

## God Commissions Joshua

**Joshua 1** After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, **2** "Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. **3** Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. **4** From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. **5** No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. **6** Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. **7** Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success<sup>1</sup> wherever you go. **8** This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. **9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

## Joshua Assumes Command

**10** And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, **11** "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'"

**12** And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, **13** "Remember the word that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.' **14** Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, **15** until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise."

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1 Joshua 1:7 Or *may act wisely*

**16** And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. **17** Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses! **18** Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”

## Rahab Hides the Spies

**Joshua 2** And Joshua the son of Nun sent<sup>2</sup> two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there. **2** And it was told to the king of Jericho, “Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.” **3** Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.” **4** But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. **5** And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.” **6** But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. **7** So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.

**8** Before the men<sup>3</sup> lay down, she came up to them on the roof **9** and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. **10** For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction.<sup>4</sup> **11** And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. **12** Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father’s house, and give me a sure sign **13** that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” **14** And the men said to her, “Our life for yours even to death! If you

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2 Joshua 2:1 Or *had sent*

3 Joshua 2:8 Hebrew *they*

4 Joshua 2:10 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

do not tell this business of ours, then when the LORD gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.”

**15** Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall. **16** And she said<sup>5</sup> to them, “Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way.” **17** The men said to her, “We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear. **18** Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father’s household. **19** Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head. **20** But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear.” **21** And she said, “According to your words, so be it.” Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

**22** They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and found nothing. **23** Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them. **24** And they said to Joshua, “Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us.”

## Israel Crosses the Jordan

**Joshua 3** Then Joshua rose early in the morning and they set out from Shittim. And they came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. **2** At the end of three days the officers went through the camp **3** and commanded the people, “As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place and follow it. **4** Yet there shall be a distance between you and it, about 2,000 cubits<sup>6</sup> in length. Do not come near it, in order that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before.” **5** Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.” **6** And

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5 Joshua 2:16 Or *had said*

6 Joshua 3:4 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on before the people.” So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

**7** The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

**8** And as for you, command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, “When you come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.” **9** And Joshua said to the people of Israel, “Come here

and listen to the words of the LORD your God.” **10** And Joshua said, “Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

**11** Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth<sup>7</sup> is passing over before you into the Jordan. **12** Now therefore take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man. **13** And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap.”

**14** So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, **15** and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest), **16** the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho. **17** Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

## Twelve Memorial Stones from the Jordan

**Joshua 4** When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, **2** “Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, **3** and command them, saying, “Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests’ feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.” **4** Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of

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<sup>7</sup> Joshua 3:11 Hebrew *the ark of the covenant, the Lord of all the earth*

Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. **5** And Joshua said to them, “Pass on before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, **6** that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’ **7** then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.”

**8** And the people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded and took up twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, just as the LORD told Joshua. And they carried them over with them to the place where they lodged and laid them down<sup>8</sup> there. **9** And Joshua set up<sup>9</sup> twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day. **10** For the priests bearing the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua.

The people passed over in haste. **11** And when all the people had finished passing over, the ark of the LORD and the priests passed over before the people. **12** The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasse passed over armed before the people of Israel, as Moses had told them. **13** About 40,000 ready for war passed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. **14** On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life.

**15** And the LORD said to Joshua, **16** “Command the priests bearing the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan.” **17** So Joshua commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan.” **18** And when the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up on dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

**19** The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. **20** And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. **21** And he said to the people of Israel, “When your children ask their

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8 Joshua 4:8 Or *to rest*

9 Joshua 4:9 Or *Joshua had set up*

fathers in times to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’ **22** then you shall let your children know, ‘Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.’

**23** For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, **24** so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”<sup>10</sup>

## The New Generation Circumcised

**Joshua 5** As soon as all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel.

**2** At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time.” **3** So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.<sup>11</sup> **4** And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people who came out of Egypt, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way after they had come out of Egypt. **5** Though all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people who were born on the way in the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

**6** For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD; the LORD swore to them that he would not let them see the land that the LORD had sworn to their fathers to give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey. **7** So it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised. For they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.

**8** When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. **9** And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” And so the name of that place is called Gilgal<sup>12</sup> to this day.

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<sup>10</sup> Joshua 4:24 Or *all the days*

<sup>11</sup> Joshua 5:3 *Gibeath-haaraloth* means *the hill of the foreskins*

<sup>12</sup> Joshua 5:9 *Gilgal* sounds like the Hebrew for *to roll*

## First Passover in Canaan

**10** While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho. **11** And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. **12** And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

## The Commander of the LORD's Army

**13** When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us, or for our adversaries?" **14** And he said, "No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped<sup>13</sup> and said to him, "What does my lord say to his servant?" **15** And the commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

## The Fall of Jericho

**Joshua 6** Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in. **2** And the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. **3** You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. **4** Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. **5** And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat,<sup>14</sup> and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him." **6** So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD." **7** And he said to the people, "Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD."

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<sup>13</sup> Joshua 5:14 Or *and paid homage*

<sup>14</sup> Joshua 6:5 Hebrew *under itself*; also verse 20

**8** And just as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the LORD following them.

**9** The armed men were walking before the priests who were blowing the trumpets, and the rear guard was walking after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually. **10** But Joshua commanded the people, "You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout." **11** So he caused the ark of the LORD to circle the city, going about it once. And they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.

**12** Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. **13** And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD walked on, and they blew the trumpets continually. And the armed men were walking before them, and the rear guard was walking after the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets blew continually. **14** And the second day they marched around the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did for six days.

**15** On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. **16** And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city. **17** And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction.<sup>15</sup> Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. **18** But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. **19** But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD."

**20** So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. **21** Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

**22** But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." **23** So the young men who had been spies went

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<sup>15</sup> Joshua 6:17 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verses 18, 21

in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. **24** And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. **25** But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

**26** Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, "Cursed before the LORD be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho.

"At the cost of his firstborn  
shall he lay its foundation,  
and at the cost of his youngest son  
shall he set up its gates."

**27** So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

## Israel Defeated at Ai

**Joshua 7** But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the LORD burned against the people of Israel.

**2** Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." And the men went up and spied out Ai. **3** And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are few."

**4** So about three thousand men went up there from the people. And they fled before the men of Ai, **5** and the men of Ai killed about thirty-six of their men and chased them before the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them at the descent. And the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

**6** Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until the evening, he and the elders of Israel. And they put dust on their heads. **7** And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord GOD, why have you brought this people over the Jordan at all, to give us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan! **8** O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs before their enemies! **9** For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the

land will hear of it and will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will you do for your great name?"

## The Sin of Achan

**10** The LORD said to Joshua, "Get up! Why have you fallen on your face?"

**11** Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings. **12** Therefore the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become devoted for destruction.<sup>16</sup> I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you. **13** Get up! Consecrate the people and say, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says the LORD, God of Israel, "There are devoted things in your midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you." **14** In the morning therefore you shall be brought near by your tribes. And the tribe that the LORD takes by lot shall come near by clans. And the clan that the LORD takes shall come near by households. And the household that the LORD takes shall come near man by man. **15** And he who is taken with the devoted things shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he has done an outrageous thing in Israel.'"

