inwards from the Hall, were of the same construction. There was also a house similar to this hall for the daughter of Pharaoh whom he had taken in marriage. ⁹ All these buildings were of special stones cut according to measure, trimmed on the inner and outer sides with the saw, right from the foundations to the wood course, and from outside the great court. ¹⁰ Their foundations were of special stones, huge stones, stones of ten and eight cubits. ¹¹ Above these were valuable stones, cut to measure, and cedar wood. ¹² On the outside, the great court had three courses of dressed stone round it and one course of cedar beams; so also had the inner court of the Temple of Yahweh and the vestibule of the Temple.

¹³ And King Solomon sent for and received Hiram out of Tyre; ¹⁴ he was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali but his father had become a Tyrian, an artisan in bronze. He was a highly intelligent craftsman who was skilled in all aspects of working with bronze. And he came to King

⁸ Literally translated, this verse ends, "and a house he was making for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this porch."

⁹ The NJB omits, 'and from outside the great court', dismissing it as a doublet of part of v. 12.

¹⁰ It is unclear exactly what dimensions are being specified here; if both numbers refer to the length of the stones, then perhaps stones of two different sizes were used in some alternating pattern.

¹¹ In place of 'valuable', here following NETB, the NJB has 'special' and the NRSV has 'costly'.

¹² Another possible translation for 'vestibule of the Temple' is 'hall of the palace'.

¹³ The artisan 'Hiram from Tyre' is not to be confused with the king of the same name; compare 2Ch 2:13, where the name is given as 'Hiram-Abi'.

¹⁴ Literally translated, the 2nd sentence opens, "He was filled with the skill, understanding, and knowledge."

וַיָּבֹא אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת-כָּל-מְלָאכָתּוֹ:
^{טו} וַיֵּצֵר אֶת-שְׁנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים נְחֹשֶׁת שְׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂר
אֲמָה קוֹמַת הָעַמֻּד הָאֶחָד וְחוֹט שְׁתֵּים-עָשָׂר
אֲמָה יָסֹב אֶת-הָעַמֻּד הַשֵּׁנִי: ^{טז} וְשְׁתֵּי כְתָרֹת עָשָׂה
לָתֵת עַל-רָאשֵׁי הָעַמֻּדִים מִצֶּק נְחֹשֶׁת חֲמֵשׁ
אֲמֹת קוֹמַת הַכְּתָרֹת הָאֵחָת וְחֲמֵשׁ אֲמֹת קוֹמַת
הַכְּתָרֹת הַשֵּׁנִית: ^{יז} שְׁבָכִים מַעֲשֶׂה שְׁבָכָה גְּדִלִים
מַעֲשֶׂה שְׂרָשְׁרוֹת לַכְּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל-רָאשׁ
הָעַמֻּדִים שְׁבַע לַכְּתָרֹת הָאֵחָת וְשְׁבַע לַכְּתָרֹת
הַשֵּׁנִית: ^{יח} וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת-הָעַמֻּדִים וּשְׁנֵי טוֹרִים סָבִיב
עַל-הַשְּׁבָכָה הָאֵחָת לְכֶסֶף אֶת-הַכְּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר
עַל-רָאשׁ הָרַמְנִים וְכֵן עָשָׂה לַכְּתָרֹת הַשֵּׁנִית:
^{יט} וְכְתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל-רָאשׁ הָעַמֻּדִים מַעֲשֶׂה שׁוֹשַׁן
בְּאוֹלָם אַרְבַּע אֲמֹת: ^כ וְכְתָרֹת עַל-שְׁנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים
גַּם-מִמַּעַל מְלֻעֲמַת הַבֶּטֶן אֲשֶׁר לְעֵבֶר שְׁבָכָה

Solomon and did all this work for him: ¹⁵ He fashioned the two pillars of bronze; the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits and a cord twelve cubits long gave the measurement of its girth; and a cord of twelve cubits encircled the second pillar. ¹⁶ He also made two capitals of molten bronze, to set on the tops of the pillars; the height of one capital was five cubits and the height of the other capital was five cubits. ¹⁷ He also made nets of checker work with wreaths of chain work for the capitals, which were on the tops of the pillars, a set of seven for one capital and a set of seven for the other capital. ¹⁸ And he made the columns with two rows around each latticework to cover the capitals that were above the pomegranates; he did the same with the other capital. ¹⁹ Now the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars in the vestibule were of lily-work, four cubits high. ²⁰ And there were also capitals on the two pillars and also above the rounded projection that was beside the latticework; there were two hundred pomegranates in rows all around; and so it was

¹⁵ These two columns stood in front of the porch of the Temple, one on each side of the entrance. The *NSRV* and *NJB* end the verse with a conjectural translation, “so also was the second pillar,” (compare Jr 52:21).

¹⁶ *NETB* abbreviates the end of this verse, avoiding the repetition: “the height of each capital...”

¹⁷ The text of vv. 17–20 is disordered and in places corrupt; the restoration is conjectural. The *NJB* opens this verse, here following the *NRSV*, with, “He made two sets of filigree to cover the moulding of the two capitals surmounting the pillars.”

¹⁸ For this verse, here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* reads, “He also made pomegranates: two rows of them round each filigree.”

¹⁹ The *NJB* splits this verse in two, with v. 19^a here: “four hundred in all” and 19^b: “The capitals surmounting the pillars were flower-shaped.” Here, we follow the *NRSV*.

²⁰ The meaning of the word translated ‘rounded projection’ is uncertain. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

הַשְּׁבֵכָה וְהַרְמוֹנִים מֵאֲתִיל טָרִים סָבִיב עַל
הַכְּתָרֶת הַשְּׁנִיָּת: ^{כא} וַיִּקֶּם אֶת־הָעַמֻּדִים לְאֵלֶם
הַהֵיכָל וַיִּקֶּם אֶת־הָעַמֻּד הַיָּמָנִי וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ
יָכִין וַיִּקֶּם אֶת־הָעַמֻּד הַשְּׂמָאלִי וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ
בֹּאֵז: ^{כב} וְעַל רֹאשׁ הָעַמֻּדִים מַעֲשֵׂה שׁוֹשַׁן וְתָתֵם
מִלֵּאכֶת הָעַמֻּדִים: ^{כג} וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־הַיָּם מוֹצֵק עֶשֶׂר
בָּאַמָּה מִשְׁפָּתוֹ עַד־שְׁפָתוֹ עָגֹל סָבִיב וְחֲמֵשׁ
בָּאַמָּה קוֹמָתוֹ וְקוֹה וְקוֹ שְׁלֹשִׁים בָּאַמָּה יָסֵב אֹתוֹ
סָבִיב: ^{כד} וּפָקְעִים מִתַּחַת לְשִׁפָּתוֹ סָבִיב סָבָיִם
אֹתוֹ עֶשֶׂר בָּאַמָּה מְקַפִּים אֶת־הַיָּם סָבִיב שְׁנֵי
טוֹרִים הַפָּקְעִים יֵצְקִים בִּיצָקָתוֹ: ^{כה} עֹמֵד עַל־שְׁנֵי
עֶשֶׂר בָּקָר שְׁלֹשָׁה פָּנִים | צְפוֹנָה וְשְׁלֹשָׁה פָּנִים |
יָמָה וְשְׁלֹשָׁה | פָּנִים נֹגְבָה וְשְׁלֹשָׁה פָּנִים מִזְרָחָה
וְהַיָּם עֲלֵיהֶם מְלֻמָּעָה וְכָל־אַחֲרֵיהֶם בֵּיתָה:

also with the other capital. ²¹ He set up the pillars in front of the vestibule of the sanctuary; he set up the pillar on the south and gave it the name, 'Jachin'; and he set up the pillar on the north and gave it the name, 'Boaz'. ²² And, on the tops of the pillars was lily-work. So, the work on the pillars was completed. ²³ Then he made the Sea of cast metal; it was ten cubits from rim to rim, circular in shape and the height of it was five cubits; a cord thirty cubits long gave the measurement of its girth. ²⁴ And under its rim and completely encircling it were gourd-shaped ornaments; they went round the Sea over a length of ten cubits; the gourd-shaped ornaments were in two rows, of the same casting with the rest. ²⁵ It rested on twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; on these stood the Sea. The hind quarters of each were towards the inside. ²⁶ It was a hand's breadth in thickness,

²¹ The names 'Jachin' and 'Boaz' are obscure, possibly meaning 'it is firm' and 'it is strong'; a footnote to the NRSV gives possible meanings as 'God establishes' and 'He comes with power' respectively. The pillars themselves doubtless had a symbolic significance (e.g. 'Trees of Life'), which now eludes us. On their role at ceremonial occasions, see 2K 11:14, 23:3.

²² The NJB omits the first sentence, here following the MT & NRSV.

²³ The 'Sea' was large basin mounted on 12 bronze bulls (v. 25) that contained water for the priests to bathe themselves (2Ch 4:6, cf. Ex 30:17-21). The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁴ The NJB has a conjectural translation, 'thirty', in place of 'ten' (cf. the 'girth' mentioned in v. 23).

²⁵ The 'twelve oxen' were actually couchant bulls, symbols of power and fertility in many religions of the ancient Near East. Their arrangement according to the four points of the compass suggested universal dominion.

²⁶ A 'bat' was 45 litres.

כ^ו וְעִבְיוֹ טֶפַח וְשִׁפְתּוֹ כְּמַעֲשֵׂה שִׁפְת־כּוֹס פָּרַח
שׁוֹשֵׁן אֲלָפִים בֵּת יָכִיל: {פ}

כ^ז וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־הַמְּכֻנּוֹת עֹשֶׂר נְחֹשֶׁת אַרְבַּע בָּאֲמָה
אַרְדָּ הַמְּכֻנָּה הָאֶחָת וְאַרְבַּע בָּאֲמָה רָחְבָּהּ וּשְׁלֹשׁ
בָּאֲמָה קוֹמָתָהּ: כ^ח וְזֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַמְּכֻנָּה מְסַגֵּרֹת
לָהֶם וּמְסַגֵּרֹת בֵּין הַשְּׁלָבִים: כ^ט וְעַל־הַמְּסַגֵּרֹת
אֲשֶׁר | בֵּין הַשְּׁלָבִים אֲרִיּוֹת | בָּקָר וְכְרוּבִים וְעַל־
הַשְּׁלָבִים בֵּן מִמַּעַל וּמִתַּחַת לְאֲרִיּוֹת וּלְבָקָר לִיּוֹת
מַעֲשֵׂה מוֹרָד: ל וְאַרְבַּעָה אוֹפְנֵי נְחֹשֶׁת לַמְּכֻנָּה
הָאֶחָת וּסְרָנֵי נְחֹשֶׁת וְאַרְבַּעָה פַּעֲמָתָיו כְּתִפֹּת
לָהֶם מִתַּחַת לְכִיר הַכְּתָפוֹת יִצְקוֹת מִעֲבֹר אִישׁ
לִיּוֹת: ל^א וּפִיהוּ מִבֵּית לַכְּתֹרֶת וּמַעְלָה בָּאֲמָה וּפִיהָ
עָגֹל מַעֲשֵׂה־כֵן אֲמָה וַחֲצִי הָאֲמָה וְגַם־עַל־פִּיהָ
מְקַלְעוֹת וּמְסַגֵּרֹתֵיהֶם מְרַבְּעוֹת לֹא עֲגֻלוֹת:
ל^ב וְאַרְבַּעַת הָאוֹפְנִים לְמִתַּחַת לַמְּסַגֵּרֹת וִידוֹת
הָאוֹפְנִים בַּמְּכֻנָּה וְקוֹמַת הָאוֹפֵן הָאֶחָד אֲמָה וַחֲצִי

and its rim was shaped like the rim of a cup, like the flower of a lily. It held two thousand bats.

²⁷ He also made ten moveable stands of bronze; each stand was four cubits in length, four cubits in width, and three cubits in height. ²⁸ This was the construction of the stands: they had an undercarriage and crosspieces to the undercarriage. ²⁹ On the crosspieces to the undercarriage were lions, bulls, and cherubim. On the crosspieces, both above and below the lions and bulls, there were wreaths of bevelled work. ³⁰ Each stand had four bronze wheels with bronze axles; at the four corners were supports for a basin. The supports were cast with wreaths at the side of each. ³¹ Its mouth was within the crown, which measured one and a half cubits from where the supports met to the top; its mouth was round like a rest for a vessel and, on the mouth, there were engravings too; the crosspieces, however, were rectangular and not round. ³² The four wheels were underneath the crosspieces. The axles of the wheels were inside the stands, and the height of each wheel

²⁷ The stands were cuboids surmounted by a rounded support to hold the bowl. The text of vv. 27–39 is corrupt and difficult to interpret.

²⁸ The NJB has ‘design’ in place of ‘construction’, here following the NRSV.

²⁹ In place of ‘wreaths of bevelled work’ (NRSV), the NJB has ‘scrolls in the style of...’ and notes that the last words of the MT are unintelligible: a possible literal translation would be ‘wreaths, the work of descent’.

³⁰ The NJB lacks, ‘with wreaths at the side of each’, ending the verse with an ellipsis.

³¹ The NJB lacks ‘was within the crown, which’, here following the NRSV.

³² In place of ‘each wheel’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘the wheels’.

הָאֹמָה: ^{לג} וּמַעֲשֵׂה הָאוֹפָנִים כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה אוֹפֵן
הַמֵּרְכָבָה יְדוּתָם וְגִבֵּיהֶם וְחֻשְׁקֵיהֶם וְחֻשְׁרֵיהֶם
הַכֹּל מוֹצֵק: ^{לד} וְאַרְבַּע כְּתָפוֹת אֶל אַרְבַּע פְּנוֹת
הַמִּכְנָה הָאֶחָת מִן־הַמִּכְנָה כְּתֻפִּיהָ: ^{לה} וּבִרְאֵשׁ
הַמִּכְנָה חֲצִי הָאֹמָה קוֹמָה עָגֹל סָבִיב וְעַל רֹאשׁ
הַמִּכְנָה יְדוּתֶיהָ וּמִסְגֵּרֹתֶיהָ מִמֶּנָּה: ^{לו} וַיַּפְתַּח עַל־
הַלְחָת יְדוּתֶיהָ וְעַל־ וּמִסְגֵּרֹתֶיהָ מִסְגֵּרֹתֶיהָ כְּרוּבִים
אַרְיֹת וְתַמְרֹת כַּמַּעֲרָאִישׁ וְלִיּוֹת סָבִיב: ^{לז} כִּזְאֹת
עָשָׂה אֶת עֵשֶׂר הַמִּכְנֹת מוֹצֵק אֶחָד מִדֶּה אֶחָת
קָצֵב אֶחָד לְכָל־הֶנָּה: {ס}

^{לח} וַיַּעַשׂ עֲשָׂרָה כִּיּוֹת נְחֹשֶׁת אַרְבָּעִים בֵּת יִכְיִל
הַכִּיּוֹר הָאֶחָד אַרְבַּע בָּאֹמָה הַכִּיּוֹר הָאֶחָד כִּיּוֹר
אֶחָד עַל־הַמִּכְנָה הָאֶחָת לְעֵשֶׂר הַמִּכְנֹת: ^{לט} וַיִּתֵּן
אֶת־הַמִּכְנֹת חֲמֵשׁ עַל־כֶּתֶף הַבַּיִת מִיָּמִין וְחֲמֵשׁ
עַל־כֶּתֶף הַבַּיִת מִשְׁמָאלוֹ וְאֶת־הֵיִם נָתַן מִכֶּתֶף
הַבַּיִת הַיְּמָנִית קִדְמָה מִמּוֹל נֹגֵב: {ס}

was one and a half cubits. ³³ The wheels were designed like chariot wheels: their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast. ³⁴ There were four supports at the four corners of each stand: the stand and the supports were all of one piece. ³⁵ At the top of the stand, there was a support, circular in shape and half a cubit high; and on top of the stand, there were lugs. The crosspieces were of one piece with the stand. ³⁶ On the surface of its stays, he engraved cherubim, lions, and palm leaves, where each had space, with wreaths all round. ³⁷ In this way, he made the ten stands; all of them were cast alike, with the same size and the same form.

³⁸ And he made ten basins of bronze; each basin held forty bats and each basin measured four cubits; and there was a basin upon each of the ten stands. ³⁹ And he arranged the basins: five of them on the south side of the Temple and five of them on the north side of the Temple; and the Sea he placed on the south side of the Temple, in the south-eastern corner.

³³ In place of 'rims' and 'hubs', here following the NRSV, the NJB has, respectively, 'felloes' and 'naves'.

³⁴ The precise meaning of this description is uncertain.

³⁵ The text of this verse is difficult to interpret and possibly corrupt.

³⁶ The NJB lacks 'where each had space', replacing the text with an ellipsis. In place of מִסְגֵּרֹתֶיהָ, here following the Qere, the Kethib has וּמִסְגֵּרֹתֶיהָ.

³⁷ The NJB ends this verse, here following the NRSV, with, "the same casting and the same measurements for all."

³⁸ The basins held about 1,100 litres.

³⁹ The NJB has 'right-hand' in place of 'south' and 'left-hand' in place of 'north'; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

מִיַּעַשׁ חִירוֹם אֶת־הַכִּיּוֹת וְאֶת־הַיָּעִים וְאֶת־
הַמְזֻרְקוֹת וַיְכַל חִירָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־הַמְּלָאכָה
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה: ^{מא} עַמּוּדִים
שְׁנַיִם וְגִלְת הַכְּתָרֶת אֲשֶׁר־עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמּוּדִים
שְׁתֵּי וְהַשְּׁבָכוֹת שְׁתֵּי לְכַסּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גִלּוֹת
הַכְּתָרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמּוּדִים: ^{מב} וְאֶת־
הָרַמְנִים אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת לְשְׁתֵּי הַשְּׁבָכוֹת שְׁנֵי־טוּרִים
רַמְנִים לְשִׁבְכָה הָאֶחָת לְכַסּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גִלּוֹת
הַכְּתָרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמּוּדִים: ^{מג} וְאֶת־הַמְּכֻנּוֹת
עָשָׂר וְאֶת־הַכִּיּוֹת עָשָׂה עַל־הַמְּכֻנּוֹת: ^{מד} וְאֶת־
הַיָּם הָאֶחָד וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר שְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר תַּחַת הַיָּם:
^{מה} וְאֶת־הַסִּירֹת וְאֶת־הַיָּעִים וְאֶת־הַמְזֻרְקוֹת וְאֶת־
כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הָאֵלֶּה הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה חִירָם לַמֶּלֶךְ
שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה נְחֹשֶׁת מִמֶּרֶט: ^{מו} בְּכֶבֶד הִירְדָן
יִצְקָם הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּמַּעֲבָה הָאֲדָמָה בֵּין סָכוֹת וּבֵין
צָרְתָן: ^{מו} וַיִּנָּח שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־כָּל־הַכֵּלִים מִרַב מְאֹד

⁴⁰ Hiram also made the basins, the scoops, and the sprinkling bowls. And so Hiram finished all the work that he did for King Solomon on the Temple of Yahweh: ⁴¹ the two pillars; and the two mouldings of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars; and the two sets of lattice-work to cover the two mouldings of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars; ⁴² and the four hundred pomegranates for the two sets of lattice-work to cover the two mouldings of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars; the pomegranates of each set of latticework were in two rows; ⁴³ and the ten moveable stands and the ten basins on the stands; ⁴⁴ and the bronze basin called the Sea and the twelve oxen underneath the Sea; ⁴⁵ and the basins, and the scoops, and the sprinkling bowls. All these furnishings that Hiram made for King Solomon for the Temple of Yahweh were of burnished bronze. ⁴⁶ The king made them by the process of sand casting in the plain of the Jordan, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan. ⁴⁷ Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because there were so many of them, that the weight of

⁴⁰ The NJB, following the LXX, has 'ash containers' in place of 'basins'.

⁴¹ The NJB omits from 'to cover' to the end of the verse.

⁴² Throughout this paragraph, the NJB has 'filigree' in place of 'latticework', here following the NRSV & NETB.

⁴³ The NJB & NRSV lack the word 'moveable', here following NETB.

⁴⁴ The NJB & NRSV open with 'the one sea'; here, we follow NETB.

⁴⁵ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁴⁶ 'Succoth' and 'Zarethan', on the east bank of the Jordan, are possibly modern Tell Akhsas and Tell es-Saidiyah.

⁴⁷ The NJB lacks, "Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because."

מֵאֵד לֹא נִחְקַר מִשְׁקַל הַנְּחֹשֶׁת: ^{מח} וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלֹמֹה
אֶת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה אֶת מִזְבַּח הַזָּהָב
וְאֶת־הַשֻּׁלְחָן אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים זָהָב: ^{מט} וְאֶת־
הַמְנֹרֹת חֲמֵשׁ מִיָּמִין וְחֲמֵשׁ מִשְׁמָאֹל לִפְנֵי הַדְּבִיר
זָהָב סָגוֹר וְהַפָּרַח וְהַנֶּרֶת וְהַמְּלָקָחִים זָהָב:
וְהַסְּפֹת וְהַמְּזֻמְרוֹת וְהַמְּזֻרְקוֹת וְהַכַּפֹּת
וְהַמַּחֲתוֹת זָהָב סָגוֹר וְהַפִּתּוֹת לְדִלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת
הַפְּנִימִי לְקֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדְשִׁים לְדִלְתֵי הַבַּיִת לְהִיכָל
זָהָב: {פ}

נא וַתִּשְׁלֵם כָּל־הַמְּלָאכָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה
בֵּית יְהוָה וַיָּבֵא שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־קֹדְשֵׁי דָוִד אָבִיו אֶת־
הַכֶּסֶף וְאֶת־הַזָּהָב וְאֶת־הַכֵּלִים נָתַן בְּאֲצֻרוֹת בֵּית
יְהוָה: {פ}

bronze was never calculated. ⁴⁸ Solomon placed all the furnishings he had made in the Temple of Yahweh: the golden altar and the table for the loaves of offering, which was of gold; ⁴⁹ the lamp-stands, five on the south side and five on the north side in front of the Inner Sanctuary, of pure gold; the floral work, the lamps and the extinguishers, of gold; ⁵⁰ the basins, the snuffers, the sprinkling bowls, the incense boats, and the fire-pans, of pure gold; the sockets for the doors of the innermost part of the house – that is, the Holy of Holies – and for the doors of the nave of the Temple, of gold.

⁵¹ So, all the work that King Solomon did for the Temple of Yahweh was completed. Solomon brought what his father David had consecrated, the silver and the gold and the vessels, and put them in the treasuries of the Temple of Yahweh.

⁴⁸ The 'golden altar' was the altar of incense (see 6:20–21).

⁴⁹ The 'lampstands' were simple, each being a rod resting on a base, with a small bowl at the top for oil and wick; not to be confused with the lampstands described in Ex 25:31–40.

⁵⁰ The NJB has 'knives' in place of 'snuffers', here following the NRSV.

⁵¹ In place of 'treasuries', here following the MT, NRSV & NETB, the NJB has the singular, 'treasury'.

מלכים א פרק ח

א אז יקהל שלמה את־זקני ישראל את־כל־ראשי
המטות נשיאי האבות לבני ישראל אל־המלך
שלמה ירושלם להעלות את־ארון ברית־יהוה
מעיר דוד היא ציון: ב ויקהל אל־המלך שלמה
כל־איש ישראל בירח האתנים בחג הוא החדש
השביעי: ג ויבאו כל זקני ישראל וישאו הכהנים
את־הארון: ד ויעלו את־ארון יהוה ואת־אהל
מועד ואת־כל־כלי הקדש אשר באהל ויעלו אתם
הכהנים והלויים: ה והמלך שלמה וכל־עדת
ישראל הנועדים עליו אתו לפני הארון מזבחים
צאן ובקר אשר לא־יספרו ולא ימנו מרב: ו ויבאו

1 KINGS 8

¹ Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the tribal chiefs and all the heads of the Israelite families, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh up from the City of David, which is Zion. ² All the men of Israel assembled round King Solomon, at the time of the festival in the month of Ethanim (the seventh month) ³ and, when all the elders of Israel came, the priests took up the Ark. ⁴ They brought up the Ark of Yahweh and the Tent of Meeting with all the sacred vessels that were in the Tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. ⁵ King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the Ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. ⁶ The

1 KINGS 8

- ¹ The NJB, following the LXX, omits, "all the tribal chiefs ... before King Solomon." The 'City of David', or 'Zion', was south of the Temple area, in the SE part of the city. At the beginning of this verse, the LXX adds, "It so happened that when Solomon finished building the Lord's temple and his own house, after twenty years" (*Kai ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ συντελέσαι Σαλωμων τοῦ οἰκοδομῆσαι τὸν οἶκον κυρίου καὶ τὸν οἶκον ἑαυτοῦ μετὰ εἴκοσι ἔτη*).
- ² 'Ethanim' was the month of the Canaanite calendar corresponding to the 7th month (Tishri) of the later Israelite one, as the parenthesis explains. The (pre-eminent) festival, mentioned here, was the Feast of Tabernacles; the dedication of the Temple was, therefore, postponed for eleven months (6:38) to make it part of this festival, the religious high point of the year.
- ³ In place of 'took up', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'carried' and NETB has 'lifted'.
- ⁴ The NJB, following the LXX, omits, 'They brought up the Ark of Yahweh' and 'the priests and the Levites brought them up'. This Tent was the one erected by David to shelter the Ark (1:39, 2S 7:8). A glossator calls it the 'Tent of Meeting', like the desert Tent constructed by Moses (Ex 25), of which no more is heard, once the Israelites had crossed the Jordan (Jos 3-4).
- ⁵ The NJB, following the LXX, omits, 'the congregation of'.
- ⁶ Before 'place', NETB adds the clarifying adjective, 'assigned'.

הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה אֶל־מְקוֹמוֹ אֶל־
 דְּבִיר הַבַּיִת אֶל־קֹדֶשׁ הַקֳּדָשִׁים אֶל־תַּחַת כְּנָפֵי
 הַכְּרוּבִים: ^ז כִּי הַכְּרוּבִים פָּרְשִׁים כְּנָפִים אֶל־מְקוֹם
 הָאֲרוֹן וַיִּסְכּוּ הַכְּרָבִים עַל־הָאֲרוֹן וְעַל־בְּדִי
 מִלְמַעְלָה: ^ח וַיֵּאָרְכוּ הַבַּדִּים וַיֵּרְאוּ רָאשֵׁי הַבַּדִּים
 מִן־הַקֹּדֶשׁ עַל־פְּנֵי הַדְּבִיר וְלֹא יֵרְאוּ הַחוּצָה וַיְהִי
 שֵׁם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ^ט אֵין בָּאֲרוֹן רֶק שְׁנֵי לַחֹת
 הָאֲבָנִים אֲשֶׁר הֵנִחַ שֵׁם מֹשֶׁה בְּחָרֵב אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת
 יְהוָה עִם־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצֵאתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: ^י וַיְהִי
 בְּצֵאת הַכֹּהֲנִים מִן־הַקֹּדֶשׁ וַהֲעֲנָן מָלֵא אֶת־בַּיִת
 יְהוָה: ^{יא} וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים לַעֲמֹד לְשֶׁרֶת מִפְּנֵי
 הָעֲנָן כִּי־מָלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה: {פ}

^{יב} אַז אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה

יְהוָה אָמַר לִשְׁכֵּן בְּעֶרְפֶּל:

^{יג} בָּנָה בְּנִיתִי בַּיִת זָבֵל לָךְ

מִכּוֹן לְשִׁבְתֶּךָ עוֹלָמִים:

priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh to its place, in the Sanctuary of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, under the wings of the cherubim. ⁷ For, the cherubim's wings spread out over the place of the Ark, so that the cherubim covered the Ark and its poles. ⁸ These were long enough for their ends to be seen from the Holy Place, in front of the Sanctuary, but not from outside; they are still there today. ⁹ There was nothing in the Ark except the two stone tablets Moses had placed in it at Horeb, the tablets of the Covenant, which Yahweh had made with the Israelites when they came out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ Now, when the priests came out of the Sanctuary, the Cloud filled the Temple of Yahweh, ¹¹ and because of the Cloud the priests could no longer perform their duties: the glory of Yahweh filled Yahweh's Temple.

¹² Then Solomon said:

"Yahweh has chosen to dwell in thick cloud.

¹³ I have built you a princely dwelling,
 a residence for you forever."

⁷ The 'poles' were used to carry the Ark (Ex 25:13–15).

⁸ The NJB transposes the words 'they are still there today' to a separate verse (8^b) after v.9; here, we follow the MT (& NRSV) the words indicate that the writer compiled this material during the time before the destruction of the Temple.

⁹ The NRSV, following the MT, lacks 'the tablets of the Covenant', here following the LXX (πλάκες τῆς διαθήκης) & NJB.

¹⁰ The 'Cloud' (see #Ex 13:21–22) was the visible manifestation of the presence of Yahweh, who now took possession of his Sanctuary.

¹¹ The literal translation of 'could not perform their duties' is 'were not able to stand to serve'.

¹² This poem occurs in the LXX after v. 53, with an extra line: "Yahweh has set the sun firm in the heavens" (Ἥλιον ἐγνώρισεν ἐν οὐρανῷ κύριος).

¹³ Though master of the universe and wrapped in mystery, Yahweh now has a dwelling place on earth in the midst of his people Israel.

^ד וַיִּסַּב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־פָּנָיו וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת כָּל־קֹהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְכָל־קֹהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל עֹמֵד: ^ט וַיֹּאמֶר בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּפִיו אֶת דּוֹד אָבִי וּבִידּוֹ מִלֹּא
 לֵאמֹר: ^{טז} מִן־הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־עַמִּי אֶת־
 יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם לֹא־בַחֲרָתִי בְעִיר מִכָּל שְׁבִטֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לַיהוָה שְׁמִי שָׁם וְאֶבְחַר בְּדוֹד
 לַיהוָה עַל־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יז} וַיְהִי עַם־לִבָּב דּוֹד אָבִי
 לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר
 יְהוָה אֶל־דּוֹד אָבִי יַעֲן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה עַם־לִבָּבְךָ לְבָנוֹת
 בַּיִת לְשְׁמִי הִטִּיבְתָּ כִּי הָיָה עַם־לִבָּבְךָ: ^{יט} רַק אַתָּה
 לֹא תִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת כִּי אִם־בְּנֶךָ הַיָּצֵא מִחֲלָצֶיךָ הוּא־
 יִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת לְשְׁמִי: ^כ וַיֵּקֶם יְהוָה אֶת־דְּבָרֹו אֲשֶׁר
 דִּבֶּר וְאָקָם תַּחַת דּוֹד אָבִי וְאָשַׁב עַל־כִּפְסָא
 יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה וְאִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{כא} וְאָשֵׁם שֵׁם מָקוֹם לְאֹזֶן אֲשֶׁר־

¹⁴ Then the king turned around and blessed the whole assembly of Israel, while the whole assembly of Israel stood. ¹⁵ He said, “Blessed by Yahweh, the God of Israel, who has carried out by his hand what he promised with his mouth to David my father when he said, ¹⁶ “From the day I brought my people out of Egypt, I chose no city, in any of the tribes of Israel, to have a house built where my name might make its home; but I chose David, to rule over Israel my people.” ¹⁷ My father David had set his heart on building a house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel, ¹⁸ but Yahweh said, “You have set your heart on building a house for my name, and in this you have done well. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, you are not the man to build the house; your son, born of your own body, shall build the house for my name.” ²⁰ Yahweh has kept the promise he made: I have succeeded David my father and am seated on the throne of Israel, as Yahweh promised; I have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ²¹ There I have provided a place for the Ark

¹⁴ The literal translation of ‘turned around’ is ‘turned his face’.

¹⁵ NETB lacks the phrases ‘by his hand’ and ‘by his mouth’, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV.

¹⁶ The ‘Name of Yahweh’ dwells in the Temple in which Yahweh himself cannot be confined (see the insertion of v. 27), which excludes the naïve interpretation that God himself resides in the Temple.

¹⁷ The literal translation of ‘David had set his heart on’ is ‘it was in the heart of David’.

¹⁸ Literally translated, this verse reads, “Because it was with your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was with your heart.”

¹⁹ The literal translation of ‘born’ is ‘who came out of’.

²⁰ Throughout this section, NETB uses ‘honour’ in place of ‘name’ (see #16).

²¹ The NJB has ‘made’ in place of ‘provided’, here following the NRSV.

שֵׁם בְּרִית יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת עִם־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּהוֹצִיאָו
אֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: {ס}

כב וַיַּעֲמֵד שְׁלֹמֹה לִפְנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוָה נֹגֵד כָּל־קֹהֶל
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּפְרֹשׂ כַּפָּיו הַשָּׁמַיִם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵין־כְּמוֹד אֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־
הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֲסֵד לַעֲבָדֶיךָ
הַהֹלְכִים לִפְנֶיךָ בְּכָל־לֵבָם: כד אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַרְתָּ לַעֲבָדֶיךָ
דָּוִד אָבִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבַּרְתָּ לוֹ וְתִדְבֹּר בְּפִיךָ וּבִידֶיךָ
מִלֵּאֵת כִּי־וְעַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
שָׁמַר לַעֲבָדֶיךָ דָּוִד אָבִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ לוֹ לֵאמֹר
לֹא־יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מִלִּפְנֵי יֹשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל
רַק אִם־יִשְׁמְרוּ בְנֶיךָ אֶת־דֶּרֶכְךָ לָלֶכֶת לִפְנֵי כָאֲשֶׁר
הָלַכְתָּ לִפְנֵי: כו וְעַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יֹאמֶן נָא
דְּבָרֶיךָ דְּבָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ לַעֲבָדֶיךָ דָּוִד אָבִי: כז כִּי
הָאִמָּנִים יֹשֵׁב אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ הֲנֶה הַשָּׁמַיִם וְשָׁמַי

containing the covenant that Yahweh made with our fathers when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

²² Then, in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, Solomon stood before the altar of Yahweh and stretched out his hands towards heaven.

²³ He said, “Yahweh, God of Israel, not in heaven above nor in earth beneath is there such a God as you, true to your Covenant and your kindness towards your servants when they walk wholeheartedly in your way. ²⁴ You have kept the promise you made to your servant David my father; what you promised with your mouth, today you have carried out by your hand. ²⁵ And now, Yahweh, God of Israel, keep the promise you made to your servant David when you said, “You shall never lack for a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful how they behave, walking before me as you yourself have done.” ²⁶ So now, God of Israel, let the words come true which you spoke to your servant David my father. ²⁷ Yet, will God really live on the earth? Why, even the

²² In vv. 22–29, the author develops, in the manner of Deuteronomy, ideas contained in the discourse of vv. 15–21. He begins with the principal of mutual fidelity (v. 23); God’s kindness to his people flows from the Covenant concluded on Mount Sinai, but is conditional upon their faithfulness; in this, it contained the whole theology of the Old Testament. Then follow two particular applications: Yahweh has kept his promise concerning the Temple (v. 24); may he also keep it as regards the perpetuity of the dynasty (v. 25).

²³ In place of ‘kindness’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘steadfast love’.

²⁴ This verse is a reiteration of v. 15.

²⁵ Literally translated, Solomon’s quotation opens, “There will not be cut off from you a man from before me sitting on the throne of Israel.”

²⁶ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁷ After ‘live’, the NJB, following the LXX (μετὰ ἀνθρώπων) & Tg, adds ‘with human beings’; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

הַשָּׁמַיִם לֹא יִכְלְלוּךָ אֶף כִּי־הִבִּיתָ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר
 בָּנִיתִי: ^{כח} וּפָנִיתָ אֶל־תְּפִלַּת עֲבָדֶךָ וְאֶל־תַּחֲנֻנֹתוֹ
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לְשִׁמְעַת אֶל־הַרְנָה וְאֶל־הַתְּפִלָּה אֲשֶׁר
 עֲבָדֶךָ מִתְּפִלַּל לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם: ^{כט} לִהְיוֹת עֵינֶיךָ פְּתוּחֹת
 אֶל־הִבִּיתָ הַזֶּה לַיְלָה וַיּוֹם אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתָּ
 יְהִיָּה שְׁמִי שָׁם לְשִׁמְעַת אֶל־הַתְּפִלָּה אֲשֶׁר יִתְּפִלֵּל
 עֲבָדֶךָ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: ^ל וְשִׁמְעַת אֶל־תַּחֲנֻנֹת
 עֲבָדֶךָ וְעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִתְּפִלְלוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם
 הַזֶּה וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁמָע אֶל־מָקוֹם שְׁבִתְךָ אֶל־הַשָּׁמַיִם
 וְשִׁמְעַת וְסָלַחְתָּ: ^{לא} אֵת אֲשֶׁר יַחֲטֵא אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ
 וְנִשְׁאָבוּ אִלָּה לְהֵאֱלָתוֹ וּבָא אֱלֹה לִפְנֵי מִזְבִּיחֶךָ
 בְּבֵית הַזֶּה: ^{לב} וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁמָע הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעָשִׂיתָ
 וְשִׁפְטָתָ אֶת־עַבְדֶּיךָ לְהַרְשִׁיעַ רָשָׁע לָתֵת דֶּרֶכוֹ
 בְּרָאשׁוֹ וּלְהַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק לָתֵת לוֹ כְּצַדִּיקוֹ:
^{לג} לֵבָּהֶנְגָּף עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי אוֹיֵב אֲשֶׁר יַחֲטִאוּ־לָךְ

heavens and their own heavens cannot contain you. How much less this house that I have built! ²⁸ Listen to the prayer and supplication of your servant, Yahweh my God; listen to the loud cry and to the prayer your servant makes before you today. ²⁹ Day and night, let your eyes be open towards this house, towards the place of which you have said, “My name shall be there.” Listen to the prayer that your servant is offering in this place. ³⁰ Hear the entreaty of your servant and of Israel, your people, when they pray towards this place. Hear from inside your heavenly dwelling-place and, when you hear, forgive. ³¹ If a man sins against his neighbour, and the neighbour calls down a curse on him and makes him swear an oath before our altar in the Temple, ³² hear from heaven, and act; decide between your servants: pronounce the wicked one guilty, bringing his conduct down on his own head; and vindicate the innocent, rewarding him as his innocence deserves. ³³ When your people Israel are defeated by the enemy because they have sinned

²⁸ In place of ‘to the loud cry and to the prayer’, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘to the desperate prayer’, treating the phrase as a hendiadys.

²⁹ The NJB has ‘will offer’ in place of ‘is offering’.

³⁰ The precise nuance of the preposition *אֶל*, used here with the verb ‘hear’, is unclear: one expects the preposition ‘from’, which appears in the parallel text in 2Ch 6:21; the nuance ‘inside’ or ‘among’ is attested (Gn 23:19, 1S 10:22, Jr 4:3) but, in each case, a verb of motion is employed with the preposition, unlike here. The translation above (‘from inside’) is based on the demands of the context rather than on attested usage.

³¹ God will show the guilt or innocence of the accused by implementing or not implementing the curse. (See Ex 22:6–10, Nb 5:19–28, Jg 17: 1–3).

³² Literally translated, this verse reads, “and you, hear (from) heaven and act and judge your servants by declaring the guilty to be guilty, to give his way on his head, and to declare the innocent to be innocent, to give to him according to his innocence.”

³³ In place of ‘entreat’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘plead’.

וּשְׁבוּ אֵלַיְךָ וְהוֹדוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ וְהִתְחַנְּנוּ
אֵלַיְךָ בְּבֵית הַזֶּה: לֵד וְאַתָּה תִשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם וְסַלַּחְתָּ
לְחַטָּאת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהִשְׁבַּתָּם אֶל־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר
נָתַתָּ לְאֲבוֹתָם: {ס}

לֵה בְּהִעָצֵר שָׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מָטָר כִּי יַחְטְאוּ־לָךְ
וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְהוֹדוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ
וּמִחְטָאתָם יִשׁוּבוּן כִּי תַעֲנֶם: לו וְאַתָּה תִשְׁמַע
הַשָּׁמַיִם וְסַלַּחְתָּ לְחַטָּאת עַבְדֶּיךָ וְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי
תוֹרֵם אֶת־הַדֶּרֶךְ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר יִלְכוּ־בָהּ וְנָתַתָּה
מָטָר עַל־אֲרָצְךָ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּה לְעַמְּךָ לְנַחֲלָה: {ס}

לז רָעַב כִּי־יִהְיֶה בָאָרֶץ דָּבָר כִּי־יִהְיֶה שָׁדְפוֹן יִרְקוֹן
אַרְבֶּה חֲסִיל כִּי יִהְיֶה כִּי יֵצֵרוּ אִיּוֹ בָאָרֶץ שְׁעָרָיו
כָּל־נִגַּע כָּל־מַחֲלָה: לח כָּל־תְּפִלָּה כָּל־תַּחֲנֻנָּה אֲשֶׁר
תַּהֲיֶה לְכָל־הָאָדָם לְכָל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יֵדְעוּן
אִישׁ נִגַּע לִבּוֹ וּפְרֵשׁ כַּפּוֹ אֶל־הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה:
לט וְאַתָּה תִשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם מִכּוֹן שִׁבְתְּךָ וְסַלַּחְתָּ
וַעֲשִׂיתָ וְנָתַתָּ לְאִישׁ כַּכ־דֶּרֶכּוֹ אֲשֶׁר תִּדַּע אֶת־

against you, if they return to you and praise your name and pray to you and entreat you in this Temple, ³⁴ hear from heaven; forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their fathers.

³⁵ “When the heavens are shut and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, if they pray in this place, praise your name and repent of their sin, because you humble them, ³⁶ hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servant and of your people Israel – indeed, you will show them the good way they ought to follow – and send rain on your land which you have given your people for an inheritance.

³⁷ “Should there be famine in the land, or pestilence, blight or mildew, locust or caterpillar; should this people’s enemy besiege them in any of their cities; whatever plague or whatever sickness there is; ³⁸ whatever prayer, whatever plea there is from any individual or from all your people Israel, all knowing the afflictions of their own hearts, so that they stretch out their hands towards this Temple, ³⁹ hear from heaven where your home is; forgive and act, dealing with each as his conduct deserves;

³⁴ The phrase ‘and bring them back to the land you gave to their fathers’ was possibly added during the Exile.

³⁵ For ‘humble’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘punish’; an alternative translation is ‘answer’.

³⁶ The translation ‘indeed’ understands כִּי in an emphatic sense.

³⁷ ‘In any’ follows the LXX (ἐν μιᾷ τῶν) and Peshitta; the MT has ‘in the land’.

³⁸ The NJB, following the LXX, omits ‘or from all your people Israel’ and continues the sentence in the singular sense.

³⁹ Literally translated, this verse ends, “indeed you know, you alone, the heart of all the sons of mankind.”

לִבְבוֹ כִּי־אַתָּה יֹדַעַת לְבַדְּךָ אֶת־לִבִּי כָּל־בְּנֵי
הָאָדָם: ^מ לִמְעַן יִרְאוּךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר־הֵם חַיִּים
עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לְאַבְתִּינוּ: ^{מא} וְגַם
אֶל־הַנֹּכְרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־מֵעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא וְבֹא
מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה לִמְעַן שְׁמֶךָ: ^{מב} כִּי יִשְׁמְעוּן אֶת־
שְׁמֶךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְאֶת־יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה וְזִרְעֶךָ הַנְּטוּיָה וְבֹא
וְהִתְפַּלֵּל אֶל־הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה: ^{מג} אַתָּה תִּשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם
מִכּוֹן שְׁבַתְּךָ וַעֲשֵׂיתָ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא אֵלֶיךָ הַנֹּכְרִי
לִמְעַן יִדְעוּן כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ לִירְאָה אֶתְּךָ
כַּעֲמֶךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִדְעַת כִּי־שְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא עַל־הַבַּיִת
הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בָּנִיתִי: ^{מד} כִּי־יֵצֵא עַמְּךָ לְמִלְחָמָה עַל־
אִיְבוֹ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁלַחם וְהִתְפַּלְּלוּ אֶל־יְהוָה
דֶּרֶךְ הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲרָתָ בָּהּ וְהַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר־בָּנִיתִי
לְשִׁמְךָ: ^{מה} וְשִׁמְעַתָּ הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶת־תַּפִּלָּתָם וְאֶת־
תַּחֲנֻנָּתָם וַעֲשֵׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטָם: ^{מו} כִּי יִחַטְּאוּ־לְךָ כִּי אֵין

for you know every heart – you alone know the hearts of all the children
of men – ⁴⁰ and so they may come to fear you all the days that they live
in the land that you gave to our fathers. ⁴¹ And likewise with the
foreigner, not belonging to your people Israel, if he comes from a distant
country for the sake of your name – ⁴² for, men will hear of your great
name, of your mighty hand and outstretched arm – if a foreigner comes
and prays towards this Temple, ⁴³ hear from heaven where your home
is, and grant all the foreigner asks, so that all the peoples of the earth
may come to know your name and, like your people Israel, fear you,
and know that your name has been called over this Temple that I have
built. ⁴⁴ If your people go out to war against their enemies on the way
that you send them and, if they turn towards the city you have chosen
and towards the Temple I have built for your name, and pray to
Yahweh, ⁴⁵ then hear from heaven their prayer and their entreaty, and
uphold their cause. ⁴⁶ If they sin against you – for there is no man who

⁴⁰ In place of 'fear', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has 'revere' and NETB has 'obey'.

⁴¹ Vv. 41–53 were added during, or after the return from, the Exile. Note the universalism of vv. 41–43, the custom of praying with the face turned to Jerusalem (v. 44), and the concern for those still far from home (vv. 47ff).

⁴² The NJB omits 'great' before 'name', here following the MT & NRSV.

⁴³ The idiom 'to call the name over' indicates ownership; see 2S 12:28.

⁴⁴ Here is the first mention of the custom of facing Jerusalem when praying.

⁴⁵ The literal translation of 'uphold their cause', here following the NJB, is 'accomplish their justice'; the NRSV has 'maintain their cause' and NETB has 'vindicate them'.

⁴⁶ In place of 'they are taken as prisoners to the land of their enemy', here following the MT, the NJB has, 'their conquerors lead them captive to a country'.

אָדָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַחֲטֹא וְאַנְפָּתָ בָּם וְנִתְּתָם לִפְנֵי
 אוֹיֵב וְשָׁבוּם שְׁבִיָּהֶם אֶל־אַרְץ הָאוֹיֵב רְחוֹקָה אוֹ
 קְרוֹבָה: ^{מז} וְהָשִׁיבוּ אֶל־לִבָּם בְּאַרְץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבוּ־
 שָׁם וְשָׁבוּ וְהִתְחַנְּנוּ אֵלַי בְּאַרְץ שְׁבִיָּהֶם לֵאמֹר
 חָטֵאנוּ וְהָעֵוִינוּ רָשָׁעֵנוּ: ^{מח} וְשָׁבוּ אֵלַי בְּכָל־לִבָּבְכֶם
 וּבְכָל־נַפְשָׁם בְּאַרְץ אִיְבֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר־שָׁבוּ אֹתָם
 וְהִתְפַּלְּלוּ אֵלַי דֶּרֶךְ אֲרָצָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לְאַבוֹתָם
 הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲרָתָ וְהַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר־בִּנֵּיתִי בְּנִית
 לְשִׁמְךָ: ^{מט} וְשָׁמַעְתָּ הַשָּׁמַיִם מְכוֹן שְׁבַתְךָ אֶת־
 תְּפִלָּתָם וְאֶת־תַּחֲנוּנָתָם וְעָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטָם: ^נ וְסָלַחְתָּ
 לְעַמְּךָ אֲשֶׁר חָטְאוּ־לְךָ וּלְכָל־פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר
 פָּשְׁעוּ־בְךָ וְנִתְּתָם לְרַחֲמִים לִפְנֵי שְׁבִיָּהֶם וְרַחֲמוּם:
^{נא} כִּי־עַמְּךָ וְנַחֲלָתְךָ הֵם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתָ מִמִּצְרַיִם
 מִתּוֹךְ כּוּר הַבְּרִזָּל: ^{נב} לִהְיוֹת עֵינֶיךָ פְּתוּחִת אֶל־

does not sin – and you are angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they are taken as prisoners to the land of their enemy, far or near, ⁴⁷ if in the land of their exile they come to their senses and repent and, in the country of their captors, they entreat you saying, “We have sinned, we have acted perversely and wickedly,” ⁴⁸ and if they turn again to you with all their heart and soul in the country of the enemies who have deported them, and pray to you, turning towards the land you gave to their fathers, towards the city you have chosen, and towards the Temple I have built for your name, ⁴⁹ hear from heaven where your home is, uphold their case, ⁵⁰ forgive your people the sins they have committed against you and all the crimes they have been guilty of, grant them to win favour with their captors so that they may have pity on them; ⁵¹ for they are your people and your heritage whom you brought out of Egypt, that iron furnace. ⁵² Be always watchful for the entreaty of

⁴⁷ The NJB has ‘conquerors’ in place of ‘captors’, here following the NRSV.

⁴⁸ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁴⁹ The literal translation of ‘uphold their cause’, here following the NJB, is ‘accomplish their justice’; the NRSV has ‘maintain their cause’ and NETB has ‘vindicate them’.

⁵⁰ Literally translated, this verse reads, “And forgive your people who have sinned against you, (forgive) all their rebellious acts by which they rebelled against you and grant them mercy before their captors so they will show them mercy.”

⁵¹ The term כּוּר (‘furnace’) is a metaphor for the intense heat of purification; it was *not* a source of heat but a crucible in which precious metals were melted down and their impurities burned away. Thus, Egypt served not as a place of punishment for the Israelites, but as a place of refinement to bring Israel to a place of submission to divine sovereignty.

⁵² Literally translated, this verse opens, “May your eyes be open.”

תַּחֲנֹת עֲבָדְךָ וְאֶל־תַּחֲנֹת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל לִשְׁמַע
אֲלֵיהֶם בְּכָל קְרָאָם אֲלֶיךָ: ^נ כִּי־אַתָּה הַבְּדַלְתָּם לָךְ
לְנַחֲלָה מִכָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה
עֲבָדְךָ בְּהוֹצִיאֲךָ אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם אֲדֹנָי
יְהוָה: {פ}

^נ וַיְהִי כִכְלוֹת שְׁלֹמֹה לְהִתְפַּלֵּל אֶל־יְהוָה אֵת כָּל־
הַתְּפִלָּה וְהַתַּחֲנֹה הַזֹּאת קָם מִלִּפְנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוָה
מִכְרַע עַל־בְּרָכָיו וְכַפָּיו פָּרְשׂוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם: ^נ וַיַּעֲמֵד
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֵת כָּל־קְהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹל גָּדוֹל לֵאמֹר:
^נ בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן מְנוּחָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּכָל
אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּר לֹא־נִפְּל דָּבָר אֶחָד מִכָּל דִּבְרוֹ הַטּוֹב
אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּר בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדוֹ: ^נ יְהִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
עִמָּנוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִם־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֶל־יַעֲזֹבֵנוּ וְאֶל־
יִטְשֵׁנוּ: ^נ לְהִטּוֹת לְבַבֵּנוּ אֵלָיו לִלְכֹת בְּכָל־דַּרְכָּיו
וּלְשַׁמֵּר מִצְוֹתָיו וְחֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת־
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ: ^נ וַיְהִי דְבָרִי אֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִתַּחֲנַנְתִּי לִפְנֵי

your servant and of your people Israel, always hearing them when they call to you. ⁵³ For, it was you who set them apart from all the peoples of the earth to be your own heritage, just as you declared through Moses your servant when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, Lord Yahweh."

⁵⁴ When Solomon had finished offering this whole prayer and entreaty, he rose from where he was kneeling before the altar of Yahweh with his hands stretched out towards heaven; ⁵⁵ he stood up and, in a loud voice, he blessed the whole assembly of Israel. ⁵⁶ "Blessed be Yahweh," he said, "who has given a resting place to his people Israel, keeping all his promises; of all the promises of good that he made through Moses his servant, not one has failed. ⁵⁷ May Yahweh our God be with us, as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us or abandon us. ⁵⁸ May he turn our hearts towards him so that we may follow all his ways and keep his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances, which he gave to our fathers. ⁵⁹ May these words of mine, of my entreaty before

⁵³ The expression, 'Lord Yahweh', (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה = 'Adonai Yahweh'), is translated in the NRSV (and most English versions) as 'Lord GOD'.

⁵⁴ The word translated 'heaven' can also mean 'sky'.

⁵⁵ The NJB has 'stood erect' in place of 'stood up', here following the NRSV.

⁵⁶ In place of 'given a resting place', here following the MT, the NJB & NRSV have 'granted rest'.

⁵⁷ The NJB ends the verse, here following the NRSV & NETB, with, "may he never desert us or cast us off."

⁵⁸ The term לְבַבֵּנוּ ('heart') here refers to the people's volition and will.

⁵⁹ The literal translation of 'uphold the cause' is 'accomplish the justice'.

יְהוָה קְרִבִּים אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה
לַעֲשׂוֹת | מִשְׁפָּט עֲבָדָיו וּמִשְׁפָּט עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל דְּבַר־
יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ: ^ס לְמַעַן דַּעַת כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי יְהוָה
הוא האֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד: ^{סא} וְהִיה לְבַבְכֶם שָׁלֵם עִם
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לִלְכֹת בְּחֻקָּיו וּלְשָׁמֵר מִצְוֹתָיו כִּי־
יְהוָה: ^{סב} וְהַמֶּלֶךְ וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָמּוֹ זִבְחִים זִבַּח לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה: ^{סג} וַיִּזְבַּח שְׁלָמָה אֶת זִבַּח הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר
זָבַח לַיהוָה בְּקָר עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁנַיִם אֵלֶף וְצֹאֵן מֵאָה
וְעֶשְׂרִים אֵלֶף וַיַּחֲנֹכוּ אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה הַמֶּלֶךְ וְכָל־
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{סד} בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא קִדֵּשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־תּוֹךְ
הַחֲצֵר אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי בֵית־יְהוָה כִּי־עָשָׂה שָׁם אֶת־
הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־הַמִּנְחָה וְאֶת חֲלָבֵי הַשְּׁלָמִים כִּי־מִזְבַּח
הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה קָטָן מִהַכִּיל אֶת־הָעֹלָה
וְאֶת־הַמִּנְחָה וְאֶת חֲלָבֵי הַשְּׁלָמִים: ^{סה} וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלָמָה
בְּעֵת־הַהִיא | אֶת־הַחֹג וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָמּוֹ קָהָל גָּדוֹל
מִלְּבֹא חֲמַת | עַד־נַחַל מִצְרַיִם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

Yahweh, be present with Yahweh our God, day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of Israel, as each day requires, ⁶⁰ so that all the peoples of the earth may come to know that Yahweh is God indeed, and that there is no other. ⁶¹ May your hearts be wholly with Yahweh our God, following his laws and keeping his commandments as at this present day.” ⁶² Then the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifice before Yahweh. ⁶³ Solomon sacrificed twenty-two thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep as peace offerings to Yahweh; and so, the king and all the Israelites dedicated the Temple of Yahweh. ⁶⁴ On the same day, the king consecrated the middle of the court lying in front of the Temple of Yahweh; and there he offered the burnt offerings, oblations and fatty parts of the communion sacrifices, since the bronze altar that stood before Yahweh was too small to hold the holocaust, oblation and fatty parts of the communion sacrifices. ⁶⁵ Thus, at that time, Solomon celebrated the Feast – and all the Israelites with him, a great gathering from the Pass of Hamath to the

⁶⁰ Literally translated, this verse ends, “Yahweh, he is the God, there is no other.”

⁶¹ The literal translation of ‘wholly’ is ‘complete’.

⁶² This paragraph would have been a natural conclusion to the chapter by a writer who worked before the destruction of the Temple.

⁶³ In place of ‘peace offerings’ here following NETB, the NJB has ‘communion sacrifices’ and the NRSV has ‘sacrifices of well-being’.

⁶⁴ The altar of burnt offerings was a metal structure that was movable (2K 16:14) and recalled the movable altar of the Tent of Meeting, the description of which is idealised (Ex 27:1ff). The altar erected by Solomon (9:25) remained in use until the time of Ahaz (2K 16:10).

⁶⁵ The dedication of the Temple coincided with the Feast of Tabernacles (v. 2), which lasted for seven days (Dt 16:13-15). At the end of the verse, the MT adds ‘and seven more days, that is fourteen days’ – a gloss inspired by 2Ch 7:9, missing from the LXX, and contradicted by v. 66.

שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְשִׁבְעַת יָמִים אַרְבַּעַה עָשָׂר יוֹם:
סוּ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי שָׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם וַיְבָרְכוּ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ
וַיֵּלְכוּ לְאַהֲלֵיהֶם שְׂמֵחִים וְטוֹבֵי לֵב עַל כָּל־הַטּוֹבָה
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה לְדָוִד עַבְדּוֹ וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ:

Wadi of Egypt – before Yahweh our God for seven days.⁶⁶ Then, on the eighth day, he dismissed the people, who blessed the king and went to their homes, rejoicing and happy in their hearts for all the goodness Yahweh had shown to his servant David and to his people Israel.

⁶⁶ The NJB omits ‘his servant’, here following the MT & NRSV.

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מלכים א פרק ט

א וַיְהִי כְּכִלּוֹת שְׁלֹמֹה לִבְנוֹת אֶת־בֵּית־יְהוָה וְאֶת־
בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶת כָּל־חֶשֶׁק שְׁלֹמֹה אֲשֶׁר חָפֵץ
לַעֲשׂוֹת: {פ}

ב וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁלֹמֹה שֵׁנִית כַּאֲשֶׁר נִרְאָה אֵלָיו
בְּגִבְעֹן: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו שְׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־תְּפִלָּתְךָ
וְאֶת־תַּחֲנֻנְתְּךָ אֲשֶׁר הִתְחַנַּנְתָּה לִּפְנֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁתִּי אֶת־
הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בָּנִיתָ לְשׁוֹם־שְׁמִי שָׁם עַד־עוֹלָם
וְהָיוּ עֵינִי וְלִבִּי שָׁם כָּל־הַיָּמִים: ד וְאַתָּה אִם־תֵּלֶךְ
לִפְנֵי כַּאֲשֶׁר הָלַךְ דָּוִד אֲבִיךָ בְּתַם־לֵבָב וּבִישׁוֹר
לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ חֻקִּי וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי תִּשְׁמֹר:
ה וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת־כִּסֵּא מַמְלַכְתְּךָ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעֹלָם
כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי עַל־דָּוִד אֲבִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא־יִכָּרֵת לְךָ
אִישׁ מֵעַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל: ו אִם־שׁוּב תִּשְׁבּוּן אַתֶּם
וּבְנֵיכֶם מֵאַחֲרַי וְלֹא תִשְׁמְרוּ מִצְוֹתֵי חֻקֹּתַי אֲשֶׁר
נָתַתִּי לִפְנֵיכֶם וְהִלַּכְתֶּם וַעֲבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים

¹ And it came to pass that Solomon had finished building the Temple of Yahweh and the royal palace and all the projects that Solomon had a mind to build.

² Then Yahweh appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³ Yahweh said to him, "I have heard your prayer and the supplication, which you have made before me. I consecrate this house you have built: I place my name there forever; my eyes and my heart shall be there for all time. ⁴ For your part, if you will walk before me with innocence of heart and in honesty, like David your father walked, if you do all I order you and keep my statutes and my ordinances, ⁵ then I will make your royal throne secure over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said: You shall never lack for a man on the throne of Israel. ⁶ However, if you turn away from me, you or your sons, and do not keep the commandments and statutes that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and bow down

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¹ This first section (vv. 1-9) is a thoroughly Deuteronomic composition, perhaps by a writer during the Exile, who lived after the Temple had been destroyed (see v. 8 and the footnote thereto), and could point out the sinfulness that had led to national ruin.

² For the appearance at Gibeon, see 3:5.

³ NETB ends this verse, here following the NRSV & MT, with, "I will constantly be present there."

⁴ This verse is actually a lengthy protasis ('if' section) of a conditional sentence, the apodosis ('then' section) of which appears in v. 5.

⁵ Literally translated, this verse ends, "there will not be cut off from you a man from upon the throne of Israel."

⁶ The NJB & NRSV have 'worship' in place of 'bow down to', here following the MT & NETB.

וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם: ^ז וְהִכְרַתִּי אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַל פְּנֵי
הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָהֶם וְאֶת־הַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר
הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי לְשְׁמִי אֲשַׁלַּח מֵעַל פְּנֵי וְהָיָה יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְמַשָּׁל וּלְשִׁנְיָנָה בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים: ^ח וְהַבַּיִת הַזֶּה יִהְיֶה
עַלְיוֹן כָּל־עֵבֶר עָלָיו יִשָּׂם וְשָׂרָק וְאָמְרוּ עַל־מָה
עָשָׂה יְהוָה כֹּכָה לָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וּלְבַיִת הַזֶּה: ^ט וְאָמְרוּ
עַל אֲשֶׁר עָזְבוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיא
אֶת־אֲבֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיַּחֲזִקוּ בָאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָהֶם וַיַּעֲבֹדוּם עַל־כֵּן הֵבִיא יְהוָה
עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת: {פ}

י וְהָיָה מִקְצֵה עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה אֲשֶׁר־בָּנָה שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־
שְׁנֵי הַבָּתִּים אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה וְאֶת־בַּיִת הַמֶּלֶךְ:
^{יא} חִירָם מֶלֶךְ־צֹר נָשָׂא אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה בַּעֲצֵי אֲרָזִים
וּבַעֲצֵי בְרוֹשִׁים וּבַזָּהָב לְכָל־חִפְצוֹ אֲזִי יִתֵּן הַמֶּלֶךְ
שְׁלֹמֹה לְחִירָם עֶשְׂרִים עִיר בְּאֶרֶץ הַגָּלִיל: ^{יב} וַיֵּצֵא
חִירָם מִצֹּר לְרֹאוֹת אֶת־הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לּוֹ

to them, ⁷ then I will cut Israel off from the land I have given them, and I will send away from my presence this Temple that I have consecrated for my name, and Israel shall become a proverb and a byword among all the nations. ⁸ This Temple will become a heap of ruins; all who pass by will be astounded; they will whistle and say, “Why has Yahweh done such a thing to this country and to this Temple?” ⁹ And the answer will be, “Because they deserted Yahweh their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshipped them and served them; that is why Yahweh has brought all these disasters on them.””

¹⁰ And it came to pass that, at the end of the twenty years, in which Solomon erected the two buildings, the Temple of Yahweh and the royal palace ¹¹ (Hiram king of Tyre had provided Solomon with as much cedar wood, cypress wood and gold as he had wanted), King Solomon gave Hiram twenty towns in the land of Galilee. ¹² However, when Hiram came from Tyre to view the towns that Solomon had given him,

⁷ For ‘I will send away’, the parallel 2Ch 7:20 has ‘I will throw away’; the verbs sound very similar, so we may have an oral transmission error.

⁸ The opening of this verse (‘This Temple will become a heap of ruins’) follows the *Peshitta*, *NRSV* & *NETB*; the *MT*’s opening (‘This Temple will be exalted’) makes little sense in this context, which predicts the desolation that judgement will bring. The *NJB*, following the *LXX* (καὶ ὁ οἶκος οὕτως ὁ ὑψηλός), has ‘As for this exalted Temple’.

⁹ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁰ Throughout this book, the *NRSV* has ‘the king’s house’ in place of ‘the royal palace’, here following the *NJB*.

¹¹ This reminiscence is a clumsy addition, since it refers to a different bargain: Solomon sells part of his territory for gold (v. 14).

¹² Literally translated, this verse ends, “they were not agreeable in his eyes.”

שְׁלֹמֹה וְלֹא יִשְׁרוּ בְּעֵינָיו: י' וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה הָעָרִים
הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּה לִּי אָחִי וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶם אֶרֶץ כָּבוֹל
עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: {פ}

י"ד וַיִּשְׁלַח חִירָם לַמֶּלֶךְ מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים כֶּכָר זָהָב:
טו וְזֶה דְּבַר־הַמָּס אֲשֶׁר־הֶעֱלָה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה
לְבָנוֹת אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶת־הַמִּלּוֹא וְאֶת
חוֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת־חֲצֹר וְאֶת־מִגְדּוֹ וְאֶת־גִּזְרִי:
טז פָּרָעָה מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם עָלָה וַיִּלְכֹּד אֶת־גִּזְרִי
וַיִּשְׂרָפָהּ בָּאֵשׁ וְאֶת־הַכְּנַעֲנִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּעִיר הָרֶג
וַיִּתְּנָהּ שְׁלֹחִים לְבָתוֹ אֵשֶׁת שְׁלֹמֹה: יז וַיִּבֶן שְׁלֹמֹה
אֶת־גִּזְרִי וְאֶת־בֵּית חָרֹן תַּחְתּוֹן: יח וְאֶת־בַּעַלְתַּ
וְאֶת־תַּדְמֹר תֹּמֶר בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ: יט וְאֵת כָּל־עָרֵי
הַמִּסְכָּנוֹת אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ לְשְׁלֹמֹה וְאֵת עָרֵי הָרֶכֶב וְאֵת
עָרֵי הַפָּרָשִׁים וְאֵת חֶשֶׁק שְׁלֹמֹה אֲשֶׁר חֶשֶׁק
לְבָנוֹת בִּירוּשָׁלַם וּבְלִבְנוֹן וּבְכָל אֶרֶץ מִמְּשַׁלְתּוֹ:

he was not pleased with them. ¹³ Therefore, he said, "What kind of towns are these you have given me, my brother?" So, to this day, they are called, "the land of Cabul."

¹⁴ And Hiram sent the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold.

¹⁵ This is an account of the forced labour King Solomon conscripted for the building of the Temple of Yahweh, his own palace, the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer ¹⁶ (Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had gone up and captured Gezer; he burnt it down and he massacred the Canaanites living there; he then gave the town as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife, ¹⁷ and Solomon rebuilt Gezer), and Lower Beth-Horon, ¹⁸ and Baalath, and Tamar in the wilderness, inside the country, ¹⁹ as well as all the garrison towns owned by Solomon, and all the towns for his chariots and horses, and all it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the countries under his dominion. ²⁰ All the people who survived of the Amorites, the

¹³ It is not certain what connexion there is between the place name and Hiram's comment; 'Cabul' (כבול), perhaps, means, 'good for nothing'.

¹⁴ The term כֶּכָר (literally, 'circle') refers generally to something that is round; when used of metals, it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or to a standard unit of weight. A talent is ~33 Kg, so this would have amounted to about 4 tonnes of gold.

¹⁵ The 'Millo' was an earth fill against the rocky hill on which stood the Temple and the palace.

¹⁶ This verse (and the first part of v. 17) is a parenthetical note by the author.

¹⁷ The 2nd part of this verse continues the list from v. 15.

¹⁸ NETB omits the phrase 'inside the country'. The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁹ The war chariots, core of Solomon's standing army, were stationed in the towns just enumerated.

²⁰ The NRSV has 'people' in place of 'sons', here following the MT.

כ כל־הָעַם הַנּוֹתָר מִן־הָאֲמֹרִי הַחִתִּי הַפְּרִזִּי הַחֹזִי וְהַיְבוּסִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵמָּה: כא בְּנֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר נִתְּרוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָכְלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַחֲרִימָם וַיַּעֲלֵם שְׁלֹמֹה לְמַס־עֲבָד עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: כב וּמִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־נָתַן שְׁלֹמֹה עֲבָד כִּי־הֵם אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה וְעַבְדָּיו וְשָׂרָיו וְשְׁלִישֵׁי וְשָׂרֵי רֶכֶב וּפָרָשָׁיו: {ס}

כג אֵלֶּה | שָׂרֵי הַנֹּצְבִים אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמְּלָאכָה לְשְׁלֹמֹה חֲמִשִּׁים וַחֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת הָרָדִים בָּעַם הָעֹשִׂים בַּמְּלָאכָה: כד אַךְ בַּת־פָּרְעֹה עָלְתָה מֵעִיר דָּוִד אֶל־בֵּיתָהּ אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה־לָּהּ אָז בָּנָה אֶת־הַמִּלּוֹא: כה וְהָעִלָּה שְׁלֹמֹה שָׁלַח פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה עֲלוֹת וְשִׁלְמִים עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה לַיהוָה וְהַקְטִיר אֹתוֹ אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְשָׁלַם אֶת־הַבַּיִת: כו וְאֵנִי עָשָׂה הַמִּלֵּךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בְּעֶצְיוֹן־גִּבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר אֶת־אֵלוֹת

Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who were not of the sons of Israel, ²¹ their descendants who were left in the country after them, those on whom the Israelites had not been able to enforce the ban, these Solomon conscripted as slave labourers, as they are still. ²² However, Solomon did not impose slave labour on the Israelites; these served as fighting men: they were his guards, officers, equerries, chariot and cavalry commanders.

²³ There were five hundred and fifty officials in charge of Solomon's work, who supervised the people employed in the work. ²⁴ After Pharaoh's daughter had moved from the City of David to the house that he had built for her, he then built the Millo. ²⁵ Three times a year Solomon sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar he had built for Yahweh, offering incense before Yahweh, and he kept the Temple in good repair. ²⁶ King Solomon equipped a fleet at Ezion-Geber, which is near Eloth on the shores of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

²¹ Literally translated, this verse reads, "their sons who were left after them in the land, whom the sons of Israel were unable to wipe out, and Solomon raised them up for a crew of labour to this day."

²² The author's remark does not square with the more ancient, and preferable, data used in 5:27, 11:28 and 12:4.

²³ Literally translated, this verse reads, "these (were) the officials of the governors who were over the work belonging to Solomon, five hundred and fifty, the ones ruling over the people, the ones doing the work."

²⁴ The phrase 'City of David' refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem (see 2S 5:7).

²⁵ In place of 'offering incense before Yahweh', the NJB has 'set his burnt offerings smoking before Yahweh'; the MT is unintelligible. In these early days, the king still exercised priestly functions.

²⁶ In place of 'Eloth', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'Elath'. The 'Red Sea' here refers to the Gulf of Aqaba.

עַל־שִׁפְתַי יִסְּסוּ בְּאֶרֶץ אֲדוֹם: כִּי וַיִּשְׁלַח חִירָם
בְּאֲנִי אֶת־עַבְדָּיו אֲנָשֵׁי יָדָעִי הֵם עִם עַבְדֵי
שְׁלֹמֹה: כִּי וַיָּבֹאוּ אוֹפִירָה וַיִּקְחוּ מִשָּׁם זָהָב אַרְבַּע־
מֵאוֹת וָעֶשְׂרִים כִּכָּר וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה: {פ}

²⁷ Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, sailors who were familiar with the sea, to serve with Solomon's men. ²⁸ They went to Ophir and brought back from there, four hundred and twenty talents of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.

²⁷ The NJB has simply 'knew' in place of 'were familiar with', here following the NRSV.

²⁸ 'Ezion-Geber', near Aqaba, was a port at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba; excavations here have disclosed the refineries in which copper from the Arabah was smelted. 'Ophir' was a gold-bearing region in either southern Arabia or western Africa (compare 10:11 and Gn 10:29). The amount of gold here referred to is about 14 tonnes (see #14).

מלכים א פרק י

א וּמִלְכַּת־שֶׁבָא שָׁמְעַת אֶת־שִׁמְעַת שְׁלֹמֹה לְשֵׁם
יְהוָה וַתָּבֹא לְנִסְתּוֹ בַּחֲדָוֹת: ב וַתָּבֹא יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
בְּחִיל¹ כָּבֵד מְאֹד גְּמָלִים נִשְׂאִים בַּשָּׁמִים וְזֶהָב רַב־
מְאֹד וְאֶבֶן יָקָרָה וַתָּבֹא אֶל־שְׁלֹמֹה וַתְּדַבֵּר אֵלָיו
אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִם־לִבָּבָהּ: ג וַיַּגִּד־לָהּ שְׁלֹמֹה
אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֶיהָ לֹא־הָיָה דָּבָר נֶעְלַם מִן־הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִגִּיד לָהּ: ד וַתֵּרָא מִלְכַּת־שֶׁבָא אֶת כָּל־
חֲכַמַת שְׁלֹמֹה וְהַבֵּית אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה: ה וּמֵאֲכָל שֻׁלְחָנוֹ
וּמוֹשָׁב עַבְדָּיו וּמַעֲמַד מִשְׁרָתוֹ וּמִלְבָּשֵׁיהֶם וּמִשְׁקֵיו
וְעֹלְתוֹ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה בֵּית יְהוָה וְלֹא־הָיָה בָּהּ עוֹד
רוּחַ: ו וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲמַת הָיָה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר
שָׁמַעְתִּי בָאָרֶץ עַל־דִּבְרֶיךָ וְעַל־חֲכַמְתְּךָ: ז וְלֹא־
הָאֵמַנְתִּי לַדְּבָרִים עַד אֲשֶׁר־בָּאתִי וַתֵּרְאֵנִי עֵינִי
וְהִנֵּה לֹא־הִגַּדְתִּי הַחֲצִי הַחֲסִיף חֲכָמָה וְטוֹב אֶל־

1 KINGS 10

¹ When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon (due to the name of Yahweh), she came to test him with hard riddles. ² She came to Jerusalem with great strength, camels laden with spices, great quantities of gold, and precious stones. On coming to Solomon, she opened her mind freely to him; ³ and Solomon had an answer to all her riddles: not one of them was too obscure for the king to expound. ⁴ When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon, the palace he had built, ⁵ the food at his table, the seating for his officials, the attendance of his staff and the way they were dressed, his valets, and the burnt offerings he sacrificed in the Temple of Yahweh, it left her breathless. ⁶ She said to the king, "What I heard in my own country of your accomplishments and your wisdom was true, then!" ⁷ Until I came and saw it with my own eyes, I could not believe what they told me, but clearly, they told me less than half: for, your wisdom and wealth far surpass the report I heard.

1 KINGS 10

- ¹ The NJB, following the parallel text of 2Ch 9:1, omits the parenthesised clause 'due to the name of Yahweh', the meaning of which is uncertain.
- ² The term חִיל ('strength') may refer here to the size of her retinue (cf. NRSV, NAB, NASB & NIV) or to the great wealth she brought with her (cf. NJB).
- ³ Literally translated, this verse reads, "Solomon declared to her all her words; there was not a word hidden from the king which he did not declare to her."
- ⁴ In place of 'all the wisdom of Solomon', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'Solomon's extensive wisdom'.
- ⁵ In place of 'it left her breathless', the NRSV has 'there was no more spirit in her' (the Hebrew word for 'spirit' can also mean 'breath').
- ⁶ The NJB has 'about you' in place of 'of your accomplishments', here following the NRSV.
- ⁷ The literal translation of 'wealth' is 'good'.

הַשְׁמוּעָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי: ^ח אֲשֶׁרִי אֲנֹשִׁיךָ אֲשֶׁרִי
 עֲבַדְיָךָ אֵלֶּה הָעַמָּדִים לְפָנֶיךָ תָּמִיד הַשְׁמָעִים אֶת־
 חֲכַמְתֶּךָ: ^ט יְהִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בָּרוּךְ אֲשֶׁר חָפֵץ בָּךְ
 לְתִתֶּךָ עַל־כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבַת יְהוָה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
 לְעָלִים וַיְשִׁימֶךָ לְמֶלֶךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה:
 'וַתֵּן לְמֶלֶךְ מֶאֱהָ וְעֶשְׂרִים | פָּכָר זָהָב וּבִשְׁמִים
 הָרַבָּה מְאֹד וְאִבְנֵי יָקָרָה לֹא בָּא כַּבֶּשֶׂם הַהוּא עוֹד
 לְרֹב אֲשֶׁר־נָתַנָּה מִלְכַּת־שֶׁבָא לְמֶלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה:
^י וְגַם אֲנִי חִירָם אֲשֶׁר־נָשָׂא זָהָב מֵאוֹפִיר הֵבִיא
 מֵאוֹפִיר עֲצֵי אֱלִמְגִּים הָרַבָּה מְאֹד וְאִבְנֵי יָקָרָה:
^{יב} וַיַּעַשׂ הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־עֲצֵי הָאֱלִמְגִּים מִסְעָד לְבֵית־
 יְהוָה וּלְבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ וּכְנָרוֹת וְנִבְלִים לְשָׁרִים לֹא בָּא־
 כֵּן עֲצֵי אֱלִמְגִּים וְלֹא נִרְאָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ^{יג} וְהַמֶּלֶךְ
 שְׁלֹמֹה נָתַן לְמִלְכַּת־שֶׁבָא אֶת־כָּל־חֲפָצָהּ אֲשֶׁר
 שְׁאַלָה מִלְּבַד אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לָהּ כִּיד הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה
 וַתָּפֶן וַתֵּלֶךְ לְאַרְצָהּ הִיא וְעַבְדֶּיהָ: {פ}

⁸ How happy your wives are! How happy are your servants, who wait on you always and hear your wisdom! ⁹ Blessed be Yahweh your God who has delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because of Yahweh's everlasting love for Israel, he has made you king to deal out law and justice." ¹⁰ Then she presented the king with a hundred and twenty talents of gold and great quantities of spices and precious stones; no such wealth of spices ever came again as those given to King Solomon by the queen of Sheba. ¹¹ Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which carried gold from Ophir, brought great cargoes of almug timber and precious stones. ¹² The king made supports with the almug timber for the Temple of Yahweh and for the royal palace, and lyres and harps for the musicians; no more of this almug timber has since come or been seen to this day. ¹³ Meanwhile, King Solomon presented the queen of Sheba with all she expressed a wish for, as well as those presents he gave her out of his royal bounty. Then she went home, she and her servants, to her own country.

⁸ 'Wives' follows the LXX (γυναῖκες) and Peshitta; the MT has 'men'.

⁹ In place of 'delighted in you', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has 'granted you favour'.

¹⁰ On the weight of a talent of gold, see #9:14 – this was, indeed, a mighty gift, amounting to around 4 tonnes of gold!

¹¹ 'Almug' was a rare, possibly scented wood (possibly Indian sandalwood). According to 2Ch 2:7, the wood came from Lebanon.

¹² The architectural term translated 'supports' occurs only here; the meaning is uncertain: some have suggested 'banisters', 'parapets' or 'railings' (NLT). The parallel passage in 2Ch 9:11 has a different word, meaning 'tracks', or perhaps 'steps'.

¹³ The Ethiopians (Abyssinians) have a tradition according to which 'all she expressed a wish for' included an heir, who later became king of Ethiopia, thus establishing the true dynasty of David for that country.