**16** So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel near tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was taken. **17** And he brought near the clans of Judah, and the clan of the Zerahites was taken. And he brought near the clan of the Zerahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. **18** And he brought near his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. **19** Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and give praise<sup>17</sup> to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me." **20** And Achan answered Joshua, "Truly I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I did: **21** when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels,<sup>18</sup> then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

**22** So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and behold, it was hidden in his tent with the silver underneath. **23** And they took them out of

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<sup>16</sup> [Joshua 7:12](#) That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

<sup>17</sup> [Joshua 7:19](#) Or *and make confession*

<sup>18</sup> [Joshua 7:21](#) A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the people of Israel. And they laid them down before the LORD. **24** And Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the cloak and the bar of gold, and his sons and daughters and his oxen and donkeys and sheep and his tent and all that he had. And they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. **25** And Joshua said, “Why did you bring trouble on us? The LORD brings trouble on you today.” And all Israel stoned him with stones. They burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. **26** And they raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day. Then the LORD turned from his burning anger. Therefore, to this day the name of that place is called the Valley of Achor.<sup>19</sup>

## The Fall of Ai

**Joshua 8** And the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not fear and do not be dismayed. Take all the fighting men with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his land. **2** And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its livestock you shall take as plunder for yourselves. Lay an ambush against the city, behind it.”

**3** So Joshua and all the fighting men arose to go up to Ai. And Joshua chose 30,000 mighty men of valor and sent them out by night. **4** And he commanded them, “Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind it. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you remain ready. **5** And I and all the people who are with me will approach the city. And when they come out against us just as before, we shall flee before them. **6** And they will come out after us, until we have drawn them away from the city. For they will say, ‘They are fleeing from us, just as before.’ So we will flee before them. **7** Then you shall rise up from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will give it into your hand. **8** And as soon as you have taken the city, you shall set the city on fire. You shall do according to the word of the LORD. See, I have commanded you.” **9** So Joshua sent them out. And they went to the place of ambush and lay between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai, but Joshua spent that night among the people.

**10** Joshua arose early in the morning and mustered the people and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. **11** And all the fighting men who were with him went up and drew near before the city and encamped on the north side of Ai, with a ravine between them and Ai. **12** He took about 5,000 men and set them in ambush between Bethel and

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<sup>19</sup> Joshua 7:26 *Achor* means *trouble*

Ai, to the west of the city. **13** So they stationed the forces, the main encampment that was north of the city and its rear guard west of the city. But Joshua spent that night in the valley. **14** And as soon as the king of Ai saw this, he and all his people, the men of the city, hurried and went out early to the appointed place<sup>20</sup> toward the Arabah to meet Israel in battle. But he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city. **15** And Joshua and all Israel pretended to be beaten before them and fled in the direction of the wilderness. **16** So all the people who were in the city were called together to pursue them, and as they pursued Joshua they were drawn away from the city. **17** Not a man was left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. They left the city open and pursued Israel.

**18** Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.” And Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city. **19** And the men in the ambush rose quickly out of their place, and as soon as he had stretched out his hand, they ran and entered the city and captured it. And they hurried to set the city on fire. **20** So when the men of Ai looked back, behold, the smoke of the city went up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that, for the people who fled to the wilderness turned back against the pursuers. **21** And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had captured the city, and that the smoke of the city went up, then they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. **22** And the others came out from the city against them, so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side. And Israel struck them down, until there was left none that survived or escaped. **23** But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him near to Joshua.

**24** When Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the open wilderness where they pursued them, and all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai and struck it down with the edge of the sword. **25** And all who fell that day, both men and women, were 12,000, all the people of Ai. **26** But Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had devoted all the inhabitants of Ai to destruction.<sup>21</sup> **27** Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as their plunder, according to the word of the LORD that he commanded Joshua. **28** So Joshua burned Ai and made it forever a heap of ruins, as it is to this day. **29** And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. And at sunset Joshua commanded, and they took his body down

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<sup>20</sup> [Joshua 8:14](#) Hebrew *appointed time*

<sup>21</sup> [Joshua 8:26](#) That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the gate of the city and raised over it a great heap of stones, which stands there to this day.

## Joshua Renews the Covenant

**30** At that time Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, **31** just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the people of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, “an altar of uncut stones, upon which no man has wielded an iron tool.” And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD and sacrificed peace offerings.

**32** And there, in the presence of the people of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. **33** And all Israel, sojourner as well as native born, with their elders and officers and their judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark before the Levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, to bless the people of Israel.

**34** And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. **35** There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners who lived<sup>22</sup> among them.

## The Gibeonite Deception

**Joshua 9** As soon as all the kings who were beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland all along the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, heard of this, **2** they gathered together as one to fight against Joshua and Israel.

**3** But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, **4** they on their part acted with cunning and went and made ready provisions and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, **5** with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes. And all their provisions were dry and crumbly. **6** And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a distant country, so now make a covenant with us.” **7** But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a covenant with you?”

**8** They said to Joshua, “We are your servants.” And Joshua said to them,

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<sup>22</sup> Joshua 8:35 Or *traveled*

“Who are you? And where do you come from?” **9** They said to him, “From a very distant country your servants have come, because of the name of the LORD your God. For we have heard a report of him, and all that he did in Egypt, **10** and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth. **11** So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, ‘Take provisions in your hand for the journey and go to meet them and say to them, ‘We are your servants. Come now, make a covenant with us.’” **12** Here is our bread. It was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey on the day we set out to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and crumbly. **13** These wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they have burst. And these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey.” **14** So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the LORD. **15** And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore to them.

**16** At the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors and that they lived among them.

**17** And the people of Israel set out and reached their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim.

**18** But the people of Israel did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. Then all the congregation murmured against the leaders. **19** But all the leaders said to all the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel, and now we may not touch them. **20** This we will do to them: let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath that we swore to them.” **21** And the leaders said to them, “Let them live.” So they became cutters of wood and drawers of water for all the congregation, just as the leaders had said of them.

**22** Joshua summoned them, and he said to them, “Why did you deceive us, saying, ‘We are very far from you,’ when you dwell among us? **23** Now therefore you are cursed, and some of you shall never be anything but servants, cutters of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.”

**24** They answered Joshua, “Because it was told to your servants for a certainty that the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you—so we feared greatly for our lives because of you and did this thing.

**25** And now, behold, we are in your hand. Whatever seems good and right in your sight to do to us, do it.” **26** So he did this to them and delivered them out of the hand of the people of Israel, and they did not kill them.

**27** But Joshua made them that day cutters of wood and drawers of water

for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, to this day, in the place that he should choose.

## The Sun Stands Still

**Joshua 10** As soon as Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had captured Ai and had devoted it to destruction,<sup>23</sup> doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, **2** he<sup>24</sup> feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were warriors. **3** So Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon, saying, **4** “Come up to me and help me, and let us strike Gibeon. For it has made peace with Joshua and with the people of Israel.” **5** Then the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered their forces and went up with all their armies and encamped against Gibeon and made war against it.

**6** And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, “Do not relax your hand from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country are gathered against us.” **7** So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. **8** And the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you.” **9** So Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched up all night from Gilgal. **10** And the LORD threw them into a panic before Israel, who<sup>25</sup> struck them with a great blow at Gibeon and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah. **11** And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth-horon, the LORD threw down large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

**12** At that time Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

“Sun, stand still at Gibeon,

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23 Joshua 10:1 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verses 28, 35, 37, 39, 40

24 Joshua 10:2 One Hebrew manuscript, Vulgate (compare Syriac); most Hebrew manuscripts *they*

25 Joshua 10:10 Or *and he*

and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.”

**13** And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped,  
until the nation took vengeance on their enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. **14** There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded the voice of a man, for the LORD fought for Israel.

**15** So Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

## Five Amorite Kings Executed

**16** These five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah.

**17** And it was told to Joshua, “The five kings have been found, hidden in the cave at Makkedah.” **18** And Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave and set men by it to guard them, **19** but do not stay there yourselves. Pursue your enemies; attack their rear guard. Do not let them enter their cities, for the LORD your God has given them into your hand.”

**20** When Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished striking them with a great blow until they were wiped out, and when the remnant that remained of them had entered into the fortified cities, **21** then all the people returned safe to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah. Not a man moved his tongue against any of the people of Israel.

**22** Then Joshua said, “Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me from the cave.” **23** And they did so, and brought those five kings out to him from the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. **24** And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, “Come near; put your feet on the necks of these kings.” Then they came near and put their feet on their necks. **25** And Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous. For thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.” **26** And afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees. And they hung on the trees until evening. **27** But at the time of the going down of the sun, Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and they set large stones against the mouth of the cave, which remain to this very day.

**28** As for Makkedah, Joshua captured it on that day and struck it, and its king, with the edge of the sword. He devoted to destruction every person in

it; he left none remaining. And he did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

## Conquest of Southern Canaan

**29** Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against Libnah. **30** And the LORD gave it also and its king into the hand of Israel. And he struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it; he left none remaining in it. And he did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

**31** Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish and laid siege to it and fought against it. **32** And the LORD gave Lachish into the hand of Israel, and he captured it on the second day and struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it, as he had done to Libnah.

**33** Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish. And Joshua struck him and his people, until he left none remaining.

**34** Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon. And they laid siege to it and fought against it. **35** And they captured it on that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword. And he devoted every person in it to destruction that day, as he had done to Lachish.

**36** Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron. And they fought against it **37** and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword, and its king and its towns, and every person in it. He left none remaining, as he had done to Eglon, and devoted it to destruction and every person in it.

**38** Then Joshua and all Israel with him turned back to Debir and fought against it **39** and he captured it with its king and all its towns. And they struck them with the edge of the sword and devoted to destruction every person in it; he left none remaining. Just as he had done to Hebron and to Libnah and its king, so he did to Debir and to its king.

**40** So Joshua struck the whole land, the hill country and the Negeb and the lowland and the slopes, and all their kings. He left none remaining, but devoted to destruction all that breathed, just as the LORD God of Israel commanded. **41** And Joshua struck them from Kadesh-barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, as far as Gibeon. **42** And Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. **43** Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

## Conquests in Northern Canaan

**Joshua 11** When Jabin, king of Hazor, heard of this, he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, **2** and to the kings who were in the northern hill country, and in the Arabah south of Chinneroth, and in the lowland, and in Naphoth-dor on the west, **3** to the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites under Hermon in the land of Mizpah. **4** And they came out with all their troops, a great horde, in number like the sand that is on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots. **5** And all these kings joined their forces and came and encamped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

**6** And the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this time I will give over all of them, slain, to Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.” **7** So Joshua and all his warriors came suddenly against them by the waters of Merom and fell upon them. **8** And the LORD gave them into the hand of Israel, who struck them and chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-maim, and eastward as far as the Valley of Mizpeh. And they struck them until he left none remaining. **9** And Joshua did to them just as the LORD said to him: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

**10** And Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor and struck its king with the sword, for Hazor formerly was the head of all those kingdoms. **11** And they struck with the sword all who were in it, devoting them to destruction;<sup>26</sup> there was none left that breathed. And he burned Hazor with fire. **12** And all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua captured, and struck them with the edge of the sword, devoting them to destruction, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. **13** But none of the cities that stood on mounds did Israel burn, except Hazor alone; that Joshua burned. **14** And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock, the people of Israel took for their plunder. But every person they struck with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they did not leave any who breathed. **15** Just as the LORD had commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

**16** So Joshua took all that land, the hill country and all the Negeb and all the land of Goshen and the lowland and the Arabah and the hill country of

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<sup>26</sup> Joshua 11:11 That is, setting apart (devoting) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verses 12, 20, 21

Israel and its lowland **17** from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far as Baal-gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. And he captured all their kings and struck them and put them to death. **18** Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. **19** There was not a city that made peace with the people of Israel except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. They took them all in battle. **20** For it was the LORD's doing to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, in order that they should be devoted to destruction and should receive no mercy but be destroyed, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

**21** And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua devoted them to destruction with their cities. **22** There was none of the Anakim left in the land of the people of Israel. Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some remain. **23** So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses. And Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.

## **Kings Defeated by Moses**

**Joshua 12** Now these are the kings of the land whom the people of Israel defeated and took possession of their land beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon, with all the Arabah eastward: **2** Sihon king of the Amorites who lived at Heshbon and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and from the middle of the valley as far as the river Jabbok, the boundary of the Ammonites, that is, half of Gilead, **3** and the Arabah to the Sea of Chinneroth eastward, and in the direction of Beth-jeshimoth, to the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, southward to the foot of the slopes of Pisgah; **4** and Og<sup>27</sup> king of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei **5** and ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecah and all Bashan to the boundary of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and over half of Gilead to the boundary of Sihon king of Heshbon. **6** Moses, the servant of the LORD, and the people of Israel defeated them. And Moses the servant of the LORD gave their land for a possession to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

## **Kings Defeated by Joshua**

**7** And these are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the people of Israel defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the Valley of

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<sup>27</sup> Joshua 12:4 Septuagint; Hebrew *the boundary of Og*

Lebanon to Mount Halak, that rises toward Seir (and Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their allotments, **8** in the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negeb, the land of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites): **9** the king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; **10** the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; **11** the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; **12** the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; **13** the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; **14** the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; **15** the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; **16** the king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; **17** the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hepher, one; **18** the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; **19** the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; **20** the king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; **21** the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; **22** the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; **23** the king of Dor in Naphath-dor, one; the king of Goim in Galilee,<sup>28</sup> one; **24** the king of Tirzah, one: in all, thirty-one kings.

## Land Still to Be Conquered

**Joshua 13** Now Joshua was old and advanced in years, and the LORD said to him, “You are old and advanced in years, and there remains yet very much land to possess. **2** This is the land that yet remains: all the regions of the Philistines, and all those of the Geshurites **3** (from the Shihor, which is east of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Ekron, it is counted as Canaanite; there are five rulers of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron), and those of the Avvim, **4** in the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, to Aphek, to the boundary of the Amorites, **5** and the land of the Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon to Lebohamath, **6** all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, even all the Sidonians. I myself will drive them out from before the people of Israel. Only allot the land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you. **7** Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.”

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<sup>28</sup> Joshua 12:23 Septuagint; Hebrew *Gilgal*

## The Inheritance East of the Jordan

**8** With the other half of the tribe of Manasseh<sup>29</sup> the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them: **9** from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland of Medeba as far as Dibon; **10** and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the boundary of the Ammonites; **11** and Gilead, and the region of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan to Salecah; **12** all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he alone was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); these Moses had struck and driven out. **13** Yet the people of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites, but Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst of Israel to this day.