י^ד וַיְהִי מִשְׁקַל הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר-בָּא לְשִׁלְמֹה בְּשָׁנָה
אַחַת שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת שְׁשִׁים וּשְׁשׁ כֶּכֶר זָהָב: ^{טו} לְבַד
מֵאֲנָשֵׁי הַתָּרִים וּמִסַּחֲר הַרְכָּלִים וְכָל-מַלְכֵי הָעָרֶב
וּפְחוֹת הָאָרֶץ: ^{טז} וַיַּעַשׂ הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מֵאֲתִים צֹנָה
זָהָב שְׁחוּט שֵׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת זָהָב יַעֲלֶה עַל-הַצֹּנָה
הָאֶחָת: ^{יז} וּשְׁלֹשׁ-מֵאוֹת מִגָּנִים זָהָב שְׁחוּט שְׁלֹשֶׁת
מִנִּים זָהָב יַעֲלֶה עַל-הַמִּגָּן הָאֶחָת וַיִּתֵּן הַמֶּלֶךְ
בֵּית יַעֲר הַלְּבָנוֹן: {פ}

יח^{יח} וַיַּעַשׂ הַמֶּלֶךְ כֶּסֶּא-שֵׁן גָּדוֹל וַיַּצְפֶּהוּ זָהָב מוֹפָז:
יט^{יט} שֵׁשׁ מַעֲלֹת לַכֶּסֶּה וְרֹאשׁ-עֵגֹל לַכֶּסֶּה מֵאַחֲרָיו
וַיִּדֹת מִזָּה וּמִזָּה אֶל-מְקוֹם הַשְּׁבֵת וּשְׁנַיִם אֲרִיֹת
עַמֻּדִים אֵצֶל הַיְדוֹת: ^כ וּשְׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר אֲרִיִּים עַמֻּדִים
שָׁם עַל-שֵׁשׁ הַמַּעֲלֹת מִזָּה וּמִזָּה לֹא-נַעֲשֶׂה בֵּן
לְכָל-מַמְלָכוֹת: ^{כא} וְכָל כְּלֵי מִשְׁקָה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה
זָהָב וְכָל כְּלֵי בֵּית יַעֲר הַלְּבָנוֹן זָהָב סָגוֹר אֵין כֶּסֶף

¹⁴ The weight of gold coming to Solomon in one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, ¹⁵ not counting what came in from merchants' dues and traders' profits, and from all the foreign kings and the governors of the country. ¹⁶ King Solomon made three hundred great shields of beaten gold and plated each shield with six hundred shekels of gold; ¹⁷ also three hundred small shields of beaten gold and plated each of these with three minas of gold; and he put them in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸ The king also made a great ivory throne and plated it with refined gold. ¹⁹ The throne had six steps. The top of the throne was rounded and with bulls' heads at the back; on either side of the seat were arm rests, with two lions standing beside the arm rests, ²⁰ while twelve lions stood on either side of the six steps. No throne like this was ever made in any other kingdom. ²¹ All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the furnishings in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold;

¹⁴ On the weight of a talent of gold, see #9:14 – the annual income here is around 23 tonnes of gold.

¹⁵ 'Dues' follows the LXX (φόρων); the MT has 'men'.

¹⁶ The MT ends this verse with 'six hundred', with no unit of measure given.

¹⁷ If there were 50 shekels in a mina (Ezk 45:12), the smaller shields weighed 150 shekels. The 'Hall of the Forest of Lebanon' was an appropriate name because of the large amount of cedar, undoubtedly brought from Lebanon, used in its construction.

¹⁸ In place of 'refined', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'finest' and NETB has 'pure'.

¹⁹ The NJB lacks 'was rounded' and the NRSV lacks 'with bulls' heads'.

²⁰ Literally translated, this verse ends, "nothing like it had been made for all the kingdoms."

²¹ Literally translated, this verse ends, "there was no silver; it was not regarded as anything in the days of Solomon."

לֹא נִחְשַׁב בְּיָמַי שְׁלֹמָה לְמֵאוֹמָה: כִּי אֲנִי
 תִּרְשִׁישׁ לַמֶּלֶךְ בַּיָּם עִם אֲנִי חִירָם אַחַת לְשָׁלֹשׁ
 שָׁנִים תָּבוֹא | אֲנִי תִרְשִׁישׁ נִשְׂאֵת זֶהָב וְכֶסֶף
 שְׁנֵהָבִים וְקָפִים וְתַכְיִים: כִּי וַיַּגְדֵּל הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמָה
 מִכָּל מַלְכֵי הָאָרֶץ לְעֶשֶׂר וּלְחֻכְמָה: כִּי וְכָל־הָאָרֶץ
 מִבְּקָשִׁים אֶת־פָּנָי שְׁלֹמָה לְשִׁמְעַת אֶת־חֻכְמָתוֹ
 אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן אֱלֹהִים בְּלִבּוֹ: כִּי וְהָמָּה מִבָּאִים אִישׁ
 מִנְּחָתוֹ כָּלִי כֶסֶף וְכָלִי זָהָב וְשִׁלְמוֹת וְנֶגֶשׁ וּבִשְׂמִים
 סוּסִים וּפָרָדִים דְּבַר־שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה: {ס}

כִּי וַיֵּאֱסֹף שְׁלֹמָה רֶכֶב וּפָרָשִׁים וַיְהִי־לּוֹ אֵלָיו
 וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת רֶכֶב וּשְׁנַיִם־עֶשְׂרֵי אֵלָיו פָּרָשִׁים
 וַיִּנְחֵם בְּעָרֵי הָרֶכֶב וְעַם־הַמֶּלֶךְ בִּירוּשָׁלַם: כִּי וַיִּתֵּן
 הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף בִּירוּשָׁלַם כַּאֲבָנִים וְאֵת הָאֲרָזִים
 נָתַן כַּשֻּׁקִּים אֲשֶׁר־בְּשִׁפְלָה לָרֶב: כִּי וּמוֹצָא

none were of silver, which was little thought of in Solomon's time. ²² The king also had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with Hiram's fleet, and once every three years the fleet of Tarshish would come back laden with gold and silver, ivory, apes, and baboons. ²³ For riches and for wisdom King Solomon outdid all the kings of the earth. ²⁴ The whole world sought audience of Solomon to hear the wisdom God had implanted in his heart ²⁵ and each would bring his own present: gold vessels, silver vessels, robes, armour, spices, horses, and mules; and this went on year after year.

²⁶ Solomon built up a force of chariots and horses; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses; these he stationed in the chariot towns and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁷ In Jerusalem, the king made silver as common as pebbles and cedars as plentiful as the sycamores of the Lowlands. ²⁸ Solomon's horses were imported from

²² The identification of 'Tarshish' with Tartessos (a Phoenician colony in Spain) is unlikely. The word may mean 'foundry' and Tarshish ships would therefore be those used for transporting metal or ore (see 22:49), hence very large and strong (see Ps 48:7, Is 23:1, 14, 60:9, Ezk 27:25).

²³ The literal translation of this verse is, "King Solomon was greater than all the kings of the earth with respect to wealth and with respect to wisdom."

²⁴ In place of 'the whole world', the LXX (πάντες βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς) and Peshitta have 'all the kings of the earth' (cf. 2Ch 9:23).

²⁵ The NRSV has 'weaponry' in place of 'armour', here following the NJB.

²⁶ The NJB has 'near the king' in place of 'with the king', here following the MT & NRSV.

²⁷ The NRSV uses the name, 'Shephelah' (שִׁפְלָה) in place of 'Lowlands'.

²⁸ The NRSV, following the MT, uses 'Egypt and Kue' in place of 'Muzur and Cilicia'. Cilicia was in southeast Asia Minor. Vv. 28-29 perhaps indicate a trade in two directions: Solomon's courtiers supplied to Egypt horses imported from Asia Minor, and to the 'Hittite kings' in northern Syria and the 'Aramaean kings' in southern Syria chariots imported from Egypt.

הַסּוֹסִים אֲשֶׁר לְשִׁלְמָה מִמִּצְרַיִם וּמִקֹּוֹה סַחְרֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ יִקְחוּ מִקֹּוֹה בְּמַחִיר: כֹּט וְתַעֲלָה וְתִצָּא
מִרֶכְבָּה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּשֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת כֶּסֶף וְסוֹס
בְּחֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאָה וְכֹן לְכָל-מֶלֶכִי הַחִתִּים וּלְמֶלֶכִי
אַרָם בְּיָדָם יֵצְאוּ: {פ}

Muzur and Cilicia. The king's dealers acquired them from Cilicia at the prevailing price.²⁹ A chariot could be imported from Egypt for six hundred shekels, a horse for a hundred and fifty. These were exported through the king's agents to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Aram in the same way.

²⁹ Literally translated, this verse reads, "and a chariot went up and came out of Egypt for six hundred silver (pieces), and a horse for one hundred fifty, and in the same way to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Aram by their hand they brought out."

מלכים א פרק יא

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א וְהַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה אָהֵב נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת רַבּוֹת וְאֶת־
בִּת־פַּרְעֹה מוֹאבִּיּוֹת עַמֻּנִיּוֹת אֲדָמִית צִדְנִית
חִתִּית: ב מִן־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר־יְהוָה אֶל־בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־תָבֹאוּ בָהֶם וְהֵם לֹא־יָבֹאוּ בָכֶם אֲכַן
יִטּוּ אֶת־לִבְבְּכֶם אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהֵיהֶם בָּהֶם דָּבַק שְׁלֹמֹה
לְאַהֲבָה: ג וַיְהִי־לּוֹ נָשִׁים שְׁרוֹת שְׁבַע מֵאוֹת
וּפְלִגְשִׁים שֶׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וַיִּטּוּ נָשָׁיו אֶת־לִבּוֹ: ד וַיְהִי
לְעֵת זִקְנַת שְׁלֹמֹה נָשָׁיו הָטוּ אֶת־לִבָּבּוֹ אַחֲרֵי
אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְלֹא־הָיָה לִבָּבּוֹ שָׁלֵם עִם־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהָיו כְּלָבֵב דָּוִיד אָבִיו: ה וַיֵּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה אַחֲרֵי
עֲשֹׂת־רַת אֱלֹהֵי צִדְנִים וְאַחֲרֵי מִלְכָם שֶׁקֶץ עַמֻּנִים:
ו וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלֹמֹה הָרַע בְּעֵינָי יְהוָה וְלֹא מִלֵּא אַחֲרֵי
יְהוָה כְּדָוִד אָבִיו: {ס} ז אֵז יִבְנֶה שְׁלֹמֹה בִמֶּה
לְכַמּוֹשׁ שֶׁקֶץ מוֹאָב בְּהָר אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם

1 King Solomon fell in love with many foreign women; not only Pharaoh' daughter but Moabites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites, 2 from those people of whom Yahweh had said to the Israelites, "You are not to go to them nor they to you, or they will surely sway your hearts to their own gods." But Solomon clung to them in love. 3 Among his wives were seven hundred princesses and three hundred concubines; and his wives swayed his heart. 4 When Solomon grew old, his wives swayed his heart to other gods; and his heart was not wholly with Yahweh his God, as his father David's heart had been. 5 Solomon became a follower of Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, and of Milcom, the Ammonite abomination. 6 He did what was displeasing to Yahweh, and was not a wholehearted follower of Yahweh, as his father David had been. 7 Then it was that Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the god of Moab on the mountain to the east of Jerusalem, and

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- ¹ The NJB & NRSV have simply 'loved' in place of 'fell in love with', here following NETB.
- ² The pronominal suffix, translated 'them' in the last sentence is masculine, even though it appears the foreign women are in view; perhaps this is due to attraction to the masculine forms used of the nations earlier in the verse.
- ³ The NJB, following the LXX, omits 'and his wives swayed his heart' (a duplicate of part of v. 4).
- ⁴ The NJB omits the 3rd occurrence of 'heart', here following the MT & NRSV.
- ⁵ 'Astarte' is the Greek name (Ἀστάρτη, from עֲשֹׂת־רַת) of a goddess known in the Eastern Mediterranean from the Bronze Age to classical times.
- ⁶ The literal, idiomatic translation of 'was not a wholehearted follower of' is 'did not fill up after'.
- ⁷ Following the LXX, the NJB has 'Milcom' in place of 'Molech' (cf. v. 5).

וּלְמֹלֶךְ שֶׁקֶץ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן: ^ח וְכֵן עָשָׂה לְכָל־נָשָׁיו
הַנִּכְרִיּוֹת מִקְטִירֹת וּמִזְבְּחוֹת לֵאלֹהֵיהֶן: ^ט וַיִּתְּאֶנְף
יְהוָה בְּשַׁלְמָה כִּי־נָטָה לִבּוֹ מֵעַם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּרְאָה אֵלָיו פַּעַמִּים: ^י וְצֹוָה אֵלָיו עַל־
הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לְבַלְתִּי־לָכֶת אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְלֹא
שָׁמַר אֶת אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה: {פ}

^{יא} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לְשַׁלְמָה יֵעַן אֲשֶׁר הִיתָה־זֹאת עִמָּךְ
וְלֹא שָׁמַרְתָּ בְרִיתִי וְחֻקֹּתַי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי עָלֶיךָ קִרְע
אֶקְרַע אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה מֵעָלֶיךָ וְנָתַתִּיהָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ:
^{יב} אֲדָ־בִימֶיךָ לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂנָה לְמַעַן דָּוִד אָבִיךָ מִיַּד בְּנֶךָ
אֶקְרַעֶנָה: ^{יג} רַק אֶת־כָּל־הַמַּמְלָכָה לֹא אֶקְרַע שְׁבֹט
אֶחָד אֶתֶּן לְבָנֶךָ לְמַעַן דָּוִד עַבְדִּי וּלְמַעַן יְרוּשָׁלַם
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתִּי: {ס} ^{יד} וַיִּקַּם יְהוָה שָׁטָן לְשַׁלְמָה אֶת
הַדָּד הָאֱדוֹמִי מִזֶּרַע הַמֶּלֶךְ הוּא בְּאֵדוֹם: ^{טו} וַיְהִי

to Molech the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁸ He did the same for all his foreign wives, who offered incense and sacrifice to their gods. ⁹ Yahweh was angry with Solomon because his heart had turned from Yahweh the God of Israel who had twice appeared to him ¹⁰ and who had then forbidden him to follow other gods; but he did not keep the command of Yahweh.

¹¹ So, Yahweh said to Solomon, "Since you behave like this and do not keep my Covenant or the laws I laid down for you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. ¹² Yet, for your father David's sake, I will not do this during your lifetime: I will tear it out of your son's hands. ¹³ But I will not tear the whole kingdom from him: for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen, I will leave your son one tribe." ¹⁴ Yahweh raised an enemy against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite, of the royal

⁸ Literally translated, this verse reads, "and the same thing he did for all his foreign wives, (who) were burning incense and sacrificing to their gods."

⁹ The 2 appearances are mentioned in 3:5 and 9:2.

¹⁰ The NJB has 'carry out the order' in place of 'keep the command'.

¹¹ The NJB ends with 'to one of your servants' in place of 'to your servant', here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.

¹² The 'threat' of removing the inheritance of his son would have been a bitter blow to any king of the ancient Middle East.

¹³ Solomon's marriages to foreign wives were contracted for political ends and the non-Yahwist (pagan) shrines were set up for his wives and for visiting traders. Such contracts, however, jeopardised the purity of the religion of Yahweh, and the author interprets the situation in the spirit and language of Deuteronomy: God punishes this form of impiety by raising up enemies abroad (vv. 14ff) and at home (vv. 26ff). In this connexion, Dt 17:14-20, from the same school of writers as the present passage, should be carefully considered.

¹⁴ The NJB has 'kingly stock' in place of 'royal house', here following the NRSV.

בְּהִיּוֹת דָּוִד אֶת־אֲדֹם בַּעֲלוֹת יוֹאָב שֶׁר הֶעֱבָא
 לְקַבֵּר אֶת־הַחֲלָלִים וַיֵּךְ כָּל־זָכָר בְּאֲדֹם: טז כִּי
 שֵׁשֶׁת חֳדָשִׁים יָשַׁב־שָׁם יוֹאָב וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד־
 הַכְרִית כָּל־זָכָר בְּאֲדֹם: יז וַיִּבְרַח אֲדָד הוּא
 וְאֲנָשִׁים אֲדָמִיִּים מֵעַבְדֵי אָבִיו אֲתוֹ לָבוֹא מִצְרִים
 וַהֲדָד גַּעַר קָטָן: יח וַיִּקְמוּ מִמִּדְיָן וַיָּבֹאוּ פָּאֶרָן וַיִּקְחוּ
 אֲנָשִׁים עִמָּם מִפָּאֶרָן וַיָּבֹאוּ מִצְרִים אֶל־פְּרָעָה
 מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם וַיִּתֵּן־לוֹ בַּיִת וְלֶחֶם אָמַר לוֹ וְאֶרֶץ נָתַן
 לוֹ: יט וַיִּמְצָא הֲדָד חָן בַּעֲיָנִי פְרָעָה מֶלֶךְ וַיִּתֵּן־לוֹ
 אִשָּׁה אֶת־אָחוֹת אִשְׁתּוֹ אָחוֹת תַּחֲפִנִּים הַגְּבִירָה:
 כ וַתֵּלֶד לוֹ אָחוֹת תַּחֲפִנִּים אֶת גִּנְבַּת בִּנּוֹ וַתִּגְמְלֶהּ
 תַּחֲפִנִּים בְּתוֹךְ בֵּית פְּרָעָה וְהִיא גִנְבַת בֵּית פְּרָעָה
 בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי פְרָעָה: כא וַהֲדָד שָׁמַע בְּמִצְרַיִם כִּי־שָׁכַב
 דָּוִד עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וְכִי־מָת יוֹאָב שֶׁר־הָעֶבֶא וַיֹּאמֶר

house of Edom. ¹⁵ After David had crushed Edom, Joab the army commander had gone to bury the dead and had killed every male in Edom: ¹⁶ Joab stayed there with all Israel for six months, until he had eliminated every male Edom; ¹⁷ but Hadad, with a number of Edomites in his father's service, had fled to Egypt. Hadad had been only a boy at the time. ¹⁸ They set out from Midian and, on reaching Paran, took a number of men from Paran with them and went on to Egypt, to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, who gave him a house, undertook to maintain him, and gave him land. ¹⁹ Hadad became a great favourite of Pharaoh who gave him his own wife's sister in marriage, the sister of the Great Lady Tahpenes. ²⁰ The sister of Tahpenes bore him his son Genubath, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's palace, Genubath living with Pharaoh's children. ²¹ When Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, he said to

¹⁵ David had conquered Edom (the 'every male' is, of course, an exaggeration). Near the beginning of Solomon's reign (v. 21), Hadad the Edomite revolted rather successfully (v. 25).

¹⁶ The NJB & NRSV place this entire verse in parentheses.

¹⁷ The MT here reads 'Adad' (אֲדָד) in place of 'Hadad' (הֲדָד) – an alternative form of the same name.

¹⁸ Literally translated, this verse reads, "and they arose from Midian and went to Paran and they took men with them from Paran and went to Egypt to Pharaoh, king of Egypt and he gave to him a house and food and he said to him, and a land he gave to him." Something seems to be accidentally omitted after 'and he said to him'.

¹⁹ 'Tahpenes' is not a proper name but an Egyptian title, 'the King's Wife', approximately rendered by the Hebrew title, 'the Great Lady' used to designate the Queen Mother (see #15:13).

²⁰ NETB has 'raised' in place of 'weaned', conjecturally altering the text from וַתִּגְמְלֶהּ to וַתִּגְדֶּלֶהּ.

²¹ The NJB & NRSV have 'ancestors' in place of 'fathers', here following the MT.

הָדָד אֶל-פְּרָעָה שָׁלַחְנִי וְאֵלַי אֶל-אַרְצִי: כִּב וַיֹּאמֶר
 לוֹ פְּרָעָה כִּי מִה-אַתָּה חָסֵר עָמִי וְהֵנָּה מִבְּקֶשׁ
 לָלֶכֶת אֶל-אַרְצֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר | לֹא כִי שָׁלַח תִּשְׁלַחְנִי:
 כִּב וַיִּקָּם אֱלֹהִים לוֹ שָׁטָן אֶת-רִזּוֹן בֶּן-אֱלִידָע אֲשֶׁר
 בָּרַח מֵאֵת הַדְּדַעְזֵר מֶלֶךְ-צוּבָה אֲדָנָיו: כִּד וַיִּקְבֹּץ
 עָלָיו אֲנָשִׁים וַיְהִי שָׂר-גִּדּוֹד בַּהֲרֹג דָּוִד אֹתָם וַיֵּלְכוּ
 דֹּמֶשֶׁק וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בָּהּ וַיִּמְלְכוּ בְּדִמְשֶׁק: כִּה וַיְהִי שָׁטָן
 לְיִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל-יְמֵי שְׁלֹמֹה וְאֶת-הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר הָדָד
 וַיִּקָּץ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּמְלֹךְ עַל-אַרְם: {פ}

כִּו וַיְרַבְעַם בֶּן-נִבַּט אֶפְרָתִי מִן-הָעֲרָדָה וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ
 צְרוּעָה אִשָּׁה אֱלִמָּנָה עֶבֶד לְשֹׁלְמֹה וַיִּרְם יָד
 בַּמֶּלֶךְ: כִּז וְזֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר-הָרִים יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה
 בָּנָה אֶת-הַמִּלּוֹא סָגַר אֶת-פֶּרֶץ עִיר דָּוִד אָבִיו:

Pharaoh, “Let me return to my own country.” ²² Pharaoh said, “Do you lack anything here with me, that you now ask to return to your own country?” “No,” he replied, “but please let me go.” ^{25a} Hence the harm that Hadad caused: he loathed Israel and ruled Edom. ²³ God raised a second enemy against him, Rezon son of Eliada. He had fled from his master, Hadadezer king of Zobah. ²⁴ A number of men having rallied to him, he had become a leader of a marauding band, after the slaughter by David. Rezon captured Damascus and settled there, and became king of Damascus. ²⁵ He was hostile to Israel as long as Solomon lived.

²⁶ Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon whose mother’s name was Zeruah, a widow, rebelled against the king. ²⁷ This is the account of his revolt. Solomon was building the Millo and closing the breach in the wall of the City of David his father.

²² This lengthy description of Hadad’s exile in Egypt explains why Hadad wanted to oppose Solomon and supports the author’s thesis that his hostility to Solomon found its ultimate source in divine providence: though Hadad enjoyed a comfortable life in Egypt, when Yahweh raised him up (apparently stirring up his desire for vengeance), he decided to leave the comforts of Egypt and return to Edom.

^{25a} This verse, transposed from the end of v. 25, is numbered 25^b in the *NJB* (see #25).

²³ The *NJB* & *NRSV* have ‘Solomon’ in place of ‘him’, here following the *MT*.

²⁴ For ‘after the slaughter by David’ (here following the *NRSV*), the *MT* reads ‘when David killed them’, a phrase is traditionally joined with what precedes. The *LXX* does not reflect the phrase and some suggest that it has been misplaced from the end of v. 23.

²⁵ The order of vv. 23–25, disturbed by the insertion of the note on Rezon, has been restored and follows the *LXX* (see #25^a). Damascus, once controlled by David (2S 8:3–6, 10:15–19), became an independent kingdom and was to prove a bitter enemy of Israel, thus the empire of David began to melt away under Solomon.

²⁶ The term ‘Ephrathite’ (אֶפְרָתִי) here means ‘Ephraimite’ (as, indeed, the *NJB* & *NRSV* interpret it).

²⁷ The *NJB* lacks, ‘the wall of’. The phrase, ‘City of David’, refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem.

כח וְהָאִישׁ יִרְבֵּעַם גִּבּוֹר חָיִל וַיֵּרָא שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־
הַנְּעָר כִּי־עָשָׂה מְלָאכָה הוּא וַיִּפְקֹד אֹתוֹ לְכָל־סֹבֵל
בֵּית יוֹסֵף: {ס}

כט וַיְהִי בַּעַת הַהִיא וַיִּרְבֵּעַם יָצָא מִירוּשָׁלַם וַיִּמְצָא
אֹתוֹ אַחִיָּה הַשִּׁילֹנִי הַנָּבִיא בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְהוּא מִתְפַּסֵּה
בְּשִׁלְמָה חֲדָשָׁה וּשְׁנֵיהֶם לְבָדָם בַּשָּׂדֶה: ל וַיִּתְפֹּשׁ
אַחִיָּה בְּשִׁלְמָה הַחֲדָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו וַיִּקְרַעְהָ שְׁנַיִם
עָשָׂר קָרְעִים: לא וַיֹּאמֶר לִירְבֵּעַם קַח־לָךְ עֲשֶׂרָה
קָרְעִים כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִנְנִי קָרַעַ
אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה מִיַּד שְׁלֹמֹה וְנָתַתִּי לָךְ אֶת עֲשֶׂרָה
הַשְּׁבָטִים: לב וְהַשְּׁבֵט הָאֶחָד יִהְיֶה־לּוֹ לְמַעַן עַבְדִּי
דָּוִד וּלְמַעַן יְרוּשָׁלַם הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲרָתִי בָּהּ מִכָּל
שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: לג יַעֲזֹן אֲשֶׁר עֲזָבוּנִי וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ
לְעִשְׂתָּרֶת אֱלֹהֵי צִדְנִין לְכִמּוֹשׁ אֱלֹהֵי מוֹאָב
וּלְמֶלֶכֶם אֱלֹהֵי בְנֵי־עַמּוֹן וְלֹא־הָלְכוּ בְּדַרְכֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת
הַיֹּשֵׁר בְּעֵינַי וַחֲקָתִי וּמִשְׁפָּטִי כְּדוֹד אָבִיו: לד וְלֹא־

²⁸ Now this Jeroboam was a man of strength; Solomon, noticing how the young man set about his work, put him in charge of all the forced labour of the House of Joseph.

²⁹ About that time, when Jeroboam had gone out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah of Shiloh accosted him on the road. Ahijah had clothed himself in a new garment; the two of them were in the open country by themselves. ³⁰ Ahijah laid hold of the new garment he was wearing and tore it into twelve strips, ³¹ saying to Jeroboam, “Take ten strips for yourself, for this is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: “I am going to tear the kingdom from Solomon’s hand and give ten tribes to you. ³² He shall keep one tribe for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel. ³³ This is because he has forsaken me to worship Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh, the god of Moab, and Milcom, the god of the Ammonites; he has not followed my ways by doing what is right in my eyes or keeping my laws and ordinances, as his father David did.

²⁸ In place of ‘man of strength’, here following the MT, the NJB has ‘man of rank’, the NRSV has ‘very able’ and NETB has ‘talented man’.

²⁹ The MT starts the 2nd sentence with the pronoun ‘he’, making it a bit unclear whether Jeroboam or Ahijah is the subject, but the word order has ‘Ahijah’ as the nearer antecedent and this is followed by the present translation (and cf. v. 30).

³⁰ The symbolic gestures of the prophets are not only meaningful but also have a real effect (see #Jr 18:1).

³¹ The ten pieces assigned to Jeroboam are the ten northern tribes (see 2S 19:44); the two pieces left for Solomon’s successor represent only one tribe, Judah, which had absorbed Simeon (Jos 19:1).

³² The NRSV opens this verse, here following the NJB, with, “One tribe shall remain his...”

³³ ‘He has forsaken’ follows the LXX (ὃν κατέλιπεν), Peshitta and Vg (dereliquerit); the MT has ‘they have forsaken’.

אֶקַח אֶת-כָּל-הַמַּמְלָכָה מִיָּדוֹ כִּי | נָשִׂיא אֲשַׁתְּנוּ כָּל
 יָמֵי חַיָּיו לְמַעַן דָּוִד עַבְדִּי אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתִּי אֹתוֹ אֲשֶׁר
 שָׁמַר מִצְוֹתַי וְחֻקֹּתַי: ^ל וְלִקְחֹתִי הַמְּלוּכָה מִיָּד בְּנוֹ
 וְנָתַתִּיהָ לָּךְ אֶת עֶשְׂרֵת הַשִּׁבְטִים: ^{לו} וְלִבְנוֹ אֶתֵּן
 שִׁבְט־אֶחָד לְמַעַן הִיֹּת-נֵיר לְדָוִיד עַבְדִּי כָּל-
 הַיָּמִים | לְפָנַי בִּירוּשָׁלַם הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתִּי לִי
 לְשׁוֹם שְׁמִי שָׁם: ^{לז} וְאַתָּה אֶקַח וּמַלְכָּתָּ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר-
 תִּאֲוָה נַפְשְׁךָ וְהָיִיתָ מֶלֶךְ עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{לח} וְהָיָה אִם-
 תִּשְׁמַע אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה וְהִלַּכְתָּ בְּדַרְכֵי וְעָשִׂיתָ
 הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינַי לְשִׁמּוֹר חֻקֹּתַי וּמִצְוֹתַי כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה
 דָּוִד עַבְדִּי וְהָיִיתִי עִמָּךְ וּבִנִּיתִי לָּךְ בֵּית-גִּנְאָמָן
 כַּאֲשֶׁר בָּנִיתִי לְדָוִד וְנָתַתִּי לָּךְ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל:
^{לט} וְאַעֲנֶה אֶת-זֶרַע דָּוִד לְמַעַן זֹאת אֲךָ לֹא כָּל-
 הַיָּמִים: {ס} ^מ וַיִּבְקֶשׁ שְׁלֹמֹה לְהִמִּית אֶת-יִרְבֵּעַם
 וַיִּקֶּם יִרְבֵּעַם וַיִּבְרַח מִצְרַיִם אֶל-שִׁישַׁק מֶלֶךְ-
 מִצְרַיִם וַיְהִי בְּמִצְרַיִם עַד-מוֹת שְׁלֹמֹה: {ס}

³⁴ Nevertheless, I will not take the entire kingdom out of his own hands, since I have made him a prince for as long as he lives, for the sake of my chosen servant David, who kept my commandments and laws.

³⁵ However, I will take the kingdom from the hand of his son, giving the ten tribes to you. ³⁶ I will keep one tribe to give to his son, so that my servant David may always have a lamp in my presence in Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen as a dwelling place for my name. ³⁷ You, nonetheless, I will take to rule over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king of Israel. ³⁸ You must listen to all my orders and follow my ways, by doing what is right in my eyes and keeping my laws and commandments as my servant David did. Then I will be with you and will build you as enduring a House as the one I built for David; I will give Israel to you. ³⁹ Thus, I will humble the descendants of David, but not forever.””

⁴⁰ Solomon therefore tried to kill Jeroboam, but he made off and fled to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and he remained in Egypt until Solomon’s death.

³⁴ The NJB & NRSV lacks the word ‘chosen’, here following NETB.

³⁵ Literally translated, this verse ends, “...and give it to you, ten tribes.”

³⁶ The ‘lamp’ was a symbol of the permanence of the Davidic dynasty (2S 21:17).

³⁷ In place of ‘all that your soul desires’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has simply ‘as much as you wish’.

³⁸ In the MT, this verse is actually one long conditional sentence, which has been broken into two parts in the translation for the benefit of the modern English reader.

³⁹ The literal translation of ‘forever’ is ‘all the days’.

⁴⁰ ‘Shishak’ was probably the less friendly successor of the pharaoh whose daughter was married to Solomon (3:1).

מֵא וְיִתֵּר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְחֻכְמָתוֹ
הָלֹא־הֵם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה:
מִב וְהַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בִּירוּשָׁלַם עַל־כָּל־
יִשְׂרָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה: מִג וַיִּשְׁכַּב שְׁלֹמֹה עִם־
אָבִיתּוֹ וַיִּקְבֹּר בְּעִיר דָּוִד אָבִיו וַיִּמְלֹךְ רְחַבְעָם בְּנוֹ
תַּחְתָּיו: {ס}

⁴¹ Now, the rest of the history of Solomon, and his entire career, as well as his wisdom, is not all this recorded in the Book of the Acts of Solomon? ⁴² The time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. ⁴³ Then, Solomon lay down with his fathers and he was buried in the City of David his father. And his son Rehoboam succeeded him.

⁴¹ The 'Book of the Acts of Solomon', now lost, seems to have been one of the ancient sources of Chs. 3–11.

⁴² Solomon reigned 965–931 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 962–922 BCE according to W.F. Albright. The figure of 40 years is an idealisation (compare the same figure for David in 2:11).

⁴³ Before the last sentence, the LXX adds the following: "And it so happened that when Jeroboam son of Nebat heard – now he was in Egypt where he had fled from before Solomon and was residing in Egypt – he came straight to his city in the land of Sarira, which is on mount Ephraim. And King Solomon slept with his fathers." (καὶ ἐγενήθη ὥς ἤκουσεν Ιεροβοαμ υἱὸς Ναβατ – καὶ αὐτοῦ ἔτι ὄντος ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ, ὥς ἔφυγεν ἐκ προσώπου Σαλωμων καὶ ἐκάθητο ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ – , κατευθύνει καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τὴν πόλιν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν γῆν Σαριρα τὴν ἐν ὄρει Εφραιμ. καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς Σαλωμων ἐκοιμήθη μετὰ τῶν πατέρων αὐτοῦ.)

מלכים א פרק יב

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^א וַיֵּלֶךְ רְחֹבְעָם שָׁכֵם כִּי שָׁכֵם בָּא כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְהַמְלִיךְ אֹתוֹ: ^ב וַיְהִי כִשְׁמֹעַ יִרְבֵּעַם בֶּן־נִבְטָ וְהוּא
עֹדְנָו בְּמִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר בָּרַח מִפְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה
וַיָּשָׁב יִרְבֵּעַם בְּמִצְרַיִם: ^ג וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ וַיִּקְרְאוּ־לֹו וַיָּבֹאוּ
וַיָּבֹא יִרְבֵּעַם וְכָל־קְהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֶל־רְחֹבְעָם
לֵאמֹר: ^ד אֲבִיךָ הִקְשָׁה אֶת־עַלְנוּ וְאַתָּה עַתָּה הִקַּלְ^ה
מִעֲבֹדֶת אֲבִיךָ הִקְשָׁה וּמַעַלּוּ הַכֶּבֶד אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן
עָלֵינוּ וְנַעֲבֹדְךָ: ^ה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם לְכוּ־עַד שְׁלֹשָׁה
יָמִים וְשׁוּבוּ אֵלַי וַיֵּלְכוּ הָעָם: ^ו וַיֹּעֵץ הַמֶּלֶךְ רְחֹבְעָם
אֶת־הַזִּקְנִים אֲשֶׁר־הָיוּ עֲמָדִים אֶת־פָּנָיו שְׁלֹמֹה
אָבִיו בְּהִיטּוֹ חֵי לֵאמֹר אֵיךְ אַתֶּם נֹעֲצִים לְהַשִּׁיב
אֶת־הָעַם־הַזֶּה דְּבַר: ^ז וַיְדַבֵּר וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר
אִם־הַיּוֹם תִּהְיֶה־עֹבֵד לָעָם הַזֶּה וְעַבַּדְתֶּם וְעָנִיתֶם

¹ Rehoboam went to Shechem, for it was to Shechem that all Israel had gone to proclaim him king. ² As soon as Jeroboam son of Nebat heard the news – he was still in Egypt, where he had taken refuge from King Solomon – he returned from Egypt. ³ They now sent for him, and Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came. And they said this to Rehoboam, ⁴ “Your father gave us a heavy burden to bear; if you lighten your father’s harsh tyranny now, and the weight of the burden he laid on us, we will serve you.” ⁵ He said to them, “Go away for three days and then come back to me;” so the people went away. ⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted the older men, who had been in the service of his father Solomon while he was alive. “What reply,” he asked, “do you advise me to give to this people?” ⁷ They answered him, “If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them and speak good words to

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- ¹ At this time, ‘Shechem’ was the chief town of the northern tribes (Jos 24:1, 32), where Rehoboam needed to be confirmed as king in order to hold the allegiance of these tribes.
- ² Vv. 2–3, parenthesised in the *NJB*, are a gloss taken from 2Ch 10:2–3 and not present in the *LXX*; they contradict v. 20 (missing from 2Ch 10).
- ³ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.
- ⁴ In the *MT*, the prefixed verbal form with vav (וְנַעֲבֹדְךָ, ‘and we will serve you’) following the imperative (הִקַּלְ, ‘lighten’) indicates purpose (or result); the conditional sentence used in the translation above is an attempt to bring out the logical relationship between these forms.
- ⁵ Rehoboam wished for time to consult his officials (vv. 6–10).
- ⁶ The literal translation of ‘been in the service of’ is ‘stood before’.
- ⁷ The *Kethib* opens with וַיְדַבֵּר in place of וַיְדַבְּרוּ, here following the *Qere*.

וְדִבַּרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם דְּבָרִים טוֹבִים וְהָיוּ לְךָ עֲבָדִים כָּל־
הַיָּמִים: ^ח וַיַּעֲזֹב אֶת־עֵצַת הַזְּקֵנִים אֲשֶׁר יַעֲצָהוּ
וַיִּוָּעֵץ אֶת־הַיְלָדִים אֲשֶׁר גָּדְלוּ אִתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר הָעֲמָדִים
לִפְנָיו: ^ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם מָה אַתֶּם נוֹעֲצִים וְנָשִׁיב
דְּבַר אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר דִּבְּרוּ אֵלַי לֵאמֹר הֲקָל
מִן־הָעֹל אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן אָבִיךָ עָלֵינוּ: ^י וַיִּדְּבְרוּ אֵלָיו
הַיְלָדִים אֲשֶׁר גָּדְלוּ אִתּוֹ לֵאמֹר כֹּה־תֹאמַר לָעָם
הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר דִּבְּרוּ אֵלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר אָבִיךָ הַכְּבִיד אֶת־
עֲלָנוּ וְאַתָּה הֲקָל מֵעָלֵינוּ כֹּה תִּדְבֹּר אֲלֵיהֶם קִטְנִי
עֲבָה מִמֶּתְנִי אָבִי: ^{יא} וְעַתָּה אָבִי הָעַמִּים עָלֵיכֶם עַל
כִּבֹּד וְאֲנִי אוֹסִיף עַל־עַלְכֶם אָבִי יִסֹּר אֶתְכֶם
בְּשׁוֹטִים וְאֲנִי אִיסֹר אֶתְכֶם בְּעֻקְרָבִים:
^{יב} וַיָּבֹאוּ יָרֵבֵעַם וְכָל־הָעָם אֶל־רְחָבֵעַם בַּיּוֹם
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר הַמֶּלֶךְ לֵאמֹר שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי בַּיּוֹם
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי: ^{יג} וַיַּעַן הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־הָעָם קָשָׁה וַיַּעֲזֹב אֶת־

them when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever.”

⁸ However, he disregarded the advice given to him by the older men and consulted with the younger men who had grown up with him and were now in his service. ⁹ “How do you advise us,” he asked, “to answer this people who have said to me, ‘Lighten the burden your father imposed on us’?” ¹⁰ The young men who had grown up with him said to him, “Thus you should say to the people who have said, ‘Your father gave us a heavy burden to bear, you must lighten it for us;’ thus you should say to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins! ¹¹ So then, my father made you bear a heavy burden. I will make it heavier still. My father beat you with whips; I am going to beat you with loaded scourges.’”

¹² On the third day, Jeroboam and all the people came back to Rehoboam in obedience to the king’s command: “Come back to me on the third day.” ¹³ The king answered the people harshly. He disregarded the

⁸ Rehoboam, not satisfied with the wisdom of age, prefers to side with the impetuosity of youth.

⁹ Many of the ancient versions have ‘me’ in place of ‘us’ (the plural of majesty), here following the MT.