**14** To the tribe of Levi alone Moses gave no inheritance. The offerings by fire to the LORD God of Israel are their inheritance, as he said to him.

**15** And Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of the people of Reuben according to their clans. **16** So their territory was from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland by Medeba; **17** with Heshbon, and all its cities that are in the tableland; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon, **18** and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, **19** and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zereth-shahar on the hill of the valley, **20** and Beth-peor, and the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, **21** that is, all the cities of the tableland, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses defeated with the leaders of Midian, Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who lived in the land. **22** Balaam also, the son of Beor, the one who practiced divination, was killed with the sword by the people of Israel among the rest of their slain. **23** And the border of the people of Reuben was the Jordan as a boundary. This was the inheritance of the people of Reuben, according to their clans with their cities and villages.

**24** Moses gave an inheritance also to the tribe of Gad, to the people of Gad, according to their clans. **25** Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer, which is east of Rabbah, **26** and from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from

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<sup>29</sup> [Joshua 13:8](#) Hebrew *With it*

Mahanaim to the territory of Debir,<sup>30</sup> **27** and in the valley Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, having the Jordan as a boundary, to the lower end of the Sea of Chinnereth, eastward beyond the Jordan. **28** This is the inheritance of the people of Gad according to their clans, with their cities and villages.

**29** And Moses gave an inheritance to the half-tribe of Manasseh. It was allotted to the half-tribe of the people of Manasseh according to their clans.

**30** Their region extended from Mahanaim, through all Bashan, the whole kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty cities, **31** and half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. These were allotted to the people of Machir the son of Manasseh for the half of the people of Machir according to their clans.

**32** These are the inheritances that Moses distributed in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan east of Jericho. **33** But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel is their inheritance, just as he said to them.

## The Inheritance West of the Jordan

**Joshua 14** These are the inheritances that the people of Israel received in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel gave them to inherit. **2** Their inheritance was by lot, just as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses for the nine and one-half tribes. **3** For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan, but to the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. **4** For the people of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. And no portion was given to the Levites in the land, but only cities to dwell in, with their pasturelands for their livestock and their substance. **5** The people of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses; they allotted the land.

## Caleb's Request and Inheritance

**6** Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. **7** I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my

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30 Joshua 13:26 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *Lidebir*

heart. **8** But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the LORD my God. **9** And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.' **10** And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. **11** I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. **12** So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said."

**13** Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. **14** Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. **15** Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba.<sup>31</sup> (Arba<sup>32</sup> was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

## The Allotment for Judah

**Joshua 15** The allotment for the tribe of the people of Judah according to their clans reached southward to the boundary of Edom, to the wilderness of Zin at the farthest south. **2** And their south boundary ran from the end of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces southward. **3** It goes out southward of the ascent of Akrabbim, passes along to Zin, and goes up south of Kadesh-barnea, along by Hezron, up to Addar, turns about to Karka, **4** passes along to Azmon, goes out by the Brook of Egypt, and comes to its end at the sea. This shall be your south boundary. **5** And the east boundary is the Salt Sea, to the mouth of the Jordan. And the boundary on the north side runs from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. **6** And the boundary goes up to Beth-hoglah and passes along north of Beth-arabah. And the boundary goes up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. **7** And the boundary goes up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, and so northward, turning toward Gilgal, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley. And the boundary passes along to the waters of En-shemesh and ends at En-rogel. **8** Then the boundary goes up by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom at the southern shoulder of the Jebusite (that is, Jerusalem). And

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31 Joshua 14:15 *Kiriath-arba* means *the city of Arba*

32 Joshua 14:15 Hebrew *He*

the boundary goes up to the top of the mountain that lies over against the Valley of Hinnom, on the west, at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. **9** Then the boundary extends from the top of the mountain to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, and from there to the cities of Mount Ephron. Then the boundary bends around to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim). **10** And the boundary circles west of Baalah to Mount Seir, passes along to the northern shoulder of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon), and goes down to Bethshemesh and passes along by Timnah. **11** The boundary goes out to the shoulder of the hill north of Ekron, then the boundary bends around to Shikkeron and passes along to Mount Baalah and goes out to Jabneel. Then the boundary comes to an end at the sea. **12** And the west boundary was the Great Sea with its coastline. This is the boundary around the people of Judah according to their clans.

**13** According to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the people of Judah, Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). **14** And Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak, Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi, the descendants of Anak. **15** And he went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir. Now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher. **16** And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter as wife." **17** And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. **18** When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?" **19** She said to him, "Give me a blessing. Since you have given me the land of the Negeb, give me also springs of water." And he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

**20** This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Judah according to their clans. **21** The cities belonging to the tribe of the people of Judah in the extreme south, toward the boundary of Edom, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, **22** Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, **23** Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, **24** Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, **25** Hazor-hadattah, Keriath-hezron (that is, Hazor), **26** Amam, Shema, Moladah, **27** Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, **28** Hazar-shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, **29** Baalah, Iim, Ezem, **30** Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, **31** Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, **32** Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: in all, twenty-nine cities with their villages.

**33** And in the lowland, Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, **34** Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, **35** Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, **36** Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their villages.

**37** Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, **38** Dilean, Mizpeh, Joktheel, **39** Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, **40** Cabbon, Lahmam, Chitlish, **41** Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah: sixteen cities with their villages.

**42** Libnah, Ether, Ashan, **43** Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, **44** Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah: nine cities with their villages.

**45** Ekron, with its towns and its villages; **46** from Ekron to the sea, all that were by the side of Ashdod, with their villages.

**47** Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza, its towns and its villages; to the Brook of Egypt, and the Great Sea with its coastline.

**48** And in the hill country, Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, **49** Dannah, Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir), **50** Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, **51** Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven cities with their villages.

**52** Arab, Dumah, Eshan, **53** Janim, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, **54** Humtah, Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior: nine cities with their villages.

**55** Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, **56** Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, **57** Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villages.

**58** Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, **59** Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon: six cities with their villages.

**60** Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-yearim), and Rabbah: two cities with their villages.

**61** In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah, **62** Nibshan, the City of Salt, and Engedi: six cities with their villages.

**63** But the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people of Judah could not drive out, so the Jebusites dwell with the people of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

## **The Allotment for Ephraim and Manasseh**

**Joshua 16** The allotment of the people of Joseph went from the Jordan by Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from Jericho into the hill country to Bethel. **2** Then going from Bethel to Luz, it passes along to Ataroth, the territory of the Archites. **3** Then it goes down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer, and it ends at the sea.

**4** The people of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, received their inheritance.

**5** The territory of the people of Ephraim by their clans was as follows: the boundary of their inheritance on the east was Ataroth-addar as far as Upper Beth-horon, **6** and the boundary goes from there to the sea. On the north is Michmethath. Then on the east the boundary turns around toward Taanath-shiloh and passes along beyond it on the east to Janoah, **7** then it goes down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, and touches Jericho, ending at the Jordan. **8** From Tappuah the boundary goes westward to the brook Kanah and ends at the sea. Such is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Ephraim by their clans, **9** together with the towns that were set apart for the people of Ephraim within the inheritance of the Manassites, all those towns with their villages. **10** However, they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites have lived in the midst of Ephraim to this day but have been made to do forced labor.

**Joshua 17** Then allotment was made to the people of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, were allotted Gilead and Bashan, because he was a man of war.