¹⁰ The translation ‘my little finger’ is not certain: the MT has simply ‘my little one’; as the following statement makes clear, Rehoboam’s point is that he is more harsh and demanding than his father.

¹¹ ‘Loaded scourges’ is a conjectural translation of ‘scorpions’; the term probably refers to a particularly cruel type of stinging whip.

¹² The mention of Jeroboam is probably a gloss; in the original account, he was probably not present at Shechem but was later recalled by the insurgents (v. 20).

¹³ The NJB rearranges this verse, here following the MT & NRSV, as follows: “The king, rejecting the advice given him by the elders, gave the people a harsh answer.”

עֲצַת הַזְקֵנִים אֲשֶׁר יַעֲצֶהוּ: י' וַיִּדְבֹּר אֵלֵיהֶם כַּעֲצַת
הַיְלָדִים לֵאמֹר אָבִי הַכְּבִיד אֶת־עַלְכֶם וְאֲנִי אֶסִּיף
עַל־עַלְכֶם אָבִי יִסֹּר אֶתְכֶם בְּשׁוֹטִים וְאֲנִי אִיסֹר
אֶתְכֶם בַּעֲקָרִים: ט' וְלֹא־שָׁמַע הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־הָעָם
כִּי־הָיְתָה סִבָּה מֵעַם יְהוָה לְמַעַן הָקִים אֶת־דְּבָרוֹ
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה בְּיַד אַחִיָּה הַשִּׁילֹנִי אֶל־יִרְבֶּעֶם בֶּן־
נֶבֶט: ט"ו וַיֵּרָא כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי לֹא־שָׁמַע הַמֶּלֶךְ

אֵלֵיהֶם וַיָּשָׁבוּ הָעָם אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ | דָּבָר |

לֵאמֹר מִה־לָּנוּ חֵלֶק בְּדָוִד
וְלֹא־נַחֲלָה בְּבֶן־יִשִּׁי לְאַהֲלֵיךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל
עֲתָה רְאֵה בֵּיתְךָ דָּוִד וַיֵּלֶךְ

יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאַהֲלָיו: י"ז וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּעָרֵי
יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם רְחַבְעָם: {פ}

י"ח וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ רְחַבְעָם אֶת־אַדְרָם אֲשֶׁר עַל־
הַמָּס וַיִּרְגְּמוּ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בּוֹ אֲבָן וַיָּמָת וְהַמֶּלֶךְ
רְחַבְעָם הִתְאַמֵּץ לָעֲלוֹת בַּמֶּרְכָּבָה לָנוֹס יְרוּשָׁלַם:
י"ט וַיִּפְשְׁעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּבֵית דָּוִד עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: {ס}

advice that the older men had given him ¹⁴ and spoke to them as the young men had recommended. "My father made you bear a heavy burden," he said, "but I will make it heavier still. My father beat you with whips; I am going to beat you with loaded scourges." ¹⁵ Thus, the king refused to listen to the people, and this was brought about by Yahweh to fulfil the promise that he had made through Ahijah of Shiloh to Jeroboam son of Nebat. ¹⁶ When all Israel saw that the king took no notice of their wishes, they gave him this answer:

"What share have we in David?

We have no heritage in the son of Jesse! To your tents, Israel!

Look after your own House, David!"

Israel went off to their tents. ¹⁷ Rehoboam, however, reigned over those sons of Israel who lived in the towns of Judah.

¹⁸ King Rehoboam sent Adoram who was in charge of forced labour; but the Israelites stoned him to death, whereupon King Rehoboam was obliged to mount his chariot and escape to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Thus, Israel has been in rebellion against the House of David until the present day.

¹⁴ On the term 'loaded scourges', see #11.

¹⁵ The attitude of the writer in this verse is explained in 11:38.

¹⁶ On the readiness of the northern tribes to withdraw from Judah, compare 2S 20:1, where even the wording is similar.

¹⁷ NETB places this entire verse in parentheses.

¹⁸ In place of 'Adoram' (אַדְרָם), the LXX (Αδωνιραμ) & Peshitta have 'Adoniram'.

¹⁹ The 'present day' being, of course, the time of the book's composition (shortly before the death of Josiah, in 609 BCE).

כַּוְיָהִי כְשִׁמְעוּ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־שָׁב יִרְבֹּעַם וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ וַיִּקְרְאוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־הָעֵדָה וַיְמַלִּיכוּ אֹתוֹ עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא הָיָה אַחֲרָי בֵּית־דָּוִד זֹולָתִי שְׁבֹט־יְהוּדָה לְבָדוֹ: כֹּא וַיָּבֹאוּ וַיָּבֹא רְחַבְעָם יְרוּשָׁלַם וַיִּקְהֵל אֶת־כָּל־בֵּית יְהוּדָה וְאֶת־שְׁבֹט בְּנֵימִן מֵאָה וּשְׁמֹנִים אֲלֹף בַּחֹר עָשָׂה מִלְחָמָה לְהִלָּחֵם עִם־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָשִׁיב אֶת־הַמְּלוּכָה לְרְחַבְעָם בֶּן־שְׁלֹמֹה: {פ}

כב וַיְהִי דְבַר הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־שְׁמַעְיָה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר: כג אָמַר אֶל־רְחַבְעָם בֶּן־שְׁלֹמֹה מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וְאֶל־כָּל־בֵּית יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵימִן וַיֹּתֵר הָעָם לֵאמֹר: כד כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה לֹא־תֵעָלוּ וְלֹא־תִלָּחֲמוּן עִם־אַחֵיכֶם בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל שׁוּבוּ אִישׁ לְבֵיתוֹ כִּי מֵאֲתִי נָהִיָה הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ לָלֶכֶת כְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה: {ס} כה וַיֵּבֶן יִרְבֹּעַם אֶת־שֶׁכֶם בְּהָר אֶפְרַיִם וַיָּשֶׁב בָּהּ וַיֵּצֵא מִשָּׁם וַיִּבֶן אֶת־פְּנוּאֵל:

²⁰ And it came to pass that, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king of all Israel. No one remained loyal to the House of David, except for the tribe of Judah. ²¹ And, when Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he mustered the whole House of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand picked warriors, to fight against the House of Israel and win back the kingdom for Rehoboam son of Solomon.

²² However, the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying: ²³ "Say this to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, to the whole House of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, ²⁴ "Yahweh says this: You shall not go to fight against your brothers, the sons of Israel; let everyone go home, for what has happened is my doing."" They obeyed the command of Yahweh and turned back in accordance with his word. ²⁵ Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there. Then, leaving there, he fortified Penuel.

²⁰ Literally translated, this verse ends, "there was no one after the house of David except the tribe of Judah, it alone."

²¹ The *Kethib/Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation. According to vv. 21–24, the prophetic party of Judah, represented by 'Shemaiah', favoured the division, hoping that the north would be more loyal to Yahweh. 'Benjamin' (vv. 21 & 23) is editorial, to support the idea that there were exactly ten tribes in the north and two in the south; actually, Benjamin may have been split by the division.

²² The *NJB* uses the divine name in this verse, but here we follow the *MT* & *NRSV* ('the word of God').

²³ Exactly what is meant here by 'the rest of the people' is unclear.

²⁴ Literally translated, the last sentence reads, "And they heard the word of Yahweh and returned to go according to the word of Yahweh."

²⁵ Before this verse, the *LXX* has a lengthy section consisting of 22 verses that are not found in the *MT*.

כ^ו וַיֹּאמֶר יִרְבֵּעַם בְּלִבּוֹ עֲתָה תָשׁוּב הַמַּמְלָכָה לְבֵית
דָּוִד: כ^ז אִם־יֵעָלֶה הָעָם הַזֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹת זִבְחִים
בְּבֵית־יְהוָה בִּירוּשָׁלַם וְשָׁב לֵב הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל־
אֲדֹנֵיהֶם אֶל־רְחִבְעָם מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וְהִרְגֵנִי וְשָׁבוּ
אֶל־רְחִבְעָם מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה: כ^ח וַיֹּעֶץ הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיַּעַשׂ
שְׁנֵי עֲגֹלֵי זָהָב וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם רַב־לָכֶם מַעֲלוֹת
יְרוּשָׁלַם הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הָעֵלֹךְ מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם: כ^ט וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הָאֶחָד בְּבֵית־אֵל וְאֶת־
הָאֶחָד נָתַן בְּדָן: ל וַיְהִי הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה לְחַטָּאת וַיֵּלְכוּ
הָעָם לִפְנֵי הָאֶחָד עַד־דָּן: ל^א וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־בֵּית בָּמוֹת
וַיַּעַשׂ כִּהְנִיִם מִקְצוֹת הָעָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הָיוּ מִבְּנֵי לֵוִי:
לב וַיַּעַשׂ יִרְבֵּעַם חָג בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁמִינִי בַחֲמִשָּׁה־

²⁶ Jeroboam said to himself, “Now the kingdom may revert to the House of David. ²⁷ If these people go up to the Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem to offer sacrifices, the people’s heart will turn back again to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah.” ²⁸ Whereupon the king took counsel and made two golden calves. He said to them, “You have gone up to Jerusalem too long. Here are your gods, Israel; these brought you up out of the land of Egypt!” ²⁹ He set one up in Bethel and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ In Israel, this gave rise to sin; for, the people went to Bethel and to Dan to worship them. ³¹ He set up temple on all the high places and appointed priests from ordinary families, who were not of the sons of Levi. ³² Jeroboam also instituted a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth

²⁶ The imperfect verbal form translated ‘may return’ is understood as having a potential force here.

²⁷ The NJB, following the LXX, omits the final ‘and return to King Rehoboam of Judah’.

²⁸ Jeroboam had a political end in view, not a change of religion. As against the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem, symbolising Yahweh’s presence there, he set up young bulls symbolising the footrest of Yahweh the Invisible. He acted within an ancient tradition, also to be detected in the episode of the ‘golden calf’ (Ex 32). Both stories have been slanted by controversialists. By choosing the same symbol as that of Baal, however, Jeroboam opened the way for serious abuses (see Ho 13:2). This was the ‘sin of Jeroboam’, occurring as a damning refrain throughout the Deuteronomic historian’s judgements on the kings of Israel.

²⁹ The NJB, following the LXX, omits ‘and the other he put in Dan’; Dan, near the source of the Jordan, and Bethel, on the road to Jerusalem, delimited the new kingdom. These places were already hallowed shrines (Gn 12:8, Jg 17–18).

³⁰ The MT ends with, “and the people went before the one to Dan.” It is likely that some words have been accidentally omitted and that the text originally read, “and the people went before the one at Bethel and before the one at Dan.”

³¹ The MT has the singular for ‘temple’ (literally, ‘house’); here, we follow the LXX (οἶκους) & Vg (*fana*).

³² The new temple of Bethel, like Solomon’s Temple, was dedicated on the Feast of Tabernacles.

עָשָׂר יוֹם | לַחֹדֶשׁ כַּחֲגֹ| אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה וַיַּעַל עַל-
 הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בֶּן עָשָׂה בְּבֵית-אֵל לְזִבְחַ לְעֹגְלִים אֲשֶׁר-
 עָשָׂה וְהָעֹמִיד בְּבֵית אֵל אֶת-כֹּהֲנֵי הַבָּמֹת אֲשֶׁר
 עָשָׂה: ^{לג} וַיַּעַל עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ | אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה בְּבֵית-אֵל
 בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁמִינִי בַּחֹדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר-
 בָּדָא מַלְבֹּד מִלְּבֹו וַיַּעַשׂ חָג לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעַל עַל-
 הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לְהַקְטִיר: {פ}

day of the month, like the feast that was in Judah, and he went up to the altar; this was how he behaved in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made; and at Bethel, he stationed the priests of the high places that he had established. ³³ On the fifteenth day of the eighth month, the month he had deliberately chosen, he went up to the altar he had made; and he instituted a feast for the Israelites and went up to the altar to offer incense.

³³ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

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מלכים א פרק יג

^א וַהֲגָהּ אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים בָּא מִיְּהוּדָה בְּדָבָר יְהוָה אֶל־
בֵּית־אֵל וַיִּרְבֹּעַם עֹמֵד עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לְהַקְטִיר:
^ב וַיִּקְרָא עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּדָבָר יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר מִזְבֵּחַ
מִזְבֵּחַ כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הִנֵּה־בֶן נֹלָד לְבֵית־דָּוִד
וַיִּשְׁמֶהוּ שְׁמוֹ וַיִּזְבַּח עָלָיו אֶת־כֹּהֲנֵי הַבָּמוֹת
הַמְּקַטְרִים עָלָיו וְעֲצָמוֹת אָדָם יִשְׂרָפוּ עָלָיו: ^ג וַנֶּתַן
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא מוֹפֵת לֵאמֹר זֶה הַמוֹפֵת אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
יְהוָה הִנֵּה הַמִּזְבֵּחַ נִקְרַע וְנִשְׁפָּךְ הַדָּשָׁן אֲשֶׁר־עָלָיו:
^ד וַיְהִי כַשְׁמַע הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־דְּבַר אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר
קָרָא עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּבֵית־אֵל וַיִּשְׁלַח יִרְבֹּעַם אֶת־יָדוֹ
מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֵאמֹר תִּפְשֵׁהוּ וּתְיַבֵּשׁ יָדוֹ אֲשֶׁר
שָׁלַח עָלָיו וְלֹא יָכֹל לְהַשִּׁיבָה אֵלָיו: ^ה וְהַמִּזְבֵּחַ
נִקְרַע וַיִּשְׁפָּךְ הַדָּשָׁן מִן־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ כַּמוֹפֵת אֲשֶׁר נָתַן
אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים בְּדָבָר יְהוָה: ^ו וַיַּעַן הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר

¹ There came to Bethel at Yahweh's command a man of God from Judah, just as Jeroboam was standing by the altar to offer the sacrifice, ² and, at Yahweh's command, this man denounced the altar. "Altar, altar," he said, "Yahweh says this, "A son shall be born to the House of David, Josiah by name, who shall immolate on you the priests of the high places who have offered sacrifice on you, and on you shall be burnt the bones of men."" ³ At the same time, he gave a sign. "This is the sign," he said, "that Yahweh has spoken, "This altar here will burst apart and the ashes that are on it will be scattered."" ⁴ When the king heard how the man of God denounced the altar of Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him!" However, the hand he stretched out against the man withered, and he could not draw it back to himself. ⁵ The altar also burst apart and the ashes from the altar were scattered, in accordance with the sign given by the man of God at Yahweh's

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- ¹ This chapter continues the condemnation of Jeroboam begun in Ch. 12. There are two definite indications of date in the story: the territory of Israel was not called 'Samaria' (v. 32) until after that kingdom fell in 721 BCE (2K 17:24); and Josiah (v. 2) died in 609 BCE. The writer of about 600 BCE is trying to evaluate the conditions existing about 300 years earlier.
- ² The NJB and NRSV, following the LXX, have 'he shall burn' in place of 'shall be burnt' (here following the MT). This forecast, the precision of which is foreign to the prophetic style, has been added to the original saying, which was v. 3 only.
- ³ The literal translation of 'ashes' is 'fat', referring to burnt wood mixed with fat.
- ⁴ A more literal translation of 'withered' is 'dried up'; the TEV and NLT interpret the phrase to mean 'paralysed'.
- ⁵ Literally translated, this verse ends, "according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of Yahweh."

אֶל-אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים חָל־נָא אֶת-פָּנַי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
וְהִתְפַּלֵּל בְּעַדִּי וְתִשָּׁב יָדִי אֵלַי ויִחַל אִישׁ-הָאֱלֹהִים
אֶת-פָּנַי יְהוָה וְתִשָּׁב יַד-הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵלָיו וְתִהְיֶה
כְּבָרָאשְׁנָה: ^ווַיִּדְבֹּר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים
בָּאָה-אֲתִי הַבֵּיתָה וְסַעֲדָה וְאֶתְנָה לִךְ מִתָּת:
^חוַיֹּאמֶר אִישׁ-הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ אִם-תִּתֶּנְ לִי
אֶת-חֲצִי בֵיתְךָ לֹא אָבֹא עִמָּךְ וְלֹא-אֲכַל לֶחֶם וְלֹא
אֶשְׁתֶּה-מַּיִם בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: ^טכִּי-כֵן צִוָּה אֹתִי בְדִבְרֵי
יְהוָה לֵאמֹר לֹא-תֹאכַל לֶחֶם וְלֹא תִשְׁתֶּה-מַּיִם וְלֹא
תָשׁוּב בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הָלַכְתָּ: ^יוַיֵּלֶךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ אַחֵר וְלֹא-
שָׁב בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר בָּא בָּהּ אֶל-בֵּית-אֵל: {פ}

^{יא}וַנִּבְיָא אֶחָד זָקֵן יֹשֵׁב בְּבֵית-אֵל וַיָּבֹא בָנוּ וַיְסַפֵּר-
לָנוּ אֶת-כָּל-הַמַּעֲשֶׂה אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה אִישׁ-הָאֱלֹהִים |
הַיּוֹם בְּבֵית-אֵל אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ
וַיְסַפְּרוּם לְאֲבִיהֶם: ^{יב}וַיִּדְבֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֲבִיהֶם אֵיזָה

command. ⁶ The king said to the man of God, “I beg you to placate Yahweh your God and pray for me, so that the use of my hand may be restored to me.” The man of God placated Yahweh; the king’s hand was restored to him, and became as it was before. ⁷ The king then said to the man of God, “Come home with me and have something to eat, and I will give you a present;” ⁸ but the man of God answered the king, “Were you to give me half your kingdom, I would not go with you. I will eat no food and drink no water in this place, ⁹ for thus I was commanded by the word of Yahweh: “You shall not eat food or drink water, or to return by the way you came.”” ¹⁰ Therefore, he left by another road and did not return by the way that he had come to Bethel.

¹¹ Now there was an old prophet living in Bethel and one of his sons came to tell him all that the man of God had done in Bethel that day; and the words that he had spoken to the king, they told these to their father too. ¹² “Which road did he take?” their father asked. His sons

⁶ The NJB, following the LXX and other versions, omits, ‘and pray for me’.

⁷ In place of ‘have something to eat’ (here following NETB), the NJB has ‘refresh yourself’.

⁸ The literal translation of ‘kingdom’ (here following the NRSV) is ‘house’.

⁹ To eat or drink (here and v. 22) in Israel would have implied approval of what was happening there.

¹⁰ No mention is made of the ways by which the prophet came to and departed from Bethel – only that the routes were different.

¹¹ At this period, a ‘prophet’ (‘Nabi’) is lower grade than a ‘man of God’; compare Elijah & Elisha with the ‘prophetic brotherhood’ (2K 2, Am 7:14).

¹² For ‘his sons showed him’, the MT has ‘and his sons saw’ (וַיִּרְאוּ); in this case, the verbal construction (*vav* consecutive + prefixed verbal form) would have to be understood as pluperfect, ‘his sons had seen’. Such uses of this construction are rare at best, consequently many, following the lead of the ancient versions, prefer to emend the verbal form to a Hiphil with pronominal suffix (וַיִּרְאֵהוּ).

הַדֶּרֶךְ הַלֵּךְ וַיֵּרְאוּ בָנָיו אֶת־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הָלַךְ אִישׁ
הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־בָּא מִיְּהוּדָה: י¹³ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־בָּנָיו
חֲבֹשׁוּ־לִי הַחֲמֹר וַיַּחֲבֹשׁוּ־לוֹ הַחֲמֹר וַיִּרְכַּב עָלָיו:
י¹⁴ וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחֲרָיו אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּמָּצְאוּהוּ יֹשֵׁב תַּחַת
הָאֵלֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הֲאֵתָה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־
בָּאתָ מִיְּהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי: ט¹⁵ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לֵךְ אִתִּי
הַבֵּיתָה וְאָכַל לֶחֶם: טז¹⁶ וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אוּכַל לָשׁוּב אִתְּךָ
וּלְבֹא אִתְּךָ וּלֹא־אֲכַל לֶחֶם וּלֹא־אֶשְׁתֶּה אִתְּךָ מִיָּם
בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: ז¹⁷ כִּי־דָבַר אֵלַי בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה לֹא־תֹאכַל
לֶחֶם וּלֹא־תִשְׁתֶּה שֵׁם מַיִם לֹא־תָשׁוּב לָלֶכֶת בַּדֶּרֶךְ
אֲשֶׁר־הָלַכְתָּ בָּהּ: ח¹⁸ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ גַּם־אֲנִי נָבִיא כְּמוֹךָ
וּמֵלֶאךָ דִּבֶּר אֵלַי בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה לֵאמֹר הֲשִׁבְהוּ אִתְּךָ
אֶל־בֵּיתְךָ וַיֹּאכַל לֶחֶם וַיִּשְׁתֶּה מִיָּם כַּחַשׁ לוֹ: ט¹⁹ וַיֹּשֶׁב
אִתּוֹ וַיֹּאכַל לֶחֶם בְּבֵיתוֹ וַיִּשְׁתֶּה מַיִם: כ²⁰ וַיְהִי הֵם
יֹשְׁבִים אֶל־הַשֻּׁלְחָן {פ}

showed him the road that the man of God who came from Judah had taken. ¹³ “Saddle the donkey for me,” he said to his sons; they saddled the donkey for him and he mounted it. ¹⁴ He followed the man of God and found him sitting under a terebinth. “Are you the man of God,” he asked, “who came from Judah?” “I am,” he replied. ¹⁵ Then he said to him, “Come home with me and take some food.” ¹⁶ He answered, “I cannot return with you, or go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water with you in this place, ¹⁷ for it was said to me by the word of Yahweh: “You shall not eat food or drink water there, or return by the way that you came.”” ¹⁸ Then the other said to him, “I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of Yahweh: “Bring him back with you into your house, so that he may eat food and drink water.”” He was lying to him. ¹⁹ The man of God went back with him; he ate food and drank water at his house. ²⁰ As they were sitting at the table,

¹³ In place of ‘the donkey’ (twice in this verse), here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘a donkey’.

¹⁴ The NRSV & NETB have ‘oak tree’ in place of ‘terebinth’, here following the NJB.

¹⁵ The old prophet now begins his test of the other (cf. v. 18).

¹⁶ The literal translation of ‘I cannot’ is ‘I am unable to’.

¹⁷ The NJB has, for Yahweh’s ‘command’: “You are to eat or drink nothing there, nor to return by the way you came.”

¹⁸ He was lying to test him. What follows, written in a markedly popular style, teaches this lesson: God’s orders must be obeyed absolutely; the man of God had no right to question the order that he had originally received, even at the bidding of an angel (see Ga 1:8).

¹⁹ The NJB lacks the words ‘food’ and ‘water’, here following the NRSV.

²⁰ The paragraph break in the middle of this verse is maintained in the English text, although it seems out of place.

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־הַנָּבִיא אֲשֶׁר הֵשִׁיבוֹ: ^{כא} וַיִּקְרָא
אֶל־אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־בָּא מִיְּהוּדָה לֵאמֹר כֹּה
אָמַר יְהוָה יֵעַן כִּי מָרִיתָ פִּי יְהוָה וְלֹא שָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת־
הַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: ^{כב} וְתָשָׁב וּתְאָכַל
לֶחֶם וּתְשַׁתֵּה מַיִם בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלֶיךָ אֶל־
תֹּאכַל לֶחֶם וְאֶל־תְּשַׁתֵּה מַיִם לֹא־תָבוֹא נִבְלָתְךָ אֶל־
קֶבֶר אֲבֹתֶיךָ: ^{כג} וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי אֲכָלוֹ לֶחֶם וְאַחֲרֵי
שְ�תוּתוֹ וַיַּחֲבֹשׁ־לּוֹ הַחֲמֹר לַנָּבִיא אֲשֶׁר הֵשִׁיבוֹ:
^{כד} וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּמְצָאֵהוּ אַרְיֵה בַּדֶּרֶךְ וַיִּמְיֹתָהוּ וַתִּהְיֶה
נִבְלָתוֹ מְשֻׁלַּכֶת בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְהַחֲמֹר עֹמֵד אֶצְלָהּ
וְהָאַרְיֵה עֹמֵד אֶצֶל הַנִּבְלָה: ^{כה} וְהָנָה אֲנָשִׁים
עֹבְרִים וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת־הַנִּבְלָה מְשֻׁלַּכֶת בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְאֶת־
הָאַרְיֵה עֹמֵד אֶצֶל הַנִּבְלָה וַיִּבְּאוּ וַיְדַבְּרוּ בְּעִיר
אֲשֶׁר הַנָּבִיא הִזְקֵן יָשָׁב בָּהּ: ^{כו} וַיִּשְׁמַע הַנָּבִיא אֲשֶׁר
הֵשִׁיבוֹ מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא אֲשֶׁר
מָרָה אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה וַיַּתְּנֵהוּ יְהוָה לְאַרְיֵה וַיִּשְׁבְּרֵהוּ
וַיִּמְתֵּהוּ כַּדִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לוֹ: ^{כז} וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־

the word of Yahweh came to the prophet who brought him back: ²¹ He addressed the man of God who came from Judah, saying “Yahweh says this: “Since you have defied Yahweh’s command and not obeyed the orders Yahweh your God gave you, ²² but have come back and eaten food and drunk water in the place of which he said to you, “Eat no food and drink no water,” your corpse will not reach the tomb of your fathers.”” ²³ After he had eaten food and had drunk, they saddled for him a donkey belonging to the prophet who had brought him back. ²⁴ And, as he turned about and went away, a lion met him on the road and killed him; his corpse lay stretched out on the road; the donkey stood there beside it; the lion stood by the corpse too. ²⁵ People passed by and saw the corpse lying on the road and the lion standing by the corpse, and they went and spoke about it in the town where the old prophet lived. ²⁶ When the prophet who brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, “It is the man of God who has disobeyed Yahweh’s command! Therefore, Yahweh has handed him over to the lion, which has mauled him and killed him, according to the word of Yahweh that

²¹ In the MT, vv. 21–22 are one sentence: a causal clause giving the reason for divine punishment and the main clause announcing it.

²² The idea of not being buried in one’s ancestral tomb would have been very disturbing for the prophet.

²³ The NRSV has ‘the man of God’ in place of ‘he’. The text for the verse ending is uncertain.

²⁴ The NJB includes the first clause as part of v. 23.

²⁵ Literally translated, this verse opens, “Look, men were passing by.”

²⁶ The literal translation of ‘mauled him’ (here following the NJB) is ‘broke him’ or ‘ripped him up’.

בְּנָיו לֵאמֹר חֲבֹשׁוּ-לִי אֶת-הַחֲמֹר וַיַּחֲבֹשׁוּ: כֹּחַ וַיִּלְךָ
וַיִּמְצָא אֶת-נִבְלָתוֹ מְשֻׁלֶּכֶת בְּדֶרֶךְ וַחֲמֹר וְהָאֲרִיָּה
עֹמְדִים אֶצֶל הַנִּבְלָה לֹא-אָכַל הָאֲרִיָּה אֶת-הַנִּבְלָה
וְלֹא שָׁבַר אֶת-הַחֲמֹר: כֹּחַ וַיֵּשֶׂא הַנָּבִיא אֶת-נִבְלַת
אִישׁ-הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּנָּחֶהוּ אֶל-הַחֲמֹר וַיִּשְׁיבֵהוּ וַיָּבֵא
אֶל-עִיר הַנָּבִיא הַזֶּקֶן לְסֶפֶד וּלְקִבְרוֹ: ל וַיִּנַּח אֶת-
נִבְלָתוֹ בְּקִבְרוֹ וַיִּסְפְּדוּ עָלָיו הוּא אָחִי: לֹא וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי
קִבְרוֹ אֹתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר בְּמוֹתִי וּקְבַרְתֶּם
אִתִּי בְּקֶבֶר אֲשֶׁר אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים קָבֹר בּוֹ אֶצֶל
עֲצַמֹתָיו הַנִּיחוּ אֶת-עֲצַמֹתַי: לִב כִּי הִיא יְהִיָּה הַדֹּבֵר
אֲשֶׁר קָרָא בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית-
אֵל וְעַל כָּל-בֵּיתֵי הַבָּמוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּעָרֵי שְׁמֶרֹן: {פ}
לִב אַחֲרֵי הַדִּבְרֵי הָאֵלֶּה לֹא-שָׁב יִרְבָּעָם מִדְּרָכֹו הָרָעָה
וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיַּעַשׂ מִקְצֹת הָעָם כַּהֲנֵי בָמוֹת הַחֶפֶץ יְמַלֵּא

was spoken to him.” ²⁷ He said to his sons, “Saddle a donkey for me,” and they saddled one. ²⁸ He set off and found the man’s corpse lying on the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside the corpse; the lion had neither eaten the corpse nor mauled the donkey. ²⁹ The prophet lifted the corpse of the man of God, put it on the donkey and brought it back to the town where he lived to hold mourning for him and bury him. ³⁰ He laid the corpse in his own tomb, and they raised the mourning cry for him, “Alas, my brother!” ³¹ After burying him, the prophet said to his sons, “When I die, bury me in the same tomb as the man of God; lay my bones beside his bones. ³² For the word he uttered at Yahweh’s command against the altar of Bethel, and against all the shrines of the high places in the towns of Samaria, will certainly come true.”

³³ Jeroboam did not give up his wicked ways after this incident but went on appointing priests for the high places from the common people. He

²⁷ The NJB has ‘the donkey’ in place of ‘a donkey’, but this would imply that the family owned only one (which would have still been beside the corpse, with the lion – v. 28).

²⁸ The lion’s unnatural behaviour here is a sign that the event involved divine intervention.

²⁹ The (old) prophet does all that he can to honour the man of God.

³⁰ The use of the plural pronoun (‘they raised’) suggests that the prophet’s sons mourned with him.

³¹ The prophet continues to honour the dead ‘man of God’ by stating his wish to share his grave.

³² In place of ‘Samaria’, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘the north’; the name of Israel’s capital city here stands for the northern kingdom as a whole. Actually, Samaria was not built and named until several years after this (see 16:24), so it is likely that the author, writing at a later time, is here adapting the old prophet’s original statement.

³³ The expression ‘common people’ refers to people who were not Levites; see 12:31.

אֶת־יָדָיו וַיְהִי כַהֲנֵי בָמֹת: לַדְּוִיָּה לְבַדְבָּר הַזֶּה
לְחַטָּאת בֵּית יִרְבְּעָם וּלְהַכְחִיד וּלְהַשְׁמִיד מֵעַל פְּנֵי
הָאֲדָמָה: {פ}

consecrated as priests of the high places any who wished to be. ³⁴ Such
conduct made the House of Jeroboam a sinful House and caused its ruin
and destruction from the face of the earth.

³⁴ The NJB has 'extinction' in place of 'destruction', here following the NRSV.

מלכים א פרק יד

^א בַּעַת הָהִיא חָלָה אֲבִיָּה בֶן־יִרְבֵּעַם: ^ב וַיֹּאמֶר יִרְבֵּעַם לְאִשְׁתּוֹ קוּמִי נָא וְהִשְׁתַּנִּיתִי וְלֹא יֵדְעוּ כִּי־אֵת אֶתִּי אִשְׁתִּי יִרְבֵּעַם וְהִלַכְתְּ שָׁלָה הַנֶּה־שָׁם אַחִיָּה הַנָּבִיא הוּא־דֹבֵר עָלַי לְמַלְךְ עַל־הָעָם הַזֶּה: ^ג וְלִקַּחְתְּ בִּידְךָ עֲשָׂרָה לֶחֶם וְנִקְדִים וּבִקְבֶקֶב דָּבֶשׁ וּבָאת אֵלָיו הוּא יַגִּיד לְךָ מִה־יְהִיָּה לְנֶעֱר: ^ד וַתַּעַשׂ כֵּן אִשְׁתִּי יִרְבֵּעַם וַתֵּקֶם וַתֵּלֶךְ שָׁלָה וַתֵּבֵא בֵּית אַחִיָּה וְאַחִיָּהּ לֹא־יָכַל לִרְאוֹת כִּי קָמוּ עֵינָיו מִשִּׁיבוֹ: {פ}

^ה וַיְהִי־הָאָמֵר אֲמַר אֶל־אַחִיָּהּ הִנֵּה אִשְׁתִּי יִרְבֵּעַם בָּאָה לְדֹרֶשׁ דְּבַר מַעֲמֹךְ אֶל־בְּנֶהָ כִּי־חָלָה הוּא כִּזָּה וְכִזָּה תִּדְבֹר אֵלָיָהּ וַיְהִי כְּבֹאָהּ וְהִיא מִתְנַפְּרָה: ^ו וַיְהִי כְּשָׁמַע אַחִיָּהּ אֶת־קוֹל רַגְלֶיהָ בָּאָה בַּפֶּתַח וַיֹּאמֶר בָּאִי אִשְׁתִּי יִרְבֵּעַם לָמָּה זֶה אַתְּ מִתְנַפְּרָה וְאַנֹכִי שָׁלוֹחַ אֵלֶיךָ קִשָּׁה: ^ז לָכֵי אֲמַרְי לִיִּרְבֵּעַם כֹּה־

1 KINGS 14

¹ At that time Abijah, Jeroboam's son, fell sick, ² and Jeroboam said to his wife, "Come, please disguise yourself so that no one will recognise you as Jeroboam's wife, and go to Shiloh; for, the prophet Ahijah is there, the man who said of me that I should be king over this people.

³ Take with you ten loaves, and some savoury food and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what will happen to the child."

⁴ Jeroboam's wife did this: she set out, went to Shiloh, and came to Ahijah's house. Now Ahijah could not see: his eyes were dimmed with age.

⁵ But Yahweh had said to Ahijah, "The wife of Jeroboam is now on her way to ask you for an oracle concerning her son, as he is sick. You will tell her such and such. When she comes, she will pretend to be some other woman." ⁶ So, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, he called, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam; why pretend to be someone else? For I am charged with heavy tidings for you. ⁷ Go

1 KINGS 14

¹ Many MSS of the LXX (including *Codex Alexandrinus*) lack vv. 1–20; the [text provided in this collection](#) follows *Codex Vaticanus*.

² The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

³ The literal translation of 'take with you' is 'take in your hand'.

⁴ The literal translation of 'dimmed with age' is 'set because of his age'.

⁵ The author here condenses the message with the words 'such and such'; he prefers to have us hear the message from Ahijah's lips (v. 7ff).

⁶ For the last sentence, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "I have bad news for you."

⁷ In the MT, vv. 7–11 comprise one sentence: a causal clause giving the reason for divine punishment and the main clause announcing it.

אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יֶעַן אֲשֶׁר הִרְמַתִּיךָ מִתּוֹךְ
הָעָם וְאֶתָּנָךְ נָגִיד עַל עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ח וְאֶקְרַע אֶת־
הַמַּמְלָכָה מִבֵּית דָּוִד וְאֶתָּנָה לָךְ וְלֹא־הָיִיתָ כְּעַבְדִּי
דָּוִד אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַר מִצְוֹתַי וְאֲשֶׁר־הִלָּךְ אַחֲרַי בְּכָל־
לְבָבוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת רַק הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינַי: ^ט וְתָרַע לַעֲשׂוֹת
מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר־הָיוּ לִפְנֶיךָ וְתִלְלֶךָ וְתַעֲשֶׂה־לָּךְ אֱלֹהִים
אַחֲרִים וּמַסְכּוֹת לְהַכְעִיסֵנִי וְאֵתִי הַשְׁלַכְתָּ אַחֲרַי
גִּזְךָ: ^י לָכֵן הִנְנִי מֵבִיא רָעָה אֶל־בֵּית יִרְבֵּעָם
וְהִכְרַתִּי לִירְבֵּעָם מִשְׁתֵּין בְּקִיר עֲצוֹר וְעֲזוֹב
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְעֵרְתִּי אַחֲרַי בֵּית־יִרְבֵּעָם כְּאֲשֶׁר יִבְעַר
הַגָּלִל עַד־תַּמּוֹ: ^{יא} הֵמֶת לִירְבֵּעָם בָּעִיר יֹאכְלוּ
הַכְּלָבִים וְהֵמֶת בַּשָּׂדֶה יֹאכְלוּ עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי יִהְיֶה
דְּבַר: ^{יב} וְאֵת קוֹמִי לְכִי לְבֵיתְךָ בְּבֹאָה רַגְלִיךָ
הָעִירָה וּמֵת הַיֵּלֶד: ^{יג} וְסִפְדוּ־לוֹ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְקִבְּרוּ
אֹתוֹ כִּי־זֶה לְבָדּוֹ יָבֹא לִירְבֵּעָם אֶל־קֶבֶר יֶעַן נִמְצָא־
בּוֹ דְּבַר טוֹב אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּבֵית יִרְבֵּעָם:
^{יד} וְהָקִים יְהוָה לוֹ מִלֶּךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִכְרִית

and tell Jeroboam, “Yahweh says this, the God of Israel: I raised you from among the people and made you leader over my people Israel. ⁸ I tore the kingdom from the House of David and gave it to you, but you have not been like my servant David who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my eyes; ⁹ you have done more evil than all your predecessors, you have gone and made yourself other gods, idols of cast metal, provoking my anger, and you have turned your back on me. ¹⁰ So, I will bring disaster on the House of Jeroboam, I will wipe out everyone who urinates on a wall from the family of Jeroboam, fettered or free in Israel, I will sweep away the House of Jeroboam as a man sweeps away dung until nothing is left. ¹¹ Those of Jeroboam’s family who die in the city, the dogs shall eat; and those who die in the open country, the birds of the air shall eat, for Yahweh has spoken.” ¹² Therefore, get up and go home: the moment your feet enter the town, the child shall die. ¹³ All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him; and he alone of Jeroboam’s family will have a proper burial, for in him alone of the House of Jeroboam can Yahweh, the God

⁸ The NRSV has ‘sight’ in place of ‘eyes’, here following the MT & NJB.

⁹ Jeroboam intended his golden calves to serve for the worship of Yahweh (see #12:28) but they were not suitable – ‘false gods’ and no more.

¹⁰ ‘Fettered’ and ‘free’ are, in the MT, two alliterative words (עֲצוֹר וְעֲזוֹב) of uncertain sense but together expressing totality: ‘every single man’.

¹¹ The literal translation of ‘those of Jeroboam’s family’, here following the NJB, is ‘anyone belonging to Jeroboam’.

¹² Ahijah’s tidings were heavy indeed (v. 6).

¹³ The NRSV ends this verse with, “because in him there is found something pleasing to the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.”