**2** And allotments were made to the rest of the people of Manasseh by their clans, Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher, and Shemida. These were the male descendants of Manasseh the son of Joseph, by their clans.

**3** Now Zelophehad the son of Hephher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters, and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. **4** They approached Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the leaders and said, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance along with our brothers." So according to the mouth of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the brothers of their father. **5** Thus there fell to Manasseh ten portions, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which is on the other side of the Jordan, **6** because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead was allotted to the rest of the people of Manasseh.

**7** The territory of Manasseh reached from Asher to Michmethath, which is east of Shechem. Then the boundary goes along southward to the inhabitants of En-tappuah. **8** The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah on the boundary of Manasseh belonged to the people of Ephraim. **9** Then the boundary went down to the brook Kanah. These cities, to the south of the brook, among the cities of Manasseh, belong to Ephraim. Then the boundary of Manasseh goes on the north side of the brook and ends at the sea, **10** the land to the south being Ephraim's

and that to the north being Manasseh's, with the sea forming its boundary. On the north Asher is reached, and on the east Issachar. **11** Also in Issachar and in Asher Manasseh had Beth-shean and its villages, and Ibleam and its villages, and the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, and the inhabitants of En-dor and its villages, and the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; the third is Naphath.<sup>33</sup> **12** Yet the people of Manasseh could not take possession of those cities, but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. **13** Now when the people of Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

**14** Then the people of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, although I am a numerous people, since all along the LORD has blessed me?" **15** And Joshua said to them, "If you are a numerous people, go up by yourselves to the forest, and there clear ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you." **16** The people of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us. Yet all the Canaanites who dwell in the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel." **17** Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You are a numerous people and have great power. You shall not have one allotment only, **18** but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders. For you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong."

## Allotment of the Remaining Land

**Joshua 18** Then the whole congregation of the people of Israel assembled at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting there. The land lay subdued before them.

**2** There remained among the people of Israel seven tribes whose inheritance had not yet been apportioned. **3** So Joshua said to the people of Israel, "How long will you put off going in to take possession of the land, which the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you? **4** Provide three men from each tribe, and I will send them out that they may set out and go up and down the land. They shall write a description of it with a view to their inheritances, and then come to me. **5** They shall divide it into seven portions. Judah shall continue in his territory on the south, and the house of Joseph shall continue in their territory on the north. **6** And you shall describe the land in seven divisions and bring the description here to me.

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<sup>33</sup> [Joshua 17:11](#) The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

And I will cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. **7** The Levites have no portion among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their heritage. And Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan eastward, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.”

**8** So the men arose and went, and Joshua charged those who went to write the description of the land, saying, “Go up and down in the land and write a description and return to me. And I will cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh.” **9** So the men went and passed up and down in the land and wrote in a book a description of it by towns in seven divisions. Then they came to Joshua to the camp at Shiloh, **10** and Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD. And there Joshua apportioned the land to the people of Israel, to each his portion.

## The Inheritance for Benjamin

**11** The lot of the tribe of the people of Benjamin according to its clans came up, and the territory allotted to it fell between the people of Judah and the people of Joseph. **12** On the north side their boundary began at the Jordan. Then the boundary goes up to the shoulder north of Jericho, then up through the hill country westward, and it ends at the wilderness of Beth-aven. **13** From there the boundary passes along southward in the direction of Luz, to the shoulder of Luz (that is, Bethel), then the boundary goes down to Ataroth-addar, on the mountain that lies south of Lower Beth-horon. **14** Then the boundary goes in another direction, turning on the western side southward from the mountain that lies to the south, opposite Beth-horon, and it ends at Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a city belonging to the people of Judah. This forms the western side. **15** And the southern side begins at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim. And the boundary goes from there to Ephron,<sup>34</sup> to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. **16** Then the boundary goes down to the border of the mountain that overlooks the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which is at the north end of the Valley of Rephaim. And it then goes down the Valley of Hinnom, south of the shoulder of the Jebusites, and downward to En-rogel. **17** Then it bends in a northerly direction going on to En-shemesh, and from there goes to Geliloth, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim. Then it goes down to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, **18** and passing on to the north of the shoulder of Beth-arabah<sup>35</sup> it goes down to the Arabah. **19** Then the boundary passes on to the north of the shoulder of Beth-hoglah. And the boundary ends at the northern bay of the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan: this is the southern border.

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<sup>34</sup> [Joshua 18:15](#) See 15:9; Hebrew *westward*

<sup>35</sup> [Joshua 18:18](#) Septuagint; Hebrew *to the shoulder over against the Arabah*

**20** The Jordan forms its boundary on the eastern side. This is the inheritance of the people of Benjamin, according to their clans, boundary by boundary all around.

**21** Now the cities of the tribe of the people of Benjamin according to their clans were Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, **22** Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, **23** Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, **24** Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, Geba—twelve cities with their villages: **25** Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, **26** Mizpeh, Chephirah, Mozah, **27** Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, **28** Zela, Haeleph, Jebus<sup>36</sup> (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah<sup>37</sup> and Kiriath-jearim<sup>38</sup>—fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the people of Benjamin according to its clans.

## The Inheritance for Simeon

**Joshua 19** The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the people of Simeon, according to their clans, and their inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the people of Judah. **2** And they had for their inheritance Beersheba, Sheba, Moladah, **3** Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, **4** Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, **5** Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, **6** Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhem—thirteen cities with their villages; **7** Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four cities with their villages, **8** together with all the villages around these cities as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the Negeb. This was the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Simeon according to their clans. **9** The inheritance of the people of Simeon formed part of the territory of the people of Judah. Because the portion of the people of Judah was too large for them, the people of Simeon obtained an inheritance in the midst of their inheritance.

## The Inheritance for Zebulun

**10** The third lot came up for the people of Zebulun, according to their clans. And the territory of their inheritance reached as far as Sarid.

**11** Then their boundary goes up westward and on to Mareal and touches Dabbesheth, then the brook that is east of Jokneam. **12** From Sarid it goes in the other direction eastward toward the sunrise to the boundary of Chisloth-tabor. From there it goes to Daberath, then up to Japhia. **13** From there it passes along on the east toward the sunrise to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin, and going on to Rimmon it bends toward Neah, **14** then on the north

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36 Joshua 18:28 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *the Jebusite*

37 Joshua 18:28 Hebrew *Gibeath*

38 Joshua 18:28 Septuagint; Hebrew *Kiriath*

the boundary turns about to Hannathon, and it ends at the Valley of Iphtahel; **15** and Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve cities with their villages. **16** This is the inheritance of the people of Zebulun, according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

## The Inheritance for Issachar

**17** The fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the people of Issachar, according to their clans. **18** Their territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem, **19** Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, **20** Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, **21** Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, Beth-pazzez. **22** The boundary also touches Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, and its boundary ends at the Jordan—sixteen cities with their villages. **23** This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Issachar, according to their clans—the cities with their villages.

## The Inheritance for Asher

**24** The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the people of Asher according to their clans. **25** Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, **26** Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. On the west it touches Carmel and Shihor-libnath, **27** then it turns eastward, it goes to Beth-dagon, and touches Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtahel northward to Beth-emek and Neiel. Then it continues in the north to Cabul, **28** Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, as far as Sidon the Great. **29** Then the boundary turns to Ramah, reaching to the fortified city of Tyre. Then the boundary turns to Hosah, and it ends at the sea; Mahalab,<sup>39</sup> Achzib, **30** Ummah, Aphek and Rehob—twenty-two cities with their villages. **31** This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Asher according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

## The Inheritance for Naphtali

**32** The sixth lot came out for the people of Naphtali, for the people of Naphtali, according to their clans. **33** And their boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak in Zaananim, and Adami-nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum, and it ended at the Jordan. **34** Then the boundary turns westward to Aznoth-tabor and goes from there to Hukkok, touching Zebulun at the south and Asher on the west and Judah on the east at the Jordan. **35** The fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth,

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<sup>39</sup> Joshua 19:29 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew *Mehebel*

**36** Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, **37** Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, **38** Yiron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen cities with their villages. **39** This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Naphtali according to their clans—the cities with their villages.

## The Inheritance for Dan

**40** The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the people of Dan, according to their clans. **41** And the territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, **42** Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, **43** Elon, Timnah, Ekron, **44** Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, **45** Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, **46** and Me-jarkon and Rakkon with the territory over against Joppa. **47** When the territory of the people of Dan was lost to them, the people of Dan went up and fought against Leshem, and after capturing it and striking it with the sword they took possession of it and settled in it, calling Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor. **48** This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Dan, according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

## The Inheritance for Joshua

**49** When they had finished distributing the several territories of the land as inheritances, the people of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. **50** By command of the LORD they gave him the city that he asked, Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim. And he rebuilt the city and settled in it.

**51** These are the inheritances that Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel distributed by lot at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. So they finished dividing the land.

## The Cities of Refuge

**Joshua 20** Then the LORD said to Joshua, **2** "Say to the people of Israel, 'Appoint the cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, **3** that the manslayer who strikes any person without intent or unknowingly may flee there. They shall be for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. **4** He shall flee to one of these cities and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city and explain his case to the elders of that city. Then they shall take him into the city and give him a place, and he shall remain with them.

**5** And if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not give up the manslayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unknowingly, and

did not hate him in the past. **6** And he shall remain in that city until he has stood before the congregation for judgment, until the death of him who is high priest at the time. Then the manslayer may return to his own town and his own home, to the town from which he fled.”

**7** So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, and Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah. **8** And beyond the Jordan east of Jericho, they appointed Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland, from the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. **9** These were the cities designated for all the people of Israel and for the stranger sojourning among them, that anyone who killed a person without intent could flee there, so that he might not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, till he stood before the congregation.

## **Cities and Pasturelands Allotted to Levi**

**Joshua 21** Then the heads of the fathers’ houses of the Levites came to Eleazar the priest and to Joshua the son of Nun and to the heads of the fathers’ houses of the tribes of the people of Israel. **2** And they said to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, “The LORD commanded through Moses that we be given cities to dwell in, along with their pasturelands for our livestock.” **3** So by command of the LORD the people of Israel gave to the Levites the following cities and pasturelands out of their inheritance.

**4** The lot came out for the clans of the Kohathites. So those Levites who were descendants of Aaron the priest received by lot from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, thirteen cities.

**5** And the rest of the Kohathites received by lot from the clans of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan and the half-tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.

**6** The Gershonites received by lot from the clans of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

**7** The Merarites according to their clans received from the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

**8** These cities and their pasturelands the people of Israel gave by lot to the Levites, as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

**9** Out of the tribe of the people of Judah and the tribe of the people of Simeon they gave the following cities mentioned by name, **10** which went

to the descendants of Aaron, one of the clans of the Kohathites who belonged to the people of Levi; since the lot fell to them first. **11** They gave them Kiriath-arba (Arba being the father of Anak), that is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, along with the pasturelands around it. **12** But the fields of the city and its villages had been given to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

**13** And to the descendants of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron, the city of refuge for the manslayer, with its pasturelands, Libnah with its pasturelands, **14** Jattir with its pasturelands, Eshtemoa with its pasturelands, **15** Holon with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands, **16** Ain with its pasturelands, Juttah with its pasturelands, Beth-shemesh with its pasturelands—nine cities out of these two tribes; **17** then out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pasturelands, Geba with its pasturelands, **18** Anathoth with its pasturelands, and Almon with its pasturelands—four cities. **19** The cities of the descendants of Aaron, the priests, were in all thirteen cities with their pasturelands.

**20** As to the rest of the Kohathites belonging to the Kohathite clans of the Levites, the cities allotted to them were out of the tribe of Ephraim. **21** To them were given Shechem, the city of refuge for the manslayer, with its pasturelands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasturelands, **22** Kibzaim with its pasturelands, Beth-horon with its pasturelands—four cities; **23** and out of the tribe of Dan, Elteke with its pasturelands, Gibbethon with its pasturelands, **24** Aijalon with its pasturelands, Gath-rimmon with its pasturelands—four cities; **25** and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Taanach with its pasturelands, and Gath-rimmon with its pasturelands—two cities. **26** The cities of the clans of the rest of the Kohathites were ten in all with their pasturelands.

**27** And to the Gershonites, one of the clans of the Levites, were given out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands, the city of refuge for the manslayer, and Beeshterah with its pasturelands—two cities; **28** and out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands, **29** Jarmuth with its pasturelands, En-gannim with its pasturelands—four cities; **30** and out of the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands, **31** Helkath with its pasturelands, and Rehob with its pasturelands—four cities; **32** and out of the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands, the city of refuge for the manslayer, Hammoth-dor with its pasturelands, and Kartan with its pasturelands—three cities. **33** The cities of the several clans of the Gershonites were in all thirteen cities with their pasturelands.

**34** And to the rest of the Levites, the Merarite clans, were given out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its pasturelands, Kartah with its pasturelands, **35** Dimnah with its pasturelands, Nahalal with its pasturelands—four cities; **36** and out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its pasturelands, Jahaz with its pasturelands, **37** Kedemoth with its pasturelands, and Mephaath with its pasturelands—four cities; **38** and out of the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands, the city of refuge for the manslayer, Mahanaim with its pasturelands, **39** Heshbon with its pasturelands, Jazer with its pasturelands—four cities in all. **40** As for the cities of the several Merarite clans, that is, the remainder of the clans of the Levites, those allotted to them were in all twelve cities.

**41** The cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the people of Israel were in all forty-eight cities with their pasturelands. **42** These cities each had its pasturelands around it. So it was with all these cities.

**43** Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. **44** And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. **45** Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

## The Eastern Tribes Return Home

**Joshua 22** At that time Joshua summoned the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, **2** and said to them, “You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you and have obeyed my voice in all that I have commanded you. **3** You have not forsaken your brothers these many days, down to this day, but have been careful to keep the charge of the LORD your God. **4** And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brothers, as he promised them. Therefore turn and go to your tents in the land where your possession lies, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan. **5** Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.” **6** So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

**7** Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua had given a possession beside their brothers in the land west of the Jordan. And when Joshua sent

them away to their homes and blessed them, **8** he said to them, “Go back to your tents with much wealth and with very much livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, and iron, and with much clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers.” **9** So the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned home, parting from the people of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, their own land of which they had possessed themselves by command of the LORD through Moses.

## The Eastern Tribes’ Altar of Witness

**10** And when they came to the region of the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar of imposing size.

**11** And the people of Israel heard it said, “Behold, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built the altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region about the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the people of Israel.” **12** And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to make war against them.