אֶת־בֵּית יִרְבְּעָם זֶה הַיּוֹם וְיָמָּה גַּם־עַתָּה: ^{טו} וְהִלָּה
יְהוָה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר יָנוּד הַקֶּנֶה בַּמַּיִם וְנִתַּשׁ
אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַל הָאֲדָמָה הַטּוֹבָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר נָתַן
לְאֲבוֹתֵיהֶם וְזָרַם מֵעַבֵּר לְנָהָר יַעַן אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ אֶת־
אֲשֵׁרֵיהֶם מִכְּעִיסִים אֶת־יְהוָה: ^{טז} וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּגִלְל חֲטָאוֹת יִרְבְּעָם אֲשֶׁר חָטָא וְאֲשֶׁר הִחֲטִיא
אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יז} וַתִּקֶּם אִשְׁתּוֹ יִרְבְּעָם וַתִּלְךְ וַתִּבָּא
תִּרְצָתָהּ הִיא בָּאָה בְּסֶף־הַבַּיִת וְהִנֵּעַר מִתּוֹ:
^{יח} וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ וַיִּסְפְּדוּ־לּוֹ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּדָּבָר יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד־עֲבָדָיו אַחֲיָהוּ הַנָּבִיא: ^{יט} וַיִּתֵּן דְּבָרֵי
יִרְבְּעָם אֲשֶׁר נִלְחַם וְאֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ הֵנָּה כְּתוּבִים עַל־
סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^כ וְהַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר

of Israel, find anything good. ¹⁴ Yahweh will set a king over Israel who will put an end to the House of Jeroboam today, even right now! ¹⁵ Yahweh will make Israel shake as a reed shakes in the water, he will uproot Israel from this prosperous land, which he gave to their fathers, and scatter them beyond the river for provoking Yahweh to anger by making their sacred poles. ¹⁶ He will abandon Israel for the sins Jeroboam has committed and made Israel commit.” ¹⁷ Jeroboam’s wife rose and left. She arrived at Tirzah, and when she crossed the threshold of the house, the child was already dead. ¹⁸ They buried him, and all Israel mourned him, just as Yahweh had foretold through his servant Ahijah the prophet. ¹⁹ The rest of the history of Jeroboam, what wars he waged, how he governed, these are recorded in the Book of the Annals

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- ¹⁴ The NJB lacks ‘today, even right now’, though a footnote mentions an exilic gloss, “Now is the day, and what more now.” The meaning of the Hebrew (literally, “This is the day; what also now?”) is uncertain.
- ¹⁵ The phrase, ‘make Israel shake’ is a conjectural translation, in keeping with what follows; the NRSV, adhering more strictly to the MT, opens with, “Yahweh will strike Israel ...” Some texts refer to the ‘sacred poles’ by their Hebrew proper names, ‘Asherim’; they were symbols of the Canaanite fertility goddess, Asherah, mentioned about 40 times in the OT as a temptation to the Israelites. The ‘river’ is the Euphrates.
- ¹⁶ Ahijah, who had encouraged Jeroboam to revolt in the first place (11:29–31), now also turns against the king in bitter disappointment. The writer knew how short-lived was the House of Jeroboam (15:25–30) and how the whole Northern Kingdom fell in 721 BCE (v. 15), and explained these sombre events in terms of religious apostasy (vv. 9, 16).
- ¹⁷ ‘Tirzah’ (modern Tell El-Farah, north of Nablus) was Jeroboam’s place of residence after Shechem (12:25), and thus the capital of the kingdom of Israel (15:33) before Samaria was built (16:24).
- ¹⁸ The literal translation of ‘just as Yahweh had foretold’ is ‘according to the word of Yahweh which he spoke’.
- ¹⁹ Literally translated, this verse reads, “As for the rest of the events of Jeroboam, how he fought and how he ruled, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?”

מֶלֶךְ יִרְבְּעָם עֲשָׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם שָׁנָה וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִם־
אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּמְלֹךְ נָדָב בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו: {פ}

כא וַיִּרְחַבְעָם בֶּן־שְׁלֹמֹה מֶלֶךְ בִּיהוּדָה בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים
וְאַחַת שָׁנָה רַחֲבָעָם בְּמַלְכוֹ וְשִׁבְעַת עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה
מֶלֶךְ בִּירוּשָׁלַם הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר־בָּחַר יְהוָה לָשׁוּם אֶת־
שְׁמוֹ שָׁם מִכָּל שְׁבִטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ נַעֲמָה
הָעַמֹּנִית: כב וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוּדָה הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיִּקְנְאוּ
אֹתוֹ מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ אֲבֹתָם בַּחֲטָאֲתָם אֲשֶׁר
חָטְאוּ: כג וַיִּבְנוּ גִּם־הֵמָּה לָהֶם בָּמֹת וּמִצְבֹּת
וְאֲשֵׁרִים עַל כָּל־גִּבְעָה גְבוּלָה וְתַחַת כָּל־עֵץ רַעֲנָן:
כד וְגִם־קִדְּשׁ הָיָה בָאָרֶץ עָשׂוּ כָּל־הַתּוֹעֲבֹת הַגּוֹיִם
אֲשֶׁר הֹרִישׁ יְהוָה מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

כה וַיְהִי בִשְׁנֵה הַחֲמִישִׁית לְמֶלֶךְ רַחֲבָעָם עָלָה
שׁוּשַׁק שִׁישַׁק מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם עַל־יְרוּשָׁלַם: כו וַיִּקַּח
אֶת־אֲצִרוֹת בֵּית־יְהוָה וְאֶת־אֲצִרוֹת בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְאֶת־הַכָּל לָקַח וַיִּקַּח אֶת־כָּל־מִגְנֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר

of the Kings of Israel. ²⁰ Jeroboam's reign lasted twenty-two years; then he slept with his fathers; his son Nadab succeeded him.

²¹ In Judah, Rehoboam son of Solomon became king; he was forty-one years old when he became king and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city Yahweh had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to give his name a home. His mother's name was Naamah, the Ammonite.

²² Judah did evil in Yahweh's eyes, arousing his jealousy more than their fathers did by all the sins they committed, ²³ for they built themselves high places, pillars, and sacred poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. ²⁴ There were sacred male prostitutes in the country. They copied all the shameful practises of the nations whom Yahweh had dispossessed for the sons of Israel.

²⁵ And it came to pass that, in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak the king of Egypt marched on Jerusalem. ²⁶ He took all the treasures from the Temple of Yahweh and the treasures from the royal palace, he took everything, including all the golden shields that Solomon had

²⁰ Jeroboam I reigned 931–910 BCE, according to notes in the *NJB* and E.R. Thiele, or 922–901 BCE, according to W.F. Albright.

²¹ Rehoboam reigned 931–913 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 922–915 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

²² The *NJB* has 'resentment' in place of 'jealousy', here following the *NRSV*.

²³ Asherah was commonly worshiped at shrines in or near groves of evergreen trees, or, failing that, at places marked by wooden poles.

²⁴ The *LXX* has 'bonding together' (σύνδεσμος) in place of 'sacred male prostitutes'.

²⁵ 'Shishak', here following the *Qere* (שִׁישַׁק) rather than the *Ketiv* (שׁוּשַׁק), was the first Pharaoh of the 22nd Dynasty.

²⁶ In place of 'royal palace', here following the *NJB* & *NETB*, the *NRSV* has 'king's house'.

עָשָׂה שְׁלֹמֹה: כִּי וַיַּעַשׂ הַמֶּלֶךְ רַחֲבֹעַם תַּחְתָּם מִגָּנִי
 נְחֹשֶׁת וְהַפְקִיד עַל־יַד שְׂרֵי הָרָצִים הַשְּׂמָרִים פֶּתַח
 בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ: כִּי וַיְהִי מִדִּי־בֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ בֵּית יְהוָה
 יִשְׂאוּם הָרָצִים וְהַשִּׁיבוּם אֶל־תַּא הָרָצִים: כֹּס וַיִּתֵּר
 דְּבָרֵי רַחֲבֹעַם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הֲלֹא־הֵמָּה כְּתוּבִים
 עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה: ל וּמִלְחָמָה
 הָיְתָה בֵּין־רַחֲבֹעַם וּבֵין יִרְבֵּעַם כָּל־הַיָּמִים:
 לֹא וַיִּשְׁכַּב רַחֲבֹעַם עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר עִם־אֲבֹתָיו
 בְּעִיר דָּוִד וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ נַעֲמָה הָעַמֹּנִית וַיִּמְלֹךְ אַבְיָם
 בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו: {פ}

made; ²⁷ in place of them King Rehoboam had bronze shields made, entrusting them to the care of the officers of the guard who guarded the king's palace gate. ²⁸ Whenever the king went to the Temple of Yahweh, the guards would carry them, returning them to the guardroom afterwards. ²⁹ The rest of the history of Rehoboam, his entire career, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ³⁰ There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. ³¹ When Rehoboam fell asleep with his fathers, he was buried in the City of David. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite; his son Abijam succeeded him.

²⁷ The 'officers of the guard' were bodyguards who escorted the king's chariot.

²⁸ It seems that the bronze shields were used as a display of royal authority when the king visited the Temple.

²⁹ The 'Annals of the Kings of Judah' are mentioned 15 times in 1-2 Kings; they are apparently diaries or records of some sort that documented what were felt to be important events of each King's reign. Some believe they weren't official documents but were more likely records kept by the prophets who served during each king's reign; regardless, these books have never been found and are presumed to have been irretrievably lost.

³⁰ For this verse, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB reads, "Rehoboam and Jeroboam were at war with each other throughout their reigns."

³¹ The NJB omits 'His mother name was Naamah the Ammonite', in keeping with 2Ch 12:16.

מלכים א פרק טו

א וּבִשְׁנַת שְׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂרָה לַמֶּלֶךְ יִרְבֵּעַם בֶּן־נִבְט מֶלֶךְ
אֲבִים עַל־יְהוּדָה: ב שָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים מֶלֶךְ בִּירוּשָׁלַם
וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ מַעַכָּה בַת־אֲבִישָׁלֹם: ג וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּכָל־
חַטָּאוֹת אָבִיו אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לִפְנֵיו וְלֹא־הָיָה לִבּוֹ
שָׁלֵם עִם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו כְּלָבֵב דָּוִד אָבִיו: ד כִּי לִמְעַן
דָּוִד נָתַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו לֹא נִיר בִּירוּשָׁלַם לְהַקִּים אֶת־
בְּנוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְלִהְיוֹת אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם: ה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה
דָּוִד אֶת־הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וְלֹא־סָר מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר־
צִוָּהוּ כָּל יְמֵי חַיָּיו רַק בַּדְּבָר אֲוִרְיָה הַחֲתִי:
וּמִלְחָמָה הָיְתָה בֵּין־רַחֲבֵעַם וּבֵין יִרְבֵּעַם כָּל־יְמֵי
חַיָּיו: ז וְיֵתֶר דְּבָרֵי אֲבִים וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הַלְּזָאֲהֵם
כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לַמֶּלֶכִּי יְהוּדָה

1 KINGS 15

¹ In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam became king of Judah ² and reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah, daughter of Abishalom. ³ He followed the sinful example of his father before him in everything; his heart was not wholly with Yahweh his God, as the heart of David his ancestor had been. ⁴ But, for David's sake, Yahweh his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, assuring him son after him and keeping Jerusalem secure; ⁵ for David had done what is right in the eyes of Yahweh and had never in all his life disobeyed whatever he ordered him, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. ⁶ The war begun between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued all the days of his life. ⁷ The rest of the history of Abijam, his entire career, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings

1 KINGS 15

- ¹ Abijam reigned 913–911 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 915–913 BCE according to W.F. Albright. After 'Abijam', the LXX adds 'son of Rehoboam' (υἱὸς Ροβοαμ).
- ² 'Abishalom' is a variant form of 'Absalom'. If descended from King David's favourite son, Maacah must in fact have been Absalom's granddaughter (see v. 10), where the same lady appears as (grand) 'daughter' of Absalom and (grand) 'mother' of Asa (see v. 13 and 2Ch 15:16–18). Hebrew terms of relationship were elastic.
- ³ Literally translated, this verse ends, "...his heart was not complete with Yahweh his God, like the heart of David his father."
- ⁴ The NJB, following the LXX (τέκνα αὐτοῦ), has 'his sons' in place of 'his son', here following the MT & NRSV.
- ⁵ The last clause is parenthesised in the NJB.
- ⁶ In place of 'Rehoboam', some Hebrew MSS and the Peshitta have 'Abijam'. The NJB, following the LXX, omits this verse (which is out of place), dismissing it as a doublet of 14:30.
- ⁷ The literal translation of 'Book' is 'Scroll'.

וּמִלְחָמָה הִיָּתָה בֵּין אֲבִים וּבֵין יִרְבֵּעַם: ^ח וַיִּשְׁכַּב
אֲבִים עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ בְּעִיר דָּוִד וַיִּמְלֹךְ
אָסָא בְנוֹ תַחְתָּיו: {פ}

^ט וּבִשְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים לִירְבֵּעַם מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל מֶלֶךְ אָסָא
מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה: ^י וְאַרְבָּעִים וָאַחַת שָׁנָה מֶלֶךְ
בִּירוּשָׁלַם וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ מַעֲכָה בַת־אֲבִישָׁלוֹם: ^{יא} וַיַּעַשׂ
אָסָא הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינָי יְהוָה כְּדוֹד אָבִיו: ^{יב} וַיַּעֲבֹר
הַקִּדְשִׁים מִן־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּסֹּר אֶת־כָּל־הַגִּלְלִים אֲשֶׁר
עָשׂוּ אֲבֹתָיו: ^{יג} וְגַם אֶת־מַעֲכָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּסְרָהּ
מִגְבִּירָה אֲשֶׁר־עָשְׂתָה מִפְּלֶצֶת לְאַשְׁרָה וַיִּכְרֹת
אָסָא אֶת־מִפְּלֶצֶתָהּ וַיִּשְׂרֹף בְּנַחַל קִדְרוֹן:
^{יד} וְהַבְּמוֹת לֹא־סָרוּ רַק לְבַב־אָסָא הָיָה שָׁלֵם עִם־
יְהוָה כָּל־יָמָיו: {ס}

of Judah? Abijam and Jeroboam were at war with each other. ⁸ When Abijam fell asleep with his fathers, they buried him in the City of David; his son Asa succeeded him.

⁹ In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa became king of Judah ¹⁰ and reigned for forty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah, daughter of Absalom. ¹¹ Asa did what is right in the eyes of Yahweh, as his ancestor David had done. ¹² He drove out of the country the men who had been sacred prostitutes and cleared away all the idols his fathers had made. ¹³ He even deprived his grandmother of the dignity of Great Lady for making an obscenity for Asherah; Asa cut down her obscenity and burned it in the Wadi Kidron. ¹⁴ Though the high places were not abolished, the heart of Asa was wholly with Yahweh throughout his life.

⁸ After 'fell asleep', the LXX adds 'in the twenty-fourth year of Jeroboam' (ἐν τῷ εἰκοστῷ καὶ τετάρτῳ ἔτει τοῦ Ιεροβοαμ).

⁹ Asa reigned 911–870 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 913–873 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

¹⁰ See #2 on the term 'mother/grandmother'.

¹¹ The literal translation of 'ancestor' is 'father', but Hebrew often uses the terms 'father' and 'mother' for grandparents and more remote ancestors.

¹² The word used here for 'idols' (גִּלְלִים) is always used as a disdainful reference to idols; it is generally thought to have originally referred to 'dung pellets'.

¹³ In Judah, as in other eastern kingdoms, the queen mother enjoyed a position of honour (see 2:19) and certain prerogatives. She bore the title of 'Great Lady' (the NRSV uses simply 'queen mother' in place). Her name is given, without exception, in the introduction to each reign. Maacah had kept her rank under her descendant, who came to the throne very young. The meaning of the word here translated as 'obscenity' is uncertain (the NRSV uses 'abominable image'). The word occurs only here and in the parallel 2Ch 15:16.

¹⁴ The NRSV slightly rearranges this verse, here following the NJB: "But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was true to the LORD all his days."

^{טו} וַיָּבֵא אֶת־קֹדְשֵׁי אָבִיו וּקְדָשָׁיו בֵּית יְהוָה כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב וְכֵלִים: ^{טז} וּמִלְחָמָה הָיְתָה בֵּין אָסָא וּבֵין בַּעֲשָׂא מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל־יְמֵיהֶם: ^{יז} וַיַּעַל בַּעֲשָׂא מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־יְהוּדָה וַיִּבֶן אֶת־הָרְמָה לְבִלְתִּי תָת יֵצֵא וּבָא לְאָסָא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה: ^{יח} וַיִּקַּח אָסָא אֶת־כָּל־הַכֶּסֶף וְהַזָּהָב הַנּוֹתָרִים בְּאוֹצְרוֹת בֵּית־יְהוָה וְאֶת־אוֹצְרוֹת בֵּית מֶלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּתֶּנֶם בְּיַד־עֲבָדָיו וַיִּשְׁלַחֵם הַמֶּלֶךְ אָסָא אֶל־בֶּן־הִדְד בֶּן־טַבְרִמּוֹן בֶּן־חִזְיוֹן מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּדַמְשֶׁק לֵאמֹר: ^{יט} בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ בֵּין אָבִי וּבֵין אָבִיךָ הִנֵּה שְׁלַחְתִּי לָךְ שְׁחָד כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לָךְ הַפָּרָה אֶת־בְּרִיתְךָ אֶת־בַּעֲשָׂא מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעַלָּה מֵעַלִּי: ^כ וַיִּשְׁמַע בֶּן־הִדְד אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אָסָא וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־שָׂרֵי הַחִילִים אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ עַל־עָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּדֹּף אֶת־עֵינֹן וְאֶת־דֹּן וְאֶת־אֶבֶל בֵּית־מַעֲכָה וְאֶת כָּל־כְּנָרוֹת עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ

¹⁵ And he brought the holy things of his father into the Temple of Yahweh, and the things he had sanctified, too, silver and gold and furnishings. ¹⁶ Asa and Baasha king of Israel were at war with each other as long as they lived. ¹⁷ Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah. ¹⁸ Asa then took the remaining silver and gold from the treasuries of the Temple of Yahweh and the royal palace. Entrusting this to his servants, he sent them with the following message to Ben-Hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezion, the king of Aram who lived in Damascus. ¹⁹ "An alliance between myself and you, as between my father and your father! With this, I send you a gift of silver and gold. Come, break off your alliance with Baasha king of Israel, and he will have to retreat from my territory." ²⁰ Ben-Hadad agreed and sent his generals against the towns of Israel; he ravaged Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maacah, all Chinneroth, and the whole land of Naphtali too. ²¹ When

¹⁵ In place of 'holy things of', here following the *Qere* (וְקֹדְשָׁיו), the *Ketiv* has 'his holy things' (וְקֹדְשֵׁי).

¹⁶ Literally translated, this verse reads, "There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days."

¹⁷ In place of 'prevent anyone from going out or coming in to', here following the NRSV, the NJB as simply 'blockade'.

¹⁸ The 'Ben-Hadad' mentioned is the first of that name. On the dynasty's subsequent history, see 20:1. Asa inaugurated the policy of foreign alliance – here bribing Ben-Hadad (of Syria) to change sides, thus tipping the balance in favour of Judah – for which the Major Prophets were constantly to reproach the kings of Judah (see Is 7:4–9, 8: 6–8). The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁹ The literal translation of 'retreat' is 'go up'.

²⁰ 'Chinneroth' is the district west of Lake Tiberias.

²¹ The literal translation of 'fortifying' is 'building'.

נִפְתָּלִי: ^{כא} וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַע בַּעֲשָׂא וַיַּחְדֹּל מִבְּנוֹת אֶת־
הָרָמָה וַיָּשָׁב בְּתִרְצָה: ^{כב} וְהַמֶּלֶךְ אָסָא הִשְׁמִיעַ
אֶת־כָּל־יְהוּדָה אֵין נָקִי וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־אֲבִנֵי הָרָמָה
וְאֶת־עֲצֵיהָ אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה בַּעֲשָׂא וַיָּבֶן בָּם הַמֶּלֶךְ אָסָא
אֶת־גִּבְעָה בְּנִימָן וְאֶת־הַמִּצְפָּה: ^{כג} וַיֵּתֶר כָּל־דְּבָרֵי־
אָסָא וְכָל־גְּבוּרָתוֹ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְהָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר
בָּנָה הֲלֹא־הֵמָּה כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים
לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה רַק לַעֲת זִקְנָתוֹ חָלָה אֶת־רַגְלָיו:
^{כד} וַיִּשְׁכַּב אָסָא עַם־אֲבִתָּיו וַיִּקְבֹּר עַם־אֲבִתָּיו בְּעִיר
דָּוִד אָבִיו וַיִּמְלֹךְ יְהוֹשָׁפָט בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו: {פ}

^{כה} וַנָּדָב בֶּן־יִרְבֵּעָם מֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּשְׁנַת שְׁתַּיִם
לְאָסָא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנַתַּיִם:
^{כו} וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיִּלְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ אָבִיו
וּבַחֲטָאתוֹ אֲשֶׁר הִחָטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{כז} וַיִּקְשֹׁר
עָלָיו בַּעֲשָׂא בֶן־אֲחִיָּה לְבֵית יִשְׁשָׁכָר וַיַּכְהוּ בַּעֲשָׂא
בְּגִבְתּוֹן אֲשֶׁר לְפִלְשֹׁתַיִם וַנָּדָב וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל צָרִים
עַל־גִּבְתּוֹן: ^{כח} וַיָּמָתוּהוּ בַּעֲשָׂא בִּשְׁנַת שָׁלֹשׁ לְאָסָא

Baasha heard this, he gave up fortifying Ramah and returned to Tirzah.

²² King Asa then summoned the whole of Judah, no one was exempt; they took away the stones and timber with which Baasha had been fortifying Ramah, and with them, the king fortified Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah. ²³ The rest of the history of Asa, all his valour, his entire career, and the towns that he built, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? In his old age, however, he suffered from a disease of the feet. ²⁴ When Asa fell asleep with his fathers, he was buried in the City of David his father; and his son Jehoshaphat succeeded him.

²⁵ And Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa, the king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel for two years. ²⁶ He did what is evil in the sight of Yahweh and he copied his father's example and the sin that he had caused Israel to commit. ²⁷ And Baasha, the son of Ahijah, of the House of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha murdered him at Gibbethon, which was in Philistine territory; for, Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.

²² In place of 'summoned', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'made a proclamation to'.

²³ The NJB omits, 'and the towns that he built' (influenced by v. 22).

²⁴ The 'City of David' here refers to the fortified part of Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem.

²⁵ Nadab reigned 910–909 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 901–900 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

²⁶ The NJB ends this verse, here following the NRSV, with, "the sin into which he had led Israel."

²⁷ In place of 'which was in Philistine territory', the NRSV has 'which belonged to the Philistines' and the NJB has 'a Philistine town'.

מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחֲתָיו: כט וַיְהִי כַּמְלָכּוֹ הַכֹּה
 אֶת־כָּל־בֵּית יִרְבֵּעַם לֹא־הִשְׁאִיר כָּל־נִשְׁמָה
 לִירְבֵּעַם עַד־הַשְּׁמָדוֹ כַּדָּבָר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד־
 עַבְדּוֹ אַחִיָּה הַשִּׁילֹנִי: ל עַל־חַטָּאוֹת יִרְבֵּעַם אֲשֶׁר
 חָטָא וְאֲשֶׁר הִחֲטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכַעֲסוֹ אֲשֶׁר
 הִכְעִיס אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: לא וַיֹּתֵר דְּבָרֵי נִדָּב
 וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הֵלֵא־הֵם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי
 הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: לב וּמִלְחָמָה הָיְתָה בֵּין אָסָא
 וּבֵין בַּעֲשָׂא מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל־יְמֵיהֶם: {פ}

לב בַּשָּׁנָה שְׁלֹשׁ לְאָסָא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה מָלַךְ בַּעֲשָׂא בֶן־
 אַחִיָּה עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִרְצָה עֶשְׂרִים וָאַרְבַּע
 שָׁנָה: לד וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיִּלְךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ יִרְבֵּעַם
 וּבַחַטָּאתוֹ אֲשֶׁר הִחֲטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל: {ס}

²⁸ Baasha killed Nadab and succeeded him in the third year of Asa king of Israel. ²⁹ No sooner was he king than he butchered the entire House of Jeroboam; he left to the house of Jeroboam not one that breathed, until he had destroyed it, just as Yahweh had foretold through his servant Ahijah of Shiloh, ³⁰ because of the sins into which he had led Israel, and because he had provoked the anger of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ³¹ The rest of the history of Nadab, his entire career, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ³² There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all their days.

³³ In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha, the son of Ahijah, became king of Israel at Tirzah for twenty-four years. ³⁴ He did what is evil in the sight of Yahweh; he copied the example of Jeroboam and the sin into which he had led Israel.

²⁸ Here begins a series of assassinations of kings of Israel, interpreted by the writer as a judgement against the northern kingdom (vv. 29–30).

²⁹ In place of ‘he left ... destroyed it’, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has ‘not sparing a soul, and wiped it out’.

³⁰ Literally translated, this verse ends, “...by his provocation by which he made Yahweh, the God of Israel, angry.”

³¹ The ‘Annals of the Kings of Israel’ are mentioned 17 times in 1-2 Kings; they are apparently diaries or records that documented what were felt to be important events of each King’s reign. Some believe they weren’t official documents but were more likely records kept by the prophets who served during each king’s reign; regardless, these books have never been found and are presumed to have been irretrievably lost.

³² The NJB, following the LXX, omits this verse; a note therein dismisses it as a doublet of v. 16.

³³ Baasha reigned 909–886 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 900–877 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

³⁴ The literal translation of ‘sight’ is ‘eyes’.

מלכים א פרק טז

^א וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יְהוּא בֶן־חַנָּנִי עַל־בַּעַשָׁא לֵאמֹר: ^ב יַעַן אֲשֶׁר הָרִימְתִּיךָ מִן־הָעֹפָר וְאַתָּנָךְ נָגִיד עַל עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתָלַדְתָּ בְּדַרְדָּר יִרְבָּעָם וְתַחֲטָא אֶת־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַכְעִיסֵנִי בַּחֲטָאתָם: ^ג הֲנִנִי מִבְּעִיר אַחֲרֵי בַעַשָׁא וְאַחֲרֵי בֵיתוֹ וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־בֵּיתְךָ כְּבֵית יִרְבָּעָם בֶּן־נִבַּט: ^ד הַמֶּת לְבַעַשָׁא בָּעִיר יֹאכְלוּ הַכְּלָבִים וְהַמֶּת לוֹ בַּשָּׂדֶה יֹאכְלוּ עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם: ^ה וְיִתֵּר דְּבָרֵי בַעַשָׁא וְאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וּגְבוּרָתוֹ הֵלֵא־הֵם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּעַשָׁא עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר בְּתִרְצָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ אֵלָה בְּנוֹ תַחְתָּיו: ^ז וְגַם בִּיד־יְהוּא בֶן־חַנָּנִי הִנְבִּיא דְּבַר־יְהוָה הָיָה אֶל־בַּעַשָׁא וְאֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וְעַל כָּל־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְהַכְעִיסוֹ

1 KINGS 16

¹ The word of Yahweh came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha, ² "I raised you from the dust and made you leader of my people Israel, but you have followed Jeroboam's example and led my people Israel into sins that provoke my anger. ³ Now I will sweep away Baasha and his House; I will make your House like the House of Jeroboam son of Nebat. ⁴ Those of Baasha's family who die in the city, the dogs will eat; and those who die in the open country, the birds of the air will eat." ⁵ The rest of the History of Baasha, his career, his valour, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ⁶ When Baasha fell asleep with his fathers, he was buried in Tirzah; his son Elah succeeded him. ⁷ Furthermore, the word of Yahweh was delivered through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani the prophet against Baasha and his House, firstly because of all the evil he did in the sight of Yahweh, provoking

1 KINGS 16

- ¹ A new prophet, 'Jehu son of Hanani', takes up the theme of condemnation already made familiar by Ahijah the Shilonite.
- ² The MT has 'because' at the beginning of this verse; in the MT, vv. 2-3 are one sentence comprised of a causal clause giving the reason for divine punishment (v. 2) and the main clause announcing the punishment (v. 3).
- ³ 'Sweep away' follows the NJB; the traditional view understands the verb בָּעַר to mean 'burn'.
- ⁴ The literal translation of 'those of Baasha's family' is 'the ones belonging to Baasha'.
- ⁵ On the 'Annals of the Kings of Israel', see #15:31.
- ⁶ 'Tirzah' (תִּרְצָה) was a town in the Samaritan highlands northeast of Shechem; it is generally identified with Tell El-Farah, NE of modern Nablus.
- ⁷ Both the NRSV and NJB, following the LXX, omit 'the prophet' after 'Hanani'. The whole verse is an addition, repeating vv. 1-4 and offering a second reason for Baasha's punishment, and not consistent with the spirit of the book.

בַּמַּעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו לִהְיוֹת כְּבֵית יִרְבֵּעַם וְעַל אֲשֶׁר-הִכָּה
אֹתוֹ: {פ}

ח בַּשָּׁנָה עֲשָׂרִים וּשְׁשׁ שָׁנָה לְאַסָּא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה
מֶלֶךְ אֱלָה בֶן-בַּעַשָּׂא עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִרְצָה שְׁנָתִים:
ט וַיִּקְשֹׁר עָלָיו עֲבָדָיו זִמְרִי שֹׂר מַחְצִית הָרֶכֶב וְהוּא
בְּתִרְצָה שְׁתֵּה שְׁכֹר בֵּית אֶרְצָא אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַבַּיִת
בְּתִרְצָה: י וַיָּבֹא זִמְרִי וַיַּכְהוּ וַיִּמִּיתֵהוּ בַּשָּׁנָה עֲשָׂרִים
וּשְׁבַע לְאַסָּא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחֲתָיו: יא וַיְהִי
בְּמָלְכוֹ כְּשִׁבְתּוֹ עַל-כִּסְאוֹ הִכָּה אֶת-כָּל-בַּיִת
בַּעַשָּׂא לֹא-הִשְׁאִיר לוֹ מִשְׁתֵּין בְּקִיר וְגֹאֲלָיו וְרַעְהוּ:
יב וַיִּשְׁמַד זִמְרִי אֶת כָּל-בַּיִת בַּעַשָּׂא כְּדָבָר יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֶל-בַּעַשָּׂא בִּיד יְהוּא הַנָּבִיא: יג אֶל כָּל-
חֲטָאוֹת בַּעַשָּׂא וְחֲטָאוֹת אֱלָה בְּנוֹ אֲשֶׁר חָטָא
וְאֲשֶׁר הִחֲטִיאוֹ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַכְעִיס אֶת-יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהַבְלִיהֶם: יד וַיִּתֵּר דְּבָרֵי אֱלָה וְכָל-
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הֲלֹא-הֶם כְּתוּבִים עַל-סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי
הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

him to anger by his actions and becoming like the House of Jeroboam; secondly because he destroyed that House.

⁸ In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah son of Baasha became king over Israel at Tirzah; he reigned for two years. ⁹ But one of his officers, Zimri, captain of half his chariots, plotted against him. While he was at Tirzah, drinking himself senseless in the house of Azra, who was in charge of the palace at Tirzah, ¹⁰ Zimri came in, struck him down and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and he became king in his place. ¹¹ On his accession, as soon as he had seated himself on the throne, he butchered Baasha's entire family, not leaving him a single one who urinates on a wall, or any relations, or friends. ¹² Zimri destroyed the whole House of Baasha, in accordance with the word that Yahweh had spoken against Baasha through the prophet Jehu, ¹³ because of all the sins of Baasha and his son Elah into which they had led Israel, provoking the anger of Yahweh, the God of Israel, with their useless idols. ¹⁴ The history of Elah, his entire career, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

⁸ Elah reigned 886–885 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 877–876 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

⁹ The literal translation of 'drinking himself senseless' (here following the NJB) is 'drinking and drunken'.

¹⁰ NETB clarifies the last clause, reading, "Zimri replaced Elah as king;" here, we follow the MT.

¹¹ The literal translation of 'a single male' is 'any who urinate against a wall'.

¹² The NJB omits the words 'against Baasha', here following the MT & NRSV.

¹³ The literal translation of 'useless idols' is 'empty things'.

¹⁴ Literally, "As for the rest of the events of Elah, and all which he did, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?"

^{טו} בַּשָּׁנָה עֶשְׂרִים וְשֶׁבַע שָׁנָה לְאַסָּא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה מֶלֶךְ זִמְרִי שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בְּתִרְצָה וְהָעָם חָנִים עַל־גִּבְתֹּן אֲשֶׁר לְפִלְשְׁתִּים: ^{טז} וַיִּשְׁמַע הָעָם הַחֲנִים לְאַמֵּר קֶשֶׁר זִמְרִי וְגַם הִכָּה אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּמְלְכוּ כָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־עֹמְרִי שֹׁר־צַבָּא עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא בַּמַּחֲנֶה: ^{יז} וַיַּעֲלֶה עֹמְרִי וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹ מִגִּבְתֹּן וַיִּצְרוּ עַל־תִּרְצָה: ^{יח} וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת זִמְרִי כִּי־נִלְכְּדָה הָעִיר וַיָּבֹא אֶל־אַרְמוֹן בֵּית־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׂרֹף עָלָיו אֶת־בֵּית־מֶלֶךְ בָּאֵשׁ וַיָּמָת: ^{יט} עַל־חַטָּאתָיו אֲשֶׁר חָטָא לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לָלֶכֶת בְּדַרְךְ יִרְבְּעָם וּבְחַטָּאתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְהַחֲטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^כ וַיִּתֵּל דְּבָרֵי זִמְרִי וּקְשָׁרוֹ אֲשֶׁר קֶשֶׁר הָלֹא־הֵם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

^{כא} אִזּו יִחְלַק הָעָם יִשְׂרָאֵל לַחֲצֵי חֲצֵי הָעָם הִיא אַחֲרֵי תִבְנִי בִן־גִּינָת לְהַמְלִיכּוֹ וְהַחֲצֵי אַחֲרֵי עֹמְרִי:

¹⁵ In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri became king for seven days in Tirzah. The people were then encamped in front of Gibbethon, a town in Philistine territory. ¹⁶ While they were encamped there, the people received this report: “Zimri has conspired against and has assassinated the king.” Therefore, all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that very day in the camp. ¹⁷ So, Omri, and all Israel with him, raised the siege of Gibbethon and laid siege to Tirzah. ¹⁸ When Zimri saw that the town was captured, he went into the keep of the royal palace, burned the palace over his own head, and died. ¹⁹ This was because of the sin he committed by doing what is displeasing to Yahweh, by copying the example of Jeroboam and the sin into which he had led Israel. ²⁰ The rest of the history of Zimri and the plot he hatched, is not all this recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

²¹ The people of Israel then split into two factions: one half following Tibni son of Ginath to make him king, the other half following Omri.

¹⁵ Zimri reigned during 885 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 876 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

¹⁶ For this verse, here (loosely) following NETB, the NJB reads, “When news reached the camp of how Zimri had plotted against and actually killed the king, all Israel proclaimed Omri, their general, king of Israel in the camp the same day.”

¹⁷ Omri – and his people – clearly felt that the matter of internal rebellion was more important to address than the siege of the Philistine city.

¹⁸ Zimri here committed the extreme act of cowardice.

¹⁹ Literally translated, this verse ends, “...by walking in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he did to make Israel sin.”

²⁰ On the ‘Annals of the Kings of Israel’, see #15:31.

²¹ ‘Tibni’ (תִּבְנִי) may actually be a nickname, meaning ‘Man of Straw’.

כב וַיַּחֲזֹק הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אַחֲרֵי עֹמְרִי אֶת־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר
אַחֲרֵי תִבְנִי בֶן־גִּינָתַי וַיָּמָת תִּבְנִי וַיִּמְלֹךְ עֹמְרִי: {פ}
כג בְּשָׁנָתָא שְׁלֹשִׁים וְאַחַת שָׁנָה לְאַסָּא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה
מֶלֶךְ עֹמְרִי עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁתַּיִם עָשָׂרָה שָׁנָה בְּתִרְצָה
מֶלֶךְ שִׁשְׁ־שָׁנִים: כד וַיִּקֶן אֶת־הַהָר שֶׁמֶרוֹן מֵאֵת
שֹׁמֶר בְּכִכְרִים כֶּסֶף וַיִּבֶן אֶת־הָהָר וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שֵׁם
הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה עַל שֵׁם־שֹׁמֶר אֲדָנֵי הָהָר שֶׁמֶרוֹן:
כה וַיַּעַשׂה עֹמְרִי הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּרַע מְכֹל אֲשֶׁר
לִפְנָיו: כו וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּכָל־דֶּרֶךְ יִרְבָּעָם בֶּן־נִבְטַן
וּבַחֲטָאֲתָיו וּבַחֲטָאֲתָיו אֲשֶׁר הִחֲטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְהַכְעִים אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּהֲבִלֵיהֶם:
כז וַיֵּתֶר דְּבָרֵי עֹמְרִי אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וּגְבוּרָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר

²² However, the faction of Omri proved stronger than that of Tibni son of Ginath; Tibni died, and Omri became king.

²³ In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri began to reign over Israel, and he reigned for twelve years. He reigned for six years in Tirzah. ²⁴ Then, for two talents of silver, he bought the hill, Samaria, from Shemer and, on it, he built a town, which he named Samaria after Shemer, who had owned the hill. ²⁵ And Omri did that which is evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did more evil than all those who were before him. ²⁶ For, in every way, he followed in the footsteps of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and the sins into which he had led Israel, thus provoking the anger of Yahweh, the God of Israel, with their useless idols. ²⁷ Now, the rest of the history of Omri, his career, and the valour he showed, are

²² According to the dates given in vv. 15 & 23, it actually took Omri 4 years to subdue Tibni, and to become the undisputed king of Israel.

²³ Omri reigned 885–874 BCE according to E.R. Thiele or 876–869 BCE according to W.F. Albright. He was without doubt a great ruler, as we know from extra-biblical sources; the Moabite Stone tells us that he subjugated Moab, and the Assyrian records refer to Israel as ‘*the land of the House of Omri*’ long after Omri’s descendants had ceased to rule. However, the Books of Kings, concerned with the kingdom of Israel exclusively from the religious point of view, mention only the founding of Samaria, which was to remain the capital until the kingdom finally collapsed; he is otherwise roundly condemned, no doubt chiefly because he married his son Ahab to Jezebel, the daughter of the king of the neighbouring Phoenicians (Sidonians) – a good political policy that turned out to be religiously disastrous.

²⁴ The term (כִּכְרִים, literally ‘*circles*’) refers generally to things that are round; when used of metals, it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or to a standard unit of weight, generally regarded as a talent. Since the accepted weight for a talent of metal is about 34 Kg, this would have amounted to some 68 Kg of silver.

²⁵ The literal translation of ‘*sight*’ is ‘*eyes*’.

²⁶ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁷ On the ‘*Annals of the Kings of Israel*’, see #15:31.

עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹהִים כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים
לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כח וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִמָּרִי עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר
בְּשֶׁמְרוֹן וַיִּמְלֹךְ אַחָאב בֶּן־זַמְרִי: {פ}

כט וַאֲחָאב בֶּן־עִמְרִי מָלַךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשָׁנַת
שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁמֹנֶה שָׁנָה לְאַסָּא מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ
אַחָאב בֶּן־עִמְרִי עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשֶׁמְרוֹן עָשָׂרִים
וּשְׁתַּיִם שָׁנָה: ל וַיַּעַשׂ אַחָאב בֶּן־עִמְרִי הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי
יְהוָה מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר לִפְנָיו: לא וַיְהִי הַנֶּקֶל לְכָתּוֹ
בַּחֲטָאוֹת יִרְבֵּעַם בֶּן־נִבַּט וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה אֶת־אִיזֶבֶל
בַּת־אֶתְבָּעֵל מֶלֶךְ צִידוֹנִים וַיִּלְךְ וַיַּעֲבֹד אֶת־הַבַּעַל
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לוֹ: לב וַיִּקֶּם מִזְבֵּחַ לַבַּעַל בֵּית הַבַּעַל אֲשֶׁר
בָּנָה בְּשֶׁמְרוֹן: לג וַיַּעַשׂ אַחָאב אֶת־הָאֲשֵׁרָה וַיֹּסֶף
אַחָאב לַעֲשׂוֹת לְהַכְעִיס אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִכָּל מַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ לִפְנָיו: לד בַּיָּמִיו בָּנָה
חִיָּאל בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־יְרִיחָה בְּאַבִּירָם בְּכָרוֹ יִסְדָּה

these not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

²⁸ When Omri fell asleep with his fathers, he was buried in Samaria; his son Ahab replaced him as king.