**13** Then the people of Israel sent to the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, **14** and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, every one of them the head of a family among the clans of Israel. **15** And they came to the people of Reuben, the people of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they said to them, **16** “Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD, ‘What is this breach of faith that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning away this day from following the LORD by building yourselves an altar this day in rebellion against the LORD? **17** Have we not had enough of the sin at Peor from which even yet we have not cleansed ourselves, and for which there came a plague upon the congregation of the LORD, **18** that you too must turn away this day from following the LORD? And if you too rebel against the LORD today then tomorrow he will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel. **19** But now, if the land of your possession is unclean, pass over into the LORD’s land where the LORD’s tabernacle stands, and take for yourselves a possession among us. Only do not rebel against the LORD or make us as rebels by building for yourselves an altar other than the altar of the LORD our God. **20** Did not Achan the son of Zerah break faith in the matter of the devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? And he did not perish alone for his iniquity.’”

**21** Then the people of Reuben, the people of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh said in answer to the heads of the families of Israel, **22** “The Mighty One, God, the LORD! The Mighty One, God, the LORD! He knows; and let Israel itself know! If it was in rebellion or in breach of faith against the LORD, do not spare us today **23** for building an altar to turn away from following the LORD. Or if we did so to offer burnt offerings or grain offerings or peace offerings on it, may the LORD himself take vengeance. **24** No, but we did it from fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, ‘What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel? **25** For the LORD has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you, you people of Reuben and people of Gad. You have no portion in the LORD.’ So your children might make our children cease to worship the LORD. **26** Therefore we said, ‘Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, **27** but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we do perform the service of the LORD in his presence with our burnt offerings and sacrifices and peace offerings, so your children will not say to our children in time to come, “You have no portion in the LORD.”’ **28** And we thought, ‘If this should be said to us or to our descendants in time to come, we should say, “Behold, the copy of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifice, but to be a witness between us and you.”’ **29** Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD and turn away this day from following the LORD by building an altar for burnt offering, grain offering, or sacrifice, other than the altar of the LORD our God that stands before his tabernacle!”

**30** When Phinehas the priest and the chiefs of the congregation, the heads of the families of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh spoke, it was good in their eyes. **31** And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh, “Today we know that the LORD is in our midst, because you have not committed this breach of faith against the LORD. Now you have delivered the people of Israel from the hand of the LORD.”

**32** Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the chiefs, returned from the people of Reuben and the people of Gad in the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the people of Israel, and brought back word to them.

**33** And the report was good in the eyes of the people of Israel. And the people of Israel blessed God and spoke no more of making war against them to destroy the land where the people of Reuben and the people of Gad were settled. **34** The people of Reuben and the people of Gad called the altar Witness, “For,” they said, “it is a witness between us that the LORD is God.”

## Joshua's Charge to Israel's Leaders

**Joshua 23** A long time afterward, when the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their surrounding enemies, and Joshua was old and well advanced in years, **2** Joshua summoned all Israel, its elders and heads, its judges and officers, and said to them, "I am now old and well advanced in years. **3** And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake, for it is the LORD your God who has fought for you. **4** Behold, I have allotted to you as an inheritance for your tribes those nations that remain, along with all the nations that I have already cut off, from the Jordan to the Great Sea in the west. **5** The LORD your God will push them back before you and drive them out of your sight. And you shall possess their land, just as the LORD your God promised you. **6** Therefore, be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left, **7** that you may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them, **8** but you shall cling to the LORD your God just as you have done to this day. **9** For the LORD has driven out before you great and strong nations. And as for you, no man has been able to stand before you to this day. **10** One man of you puts to flight a thousand, since it is the LORD your God who fights for you, just as he promised you. **11** Be very careful, therefore, to love the LORD your God. **12** For if you turn back and cling to the remnant of these nations remaining among you and make marriages with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, **13** know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations before you, but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good ground that the LORD your God has given you.

**14** "And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good things<sup>40</sup> that the LORD your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed. **15** But just as all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the evil things, until he has destroyed you from off this good land that the LORD your God has given you, **16** if you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them. Then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and you shall perish quickly from off the good land that he has given to you."

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<sup>40</sup> Joshua 23:14 Or *words*; also twice in verse 15

## The Covenant Renewal at Shechem

**Joshua 24** Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God. **2** And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates,<sup>41</sup> Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. **3** Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River<sup>42</sup> and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac. **4** And to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. **5** And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it, and afterward I brought you out.

**6** “Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. **7** And when they cried to the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness a long time. **8** Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. **9** Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you, **10** but I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I delivered you out of his hand. **11** And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And I gave them into your hand. **12** And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow. **13** I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.’

## Choose Whom You Will Serve

**14** “Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. **15** And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your

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41 [Joshua 24:2](#) Hebrew *the River*

42 [Joshua 24:3](#) That is, the Euphrates; also verses 14, 15

fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

**16** Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods, **17** for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. **18** And the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

**19** But Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. **20** If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.”

**21** And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the LORD.”

**22** Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” **23** He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel.” **24** And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.” **25** So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. **26** And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. **27** And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God.” **28** So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

## Joshua’s Death and Burial

**29** After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being 110 years old. **30** And they buried him in his own inheritance at Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash.

**31** Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel.

**32** As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought

from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money.<sup>43</sup> It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

**33** And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of Phinehas his son, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

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<sup>43</sup> Joshua 24:32 Hebrew *for a hundred qesitah*; a unit of money of uncertain value

## The Continuing Conquest of Canaan

**Judges 1** After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the LORD, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” **2** The LORD said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.” **3** And Judah said to Simeon his brother, “Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites. And I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you.” So Simeon went with him. **4** Then Judah went up and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek. **5** They found Adoni-bezek at Bezek and fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. **6** Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and his big toes. **7** And Adoni-bezek said, “Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table. As I have done, so God has repaid me.” And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

**8** And the men of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. **9** And afterward the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negeb, and in the lowland. **10** And Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (now the name of Hebron was formerly Kiriath-arba), and they defeated Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai.

**11** From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. The name of Debir was formerly Kiriath-sepher. **12** And Caleb said, “He who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter as wife.” **13** And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. **14** When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?” **15** She said to him, “Give me a blessing. Since you have given me the land of the Negeb, give me also springs of water.” And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

**16** And the descendants of the Kenite, Moses’ father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the Negeb near Arad, and they went and settled with the people. **17** And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and devoted it to destruction. So the

name of the city was called Hormah.<sup>44</sup> **18** Judah also captured Gaza with its territory, and Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory.

**19** And the LORD was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron. **20** And Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses had said. And he drove out from it the three sons of Anak. **21** But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites have lived with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

**22** The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the LORD was with them. **23** And the house of Joseph scouted out Bethel. (Now the name of the city was formerly Luz.) **24** And the spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "Please show us the way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you." **25** And he showed them the way into the city. And they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family go. **26** And the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city and called its name Luz. That is its name to this day.

## Failure to Complete the Conquest

**27** Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages, for the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. **28** When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not drive them out completely.

**29** And Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them.

**30** Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol, so the Canaanites lived among them, but became subject to forced labor.

**31** Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon or of Ahlab or of Achzib or of Helbah or of Aphik or of Rehob, **32** so the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out.