²⁹ Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah and he reigned over Israel for twenty-two years in Samaria. ³⁰ Ahab son of Omri did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did more evil than all who were before him. ³¹ The least that he did was to follow the sinful example of Jeroboam son of Nebat; he married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and then proceeded to serve Baal and worship him. ³² He erected an altar to him in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. ³³ Ahab also put up a sacred pole and committed other crimes as well, provoking that anger of Yahweh, the God of Israel, more than all the kings of Israel who were his predecessors. ³⁴ It was in his time that Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho; he laid its foundations at the price of Abiram, his first-born; its gates he

²⁸ After this verse, the LXX has an additional 7 verses (cf. 22:41–44).

²⁹ Ahab reigned 874–853 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 869–850 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

³⁰ Ahab is here the 2nd king to do more evil than his predecessors (cf. v. 25).

³¹ ‘Ethbaal’ (‘Ittobaal’ in the LXX) was a priest of Astarte who seized power in Tyre at the same time as Omri in Israel; the two usurpers came to terms and sealed their alliance by a family marriage. The effects on the religion of Israel of this association with the Phoenicians were to be increasingly felt throughout Ahab’s reign.

³² The Canaanites worshiped ‘Baal’ as a storm and fertility god.

³³ Some MSS use the Hebrew name, ‘Asherah’, in place of ‘sacred pole’.

³⁴ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

ובשגיב ובשגוב צעירו הצִיב דלתיה כדבר יהוה
אשר דבר ביד יהושע בן־נון: {ס} erected at the price of his youngest son Segub, just as Yahweh had
foretold through Joshua son of Nun.

מלכים א פרק יז

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א וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶן הַתְּשֻׁבִּי מִתְּשֻׁבֵּי גִלְעָד אֶל־אֲחָאָב
חַי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר עֲמַדְתִּי לִפְנֵיו אִם־
יְהִיָּה הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה טַל וּמָטָר כִּי אִם־לִפִּי
דְּבָרִי: {ס}

ב וַיְהִי דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר: ג לֵךְ מִזֶּה וּפְנִיתָ לָךְ
קֶדְמָה וְנִסְתַּרְתָּ בְּנַחַל כְּרִית אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן:
ד וְהָיָה מִהֲנַחַל תִּשְׁתָּה וְאֶת־הָעֹרֵבִים צִוִּיתִי
לְכַלְכֶּלְךָ שָׁם: ה וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיַּעַשׂ כְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיֵּשֶׁב
בְּנַחַל כְּרִית אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן: ו וְהָעֹרֵבִים
מִבָּאִים לוֹ לֶחֶם וּבָשָׂר בַּבֹּקֶר וּלְחֶם וּבָשָׂר בָּעֶרֶב

¹ Now Elijah the Tishbite, of the settlers in Gilead said to Ahab, "As certainly as Yahweh lives, the God of Israel whom I stand before, there shall be neither dew nor rain the years ahead except at the command of my word."

² And the word of Yahweh came to him, saying ³ "Go away from here, go eastwards, and hide yourself in the Wadi Cherith, which lies east of Jordan. ⁴ You can drink from the stream, and I have ordered the ravens to provide for you there." ⁵ He did as Yahweh had said; he went and stayed in the Wadi Cherith, which lies east of Jordan. ⁶ The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the

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¹ In place of 'of the settlers' (here following the MT), the NJB, NRSV & NETB, following the LXX (ἐκ Θεσβων), have 'from Tishbe'. The document dealing with the history of Elijah, of which use is made henceforth, probably recounted the earlier life of the prophet but the author starts from the point where it fits into his own narrative: the drought is presented as a punishment for the introduction of the cult of Baal (16:32-33) who, to his Canaanite and Phoenician worshippers, controlled the rain. Elijah intended to show that Yahweh, his God, was the one who really controlled the rain. The stories of 1K17-2K10 are based on northern source material, possibly brought to Judah by refugees from Israel. It must be remembered that all final redaction was done in Judah, and therefore we are fortunate in having this northern material.

² The NJB lacks the word 'saying' at the end of this verse.

³ The phrase, 'east of Jordan' (here and in v. 5), probably refer to territory outside of Ahab's jurisdiction; Ahab had been eagerly seeking to apprehend the prophet in order to find some reconciliation with him to end the drought (18:10).

⁴ In place of 'provide for you', here following the MT, the NJB has 'bring you food'.

⁵ The exact location of the 'Wadi Cherith' is unknown.

⁶ This verse follows the MT & NRSV; the NJB, following the LXX (καὶ οἱ κόρακες ἔφερον αὐτῷ ἄρτους τὸ πρωῒ καὶ κρέα τὸ δείλῃς), has, "the ravens brought him bread in the morning and meat in the evening."

וּמִן־הַנַּחֵל יִשְׁתֶּה: ^ז וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ יָמִים וַיִּיבֶשׁ הַנַּחֵל כִּי
לֹא־הָיָה גֶשֶׁם בְּאֶרֶץ: {ס}

^ח וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר: ^ט קוּם לֵךְ צִרְפָּתָה
אֲשֶׁר לְצִידוֹן וְיִשְׁבֹּת שָׁם הִנֵּה צוֹיְתִי שָׁם אִשָּׁה
אֶלְמָנָה לְכָל־כֶּלֶךְ: ^י וַיֵּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ צִרְפָּתָה וַיָּבֹא אֶל־
פֶּתַח הָעִיר וְהִנֵּה־שָׁם אִשָּׁה אֶלְמָנָה מְקַשֶּׁשֶׁת
עֵצִים וַיִּקְרָא אֵלֶיהָ וַיֹּאמֶר קַח־נָא לִי מַעֲט־מִים
בְּכָלִי וְאַשְׁתֶּה: ^{יא} וַתֵּלֶךְ לִקְחַת וַיִּקְרָא אֵלֶיהָ וַיֹּאמֶר
לְקַח־נָא לִי פַת־לֶחֶם בִּידְךָ: ^{יב} וַתֹּאמֶר חַי־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ אִם־יִשְׁלִי מֵעוֹג כִּי אִם־מֶלֶא כַּךְ־קָמַח
בְּכַד וּמַעֲט־שֶׁמֶן בַּצִּפְחַת וְהִנֵּנִי מְקַשֶּׁשֶׁת שְׁנַיִם
עֵצִים וּבֹאֲתִי וְעָשִׂיתִיהוּ לִי וּלְבָנִי וְאֶכְלָנָהּ וּמָתְנוּ:
^{יג} וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אֵלֶיהָ אֶל־תִּירָאִי בְּאִי עָשִׂי כְּדִבְרֶךְ
אֲךָ עָשִׂי־לִי־מֶשֶׁם עֲגָה קִטְנָה בְּרֹאשָׁנָה וְהוֹצֵאת
לִי וּלְךָ וּלְבָנֶךָ תַּעֲשִׂי בְּאַחֲרָנָה: ^{יד} כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה

evening, and he quenched his thirst at the stream. ⁷ However, after a while the stream dried up, for the country had no rain.

⁸ Then the word of Yahweh came to him, saying ⁹ “Arise and go to Zarephath, a town in Sidonian territory, and stay there. I have ordered a widow there to give you food.” ¹⁰ So, he arose and went off to Zarephath; and, when he reached the city gate, there was a widow gathering sticks; addressing her he said, “Please bring a little water in a cup for me to drink.” ¹¹ She was setting off to bring it when he called after her. “Please,” he said, “bring me a scrap of bread in your hand.” ¹² “As Yahweh your God lives,” she replied, “I have no baked bread, but only a handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug; I am just gathering a stick or two to go and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” ¹³ But Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid, go and do as you have said; but first, make a little cake of it for me and bring it to me, and then make some for yourself and for your son. ¹⁴ For, thus Yahweh

⁷ Literally translated, this verse opens, “And it came about at the end of days.”

⁸ The NJB lacks the word ‘saying’ at the end of this verse.

⁹ ‘Zarephath’ (צִרְפָּתָה), on the Phoenician coast, was definitely in territory beyond the control of Ahab.

¹⁰ The NJB & NRSV have ‘vessel’ in place of ‘cup’, here following NETB.

¹¹ NETB lacks the phrase ‘in your hand’, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV.

¹² Literally translated, this verse reads, “Look, I am gathering two sticks and then I will go and make it for me and my son and we will eat it and we will die.”

¹³ The NJB has ‘scone’ in place of ‘cake’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁴ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדֹהֶקֶם לֹא תִכְלֶה וְצִפְחַת הַשֶּׁמֶן
לֹא תִחְסַר עַד יוֹם תֵּתֶן תֵּתִיָּהּ גֶשֶׁם עַל־פְּנֵי
הָאֲדָמָה: ^{טו} וְתִלְךָ וְתַעֲשֶׂה כְּדִבְרֵי אֱלֹהֵי וְתֹאכַל
הוּא וְהִיא [הִיא־וְהוּא] וּבֵיתָה יָמִים: ^{טז} בְּדֹהֶקֶם
לֹא כָלְתָה וְצִפְחַת הַשֶּׁמֶן לֹא חָסַר כְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד אֱלִיָּהוּ: {פ}

^{יז} וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה חָלָה בִּן־הָאִשָּׁה בַּעֲלַת
הַבַּיִת וַיְהִי חֲלָיו חֲזָק מְאֹד עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נִוְתָרָהּ
בּוֹ נְשָׁמָה: ^{יח} וְתֹאמַר אֶל־אֱלֹהֵי מֶה־לִּי וְלָךְ אִישׁ
הָאֱלֹהִים בָּאתָ אֵלַי לְהַזְכִּיר אֶת־עֲוֹנֵי וְלִהְיוֹת אֶת־
בְּנִי: ^{יט} וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֶיהָ תִּנִּי־לִי אֶת־בְּנִי וַיִּקְחָהּ
מִחִיקָה וַיַּעֲלֶהּ אֶל־הָעֵלִיָּה אֲשֶׁר־הוּא יֹשֵׁב שָׁם
וַיִּשְׁכְּבֶהּ עַל־מִטָּתוֹ: ^כ וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָגֶם עַל־הָאֲלֻמָּנָה אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי מִתְּגֹרֵר
עִמָּה הֲרַעוֹתָ לְהַמִּית אֶת־בְּנָהּ: ^{כא} וַיִּתְּמַדְד עַל־

speaks, the God of Israel: “Jar of meal shall not be spent, jug of oil shall not be emptied, before the day when Yahweh sends rain on the face of the earth.”” ¹⁵ The woman did as Elijah told her and they ate the food, she, as well as he and her household, for many days. ¹⁶ The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, just as Yahweh had foretold through Elijah.

¹⁷ It happened after this that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house fell sick; his illness was so severe that in the end he had no breath left in him. ¹⁸ Then the woman said to Elijah, “What quarrel have you with me, man of God? Have you come here to bring my sins to remembrance and to cause the death of my son?” ¹⁹ But he said to her, “Give me your son,” and, taking him from her arms, carried him to the upper chamber where he was staying and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ He cried out to Yahweh, “Yahweh my God, do you mean to bring disaster to the widow who is looking after me by killing her son?” ²¹ He stretched

¹⁵ The NJB, following the LXX (ἡσθίεν αὐτὴ καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς), ends with, “... she, himself and her son.” The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁶ Literally translated, this verse ends, “...according to the word of Yahweh that he spoke through Elijah.”

¹⁷ The NJB omits the words ‘the woman’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.

¹⁸ The woman attributes her misfortunes to Elijah’s visit: a man of God is like a hostile witness; at his presence, secret or unconscious sins are brought to light and draw down retribution.

¹⁹ In place of ‘arms’, here following NETB, the NJB has ‘lap’ and the NRSV has ‘bosom’.

²⁰ The NJB has ‘grief’ in place of ‘disaster’, and the NRSV has ‘calamity’.

²¹ The NJB has ‘soul’ in place of ‘life’, here following the NRSV (as also in v. 22).

הַיֶּלֶד שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵי תִשָּׁב נָא נַפְש־הַיֶּלֶד הַזֶּה עַל־קִרְבּוֹ:
 כִּבִּי וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל אֱלִיָּהוּ וַתָּשָׁב נַפְש־הַיֶּלֶד עַל־
 קִרְבּוֹ וַיְחִי: כִּי וַיִּקַּח אֱלִיָּהוּ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד וַיֵּרְדֵהוּ מִן־
 הָעֵלְיָה הַבֵּיתָה וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ לְאִמּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלִיָּהוּ רְאֵי
 חַי בְּנִי: כִּי וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־אֱלִיָּהוּ עַתָּה זֶה
 יִדְעָתִי כִּי אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה וַדְּבַר־יְהוָה בְּפִיךָ
 אֱמֶת: {פ}

himself on the child three times and cried out to Yahweh, “Yahweh my God, may the life of this child, I beg you, come into him again!”
²² Yahweh heard the prayer of Elijah and the life of the child returned to him, and he revived. ²³ Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother. “Look,” Elijah said, “your son is alive.” ²⁴ The woman said to Elijah, “Now I know you are a man of God and the word of Yahweh in your mouth is truth itself.”

²² Some have argued that the child was not really dead, and hence that no miracle was involved; this is beside the point – the writer meant to portray a powerful God and a worthy prophet (compare 2K 4:32–37, Ac 20:9–12). The Slavonic Bible merges vv. 20–22 into one verse.

²³ The ‘upper chamber’ would probably have been on the roof, and not inside the house.

²⁴ This episode is especially significant in light of Ahab’s decision to promote Baal worship in Israel: in Canaanite mythology, the drought that swept over the region (v. 1) would signal that Baal, a fertility god responsible for providing food for his subjects, had been defeated by the god of death and was imprisoned in the underworld. While Baal was overcome by death and unable to function like a king, Israel’s God demonstrated his sovereignty and superiority to death by providing food for a widow and restoring life to her son.

מלכים א פרק יח

א וַיְהִי יָמִים רַבִּים וַדְּבַר־יְהוָה הָיָה אֶל־אֱלֹהֵיהּ
בְּשָׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית לֵאמֹר לְךָ הִרְאָה אֶל־אֲחָאָב
וְאַתָּנָה מָטָר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: ב וַיֵּלֶךְ אֵלֵיהּ
לְהִרְאוֹת אֶל־אֲחָאָב וְהָרֶעַב חָזַק בְּשִׁמְרוֹן: ג וַיִּקְרָא
אֲחָאָב אֶל־עֲבָדָיו אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַבַּיִת וְעַבְדָּיו הָיָה
יֵרָא אֶת־יְהוָה מְאֹד: ד וַיְהִי בַּהֲכָרִית אֵיזָבֵל אֵת
נְבִיאֵי יְהוָה וַיִּקַּח עֲבָדָיו מֵאָה נְבִיאִים וַיַּחֲבִיֵּאֵם
חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ בַּמְעָרָה וּכְלָכֶלֶם לֶחֶם וּמַיִם:
ה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲחָאָב אֶל־עֲבָדָיו לְךָ בָּאָרֶץ אֶל־כָּל־
מַעֲיָנֵי הַמַּיִם וְאֵל כָּל־הַנְּחָלִים אוּלַי נִמְצָא חֲצִיר
וְנִחְיָה סוּס וּפֶרֶד וְלֹא נִכְרִית מִהֶבֱהֶמָה: ו וַיַּחֲלִקוּ
לָהֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ לַעֲבָר־בָּהּ אֲחָאָב הָלַךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ
אֶחָד לְבָדּוֹ וְעַבְדָּיו הָלַךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ־אַחַד לְבָדּוֹ: ז וַיְהִי
עֲבָדָיו בְּדֶרֶךְ וְהִנֵּה אֵלֵיהּ לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיִּכְרָהוּ וַיִּפֹּל

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¹ A long time later, in the third year, the word of Yahweh came to Elijah, “Go, present yourself to Ahab; I am about to send down rain on the land.” ² Therefore, Elijah set off to present himself to Ahab. The famine was particularly severe in Samaria. ³ Ahab summoned Obadiah, the master of the palace. (Now Obadiah revered Yahweh greatly; ⁴ when Jezebel was butchering the prophets of Yahweh, Obadiah took a hundred of them and hid them, fifty to a cave, and kept them provided with food and water.) ⁵ Then Ahab said to Obadiah, “Come along, we must scour the country, all the springs and all the ravines in the hope of finding grass to keep horses and mules alive, or we shall have to kill some of our stock.” ⁶ They divided the country for the purpose of their survey; Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way by himself. ⁷ While Obadiah was on his way, whom should he meet but Elijah; recognising him, he fell on his face and said, “So it is you, my lord

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- ¹ After ‘the third year’, the NRSV adds ‘of the drought’; here, we follow the MT & NJB. The drought is about to end, but the question is, which God withholds and sends the rain: Yahweh or the great Baal, called Baal of the Heavens by his followers?
- ² The very name of Elijah, meaning ‘Yah (short form of Yahweh) is God’ proclaims his faith.
- ³ ‘Obadiah’ means ‘Servant of Yahweh’; Jezebel (v. 4) had been persecuting the prophets of Yahweh.
- ⁴ The parenthesis prepares for v. 13. On these ‘prophets’, see 1S 10:5: they play a prominent part in the Elisha cycle.
- ⁵ The literal translation of ‘kill’ is ‘cut off’.
- ⁶ NETB omits the 2 instances of ‘by himself’ in this verse.
- ⁷ Obadiah immediately acknowledges Elijah as the greater prophet.

על־פָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֵתָה זֶה אֲדָנִי אֵלֶיּהוּ: ^ח וַיֹּאמֶר
 לוֹ אֲנִי לְךָ אֹמֵר לֹאֲדָנִיךָ הִנֵּה אֵלֶיּהוּ: ^ט וַיֹּאמֶר מָה
 חָטָאתִי כִּי־אַתָּה נָתַן אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ בְּיַד־אַחָאב
 לְהַמִּיתָנִי: ^י חִי! יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אִם־יִשְׁגֹּי וּמִמְלָכָה
 אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁלַח אֲדָנִי שָׁם לְבַקֶּשְׁךָ וַאֲמָרוּ אִין
 וְהִשְׁבִּיעַ אֶת־הַמֶּמְלָכָה וְאֶת־הַגֹּי כִּי לֹא יִמְצְאוּכָה:
^{יא} וְעַתָּה אַתָּה אֹמֵר לְךָ אֹמֵר לֹאֲדָנִיךָ הִנֵּה אֵלֶיּהוּ:
^{יב} וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי! אֵלֶיךָ מֵאֵתְךָ וְרוּחַ יְהוָה | יִשְׁאַף עַל
 אֲשֶׁר לֹא־אָדַע וּבֹאתִי לְהַגִּיד לְאַחָאב וְלֹא יִמְצְאוּךָ
 וְהִרְגָנִי וְעַבְדְּךָ יֵרָא אֶת־יְהוָה מִנְעָרִי: ^{יג} הֲלֹא־הִגַּדְתִּי
 לְאֲדָנִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי בַּהֲרֹג אִיזָבֵל אֵת נְבִיאֵי
 יְהוָה וְאַחָאב מִנְבִּיאֵי יְהוָה מָאָה אִישׁ חֲמִשִּׁים
 חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ בַּמַּעֲרָה וְאֶכְלָכֶלֶם לֶחֶם וּמִים:
^{יד} וְעַתָּה אַתָּה אֹמֵר לְךָ אֹמֵר לֹאֲדָנִיךָ הִנֵּה אֵלֶיּהוּ
 וְהִרְגָנִי: {ס}

Elijah!" ⁸ "Yes," he replied, "go and tell your master, "Elijah is here.""
⁹ Then Obadiah said, "What sin have I committed, for you to put your
 servant in Ahab's power and cause my death? ¹⁰ As Yahweh your God
 lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent in
 search of you; and when they said, "He is not there," he made the
 kingdom or nation swear on oath that they did not know where you
 were. ¹¹ And now you say to me, "Go and tell your master: Elijah is
 here." ¹² As soon as I leave you, the spirit of Yahweh will carry you away
 and I shall not know where; I shall come and tell Ahab; he will not be
 able to find you and will kill me. Yet, from his youth your servant has
 revered Yahweh. ¹³ Has no one told my lord what I did when Jezebel
 butchered the prophets of Yahweh, how I hid a hundred of them in a
 cave, fifty at a time, and kept them provided with food and water?
¹⁴ And now you say to me, "Go and tell your master: Elijah is here."
 Why, he will kill me!"

⁸ The literal translation of 'yes' is 'it is'.

⁹ Obadiah fears Ahab's anger and suspects Elijah has been sent to punish him. In place of 'Obadiah said', the MT has 'he said'; the referent of the pronoun is here added for clarity.

¹⁰ In place of 'said' and 'made', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'would say' and 'would require' and NETB has 'say' and 'makes'.

¹¹ The literal translation of 'Elijah is here' is 'Look! Elijah!'

¹² These sudden disappearances seem to be a feature of the story of Elijah (2K 2:16) until the last disappearance of all (2K 2:11ff). The spirit of Yahweh is an external force transporting the prophet from place to place (see Ezk 3:12, 8:3, 11:1, 43:5, and Ac 8:39).

¹³ Obadiah now pleads his good deeds to Elijah in hope of being excused his deadly errand.

¹⁴ The literal translation of 'Elijah is here' is 'Look! Elijah!'

טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו חִי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲשֶׁר עִמָּדָי
לִפְנֵי כִי הַיּוֹם אֶרְאֶה אֵלָיו: טז וַיֵּלֶךְ עַבְדֵּיהוּ
לִקְרֹאת אַחָאב וַיִּגְדֹּלּוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחָאב לִקְרֹאת
אֵלָיו: יז וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת אַחָאב אֶת־אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר
אַחָאב אֵלָיו הֲאֵתָה זֶה עֲכָר יִשְׂרָאֵל: יח וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא
עֲכָרְתִּי אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי אִם־אַתָּה וּבֵית אָבִיךָ
בַּעֲזֹבְכֶם אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וּתְלַךְ אַחֲרֵי הַבְּעָלִים:
יט וְעַתָּה שְׁלַח קִבֵּץ אֵלַי אֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־הַר
הַכְּרִמֶּל וְאֶת־נְבִיאֵי הַבָּעַל אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשִּׁים
וּנְבִיאֵי הָאֲשֵׁרָה אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אֲכָלֵי שֶׁלֶחַן אִיזָבֵל:
כ וַיִּשְׁלַח אַחָאב בְּכָל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְבֹּץ אֶת־
הַנְּבִיאִים אֶל־הַר הַכְּרִמֶּל: כא וַיֵּגֶשׁ אֵלָיו אֶל־כָּל־
הָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר עַד־מָתַי אַתֶּם פֹּסְחִים עַל־שְׁתֵּי

15 Elijah replied, “As Yahweh Sabaoth lives, before whom I stand, I shall surely present myself before him today!” 16 So, Obadiah went to find Ahab and tell him the news, and Ahab then went to find Elijah. 17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “So there you are – you scourge of Israel!” 18 “Not I,” he replied, “I am not the scourge of Israel, you and your family are; because you have forsaken the commandments of Yahweh and gone after the Baals. 19 Now, therefore, give orders for all Israel to gather round me on Mount Carmel, and also the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

20 So, Ahab called all Israel together and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. 21 Elijah stepped out in front of all the people and said, “How long do you mean to hobble first on one leg and then on the other?”

15 The Divine title, “Yahweh Sabaoth” (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) is traditionally translated as ‘LORD of Hosts’.

16 Literally translated, this verse reads, “Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah.”

17 Elijah is quick to point out that the fault lies with Ahab in not recognising Yahweh as the supreme God, and in allowing his wife, Jezebel, to propagate her religion in Israel.

18 The NJB, following the LXX, omits ‘the commandments of’.

19 The NJB lacks ‘and fifty’ and ‘and the four hundred prophets of Asherah’ (who are not mentioned again). There were many such ‘prophets’ among the peoples contiguous to Israel (Jr 27:9ff); they formed large groups, like the prophets of Yahweh (18:4). Here, they are the devotees of the Tyrian Baal, invited into Israel and maintained by Jezebel. ‘Asherah’ was one of the consorts of Baal (see #14:15); the ‘Baals’ may have been local versions of the great sky-god, ‘Baal’; thus, there was one Baal but also many Baals.

20 ‘Mount Carmel’ (הַר הַכְּרִמֶּל) is a mountain range in northern Israel, stretching from the Mediterranean towards the southeast.

21 The translation of Elijah’s opening question, here following the NJB, is uncertain; the NRSV reads, “How long will you go limping with two different opinions?” However, both translations are in accord with the performance of v. 26: the Israelites dance in honour both of Yahweh and of Baal.

הַסַּעֲפִים אֲסִיְהוּהָה הָאֱלֹהִים לָכֵן אַחֲרָיו וְאִם־
הַבַּעַל לָכֵן אַחֲרָיו וְלֹא־עָנָו הָעָם אֹתוֹ דָּבָר:
כַּב וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵיו אֶל־הָעָם אֲנִי נֹתַרְתִּי נִבְיֵא לִיהוּהָ
לְבַדִּי וְנִבְיֵאֵי הַבַּעַל אַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ:
כַּב וַיִּתְּנוּ־לָנוּ שְׁנַיִם פָּרִים וַיִּבְחָרוּ לָהֶם הַפָּר הָאֶחָד
וַיִּנְתְּחֵהוּ וַיִּשְׁימוּ עַל־הָעֵצִים וְאֵשׁ לֹא יִשְׁימוּ וְאֲנִי
אֶעֱשֶׂה | אֶת־הַפָּר הָאֶחָד וְנִתְתַּלִּי עַל־הָעֵצִים וְאֵשׁ
לֹא אֶשִׂים: כַּד וַקְרָאתֶם בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֲנִי אֶקְרָא
בְּשֵׁם־יְהוּהָה וְהָיָה הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲנֶנּוּ בָאֵשׁ הוּא
הָאֱלֹהִים וַיַּעַן כָּל־הָעָם וַיֹּאמְרוּ טוֹב הַדָּבָר:
כַּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵיו לְנִבְיֵאֵי הַבַּעַל בַּחֲרוּ לָכֶם הַפָּר
הָאֶחָד וַעֲשׂוּ רֹאשֻׁנָּה כִּי אַתֶּם הַרְבֵּים וַקְרָאוּ בְּשֵׁם
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֵשׁ לֹא תִשְׁימוּ: כַּו וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־הַפָּר
אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן לָהֶם וַיַּעֲשׂוּ וַיִּקְרָאוּ בְּשֵׁם־הַבַּעַל
מִהַבְּקָר וְעַד־הַצֹּהֲרִים לֵאמֹר הַבַּעַל עֲנֵנוּ וְאִין קוֹל

If Yahweh is God, follow him; if Baal, follow him.” The people never said a word. ²² Elijah then said to the people, “I, I alone, am left as a prophet of Yahweh, while the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty. ²³ Let two bulls be given to us; let them choose one for themselves, dismember it and lay it on the wood, but they must not set fire to it. I in my turn will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood, but I shall not set fire to it. ²⁴ You must call on the name of your god, and I shall call on the name of mine; the god who answers with fire, is God indeed.” The people all answered, “Agreed!” ²⁵ Elijah then said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull and begin, for there are more of you. The, call on the name of your god but put no fire to it.” ²⁶ They took the bull that was provided for them and prepared it and, from morning to midday, they called on the name of Baal. “O Baal, answer us!” they cried, but there was no voice, no answer, as they performed their hobbling dance round the altar they had made. ²⁷ Midday came, and Elijah mocked

²² The NJB & NETB have ‘to them’ in place of ‘to the people’, here following the MT & NRSV.

²³ The NJB omits ‘and lay it on the wood’.

²⁴ It is not merely a matter of deciding whether Yahweh or Baal is lord of the mountain or which is the stronger, but simply which is God. Elijah’s own statement, his prayer (v. 37) and the people’s acclamation (v. 39) make this clear: monotheism itself is at stake.

²⁵ The Peshitta lacks the 2nd sentence of this verse.

²⁶ The NJB omits ‘that was provided for them’. The ‘hobbling dance’ involved first bending one knee and then the other; this form of ritual is well known from a number of sources (compare Ps 26:6–7).

²⁷ The verse is one of the sharpest satires on non-Hebraic religion ever penned; ‘he has gone on a journey’ may well be a euphemism for attending to natural needs.

וְאִין עֲנָה וַיִּפְסְחוּ עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: כִּי וַיְהִי
בַּצְהָרִים וַיִּהְיֶה בָהֶם אֱלֹהֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר קְרָאוּ בְּקוֹל־
גָּדוֹל כִּי־אֱלֹהִים הוּא כִּי שִׁיחַ וְכִי־שִׁיג לוֹ וְכִי־דֶרֶךְ
לוֹ אוֹלֵי יֶשֶׁן הוּא וַיִּקְצוּ: כִּי וַיִּקְרָאוּ בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל
וַיִּתְגַּדְּדוּ בְּמִשְׁפָּטִים בַּחֲרָבוֹת וּבִרְמָחִים עַד־שֶׁפָּדַי
דָּם עָלֵיהֶם: כִּט וַיְהִי כַּעֲבַר הַצְהָרִים וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ עַד
לַעֲלוֹת הַמִּנְחָה וְאִין־קוֹל וְאִין־עֲנָה וְאִין קָשָׁב:

ל וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵהוּ לְכָל־הָעָם גִּשּׁוּ אֵלַי וַיִּגְשׁוּ כָל־הָעָם
אֵלָיו וַיִּרְפָּא אֶת־מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוָה הַהָרוּס: לא וַיִּקַּח
אֱלֹהֵהוּ שְׁתֵּים עָשָׂרָה אַבְנִים כַּמִּסְפָּר שְׁבַטֵי בְנֵי־
יִעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר הָיָה דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל
יְהִי שְׁמִי: לב וַיִּבְנֶה אֶת־הָאַבְנִים מִזְבֵּחַ בָּשֵׁם
יְהוָה וַיַּעַשׂ תַּעֲלָה כְּבֵית סָאתִים זָרַע סָבִיב
לַמִּזְבֵּחַ: לג וַיַּעֲרֹךְ אֶת־הָעֵצִים וַיִּנְתַּח אֶת־הַפָּרֹ

them. "Call louder," he said, "for he is a god: he is preoccupied or he is busy, or he has gone on a journey; perhaps he is asleep and will wake up." ²⁸ Then they shouted louder and gashed themselves, as their custom was, with swords and spears until the blood flowed down them. ²⁹ Midday passed, and they ranted on until the time of the offering of the oblation; but there was no voice, no answer, and no attention given to them.

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Approach me," and all the people approached him. He repaired the altar of Yahweh, which had been torn down. ³¹ Elijah took twelve stones, corresponding to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of Yahweh had come, "Israel shall be your name," ³² and built an altar in the name of Yahweh. Round the altar, he dug a trench of a size to hold two seah of seed. ³³ He then arranged the wood, cut up the bull, and laid it on the wood. ³⁴ Then

²⁸ Ritualistic gashing of oneself was commonplace (compare Dt 14:1, Lv 19:28, Ho 7:14, Jr 16:6, 41:5, 47:5).

²⁹ The mention of the evening sacrifice (Ex 29:39, Nb 28:4, 2K 16:15) is merely an indication of the time of day (around 3 pm – compare 2K16:15, Ac 3:1). At the end of this verse, the LXX adds, "When it was time to offer the sacrifice, Elijah the Tishbite spoke to the prophets of the abominations: 'Stand aside for the time being, and I will offer my burnt offering.' So, they stood aside and departed."

³⁰ The condition of the altar symbolises the spiritual state of the people.

³¹ Vv. 31–32^a appear to be a gloss, based on Gn 35:10.

³² A 'seah' was a dry measure equivalent to about 6½ litres.

³³ The NJB has 'dismembered' in place of 'cut up', here following NETB.

³⁴ The NRSV, following the LXX, includes the first sentence as part of v. 33; here, we follow the MT, NJB & NETB. The NJB, loosely following the LXX, adds 'they did this' after 'on the wood'.

וַיֵּשֶׁם עַל־הָעֵצִים: לֹא וַיֹּאמֶר מָלְאוּ אַרְבַּעָה כַּדִּים
מִיָּם וַיִּצְקוּ עַל־הָעֵלָה וְעַל־הָעֵצִים וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁנוֹ
וַיֵּשְׁנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלֹשׁ וַיִּשְׁלְשׁוּ: לֹא וַיִּלְכוּ הַמִּיָּם סָבִיב
לְמַזְבֵּחַ וְגַם אֶת־הַתַּעֲלָה מִלֹּא־מִיָּם: לֹא וַיְהִי
בַּעֲלוֹת הַמִּנְחָה וַיֵּצֵשׂ אֵלֵיהֶם הַנָּבִיא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיִשְׂרָאֵל הַיּוֹם יוֹדַע כִּי־אַתָּה
אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ וּבַדְּבָרְךָ
עָשִׂיתִי אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: לֹא עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה עֲנֵנִי
וַיִּדְעוּ הָעָם הַזֶּה כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים וְאַתָּה
הַסִּבֵּת אֶת־לִבָּם אַחֲרֶינִי:

לֹא וַתִּפֹּל אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה וַתֹּאכַל אֶת־הָעֵלָה וְאֶת־הָעֵצִים
וְאֶת־הָאֲבָנִים וְאֶת־הָעֶפֶר וְאֶת־הַמִּיָּם אֲשֶׁר־
בַּתַּעֲלָה לַחֲכָה: לֹא וַיֵּרָא כָּל־הָעָם וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם
וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים:
מ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם לֹא תִפְּשׁוּ אֶת־נְבִיאֵי הַבַּעַל

he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." They did this. He said, "Do it a second time;" they did it a second time. He said, "Do it a third time;" they did it a third time.

³⁵ The water flowed round the altar and the trench itself was full of water. ³⁶ At the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Yahweh, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let them know today that you are God in Israel, that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your bidding. ³⁷ Answer me, Yahweh, answer me, so that this people may know that you, Yahweh, are God and are winning back their hearts."

³⁸ Then the fire of Yahweh fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and even licked up the water in the trench. ³⁹ When all the people saw this, they fell on their faces. "Yahweh, indeed, is God," they cried, "Yahweh, indeed, is God." ⁴⁰ Elijah said, "Seize the prophets of Baal: do not let one of them escape." They seized

³⁵ This is not rainmaking magic but a way of enhancing the fire miracle.

³⁶ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

³⁷ The miracle will demonstrate: **1** To the prophets of Baal and to Jezebel's entourage of foreigners ('*let them know*', v. 36) that there is no place for them in Israel, where Yahweh is God; **2** To the Israelites ('*this people*', v. 37) that Yahweh is the only God, who wins back wayward hearts.

³⁸ The *NJB* omits '*the stones and the dust*', dismissing it as a gloss. Some wish to rationalise the '*fire of Yahweh*' by calling it lightning preceding the rain; but it must be borne in mind that the ancient writer intended to describe a miracle.

³⁹ The *NJB* lacks the word '*indeed*' (twice in this verse), here following the *NRSV*.

⁴⁰ The slaughter of the prophets of Baal is sometimes interpreted as a vast human sacrifice to Yahweh; however, in this war between Yahweh and Baal, those who serve Baal suffer the fate of the conquered in the warfare of the times.

אִישׁ אֶל-יִמְלָט מֵהֶם וַיִּתְּפְּשׂוּם וַיּוֹרְדֵם אֶלְיָהוּ אֶל-
נַחַל קִישׁוֹן וַיִּשְׁחָטֵם שָׁם:

מֵא וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלְיָהוּ לְאַחָאָב עֲלֵה אֲכַל וּשְׁתֵּה כִּי-קוֹל
הַמָּוֶן הַגָּשָׁם: מֵב וַיַּעַל אַחָאָב לְאָכַל וּלְשִׁתּוֹת
וְאֶלְיָהוּ עָלָה אֶל-רֹאשׁ הַכַּרְמֶל וַיִּגָּהֶר אֶרְצָה וַיִּשֶׁם
פָּנָיו בֵּין בְּרָכּוֹ: מֵג וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-נַעֲרָו עֲלֵה-נָא הַבֵּט
דֶּרֶךְ-יָם וַיַּעַל וַיִּבֶט וַיֹּאמֶר אֵין מְאֻמָּה וַיֹּאמֶר שֵׁב
שִׁבְעַת פְּעָמִים: מֵד וַיְהִי בַשְּׁבַעִית וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה-עַב
קֶטְנָה כַּכַּף-אִישׁ עָלָה מֵיָם וַיֹּאמֶר עָלָה אָמֵר אֶל-
אַחָאָב אֲסֹר וְרֹד וְלֹא יַעֲצֹרְכָה הַגָּשָׁם: מֵה וַיְהִי
עַד-כֹּה וְעַד-כֹּה וְהַשָּׁמַיִם הִתְקַדְּרוּ עָבִים וְרוּחַ וַיְהִי
גֶשֶׁם גָּדוֹל וַיִּרְכַּב אַחָאָב וַיֵּלֶךְ יִזְרְעֵאלָה: מֵו וַיֵּד-
יְהוָה הִיִּתָּה אֶל-אֶלְיָהוּ וַיִּשָּׂם מִתְּנִיו וַיֵּרָץ לִפְנֵי
אַחָאָב עַד-בְּאֶכָה יִזְרְעֵאלָה:

them; and Elijah took them down to the Wadi Kidron, and he slaughtered them there.

⁴¹ Elijah said to Ahab, "Go back, eat and drink; for there is the sound of rushing rain." ⁴² While Ahab went back to eat and drink, Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bowed down to the earth and put his face between his knees. ⁴³ "Now go up," he told his servant, "and look out to the sea." He went up and looked. "There is nothing at all," he said. "Go back seven times," Elijah said. ⁴⁴ The seventh time, he said, "Now there is a cloud, small as a man's hand, rising from the sea." Elijah said, "Go and say to Ahab, "Harness the chariot and go down before the rain stops you."" ⁴⁵ With that, the sky grew dark with cloud and storm, and rain fell in torrents. Ahab mounted his chariot and made for Jezreel. ⁴⁶ The hand of Yahweh was on Elijah and, tucking up his cloak, he ran in front of Ahab as far as the outskirts of Jezreel.

⁴¹ A fast has been observed to prepare for the sacrifice and to bring rain.

⁴² The NJB has 'putting' in place of 'and put', here following the NRSV & NETB.

⁴³ Several times in this chapter those addressed by Elijah obey his orders: in vv. 20 & 42, Ahab does as instructed; in vv. 26 & 28, the prophets follow Elijah's advice; and, in vv. 30, 34, 40 & 43 the people and servants do as they are told. By juxtaposing Elijah's commands with accounts of those commands being obeyed, the narrator emphasizes the authority of God's prophet.

⁴⁴ The NJB & NETB have 'the servant said' in place of 'he said'; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

⁴⁵ 'Jezreel', near Mount Gilboa (1S 29:1, 31:1) served more or less as an alternative place of residence for the kings of Israel (21:1, 2K 8:29, 9:30ff), the primary capital being Samaria (16:24, 20:43).

⁴⁶ Elijah ran 27 km before Ahab's chariot, in a high state of excitement, to herald what he considered a complete victory over the forces of Baal.

מלכים א פרק יט

^א וַיֹּגֵד אַחָאָב לְאִיזָבֵל אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֵלֵיהֶוּ
וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר הָרַג אֶת־כָּל־הַנְּבִיאִים בַּחֶרֶב׃
^ב וַתִּשְׁלַח אִיזָבֵל מַלְאָךְ אֶל־אֵלֵיהֶוּ לֵאמֹר כֹּה־
יַעֲשׂוּן אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסֶפֶן בִּי־כַעַת מִחֵר אֲשִׁים
אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ כְּנַפֵּשׁ אֶחָד מֵהֶם׃ ^ג וַיֵּרָא וַיִּקֶּם וַיֵּלֶךְ
אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ וַיָּבֹא בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה וַיֵּנַח אֶת־
נַעֲרוֹ שָׁם׃ ^ד וְהוּא־הֵלֶךְ בַּמִּדְבָּר דֶּרֶךְ יוֹם וַיָּבֹא
וַיֵּשֶׁב תַּחַת רֶתֶם אַחַת אֶחָד וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ
לָמוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר רֹב עֲתָה יְהוָה קָח נַפְשִׁי כִּי־לֹא־טוֹב
אֲנִי מֵאֲבֹתִי׃ ^ה וַיִּשְׁכַּב וַיִּישָׁן תַּחַת רֶתֶם אֶחָד
וְהִנֵּה־זֶה מַלְאָךְ נֹגֵעַ בּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ קוּם אֲכֹל׃ ^ו וַיֵּבֶט
וְהִנֵּה מֵרָאשֵׁיתוֹ עֵגֶת רִצְפִּים וּצְפַחַת מַיִם וַיֹּאכַל
וַיִּשֶׁת וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיִּשְׁכַּב׃ ^ז וַיֵּשֶׁב מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה שְׁנֵית

1 KINGS 19

¹ And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, including a detailed account of how he had put all the prophets to the sword. ² So, Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods do this to me and more if, by this time tomorrow, I do not make your life like the life of one of them!" ³ Then he was afraid and fled for his life. He came to Beersheba, a town of Judah, where he left his servant. ⁴ He himself went into the desert, a day's journey, and sitting under a furze bush wished he were dead. "Yahweh," he said, "I have had enough. Take my life; I am no better than my fathers." ⁵ Then he lay down under the furze bush and went to sleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." ⁶ He looked round, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and then lay down again. ⁷ But the Angel of Yahweh came back a second time and touched

1 KINGS 19

- ¹ The NJB combines vv. 1 & 2 into a single sentence, "When Ahab told ..., Jezebel sent...;" here, we follow the NRSV & NETB.
- ² The power of Jezebel quickly turned the tables and Elijah was afraid (v. 3); suddenly, he is in Beersheba, 200 Km S of Jezreel and within Judah.
- ³ For 'then he was afraid', the MT has 'and he saw' (וַיֵּרָא), but some medieval Hebrew MSS as well as several ancient versions (including the LXX - ἐφοβήθη) support the reading 'he was afraid'; the consonantal text (וירא) is ambiguous and can be vocalised וַיֵּרָא (from רָאָה, 'to see') or וַיִּירָא (from יָרָא, 'to fear').
- ⁴ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.
- ⁵ The NJB omits 'under the furze bush' (repeated from v. 4); here, we follow the MT & NRSV.
- ⁶ In place of 'cake', here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has 'scone'.
- ⁷ The literal translation of 'long' is 'great'.

וַיַּגְעֵבוּ וַיֹּאמֶר קוּם אֲכַל כִּי רַב מַמָּד הַדֶּרֶךְ׃
 ח וַיִּקֶּם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׁתֶּה וַיִּלְךָ בְּכַח הָאֲכִילָה הַהִיא
 אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה עַד הָר הָאֱלֹהִים
 חֲרֹב׃

ט וַיָּבֹא־שָׁם אֶל־הַמְעָרָה וַיֵּלֶן שָׁם וַהֲנֶה דְּבַר־יְהוָה
 אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מִה־לָּךְ פֶּה אֵלֶיךָ׃ י וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא
 קָנָאתִי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת כִּי־עֲזָבוּ בְרִיתִךָ בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִזְבְּחֶיךָ הָרְסוּ וְאֶת־נְבִיאֶיךָ הָרְגוּ
 בַּחֲרֹב וְאֹתָר אֲנִי לְבַדִּי וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי
 לְקַחְתָּהּ׃ יא וַיֹּאמֶר צֵא וְעַמַּדְתָּ בַּהֲרָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
 וַהֲנֶה יְהוָה עֹבֵר וְרוּחַ גְּדוֹלָה וְחֹזֶק מִפָּרֶקֶת הָרִים
 וּמִשֹּׁבֵר סִלְעִים לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לֹא בְרוּחַ יְהוָה וְאַחֵר
 הָרוּחַ רָעַשׁ לֹא בְרַעַשׁ יְהוָה׃ יב וְאַחֵר הָרַעַשׁ אֶשׁ
 לֹא בָאֵשׁ יְהוָה וְאַחֵר הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּמָמָה דָּקָה׃
 יג וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַע אֵלֶיךָ וַיֵּלֶט פָּנָיו בְּאֲדָרְתּוֹ וַיֵּצֵא

him and said, "Get up and eat; otherwise, the journey will be too long for you." ⁸ He got up and ate and drank and, strengthened by that food, he walked for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

⁹ There he came to a cave and spent the night in it. Then the word of Yahweh came to him saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ He said, "I have been zealous for Yahweh Sabaoth, for the sons of Israel have deserted you, torn down your altars and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to kill me." ¹¹ He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before Yahweh, for Yahweh is about to pass by." There came a mighty wind, so strong it tore the mountains and shattered the rocks before Yahweh; but Yahweh was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake; but Yahweh was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire; but Yahweh was not in the fire; and after the fire came the sound of a gentle breeze; ¹³ when

⁸ See #Ex 19:1: Zealous to maintain the Covenant and restore the ancient faith, Elijah visits the place where the true God revealed himself (Ex 3 & 33:18–34:9) and where the Covenant was concluded (Ex 19, 24, 34:10–28). He sees his own task as that of continuing the work of Moses.

⁹ The 'cave' is the same crevice where Moses crouched when God appeared to him (Ex 33:22).

¹⁰ Vv. 9^b–10 is a doublet of vv. 13–14.

¹¹ In place of 'for Yahweh is about to pass by', here following the MT, the NJB has 'then Yahweh passed by' (outside the speech).

¹² The NRSV has 'sheer silence' in place of 'a gentle breeze'.

¹³ The storm, earthquake, and lightning, which in Ex 19 manifested God's presence, are here only the heralds of his coming. The whispering murmur signifies that he converses intimately with his prophets; it does not mean that God's dealings are gentle – the terrible commission of vv. 15–17 refutes this common interpretation.

וַיַּעֲמֵד פֶּתַח הַמַּעְרָה וְהָגָה אֵלָיו קוֹל וַיֹּאמֶר מַה-
 לָּךְ פֹּה אַלְיָהוּ: יִי וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא קָנָאתִי לַיהוָה | אֱלֹהֵי
 עֲבָאוֹת כִּי־עֲזָבוּ בְרִיתְךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִזְבְּחֶיךָ
 הָרָסוּ וְאֶת־נְבִיאֶיךָ הָרְגוּ בַּחֶרֶב וְאֹתָר אֲנִי לְבָדִי
 וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי לְקַחְתָּהּ: {ס}

טו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵךְ שׁוּב לְדֶרֶכְךָ מִדְּבָרָה
 דְּמָשֶׁק וּבָאת וּמָשַׁחְתָּ אֶת־חֲזָאֵל לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־אַרָם:
 טז וְאֵת יְהוּא בֶן־נִמְשִׁי תִמְשַׁח לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְאֶת־אֵלִישָׁע בֶּן־שַׁפְטַל מֵאֲבֵל מְחֹלָה תִמְשַׁח
 לְנָבִיא תַּחְתֶּיךָ: יז וְהָיָה הַנִּמְלֹט מִחֶרֶב חֲזָאֵל יָמִית
 יְהוּא וְהַנִּמְלֹט מִחֶרֶב יְהוּא יָמִית אֵלִישָׁע:
 יח וְהִשְׁאַרְתִּי בְיִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁבְעַת אֲלָפִים כָּל־הַבְּרָכִים
 אֲשֶׁר לֹא־כָרְעוּ לַפֶּעַל וְכָל־הַפֶּה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נָשַׁק
 לוֹ: יט וַיֵּלֶךְ מִשָּׁם וַיִּמָּצֵא אֶת־אֵלִישָׁע בֶּן־שַׁפְטַל וְהוּא

Elijah heard it, he covered his face with his cloak and went out and stood at cave entrance. Then a voice asked him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁴ He said, “I have been zealous for Yahweh Sabaoth, for the sons of Israel have deserted you, torn down your altars and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left and they seek to kill me.”

¹⁵ Then Yahweh said to him, “Go! Return by the same way to the Desert of Damascus. And, when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Aram. ¹⁶ You shall also anoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king over Israel, and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat, of Abel-Meholah, as the prophet to succeed you. ¹⁷ Anyone who escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and anyone who escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. ¹⁸ Yet I shall spare seven thousand in Israel: all the knees that have not bent before Baal, and all the mouths that have not kissed him.” ¹⁹ Leaving there, he came on Elisha son of Shaphat as he was ploughing

¹⁴ This verse is a doublet of v. 10.

¹⁵ The ‘Desert of Damascus’ is the present-day Syrian Desert.

¹⁶ In fact, Elisha later performed the anointing of Jehu. Anointing (see #Ex 30:22) was reserved for kings (see #1S 9:26); parallelism explains the use of the word here.

¹⁷ God here tells Elijah how his ‘revenge’ will be achieved through Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha.

¹⁸ The number ‘seven thousand’ expresses the idea of a righteous remnant, which appears again in Am 5:15, Is 10:20, 11:11; on ‘kissing’ the image of Baal, see Ho 13:2.

¹⁹ Vv. 19–21 come from the ‘Elisha Cycle’ (2K 2–13). The ‘cloak’ symbolises the person and rights of its owner. That of Elijah has, moreover, miraculous properties (2K 2:8). Elijah thus acquires an authority over Elisha, which the latter cannot resist. By destroying plough and oxen, Elisha formerly renounces his old way of life.

חֲרֹשׁ שְׁנַיִם-עֶשֶׂר עֲמֻדִים לִפְנֵיו וְהוּא בִשְׁנַיִם
הָעֶשֶׂר וַיַּעֲבֹר אֵלָיו וַיִּשְׁלַךְ אֶדְרֵתוֹ אֵלָיו:
כַּ וַיַּעֲזֹב אֶת-הַבָּקָר וַיֵּרָץ אַחֲרֵי אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר
אֲשַׁקֶּה-נָּא לְאָבִי וּלְאִמִּי וְאֶלְכָּה אַחֲרָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ
לֵךְ שׁוּב כִּי מִה-עַשִּׂיתִי לָךְ: כֹּא וַיָּשָׁב מֵאַחֲרָיו וַיִּקַּח
אֶת-עֲמֻד הַבָּקָר וַיִּזְבַּחַהוּ וּבִכְלֵי הַבָּקָר בַּשָּׁלֶם
הַבָּשָׂר וַיִּתֵּן לָעַם וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּקְם וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחֲרֵי אֵלָיו
וַיִּשְׂרָתָהוּ: {פ}

behind twelve yoke of oxen, he himself being with the twelfth. Elijah passed near to him and threw his cloak over him.²⁰ Elisha left his oxen and ran after Elijah. “Let me kiss my father and mother, then I will follow you,” he said. Elijah answered, “Go, go back; for, have I done anything to you?”²¹ Elisha turned away, took the pair of oxen, and slaughtered them. He used the plough for cooking the oxen, and then gave to his men, who ate. He then rose and followed Elijah and became his servant.

²⁰ The end of this verse means, “Go, and return to me, for I have done something very important to you.” For similar extemporaneous sacrifices (v. 21), compare 1S 6:14, 2S 24:22–25. It was Elisha, and not Elijah, who carried out the first and second injunctions of the ‘sound’ (2K 8:13, 9:1–3).

²¹ The literal translation of ‘plough’ is ‘equipment of the oxen’; presumably, he burnt the leather yokes and used the metal blade as a griddle.

1 KINGS 20

מלכים א פרק כ

^א וּבֶן-הַדָּד מֶלֶךְ-אַרָם קָבַץ אֶת-כָּל-חֵילוֹ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁנַיִם מֵלָךְ אִתּוֹ וְסוּס וּרְכָב וַיַּעַל וַיֵּצֵר עַל-שָׁמְרוֹן וַיִּלָּחֶם בָּהּ: ^ב וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים אֶל-אַחָאָב מֶלֶךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל הָעִירָהּ: ^ג וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה אָמַר בֶּן-הַדָּד כְּסָפְךָ וְזָהָבְךָ לִי-הוּא וְנָשֶׁיךָ וּבְנֶיךָ הַטּוֹבִים לִי-הֵם: ^ד וַיַּעַן מֶלֶךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר כְּדַבְרְךָ אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ לָךְ אֲנִי וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-לִי: ^ה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֹּה-אָמַר בֶּן-הַדָּד לֵאמֹר כִּי-שְׁלַחְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר כְּסָפְךָ וְזָהָבְךָ וְנָשֶׁיךָ וּבְנֶיךָ לִי תִתֶּן: ^ו כִּי אִם-כָּעַת מֵחֵר אֲשַׁלַּח אֶת-עַבְדִּי אֵלֶיךָ וְחָפְשׁוּ אֶת-בֵּיתְךָ וְאֶת בָּתִּי עַבְדֶּיךָ וְהָיָה כָל-מִחְמַד עֵינֶיךָ יִשְׁימוּ בַיָּדָם וְלָקְחוּ: ^ז וַיִּקְרָא מֶלֶךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל לְכָל-זִקְנֵי הָאָרֶץ וַיֹּאמֶר דַּעוּ-נָא וּרְאוּ כִּי רָעָה זֶה מִבְּקֶשׁ כִּי-

¹ Ben-Hadad king of Aram mustered his whole army – thirty-two kings were with him, and horses and chariots – and went up to lay siege to Samaria and storm it. ² He sent messengers into the city to Ahab the king of Israel ³ and said to him, “Thus says Ben-Hadad, “Your silver and gold are mine; your fairest wives and children are also mine.”” ⁴ The king of Israel replied, “As you command, my lord king. Myself and all I have are yours.” ⁵ But the messengers came back and said, “Ben-Hadad says this, “I sent you this order: hand over your silver and your gold, your wives, and your children. ⁶ Count on it that this time tomorrow I will send my servants to search your house and your servants’ houses and lay hands on all you value and take it away.”” ⁷ The king of Israel summoned all the elders of the country and said, “You can see clearly how this man intends to ruin us. He has already demanded my wives

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- ¹ The king here named is ‘Ben-Hadad II’, ruler of the Aramaean kingdom of Damascus and successor to the ‘Ben-Hadad’ of 15:18. The ‘thirty-two kings’ were princely vassals of Ben-Hadad (see v. 24).
- ² The NRSV, following the verse divisions of the LXX, extends this verse up to ‘thus says Ben-Hadad’; here, we follow the MT & NJB.
- ³ The NJB, following the LXX, ends the verse with, “... you may keep your wives and children.”
- ⁴ Ahab speaks as though vanquished and already a vassal.
- ⁵ The messengers came back to reiterate Ben-Hadad’s command for Ahab you surrender his wives and children.
- ⁶ The NJB, following the LXX & Peshitta, has ‘they value’ in place of ‘you value’, here following the MT.
- ⁷ In the LXX, Ahab says, “Know indeed that this one seeks evil; for, he has sent to me for my wives and my sons and my daughters, but my gold and my silver I have not held back from him!” (Γνωτε δὴ καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι κακίαν οὗτος ζητεῖ, ὅτι ἀπέσταλκεν πρὸς με περὶ τῶν γυναικῶν μου καὶ περὶ τῶν υἱῶν μου καὶ περὶ τῶν θυγατέρων μου· τὸ ἀργύριόν μου καὶ τὸ χρυσίον μου οὐκ ἀπεκώλυσα ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ; see #3).

שָׁלַח אֵלַי לְנָשִׁי וּלְבָנִי וּלְכֶסֶפִּי וּלְזָהָבִי וְלֹא מָנַעְתִּי
מִמֶּנּוּ: ^ח וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־הַזִּקְנִים וְכָל־הָעָם אֶל־
תִּשְׁמַע וְלֹא תֹאבֶה: ^ט וַיֹּאמֶר לַמְּלָאכִי בֶן־הַדָּד
אָמְרוּ לַאֲדֹנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַחְתָּ אֶל־עַבְדְּךָ
בְּרֹאשֹׁנָה אֶעֱשֶׂה וְהַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לֹא אוֹכֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת
וַיֵּלְכוּ הַמְּלָאכִים וַיֵּשְׁבֻהוּ דָּבָר: ^י וַיִּשְׁלַח אֵלָיו בֶּן־
הַדָּד וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה־יַעֲשׂוּן לִי אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסֶפוּ אִם־
יִשְׁפֹּק עֹפֶר שְׁמֹרֶץ לְשַׁעֲלִים לְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר
בְּרַגְלִי: ^{יא} וַיַּעַן מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר דַּבְּרוּ אֶל־
יְתֵהָלֵל חֲגֹר כַּמִּפְתָּח: ^{יב} וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַע אֶת־הַדָּבָר
הַזֶּה וְהוּא שָׁתָה הוּא וְהַמְּלָכִים בַּסִּכּוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־
עַבְדָּיו שִׁימוּ וַיִּשְׁימוּ עַל־הָעִיר: ^{יג} וְהִנֵּה נָבִיא אֶחָד
נָגַשׁ אֶל־אֲחָאָב מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה אָמַר
יְהוָה הֲרֹאִיתָ אֶת כָּל־הַמּוֹן הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה הֲנִי נָתַנּוּ
בְיָדְךָ הַיּוֹם וַיִּדְעַתָּ כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה: ^{יד} וַיֹּאמֶר אֲחָאָב
בְּמִי וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה בְּנַעֲרֵי שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת
וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־יֹאסֵר הַמִּלְחָמָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֹתָהּ:

and my children, although I have not refused him my silver and my gold.” ⁸ All the elders and all the people said, “Take no notice. Do not consent.” ⁹ Therefore, he gave this answer to Ben-Hadad’s messengers, “Say this to my lord the king, “All you first required of your servant I will do, but this I cannot do.”” The messengers went back with the answer. ¹⁰ Ben-Hadad sent to him and said, “May the gods do this to me and more if there are enough handfuls of dust in Samaria for all the people who follow me.” ¹¹ The king of Israel answered, “Tell him: One who puts on should not brag like one takes it off.” ¹² When Ben-Hadad heard this message – he was drinking with the kings in the tents – he said to his men, “Take post!” So, they took up their positions against the city. ¹³ A prophet then visited King Ahab of Israel, saying, “Yahweh says this: “Have you seen this mighty army? Today I will deliver it into your hands, and you shall know that I am Yahweh.”” ¹⁴ Ahab asked, “By whom?” He said, “Yahweh says this: “By the servants of the district governors.”” “Who is to open the attack?” Ahab asked. “Yourself,” the prophet answered.

⁸ Literally translated, this verse ends, “Do not listen and do not be willing.”

⁹ Ahab insists on not handing over his wives and children.

¹⁰ The NJB has ‘rubble’ in place of ‘dust’, here following the NRSV.

¹¹ Ahab quotes a proverb to the effect that, as long as there is a battle to be fought, one should not boast; the battle may go either way.

¹² The literal translation of ‘tents’ is ‘temporary shelters’.

¹³ A more literal translation of ‘mighty army’ is ‘great horde’.

¹⁴ God is consulted about military strategy (see 22:5ff, Jg 1:1ff, 20:18, 1S 14:18 and #Ex 33:7).

^{טו} וַיִּפְקֹד אֶת־נְעָרֵי שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת וַיְהִיו מֵאֲתַיִם
שְׁנָיִם וּשְׁלָשִׁים וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם פָּקֵד אֶת־כָּל־הָעָם כָּל־
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁבְעַת אֲלָפִים: ^{טז} וַיֵּצְאוּ בַצְהָרִים וּבֶן־
הַדָּד שָׁתָה שְׂכֹר בַּסֹּכֹת הוּא וְהַמְּלָכִים שְׁלֹשִׁים־
וּשְׁנָיִם מֶלֶךְ עֹזֵר אֹתוֹ: ^{יז} וַיֵּצְאוּ נְעָרֵי שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת
בְּרֹאשֹׁנָה וַיִּשְׁלַח בֶּן־הַדָּד וַיִּגִּידוּ לוֹ לֵאמֹר אֲנָשִׁים
יֵצְאוּ מִשְׁמֶרֶת: ^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר אִם־לְשָׁלוֹם יֵצְאוּ תִּפְשׂוּם
חַיִּים וְאִם לְמִלְחָמָה יֵצְאוּ חַיִּים תִּפְשׂוּם: ^{יט} וְאַל־
יֵצְאוּ מִן־הָעִיר נְעָרֵי שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת וְהַחִיל אֲשֶׁר
אַחֲרֵיהֶם: ^כ וַיָּבֹאוּ אִישׁ אִישׁוֹ וַיִּנָּסוּ אֲרָם וַיִּרְדְּפֻם
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּמָּלֹט בֶּן־הַדָּד מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם עַל־סוּס
וּפָרָשִׁים: ^{כא} וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּדֹּם אֶת־הַסּוּס
וְאֶת־הָרֶכֶב וְהָכָה בְּאֲרָם מִכָּה גְדוֹלָה: ^{כב} וַיִּגַּשׁ
הַנָּבִיא אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֵךְ הַתְּחִזֵּק וְדַע
וּרְאֵה אֶת אֲשֶׁר־תַּעֲשֶׂה כִּי לַתְּשׁוּבָה הַשָּׁנָה מֶלֶךְ־
אֲרָם עֹלָה עָלֶיךָ: {פ}

¹⁵ So, he mustered the servants of the district governors: two hundred and thirty-two; then he mustered the whole army, all the Israelites: seven thousand. ¹⁶ They made a sortie at midday, when Ben-Hadad was drinking himself senseless in the tents, he and the thirty-two kings who were his allies. ¹⁷ The servants of the district governors led the sortie. Ben-Hadad had sent out scouts, and they reported to him, "Some men have come out of Samaria." ¹⁸ He said, "If they have come out for peace, take them alive; if they have come out for war, take them alive." ¹⁹ So, they made a sortie from the town, the servants of the district governors and, behind them, the army, ²⁰ and each struck down his man. Aram took to flight and Israel pursued; Ben-Hadad king of Aram escaped on horse with the cavalry. ²¹ Then the king of Israel came out, attacked horses and chariots, and inflicted a great defeat on Aram. ²² The prophet went up to the king of Israel, "Come," he said to him, "take courage and think carefully what you should do, for at the turn of the year the king of Aram will march against you."

¹⁵ The literal translation of 'the whole army' is 'all the people'.

¹⁶ The literal translation of 'drinking himself senseless' is 'drinking and drunk'.

¹⁷ The MT lacks the word 'scouts', here following the NRSV.

¹⁸ NETB 'straightens' the grammar here but the narrator may deliberately 'muddle' the command to emphasise Ben-Hadad's drunkenness.

¹⁹ Throughout this section, the NRSV has 'the young men who served' in place of 'servants of', here following NETB.

²⁰ In place of 'on horse with the cavalry', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has 'on a chariot horse'.

²¹ The NJB, following the LXX (ἐλαβεν – literally, 'took'), has 'capturing' in place of 'attacked', here following the MT & NRSV.

²² The 'turn of the year' was the vernal equinox (see 2S 11:1).

כג וְעַבְדֵי מֶלֶךְ־אַרָם אָמְרוּ אֵלָיו אֱלֹהֵי הָרִים
 אֱלֹהֵיהֶם עַל־כֵּן חָזְקוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וְאוֹלָם נִלְחָם אַתָּם
 בְּמִישׁוֹר אִם־לֹא נַחֲזֵק מֵהֶם: כד וְאַתָּה־דַּבֵּר הַזֶּה
 עֲשֵׂה הֶסֶר הַמְּלָכִים אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ וְשִׂים פָּחוֹת
 תַּחְתֵּיהֶם: כה וְאַתָּה תִּמְנֶה־לָּךְ | חֵיל כַּחֲלִיל הַנָּפִל
 מֵאוֹתָךְ וְסוֹס כְּסוֹס | וְרֶכֶב כְּרֶכֶב וְנִלְחָמָה אוֹתָם
 בְּמִישׁוֹר אִם־לֹא נַחֲזֵק מֵהֶם וְיִשְׁמַע לְקֹלָם וַיַּעַשׂ
 כֵּן: {פ}

כו וַיְהִי לְתִשְׁבֹּת הַשָּׁנָה וַיִּפְקֹד בֶּן־הַדָּד אֶת־אַרָם
 וַיַּעַל אֶפְקָה לְמִלְחָמָה עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל: כז וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 הִתְּפַקְדּוּ וְכָלְכָלוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ לִקְרַאתָם וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּגִי־
 יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגְדָם כְּשֹׁנֵי חֲשָׁפִי עֲזִים וְאַרָם מָלְאוּ אֶת־
 הָאָרֶץ: כח וַיֵּגֶשׁ אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־מֶלֶךְ
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה יָעַן אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ
 אַרָם אֱלֹהֵי הָרִים יְהוָה וְלֹא־אֱלֹהֵי עֲמָקִים הוּא
 וְנִתַּתִּי אֶת־כָּל־הַהֶמוֹן הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה בְּיָדְךָ וַיִּדְעוּתָם

²³ And the servants of the king of Aram said to him, “Their god is a god of the hills and, therefore, they proved stronger than we; but, if we fight them in the plain, we will certainly beat them.” ²⁴ Also do this: remove the kings from their posts and appoint commanders instead. ²⁵ You, for your part, must recruit an army as large as the one that deserted you, with as many horses and as many chariots; then if we fight them in the plain, we will certainly beat them.” He listened to their advice and acted accordingly.

²⁶ At the turn of the year, Ben-Hadad mustered the Aramaeans and went up to Aphek to fight Israel. ²⁷ The Israelites also mustered and marched out to meet them; the Israelites camped opposite them like two small flocks of goats, whereas the Aramaeans filled the countryside. ²⁸ A man of God approached and said to the king of Israel. “Yahweh says this: “Since Aram has said that Yahweh is a god of the hills and not a god of the plains, I will put all this mighty host into your power, and you shall know that I am Yahweh.”” ²⁹ And, for seven days, they encamped

²³ The NRSV uses the plural term, ‘gods’, in this verse (twice); here, we follow the NJB & NETB.

²⁴ The ‘kings’ were figureheads; the ‘commanders’ were experienced military men.

²⁵ Here, and in v. 23, the NJB has ‘on level ground’ in place of ‘in the plain’, here following the NRSV.

²⁶ Throughout this section, NETB, following the LXX (Συρία) has ‘Syria’ in place of ‘Aram’; here, we follow the MT, NJB & NRSV.

²⁷ The noun translated ‘small flocks’ (חֲשָׁפִי) occurs only here. A common interpretation derives the word from חָשַׁף, (‘to strip off’, ‘to make bare’) but it could derive from a homonymic verbal root (which occurs only in Ps 29:9) meaning ‘cause a premature birth’.

²⁸ The ‘man of God’ is the prophet of vv. 13 and 22.

²⁹ The NJB includes a footnote suggesting that the figure of 100,000 is suspect.

כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה׃ ^{כט} וַיַּחֲנוּ אֵלֶּה נֹכַח־אֵלֶּה שְׁבַע־יָמִים
וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַתִּקְרַב הַמִּלְחָמָה וַיָּכּוּ בְנֵי־
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־אֲרָם מֵאֶה־אַלְף רַגְלֵי בַיּוֹם אֶחָד׃
^ל וַיִּנָּסוּ הַנוֹתָרִים אֶפְקָה אֶל־הָעִיר וַתִּפֹּל הַחוֹמָה
עַל־עַשְׂרִים וְשִׁבְעָה אָלֶף אִישׁ הַנוֹתָרִים וּבֶן־הַדָּד
נָס וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָעִיר חֹדֶר בַּחֹדֶר׃ ^{לא} וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו
עַבְדֵּי הַנֶּהֱנָא שְׁמַעְנוּ כִּי מַלְכִּי בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־
מַלְכִּי חֹסֵד הֵם נְשִׁימָה נָא שְׁקִים בְּמַתְנֵינוּ וַחֲבָלִים
בְּרַאשֵׁנוּ וְנִצֵּא אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹלֵי יְחִיָּה אֶת־
נַפְשְׁךָ׃ ^{לב} וַיַּחְגְּרוּ שְׁקִים בְּמַתְנֵיהֶם וַחֲבָלִים
בְּרַאשֵׁיהֶם וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ עַבְדְּךָ
בֶּן־הַדָּד אָמַר תַּחֲיֶנָּה נַפְשִׁי וַיֹּאמֶר הַעוֹדְנוּ חֵי
אָחִי הוּא׃ ^{לג} וְהָאֲנָשִׁים יִנְחָשׁוּ וַיִּמְהָרוּ וַיַּחֲלֹטּוּ
הַמִּמֶּנּוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ אָחִיךָ בֶּן־הַדָּד וַיֹּאמֶר בָּאוּ קַחְהוּ
וַיֵּצֵא אֵלָיו בֶּן־הַדָּד וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ עַל־הַמָּרְכָבָה׃ ^{לד} וַיֹּאמֶר

opposite one another; on the seventh day, the battle began; and the children of Israel killed one hundred thousand Aramaean foot soldiers in one day. ³⁰ The rest fled to Aphek, into the town, but the walls fell down on the twenty-seven thousand who remained. Now Ben-Hadad had fled into the town, to an inner room. ³¹ His servants said to him, “Look, we have heard that the kings of Israel are merciful kings. Let us put sackcloth round our waists and ropes on our heads and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life.” ³² So, they wrapped sackcloth round their waists and put ropes on their heads and went to the king of Israel, and said, “Your servant Ben-Hadad says, “Spare my life.”” He answered, “Is he still alive? He is my brother.” ³³ The men took this for a good omen and quickly seized on his words; they said, “Yes, Ben-Hadad is your brother.” Ahab said, “Go and fetch him.” Then Ben-Hadad came out to him and Ahab made him get into his chariot. ³⁴ Ben-Hadad said, “I will restore the towns my father took from your

³⁰ Literally translated, this verse ends, “...into an inner room in an inner room.”

³¹ ‘Sackcloth’ was worn as a sign of sorrow and repentance; the precise significance of the ropes on the head is uncertain, but it probably was a sign of submission: these actions were comparable to raising a white flag on the battlefield or throwing in the towel in a boxing match.

³² Vassal kings referred to themselves as ‘servants’ of their suzerain, kings of equal standing were ‘brothers’. Ben-Hadad now admits defeat but Ahab declines his homage, and the envoys, hearing the word ‘brother’, deduce that their master is now safe.

³³ In place of ‘Ahab said’, the MT has simply ‘he said’; the referent is here included for clarity.

³⁴ The MT lacks the words, ‘the king of Israel responded’, here following the NRSV; there is nothing in the MT to indicate that the speaker has changed from Ben Hadad to Ahab, and some prefer to maintain Ben Hadad as the speaker changing the statement to, “Please make a treaty with me and dismiss me.”

אֵלָיו הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר-לָקַח-אָבִי מֵאֵת אָבִיךָ אֲשִׁיב
וְחֻצוֹת תְּשִׁים לָךְ בְּדַמְשֶׁק כַּאֲשֶׁר-שָׂם אָבִי
בְּשֶׁמְרוֹן וְאֲנִי בְּבְרִית אֲשַׁלַּחךָ וּיְכַרְתְּ-לוֹ בְּרִית
וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ: {ס}

לֹה וְאִישׁ אֶחָד מִבְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים אָמַר אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ
בְּדִבֶּר יְהוָה הַכִּינִי נָא וַיִּמָּאן הָאִישׁ לְהַכְתּוֹ:
לֹה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יַעַן אֲשֶׁר לֹא-שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה הַנֶּהךָ
הוֹלֵךְ מֵאִתִּי וְהִכָּךְ הָאֶרֶץ וְיִלְךְ מֵאֲצִלוֹ וַיִּמְצָאֵהוּ
הָאֶרֶץ וַיַּכֶּהוּ: לֹה וַיִּמְצָא אִישׁ אֲחֵר וַיֹּאמֶר הַכִּינִי
נָא וַיַּכֶּהוּ הָאִישׁ הַכָּה וּפָצַע: לֹה וְיִלְךְ הַנְּבִיא וַיַּעֲמֵד
לְמַלְךְ עַל-הַדֶּרֶךְ וַיִּתְחַפֵּשׂ בְּאַפָּר עַל-עֵינָיו: לֹט וַיְהִי
הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹבֵר וְהוּא צֶעֶק אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר עֲבֹדֶךָ
יָצָא בְּקֶרֶב-הַמִּלְחָמָה וְהִנֵּה-אִישׁ סֹר וַיָּבֹא אֵלַי
אִישׁ וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמַר אֶת-הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה אִם-הִפְקֹד
יִפְקֹד וְהִיתָה נַפְשְׁךָ תַּחַת נַפְשׁוֹ אוֹ כִּכְר־כֶּסֶף
תִּשְׁקוֹל: מ וַיְהִי עֲבֹדֶךָ עֹשֶׂה הֵנָּה וְהִנֵּה וְהוּא אֵינְנוּ
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מֶלֶךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל כֵּן מִשְׁפָּטֶךָ אֵתָּה

father and you may set up bazaars for yourself in Damascus as my father did in Samaria.” The king of Israel responded, “I will make a treaty with you and then dismiss you.” Thus, Ahab made a treaty with him and let him go free.

³⁵ At Yahweh’s order, one of the brotherhood of prophets said to another, “Strike me,” but the man refused to strike him. ³⁶ Then he said to him, “Since you have disobeyed the order of Yahweh, as soon as you leave, me a lion will kill you.” And, when had he left him, a lion met him and killed him. ³⁷ He then went to find another man and said, “Strike me,” and the man struck him and wounded him. ³⁸ The prophet then went and waited for the king on the road, disguising himself with a bandage over his eyes. ³⁹ As the king passed, he called to him, “Your servant was making his way to the midst of the battle when someone turned to bring a man to me, saying, “Guard this man; if he is found missing, your life will pay for his, or else you will have to pay one talent of silver.” ⁴⁰ But, while your servant was busy here and there, the man was gone.” The king of Israel said, “That is your sentence, then. You

³⁵ The literal translation of ‘brotherhood of prophets’ is ‘sons of the prophets’.

³⁶ Here is a similar story as the one in 13:24ff: any disobedience to the word of God or of a man of God, even for good motives, will be punished.

³⁷ The wound was to help the prophet to pose as a combatant (v. 39).

³⁸ The NJB has ‘headband’ in place of ‘bandage’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

³⁹ The term here translated ‘talent’ (כֶּכֶר, ‘circle’) refers generally to something that is round; it can refer to a disk used as a measure of weight.

⁴⁰ The NJB has ‘disappeared’ in place of ‘was gone’, here following the NRSV.

חֲרָצַתָּ: ^{מא} וַיִּמָּהֵר וַיִּסֹּר אֶת־הָאֶפֶר מֵעַל מַעְלֵי עֵינָיו
וַיִּכָּר אֹתוֹ מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי מִהַנְּבִיאִים הוּא:
^{מב} וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בָּה אָמַר יְהוָה יַעַן שְׁלַחְתָּ אֶת־
אִישׁ־חֶרֶמִי מִיַּד וְהִיתָה נַפְשְׁךָ תַּחַת נַפְשׁוֹ וְעַמְּךָ
תַּחַת עַמּוֹ: ^{מג} וַיֵּלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־בֵּיתוֹ סָר וְזָעַף
וַיָּבֹא שֹׁמְרוֹנָה: {פ}

have pronounced it yourself.” ⁴¹ He quickly pulled off the bandage covering his eyes and the king of Israel recognised him as one of the prophets. ⁴² He said to the king, “Yahweh says this, “Since you have let the man escape who was under my ban, your life will pay for his, your people for his people.”” ⁴³ Off went the king of Israel, resentful and sullen, on his way back to Samaria.

⁴¹ Members of the brotherhood of prophets may have worn a distinguishing tattoo or incision on their foreheads or may have shaved their heads (see 2K 2:23). The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁴² The prophet now shows that the king’s judgement holds also for himself.

⁴³ In place of ‘resentful and sullen’, here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* has ‘gloomy and out of temper’ and *NETB* has ‘bitter and angry’.

מלכים א פרק כא

א ויהי אחר הדברים האלה בַּרְם הָיָה לְנָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי אֲשֶׁר בִּיזְרְעֵאל אֶצֶל הַיֵּכָל אַחָאָב מֶלֶךְ שֻׁמְרוֹן: ב וידבר אחאב אל־נָבוֹת | לֵאמֹר | תִּנְהַלִּי אֶת־כַּרְמִי ויהי־לִי לְגֻן־יֶרֶק כִּי הוּא קָרֹב אֶצֶל בֵּיתִי וְאֶתְנָה לָךְ תַּחֲתָיו בָּרֶם טוֹב מִמֶּנּוּ אִם טוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֶתְנָה־לָךְ כֶּסֶף מְחִיר זֶה: ג ויאמר נָבוֹת אֶל־אַחָאָב חָלִילָה לִּי מִיהוָה מִתַּתִּי אֶת־נַחֲלַת אֲבֹתִי לָךְ: ד ויבא אחאב אל־בֵּיתוֹ סָר וּזְעַף עַל־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־אֶתֵּן לָךְ אֶת־נַחֲלַת אֲבוֹתַי וַיִּשְׁכַּב עַל־מִטָּתוֹ וַיִּסַּב אֶת־פָּנָיו וְלֹא־אָכַל לֶחֶם: ה וַתָּבֹא אֵלָיו אִיזָבֵל אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתִּדְבֹר אֵלָיו מִהֲזֶה רֹחֶךָ סָרָה וְאֵינְךָ אֹכֵל לֶחֶם: ו וידבר אליה כִּי־אֲדַבֵּר אֶל־נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי וַאֲמַר לוֹ תִנְהַלִּי אֶת־כַּרְמִי בְכֶסֶף אוֹ אִם־חֶפֶץ

1 KINGS 21

¹ Now, it came to pass after these things, that the following episode took place: Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria, ² and Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying "Give me your vineyard to be my vegetable garden, since it is adjacent to my house; I will give you a better vineyard for it or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money." ³ However, Naboth answered Ahab, "Yahweh forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers!" ⁴ And Ahab went to his house resentful and sullen because of the words that Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him; for, he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." He lay down on his bed, turned his face away and refused to eat. ⁵ And his wife, Jezebel, came to him. "Why are you so dispirited," she said to him, "that you will not eat?" ⁶ He said to her, "I have been speaking to Naboth the Jezreelite; and I said to him, "Give me your vineyard either for money or, if you prefer,

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- ¹ Ahab's 'palace' refers to that in Jezreel (18:45), not the one in Samaria (2K 9:25–26). Hence, the explanatory gloss to 'vineyard', 'in Jezreel' (omitted by the NJB). The words 'the following episode took place' are not in the MT and are here added (following NETB) for stylistic reasons.
- ² At the end of this verse, the LXX adds, 'and it will be mine as a garden of vegetables' (καὶ ἔσται μοι εἰς κήπον λαχάνων).
- ³ Naboth could not give up his ancestral inheritance because, by well-established custom, ancestral property must remain in the family in perpetuity (Lv 25:10, 13–17, 23–24, 34). Ahab was resentful and sullen because he knew that Naboth was legally and religiously right.
- ⁴ In place of 'resentful and sullen', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'gloomy and out of temper' and NETB has 'bitter and angry'.
- ⁵ The NRSV has 'depressed' in place of 'dispirited', here following the NJB.
- ⁶ Ahab's explanation is one lengthy sentence in the MT, which is divided in the translation for stylistic reasons.

אֶתְהָ אֶתְנָה־לָךְ כָּרֶם תַּחֲתֵיו וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־אֶתֵּן לָךְ
אֶת־כַּרְמִי: ^ז וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֵיזֶבֶל אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶתְהָ עֲתָה
תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלוּכָה עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל קוּם אֲכַל־לֶחֶם וִיטֵב
לְבָבְךָ אֲנִי אֶתֵּן לָךְ אֶת־כָּרֶם נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵלִי:
^ח וַתִּכְתֹּב סְפָרִים בְּשֵׁם אֲחָאָב וַתַּחֲתֶם בְּחַתְמוֹ
וַתִּשְׁלַח הַסְּפָרִים סְפָרִים אֶל־הַזִּקְנִים וְאֶל־הַחֲרִים
אֲשֶׁר בְּעִירוֹ הַיֹּשְׁבִים אֶת־נָבוֹת: ^ט וַתִּכְתֹּב
בַּסְּפָרִים לֵאמֹר קְרְאוּ־צוֹם וְהָשִׁיבוּ אֶת־נָבוֹת
בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם: ^י וְהוֹשִׁיבוּ שָׁנִים אָנָּשִׁים בְּנֵי־בְלִיעֹל
נִגְדּוֹ וַיַּעֲדֵהוּ לֵאמֹר בִּרְכָתָ אֱלֹהִים וּמָלַךְ וְהוֹצִיָאֵהוּ
וְסִקְלֵהוּ וַיָּמָת:

^{יא} וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אָנָּשִׁי עִירוֹ הַזִּקְנִים וְהַחֲרִים אֲשֶׁר
הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּעִירוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח אֵלֵיהֶם אֵיזֶבֶל
כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּתוּב בַּסְּפָרִים אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח אֵלֵיהֶם:
^{יב} קְרְאוּ צוֹם וְהָשִׁיבוּ אֶת־נָבוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם:

for another vineyard in exchange.” But he said, “I will not give you my vineyard.”” ⁷ Then his wife Jezebel said to him, “You make a fine king of Israel, and no mistake! Get up and eat; cheer up, and you will feel better; I will get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite myself.” ⁸ Therefore, she wrote letters in Ahab’s name and sealed them with his seal; and she sent the letters to the elders and to the nobles who lived with Naboth in his town. ⁹ In the letters she wrote, “Proclaim a time of fasting, and seat Naboth at the head of the assembly. ¹⁰ Also, seat two scoundrels opposite him, who will accuse him like this, “You have cursed God and the king.” Then take him outside and stone him to death.

¹¹ And the men of Naboth’s town, the elders and the nobles who lived in his town, did what Jezebel had ordered them, according to that was written in the letters that she had sent them. ¹² They proclaimed a time of fasting and seated Naboth at the head of the assembly. ¹³ Then the

⁷ Jezebel had no real respect for the laws and religion of Israel.

⁸ The *Kethib/Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁹ In times of disaster, public fasting and public prayer were proclaimed (Jg 20:26, Joel 1:14, 2:15) to placate God and to discover the fault that had provoked his anger. There must have been some widespread calamity (drought or famine) to give Jezebel an opportunity for her plot.

¹⁰ For a capital conviction, two witnesses were required (Nb 35:30, Dt 17:6 and see Mt 26:60ff). Some later MSS cautiously substitute ‘blessed’ for ‘cursed’, as in v. 13 (and so also in Job 1:5, 11, 2:5, 9). Apparently, the possessions of those condemned to death reverted to the king.

¹¹ The literal translation of ‘letters’ is ‘scrolls’.

¹² In place of ‘head of the assembly’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘forefront of the people’ (as also in v. 9).

¹³ The NJB omits the 2nd occurrence of ‘the scoundrels’.

וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים בְּנֵי-בְלִיעֵל וַיֵּשְׁבוּ נֹגְדֵי וַיַּעֲדֵהוּ אֲנָשֵׁי הַבְּלִיעֵל אֶת-נָבוֹת נֹגְדֵי הָעָם לֵאמֹר בֶּרֶךְ נָבוֹת אֱלֹהִים וּמִלֶּךְ וַיֵּצְאֵהוּ מִחוּץ לְעִיר וַיִּסְקְלֵהוּ בָּאֲבָנִים וַיָּמָת: ^ד וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ אֶל-אִיזָבֵל לֵאמֹר סִקֵּל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת: ^ט וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַע אִיזָבֵל כִּי-סִקֵּל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת וַתֹּאמֶר אִיזָבֵל אֶל-אֲחָאָב קוּם רֵשׁ אֶת-כָּרְסִי נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאֵלִי אֲשֶׁר מֵאֵן לָתֶת-לִּי בְכֶסֶף כִּי אֵין נָבוֹת חַי כִּי-יָמָת: ^{טז} וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַע אֲחָאָב כִּי מָת נָבוֹת וַיָּקָם אֲחָאָב לָרֶדֶת אֶל-כָּרְסִי נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאֵלִי לְרִשְׁתּוֹ: {פ}

^{יז} וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי לֵאמֹר: ^{יח} קוּם רֵד לִקְרֹאת אֲחָאָב מֶלֶךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְרוֹן הִנֵּה בְּכָרְסִי נָבוֹת אֲשֶׁר-יָרַד שָׁם לְרִשְׁתּוֹ: ^{יט} וְדַבַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הָרֹצֵחַת וְגַם-

two scoundrels came in and sat opposite him; then the scoundrels made their accusation, “Naboth has cursed God and the king.” Then they led him outside the town and stoned him to death. ¹⁴ They then sent word to Jezebel, saying “Naboth has been stoned; and he is dead.” ¹⁵ When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, “Get up! Take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he would not give you for money, for Naboth is no longer alive, he is dead.” ¹⁶ As soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab got up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite and take possession of it.

¹⁷ Then the word of Yahweh came to Elijah the Tishbite, ¹⁸ “Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, in Samaria. He is now in Naboth’s vineyard; he has gone down to take possession of it. ¹⁹ You shall say to him, “Yahweh says this: You have murdered; and now you usurp.” You shall

¹⁴ The NJB has ‘to death’ in place of ‘he is dead’, here following the MT & NRSV.

¹⁵ The NJB replaces the 2nd instance of ‘Jezebel’ with the pronoun ‘she’; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

¹⁶ After ‘was dead’, the LXX adds ‘he tore his garments and put on sackcloth; after these things’ (καὶ διέρρηξεν τὰ ἱμάτια ἑαυτοῦ καὶ περιέβαλετο σάκκον· καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ ταῦτα).

¹⁷ Note the similarity with the episode of Nathan and David in 2S 12; on each occasion, God defends the helpless against the powerful and there is the same reprieve for the repentant offender, who is punished only through his son. However, there are differences, too: David’s dynasty retains the divine promise, whereas Ahab’s is ‘swept away’. Nathan remains David’s prophet and blesses Solomon, but Elijah is Ahab’s ‘enemy’.

¹⁸ The NJB has ‘you fill find him’ in place of ‘he is now’, here following the MT & NRSV.

¹⁹ In place of the 2nd ‘You shall say to him’, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB, following the LXX (διὰ τοῦτο), has ‘for this’, keeping it inside the quotation.

יִרְשֶׁת וְדִבְרַתְּ אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה בְּמָקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר לָקְדוּ הַכְּלָבִים אֶת־דָּם נָבוֹת יִלְקוּ הַכְּלָבִים
אֶת־דַּמְךָ גַּם־אֶתָּה: ^כ וַיֹּאמֶר אַחְאָב אֶל־אֵלֵיהוּ
הַמַּצְאֲתָנִי אֵיבִי וַיֹּאמֶר מַצְאֲתִי יַעַן הִתְמַכְּרָךְ
לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: ^{כא} הִנְנִי מִבִּי אֵלֶיךָ רָעָה
וּבִעֲרָתִי אֲחַרֶיךָ וְהִכְרַתִּי לְאַחְאָב מִשְׁתֵּין בְּקִיר
וְעַצוֹר וְעֶזְרָא בִּישְׂרָאֵל: ^{כב} וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־בֵּיתְךָ כְּבֵית
יִרְבְּעָם בֶּן־נִבְט וְכְבֵית בַּעֲשָׂא בֶן־אֲחִיהָ אֶל־הַכְּעַס
אֲשֶׁר הִכְעַסְתָּ וַתַּחֲטֵא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{כג} וְגַם־לְאִיזָבֵל
דִּבֶּר יְהוָה לֵאמֹר הַכְּלָבִים יֹאכְלוּ אֶת־אִיזָבֵל בַּחֹל
יִזְרְעֶאל: ^{כד} הַמֶּת לְאַחְאָב בָּעִיר יֹאכְלוּ הַכְּלָבִים
וְהַמֶּת בַּשָּׂדֶה יֹאכְלוּ עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם: ^{כה} רַק לֹא־הָיָה
כְּאַחְאָב אֲשֶׁר הִתְמַכֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר־הִסְתָּה אֹתוֹ אִיזָבֵל אִשְׁתּוֹ: ^{כו} וַיִּתְּעַב מְאֹד
לָלֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי הַגִּלּוּלִים כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ הָאֻמֹּרִי אֲשֶׁר
הוֹרִישׁ יְהוָה מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

say to him, “Yahweh says this: In the place where dogs licked Naboth’s blood, dogs will lick your blood too.”” ²⁰ Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me out, O my enemy!” He said, “I have found you out. Because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh, ²¹ I will now bring disaster down on you; I will sweep you away and wipe out everyone who urinates on a wall from the family of Ahab, bonded or free in Israel. ²² I will treat your House as I treated the House of Jeroboam son of Nebat and of Baasha son of Ahijah, for provoking my anger and leading Israel into sin. ²³ Against Jezebel, too, Yahweh spoke these words: The dogs will eat Jezebel by the outer wall of Jezreel. ²⁴ Those of Ahab’s family who die in the city, the dogs will eat; and those who die in the open country, the birds of the air will eat.” ²⁵ Indeed, there was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh, urged on by Jezebel his wife. ²⁶ He behaved in the most abominable way, adhering to idols, just as the Amorites used to do whom Yahweh had dispossessed for the sons of Israel.

²⁰ In place of ‘because you have sold yourself to do’, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads ‘for your double-dealing, and since you have done’.

²¹ There is wordplay here: the word translated ‘disaster’ (רָעָה) is similar to the word translated ‘evil’ in v. 20 (הָרַע).

²² Vv. 22–24 is probably an expansion of Elijah’s speech by the Deuteronomic editor (compare 13:33–34, 14:10–11, 16:1–4, 2K 9:35–36).

²³ This verse is parenthesised in the NJB, which has ‘in the Field’ (following 2K 9:10, 36) in place of ‘by the outer wall’; the word translated ‘outer wall’ (חֹל, defectively written here) and ‘field’ (חֵלֶק) are similar.

²⁴ The literal translation of ‘those of Ahab’s family’ is ‘those belonging to Ahab’.

²⁵ The NRSV parenthesises vv. 25–26; an NJB footnote says they are the remarks of an editor, unconvinced of the sincerity of Ahab’s repentance.

²⁶ The word used here for ‘idols’ (הַגִּלּוּלִים) is always used disdainfully; it is generally thought to have originally referred to dung pellets.

כז וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַע אַחָאֵב אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּקְרַע
בְּגָדָיו וַיֵּשֶׁם־שָׁק עַל־בָּשָׂרוֹ וַיֵּצֹם וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּשָּׁק
וַיֵּהָלֵךְ אֵט: {פ}

כח וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־אֱלִיהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי לֵאמֹר:
כט הֲרָאִיתָ כִּי־נִכְנַע אַחָאֵב מִלִּפְנֵי יָעַן כִּי־נִכְנַע
מִפְּנֵי לֹא־אָבִי הָרָעָה בְּיָמָיו בְּיָמַי בְּנֹו אָבִיא הָרָעָה
עַל־בֵּיתוֹ:

²⁷ When Ahab heard these words, he tore his garments and put sackcloth over his bare flesh; he fasted and slept in the sackcloth; he walked about dejectedly.

²⁸ Then the word of Yahweh came to Elijah the Tishbite: ²⁹ “Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? As he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; I will bring the disaster down on his House in the days of his son.”

²⁷ In place of ‘walked about dejectedly’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘walked with slow steps’.

²⁸ In the light of what actually happened, this paragraph appraises the situation more realistically than vv. 21 and 24; it was probably added by a writer during the Exile.

²⁹ Literally translated, this verse ends, “I will not bring the disaster during his days; in the days of his son, I will bring the disaster on his house.”

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מלכים א פרק כב

^א וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים אֵין מִלְחָמָה בֵּין אֲרָם וּבֵין יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

^ב וַיְהִי בַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית וַיֵּרֶד יְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ג וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־עַבְדָּיו הַיִּדְעָתָם כִּי־לָנוּ רָמֹת גִּלְעָד וְאַנְחֵנוּ מַחֲשִׁים מִקַּחַת אֹתָהּ מִיַּד מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם: ^ד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט הֲתֵלֵךְ אִתִּי לְמִלְחָמָה רָמֹת גִּלְעָד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּמוֹנִי כַּמוֹךְ כַּעֲמִי כַּעֲמָךְ כְּסוּסֵי כְּסוּסֶיךָ: ^ה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל דָּרֹשׁ־נָא כִּי־וְאֵת דְּבַר יְהוָה: ^ו וַיִּקְבֹּץ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַנְּבִיאִים כְּאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הֲאֵלֶיךָ עַל־רָמֹת גִּלְעָד לְמִלְחָמָה אִם־אֶחָדֶל וַיֹּאמְרוּ עָלֶיהָ וַיִּתֵּן אֲדֹנָי בְּיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^ז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט הֲאֵין פֹּה נְבִיא לַיהוָה עוֹד וְנִדְרָשָׁה מֵאֲתוֹ: ^ח וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ־

¹ There was a lull of three years, with no fighting between Aram and Israel.

² Then, in the third year, Jehoshaphat king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. ³ The king of Israel said to his officers, "Are you aware that Ramoth-Gilead belongs to us? And yet we do nothing to wrest it away from the king of Aram." ⁴ He said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you come with me to fight at Ramoth-Gilead?" Jehoshaphat answered the king of Israel, "I am as ready as you: my men are as your men, my horses are as your horses." ⁵ But Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "First, consult the word of Yahweh." ⁶ So, the king of Israel called the prophets together, about four hundred of them. "Should I march to attack Ramoth-Gilead," he asked, "or should I refrain?" "March," they replied, "The Lord will deliver it into the power of the king." ⁷ But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no other prophet of Yahweh here for us to ask?" ⁸ The

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¹ Vv. 1-40 resume the story of the Aramaean wars from Ch. 20.

² During the three years of peace between them, Aram and Israel had formed a military alliance and had successfully fought, together with other allies, against the invading Assyrians at Qarqar (853 BCE), thus preserving both kingdoms.

³ The 'king of Aram' was probably still Ben-Hadad II (see 20:1).

⁴ Literally translated, Jehoshaphat's answer reads, "Like me, like you; like my people, like your people; like my horses; like your horses."

⁵ Jehoshaphat is requesting a prophetic oracle revealing God's will in the matter and their prospects for success.

⁶ Though Jehoshaphat requested an oracle from 'Yahweh', they stop short of actually using this name and substitute the title אֲדֹנָי ('Lord', 'Master').

⁷ These 'prophets' were in the king's service and were not pure Yahwists, unlike the prophets slain or persecuted by Jezebel (18:4, 13, 19:1-4).

⁸ 'Micaiah' should not be confused with 'Micah' (numbered among the 12 Minor Prophets), who lived 150 years later.

יִשְׂרָאֵל | אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט עוֹד אִישׁ־אֶחָד לְדָרֵשׁ אֶת־
יְהוָה מֵאֲתָו וְאֲנִי שֹׁנְאֹתִיו כִּי לֹא־תִנָּבֵא עָלַי טוֹב
כִּי אֶסְרֶע מִיָּכִיָּהוּ בֶן־יִמְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט אֶל־
יֹאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ בֶּן־ט וַיִּקְרָא מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־סָרִיס
אֶחָד וַיֹּאמֶר מִהֲרָה מִיָּכִיָּהוּ בֶן־יִמְלָה: 'וּמֶלֶךְ
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה יֹשְׁבִים אִישׁ עַל־
כִּסְאוֹ מְלֻבָּשִׁים בְּגָדִים בְּגָרָן פָּתַח שַׁעַר שֹׁמְרוֹן
וְכָל־הַנְּבִיאִים מִתְנַבְּאִים לִפְנֵיהֶם: יֹא וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ
צִדְקִיָּה בֶן־כְּנַעְנָה קֶרֶן בְּרֹזֶל וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה־אָמַר
יְהוָה בְּאֵלֶּה תִּנְגַּח אֶת־אַרְם עַד־כִּלְתָּם: יִב וְכָל־
הַנְּבִיאִים נִבְּאִים בֶּן לֹאמֹר עֲלֵה רִמְתָּ גִלְעָד וְהִצַּלְתָּ
וְנָתַן יְהוָה בְּיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ: יִי וְהַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־הִלָּךְ |
לִקְרָא מִיָּכִיָּהוּ דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה־נָא דִּבְרֵי
הַנְּבִיאִים פֹּה־אֶחָד טוֹב אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהִי־נָא דְּבִרִיד
דִּבְרֶךְ כְּדִבֶּר אֶחָד מֵהֶם וּדְבַרְתָּ טוֹב: יִי וַיֹּאמֶר
מִיָּכִיָּהוּ חִי־יְהוָה כִּי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר יֹאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי אֲתוֹ
אֲדַבֵּר: טו וַיְבֹא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵלָיו

king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is one other by whom we can consult Yahweh, but I hate him because he does not prophesy favourably for me, only disaster; he is Micaiah son of Imlah." "The king should not say such things," Jehoshaphat said. ⁹ So, the king of Israel summoned one of the officials and said, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah immediately." ¹⁰ The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones in full regalia, at the threshing-floor outside the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets raving before them. ¹¹ Zedekiah son of Chenaanah had made himself iron horns. "Yahweh says this," he said, "With these you will gore the Aramaeans until they are destroyed." ¹² All the prophets prophesied the same, saying "March to Ramoth-Gilead and succeed. Yahweh will deliver in into the power of the king." ¹³ Now, the messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said, "Here are all the prophets as one man speaking favourably to the king. Try to speak like one of them and foretell success." ¹⁴ However, Micaiah answered, "As Yahweh lives, what Yahweh says to me, that will I utter!" ¹⁵ When he had come to the king, the king said, "Micaiah,

⁹ The NJB has 'eunuchs' in place of 'officials', here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁰ The NRSV has 'prophesying' in place of 'raving', here following the NJB.

¹¹ This 'Zedekiah', otherwise unknown, is apparently the spokesman for the troop of ecstatic prophets.

¹² In place of 'succeed', here following NETB, the NJB has 'conquer' and the NRSV has 'triumph'.

¹³ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁴ Micaiah refuses to play politics with his role as a prophet.

¹⁵ Micaiah takes up the exact words of the false prophets; but he is ridiculing the king, and the king knows.

מִיִּכְיָהוּ הַנִּלְדָּךְ אֶל־רָמֹת גִּלְעָד לַמִּלְחָמָה אִם־נִחְדָּךְ
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו עָלֶיךָ וְהִצַּלְח וְנָתַן יְהוָה בְּיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ:
טז וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הַמֶּלֶךְ עַד־כַּמָּה פַעַמִּים אָנִי
מִשְׁבִּיעְךָ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִדְבֹר אֵלַי רַק־אֱמַת בִּשְׁם
יְהוָה: יז וַיֹּאמֶר רְאִיתִי אֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל נִפְצָיִם אֶל־
הַהָרִים כַּצֹּאֵן אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לָהֶם רֹעֶה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
לֹא־אֲדַנִּים לְאֵלָהּ יָשׁוּבוּ אִישׁ־לְבֵיתוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:
יח וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט הֲלוֹא אָמַרְתִּי
אֵלֶיךָ לֹא־יִתְּנָבֵא עָלַי טוֹב כִּי אִם־רָע: {ס}

יט וַיֹּאמֶר לָכֵן שָׁמַע דְּבַר־יְהוָה רְאִיתִי אֶת־יְהוָה
יֹשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאוֹ וְכָל־צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם עֹמֵד עָלָיו
מִיְּמִינוֹ וּמִשְׁמָאלוֹ: כ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה מִי יִפְתֹּה אֶת־
אֲחָאָב וַיַּעַל וַיִּפֹּל בְּרָמֹת גִּלְעָד וַיֹּאמֶר זֶה בָּכָה וְזֶה
אָמַר בָּכָה: כא וַיֵּצֵא הָרוּחַ וַיַּעֲמֵד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר

should we march to attack Ramoth-Gilead, or should we refrain?" He answered, "March and succeed. Yahweh will deliver it into the power of the king." ¹⁶ However, the king said to him, "How many times must I put you on oath to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of Yahweh?" ¹⁷ Then Micaiah spoke: "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep that have no shepherd. And Yahweh said, "These have no master, let each one go home in peace!"' ¹⁸ At this, the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he never prophesies anything favourable about me, but only disaster?"

¹⁹ And Micaiah said, "So listen to the word of Yahweh. I have seen Yahweh seated on his throne with the whole array of heaven standing by him, on his right and on his left. ²⁰ Yahweh said, "Who will trick Ahab into marching to his death at Ramoth-Gilead?" Then some said one thing and some another. ²¹ Then a spirit came forward, stood before

¹⁶ It is important to note that, in v. 14, Micaiah only vows to speak the word of Yahweh; he does not necessarily say he will tell the truth! In this case, Yahweh's word itself is deceptive: only when the king adjures him to tell the truth does Micaiah do so.

¹⁷ The MT here opens with 'he spoke'; the referent of the pronoun has here been added for clarity.

¹⁸ The NJB has 'unfavourable ones (prophecies)' in place of 'disaster', here following the NRSV.

¹⁹ The celestial scene portrayed in vv. 19–23 is unique in the earlier literature of Israel.

²⁰ The NRSV has 'entice' in place of 'trick', here following the NJB, and NETB has 'deceive'.

²¹ The literal translation of 'a spirit' (הָרוּחַ) is 'the spirit'; the significance of the article prefixed to רוּחַ is uncertain, but it could contain a clue as to this spirit's identity, especially when interpreted in light of v. 24. It is certainly possible, and probably even likely, that the article is used in a generic or dramatic sense and should be translated 'a spirit', in which case it would show that this spirit was vivid and definite in the mind of Micaiah the storyteller. However, if one insists that the article indicates a well-known or universally known spirit, the following context

אֲנִי אֶפְתָּנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו בְּמָה: כִּבֵּי וַיֹּאמֶר אֶצְא
וְהָיִיתִי רוּחַ שָׁקֶר בְּפִי כָל־נְבִיאָיו וַיֹּאמֶר תִּפְתָּה
וְגַם־תוֹכֵל צֵא וַעֲשֵׂה־כֵן: כִּבֵּי וַעֲתָה הִנֵּה נָתַן יְהוָה
רוּחַ שָׁקֶר בְּפִי כָל־נְבִיאֶיךָ אֵלֶּה וַיְהוָה דִּבֶּר עָלֶיךָ
רָעָה:

כִּדִּ וַיִּגַּשׁ צִדְקִיָּהוּ בֶן־כְּנַעֲנָה וַיִּכֶּה אֶת־מִיכָיָהוּ עַל־
הַלֶּחִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵיזָה עָבַר רוּחַ־יְהוָה מֵאִתִּי לְדַבֵּר
אוֹתְךָ: כִּהֵב וַיֹּאמֶר מִיכָיָהוּ הִנֵּךְ רֹאֵה בַיּוֹם הַהוּא
אֲשֶׁר תִּבָּא חֹדֶר בְּחֹדֶר לְהַחֲבֹה: כִּו וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ־
יִשְׂרָאֵל קַח אֶת־מִיכָיָהוּ וְהַשִּׁיבֵהוּ אֶל־אֲמֹן שַׂר־
הָעִיר וְאֶל־יוֹאָשׁ בֶּן־הַמֶּלֶךְ: כִּז וַאֲמַרְתָּ כֹּה אָמַר
הַמֶּלֶךְ שִׁימוּ אֶת־זֶה בַּיִת הַכֶּלֶא וְהַאֲכִלְהוּ לֶחֶם
לֶחֶץ וּמִים לֶחֶץ עַד בֹּאִי בְשָׁלוֹם: כִּח וַיֹּאמֶר מִיכָיָהוּ

Yahweh, and said, "I will trick him." "How?" Yahweh asked. ²² He replied, "I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets." Yahweh said, "You shall trick him; you shall succeed. Go and do it." ²³ So, you see: Yahweh has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all your prophets. But Yahweh has pronounced disaster on you."

²⁴ Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up and struck Micaiah on the jaw. "Which way," he asked, "did the spirit of Yahweh leave me, to talk to you?" ²⁵ Micaiah replied, "That is what you will find out, on the day you flee into an inner room to hide." ²⁶ The king of Israel said, "Seize Micaiah and hand him over to Amon, governor of the city, and to Joash, the king's son, ²⁷ and say, "These are the king's orders: Put this man in prison and feed him on nothing but reduce rations of bread and water until I come back safe and sound."" ²⁸ Micaiah said, "If you come back

provides a likely referent: v. 24 tells how Zedekiah slapped Micaiah in the face and then asked sarcastically, "Which way did the spirit leave me, to talk to you?" When the phrase 'the spirit of Yahweh' refers to the divine spirit (rather than the divine breath or mind, Is 40:7, 13) elsewhere, the spirit energises an individual or group for special tasks or moves one to prophesy. This raises the possibility that the deceiving spirit here is the same as the divine spirit mentioned by Zedekiah in v. 24.

²² Each of the verbs 'you shall trick' and 'you shall succeed' could also be translated as an injunctive.

²³ In place of 'so you see', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'and now, you see'.

²⁴ Zedekiah's question is certainly sarcastic and probably intended as rhetorical.

²⁵ The exact meaning of Micaiah's retort is unclear.

²⁶ Amon, as Governor of Samaria, and Joash, as Prince, would have had the power to imprison citizens.

²⁷ The literal translation of 'reduced rations of bread and water' is 'the bread of affliction and the water of affliction'.

²⁸ The NJB omits the last sentence, which paraphrases the opening words of the Book of Micah (Mi 1:2) and was inserted by a glossator who confused this Micaiah with the canonical prophet.

אִם־שׁוֹב תָּשׁוּב בְּשָׁלוֹם לֹא־דָבַר יְהוָה בִּי וַיֹּאמֶר
שִׁמְעוּ עַמִּים כָּלֶם:

כֹּס וַיַּעַל מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה רָמֹת
גִּלְעָד: ^ל וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט הִתְחַפֵּשׂ
וּבֹא בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאַתָּה לְבַשׁ בְּגָדֶיךָ וַיִּתְחַפֵּשׂ מֶלֶךְ
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּבֹא בַּמִּלְחָמָה: ^{לא} וּמֶלֶךְ אָרָם צֹוָה אֶת־
שָׂרֵי הָרֶכֶב אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁנַיִם לֵאמֹר לֹא
תִלָּחֲמוּ אֶת־קָטָן וְאֶת־גָּדוֹל כִּי אִם־אֶת־מֶלֶךְ
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבַדּוֹ: ^{לב} וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת שָׂרֵי הָרֶכֶב אֶת־
יְהוֹשָׁפָט וְהָמָּה אָמְרוּ אֶךְ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא וַיִּסְרוּ
עָלָיו לְהִלָּחֵם וַיִּזְעַק יְהוֹשָׁפָט: ^{לג} וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת שָׂרֵי
הָרֶכֶב כִּי־לֹא־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא וַיָּשׁוּבוּ מֵאַחֲרָיו:
^{לד} וְאִישׁ מָשַׁךְ בַּקֶּשֶׁת לְתֻמּוֹ וַיַּכֶּה אֶת־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בֵּין הַדְּבָקִים וּבֵין הַשְּׂרִינִן וַיֹּאמֶר לְרַכְּבוֹ הֲפֹךְ יָדְךָ
וְהוֹצֵאֲנִי מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה כִּי הִחֲלִיתִי: ^{לה} וַתַּעֲלֶה
הַמִּלְחָמָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְהַמֶּלֶךְ הָיָה מַעֲמִיד

safe and sound, Yahweh has not spoken through me.” He added, “Hear, you peoples, all of you!”

²⁹ The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-Gilead. ³⁰ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself to go into battle, but I want you to wear your royal uniform.” The king of Israel went into battle disguised. ³¹ The king of Aram had given his thirty-two chariot commanders the following order: “Do not attack anyone of whatever rank, except the king of Israel.” ³² When the chariot commanders caught sight of Jehoshaphat, they said, “That is obviously the king of Israel.” Therefore, they wheeled to the attack; but Jehoshaphat shouted his war cry ³³ and the chariot commanders, realising that he was not the king of Israel, called off their pursuit.

³⁴ Someone, however, drawing his bow without any special aim, shot the king of Israel between the joints of his armour. “Turn about,” the king said to his charioteer. “Get me out of the battle; I am collapsing.”

³⁵ The battle grew fiercer as the day went on; the king had to be held

²⁹ The narrative now returns to the assault on Ramoth-Gilead.

³⁰ The disguise shows that Ahab feared that Micaiah might be right.

³¹ The NJB omits ‘thirty-two’, a gloss inspired by 20:1, 16 but missing in 2Ch 18:30.

³² It is unclear how the charioteers would have recognised Jehoshaphat from his cry.

³³ Ahab’s plan in making Jehoshaphat wear his royal uniform seems to have worked.

³⁴ In place of ‘battle’, here following the LXX (πολέμου), the MT has ‘camp’; the NJB has ‘fighting’.

³⁵ Ahab’s wound was clearly very severe, if blood flowed from it into his chariot.

בַּמֶּרְכָבָה נָכַח אֲרָם וַיָּמָת בָּעֶרֶב וַיִּצָּק דָּם־הַמָּכָה
 אֶל־חֵיק הָרֶכֶב: ^{לז} וַיַּעֲבֹר הָרֶנָּה בַּמַּחֲנֶה כָּבֹא
 הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֵאמֹר אִישׁ אֶל־עִירוֹ וְאִישׁ אֶל־אֶרְצוֹ:
^{לז} וַיָּמָת הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיָּבֹא שִׁמְרוֹן וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ
 בְּשִׁמְרוֹן: ^{לח} וַיִּשְׁטֹף אֶת־הָרֶכֶב עַל בִּרְכַּת שִׁמְרוֹן
 וַיִּלְקֻוּ הַכְּלָבִים אֶת־דָּמּוֹ וְהַזְנוֹת רָחֲצוּ כַּדָּבָר יְהוָה
 אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר: ^{לט} וַיִּתֵּר דְּבָרִי אַחְאָב וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה
 וּבֵית הַשֵּׁן אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה וְכָל־הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה
 הָלוֹא־הֵם כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^מ וַיִּשְׁכַּב אַחְאָב עִם־אִבְתָּיו וַיִּמָּלֶךְ
 אַחֲזִיָּהוּ בֶן־תַּחְתִּיּוֹ: {פ}

^{מא} וַיְהוֹשָׁפָט בֶּן־אֶסָּא מֶלֶךְ עַל־יְהוּדָה בְּשָׁנָה
 אַרְבַּע לְאַחְאָב מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{מב} וַיְהוֹשָׁפָט בֶּן־
 שְׁלֹשִׁים וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנָה בְּמָלְכוֹ וַעֲשָׂרִים וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנָה
 מֶלֶךְ בִּירוּשָׁלַם וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ עֲזוּבָה בַת־שְׁלִיחִי:

upright in his chariot facing the Aramaeans and, in the evening, he died; the blood from the wound flowed into the bottom of the chariot. ³⁶ At sundown, a shout ran through the camp, "Every man back to his town, every man back to his country." ³⁷ Thus, the king died. They went to Samaria, and in Samaria, they buried the king. ³⁸ They washed the chariot at the Pool of Samaria; the dogs licked up the blood, and the prostitutes washed in it, in accordance with the word that Yahweh had spoken. ³⁹ The rest of the history of Ahab, his entire career, the ivory house he erected, all the towns he built, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ⁴⁰ Then Ahab slept with his fathers; his son Ahaziah succeeded him.

⁴¹ Jehoshaphat son of Asa became king of Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. ⁴² Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned for twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah, daughter of Shilhi. ⁴³ In every way, he

³⁶ The armies are now in complete disarray and full retreat.

³⁷ The NJB, following the LXX (τέθνηκεν ὁ βασιλεύς), replaces the first sentence with 'the king is dead'.

³⁸ This verse is a gloss referring back to 21:19, though, in fact, Naboth had been killed at Jezreel, and God had reserved Ahab's punishment for his son. The addition of the 'prostitutes' symbolises the fertility cult, a prominent feature of the Baal religion that included ritual sex.

³⁹ The 'ivory house' was a palace in Samaria, decorated with carved ivory and containing furniture so decorated (10:22, Am 3:15, 6:4, Ps 45:8).

⁴⁰ The battle took place in 853 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 850 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

⁴¹ The chronology is here a little distorted, now going back to the beginning of Jehoshaphat's reign.

⁴² Jehoshaphat reigned 873–849 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 870–848 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

⁴³ The literal translation of 'sight' is 'eyes'.

מִגּוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּכָל-דֶּרֶךְ אֲסָא אָבִיו לֹא-סָר מִמֶּנּוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת
הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: ^{מִד} אֵךְ הַבָּמֹת לֹא-סָרוּ עוֹד
הָעָם מִזִּבְחִים וּמִקְטָרִים בַּבָּמֹת: ^{מֵה} וַיִּשְׁלַם
יְהוֹשָׁפָט עִם-מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{מִז} וַיֵּתֶר דְּבָרֵי יְהוֹשָׁפָט
וּגְבוּרָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה וְאֲשֶׁר נָלַחַם הֵלֵא־הֵם
כְּתוּבִים עַל-סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה:
^{מִז} וַיֵּתֶר הַקֹּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׂאָר בְּיָמֵי אֲסָא אָבִיו בְּעַר
מִן-הָאָרֶץ: ^{מִח} וּמֶלֶךְ אֵין בְּאֵדוֹם נֹצֵב מֶלֶךְ:
^{מִט} יְהוֹשָׁפָט עָשָׂה אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ לָלֶכֶת
אֶפְרָה לְזָהָב וְלֹא הָלַךְ כִּי-נִשְׁבְּרוּ נִשְׁבְּרָה אֲנִיּוֹת
בְּעֶצְיוֹן גִּבֹר: ^נ אִזּוֹ אָמַר אַחֲזִיָּהוּ בֶן-אֲחָאֵב אֶל-
יְהוֹשָׁפָט יֵלְכוּ עַבְדֵי עִם-עַבְדֶּיךָ בְּאֲנִיּוֹת וְלֹא אָבָה

followed the example of his father Asa; he did not turn aside from it, doing what is right in the sight of Yahweh. ⁴⁴ The high places, however, were not abolished; the people still offered sacrifice and incense on the high places. ⁴⁵ Jehoshaphat was at peace with the king of Israel. ⁴⁶ The rest of the history of Jehoshaphat, the valour he showed, the wars he waged, is this not recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ⁴⁷ And the remnant of the male sacred prostitutes of those who had lived in the time of his father Asa, he swept out of the country. ⁴⁸ There was no king in Edom, ⁴⁹ and King Jehoshaphat built ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they never reached there: they were shipwrecked at Ezion-Geber. ⁵⁰ Then Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants man the ships with yours;" but

⁴⁴ In the NRSV (and many other English translations), this verse is included as part of v. 43; therein, subsequent verse numbers are decremented.

⁴⁵ This verse is probably from a different source from that of vv. 2–40, unless it is simply a recapitulation.

⁴⁶ The 'Annals of the Kings of Judah' are mentioned 15 times in 1-2 Kings; they are apparently diaries or records of some sort that documented what were felt to be important events of each King's reign. Some believe they weren't official documents but were more likely records kept by the prophets who served during each king's reign; regardless, these books have never been found and are presumed to have been irretrievably lost.

⁴⁷ The NRSV has 'temple prostitutes' in place of 'sacred prostitutes', here following the NJB, and NETB has 'cultic prostitutes'.

⁴⁸ The text of this verse (and the opening of v. 49) is uncertain and the interpretation is disputed. The NRSV reads, "There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king. Jehoshaphat built ships of Tarshish ..."

⁴⁹ Edom had asserted its independence in the later days of Solomon (11:17) but, by the time of Jehoshaphat, had evidently been once more subjected to the influence of the Davidic kings: hence, Jehoshaphat's free access to the port of Ezion-Geber and his maritime projects. In place of עָשָׂה and נִשְׁבְּרוּ, here following the Qere, the Kethib has עָשָׂה and נִשְׁבְּרָה, respectively.

⁵⁰ Literally translated, Ahaziah's suggestion reads, "Let my servants go with your servants in the fleet."

יְהוֹשָׁפָט׃ ^{נא} וַיִּשְׁכַּב יְהוֹשָׁפָט עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר
עִם־אֲבֹתָיו בְּעִיר דָּוִד אָבִיו וַיִּמְלֹךְ יְהוֹרָם בְּנוֹ
תַּחְתָּיו׃ {ס}

Jehoshaphat refused. ⁵¹ Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers; he was buried with his fathers in the City of his father David; his son Jehoram succeeded him.

^{נב} אַחַזְיָהוּ בֶן־אָחָאב מֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׁמְרוֹן
בְּשָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה עָשָׂרָה לַיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ
עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנָתַיִם׃ ^{נג} וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּלֶךְ
בְּדֶרֶךְ אָבִיו וּבְדֶרֶךְ אִמּוֹ וּבְדֶרֶךְ יִרְבֵּעַם בֶּן־נִבְט
אֲשֶׁר הִחֲטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ ^{נד} וַיַּעֲבֹד אֶת־הַבַּעַל
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לוֹ וַיִּכְעַס אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכָל
אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה אָבִיו׃

⁵² Ahaziah son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah and he reigned over Israel for two years. ⁵³ He did what is evil in the sight of Yahweh, following the way of his father and mother, and of Jeroboam son of Nebat who had led Israel into sin. ⁵⁴ He served Baal and worshipped him, and provoked the anger of Yahweh the God of Israel just as his father had done.

⁵¹ The NJB omits the second ‘with his fathers’.

⁵² Ahaziah reigned 853–852 BCE according to E.R. Thiele, or 850–849 BCE according to W.F. Albright.

⁵³ Literally translated, this verse ends, “and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat who made Israel sin.”

⁵⁴ This verse is numbered 53 in the NRSV (and most other English translations); see #44.