**33** Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, so they lived among the Canaanites, the

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<sup>44</sup> Judges 1:17 *Hormah* means *utter destruction*

inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became subject to forced labor for them.

**34** The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain. **35** The Amorites persisted in dwelling in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily on them, and they became subject to forced labor. **36** And the border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akkrabbim, from Sela and upward.

## Israel's Disobedience

**Judges 2** Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you, **2** and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done? **3** So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you." **4** As soon as the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. **5** And they called the name of that place Bochim.<sup>45</sup> And they sacrificed there to the LORD.

## The Death of Joshua

**6** When Joshua dismissed the people, the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land. **7** And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel. **8** And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110 years. **9** And they buried him within the boundaries of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash. **10** And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.

## Israel's Unfaithfulness

**11** And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. **12** And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after

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<sup>45</sup> Judges 2:5 *Bochim* means *weepers*

other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger. **13** They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. **14** So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. **15** Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them for harm, as the LORD had warned, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress.

## The LORD Raises Up Judges

**16** Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. **17** Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so. **18** Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them. **19** But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. **20** So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their fathers and have not obeyed my voice, **21** I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, **22** in order to test Israel by them, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the LORD as their fathers did, or not." **23** So the LORD left those nations, not driving them out quickly, and he did not give them into the hand of Joshua.

**Judges 3** Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to test Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan. **2** It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, to teach war to those who had not known it before. **3** These are the nations: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. **4** They were for the testing of Israel, to know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. **5** So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. **6** And their daughters they took to themselves

for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.

## Othniel

**7** And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.

**8** Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. **9** But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. **10** The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. **11** So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

## Ehud

**12** And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the LORD. **13** He gathered to himself the Ammonites and the Amalekites, and went and defeated Israel. And they took possession of the city of palms. **14** And the people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

**15** Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. The people of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab.

**16** And Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit<sup>46</sup> in length, and he bound it on his right thigh under his clothes. **17** And he presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. **18** And when Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who carried the tribute. **19** But he himself turned back at the idols near Gilgal and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." And he commanded, "Silence." And all his attendants went out from his presence.

**20** And Ehud came to him as he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." And he arose from his seat. **21** And Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly. **22** And the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not pull the sword out of

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<sup>46</sup> Judges 3:16 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

his belly; and the dung came out. **23** Then Ehud went out into the porch<sup>47</sup> and closed the doors of the roof chamber behind him and locked them.

**24** When he had gone, the servants came, and when they saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, “Surely he is relieving himself in the closet of the cool chamber.” **25** And they waited till they were embarrassed. But when he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber, they took the key and opened them, and there lay their lord dead on the floor.

**26** Ehud escaped while they delayed, and he passed beyond the idols and escaped to Seirah. **27** When he arrived, he sounded the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim. Then the people of Israel went down with him from the hill country, and he was their leader. **28** And he said to them, “Follow after me, for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand.” So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites and did not allow anyone to pass over. **29** And they killed at that time about 10,000 of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men; not a man escaped. **30** So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years.

## Shamgar

**31** After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed 600 of the Philistines with an oxgoad, and he also saved Israel.

## Deborah and Barak

**Judges 4** And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD after Ehud died. **2** And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. **3** Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, for he had 900 chariots of iron and he oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for twenty years.

**4** Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. **5** She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the people of Israel came up to her for judgment. **6** She sent and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-*naphtali* and said to him, “Has not the LORD, the God of Israel, commanded you, ‘Go, gather your men at Mount Tabor, taking 10,000 from

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<sup>47</sup> Judges 3:23 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

the people of Naphtali and the people of Zebulun. **7** And I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the river Kishon with his chariots and his troops, and I will give him into your hand?" **8** Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, I will go, but if you will not go with me, I will not go." **9** And she said, "I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. **10** And Barak called out Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh. And 10,000 men went up at his heels, and Deborah went up with him.

**11** Now Heber the Kenite had separated from the Kenites, the descendants of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak in Zaananim, which is near Kedesh.

**12** When Sisera was told that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, **13** Sisera called out all his chariots, 900 chariots of iron, and all the men who were with him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to the river Kishon. **14** And Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has given Sisera into your hand. Does not the LORD go out before you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him. **15** And the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army before Barak by the edge of the sword. And Sisera got down from his chariot and fled away on foot. **16** And Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth-hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was left.

**17** But Sisera fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. **18** And Jael came out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord; turn aside to me; do not be afraid." So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. **19** And he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. **20** And he said to her, "Stand at the opening of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say, 'No.'" **21** But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand. Then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died. **22** And behold, as Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So he went in to her tent, and there lay Sisera dead, with the tent peg in his temple.

**23** So on that day God subdued Jabin the king of Canaan before the people of Israel. **24** And the hand of the people of Israel pressed harder and harder against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

## The Song of Deborah and Barak

**Judges 5** Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day:

- 2** “That the leaders took the lead in Israel,  
that the people offered themselves willingly,  
bless the LORD!
- 3** “Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes;  
to the LORD I will sing;  
I will make melody to the LORD, the God of Israel.
- 4** “LORD, when you went out from Seir,  
when you marched from the region of Edom,  
the earth trembled  
and the heavens dropped,  
yes, the clouds dropped water.
- 5** The mountains quaked before the LORD,  
even Sinai before the LORD,<sup>48</sup> the God of Israel.
- 6** “In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath,  
in the days of Jael, the highways were abandoned,  
and travelers kept to the byways.
- 7** The villagers ceased in Israel;  
they ceased to be until I arose;  
I, Deborah, arose as a mother in Israel.
- 8** When new gods were chosen,  
then war was in the gates.  
Was shield or spear to be seen  
among forty thousand in Israel?
- 9** My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel  
who offered themselves willingly among the people.  
Bless the LORD.
- 10** “Tell of it, you who ride on white donkeys,  
you who sit on rich carpets<sup>49</sup>  
and you who walk by the way.

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48 Judges 5:5 Or *before the Lord, the One of Sinai, before the Lord*

49 Judges 5:10 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain; it may connote *saddle blankets*

- 11** To the sound of musicians<sup>50</sup> at the watering places,  
there they repeat the righteous triumphs of the LORD,  
the righteous triumphs of his villagers in Israel.
- “Then down to the gates marched the people of the LORD.
- 12** “Awake, awake, Deborah!  
Awake, awake, break out in a song!  
Arise, Barak, lead away your captives,  
O son of Abinoam.
- 13** Then down marched the remnant of the noble;  
the people of the LORD marched down for me against the mighty.
- 14** From Ephraim their root they marched down into the valley,<sup>51</sup>  
following you, Benjamin, with your kinsmen;  
from Machir marched down the commanders,  
and from Zebulun those who bear the lieutenant’s<sup>52</sup> staff;
- 15** the princes of Issachar came with Deborah,  
and Issachar faithful to Barak;  
into the valley they rushed at his heels.  
Among the clans of Reuben  
there were great searchings of heart.
- 16** Why did you sit still among the sheepfolds,  
to hear the whistling for the flocks?  
Among the clans of Reuben  
there were great searchings of heart.
- 17** Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan;  
and Dan, why did he stay with the ships?  
Asher sat still at the coast of the sea,  
staying by his landings.
- 18** Zebulun is a people who risked their lives to the death;  
Naphtali, too, on the heights of the field.
- 19** “The kings came, they fought;  
then fought the kings of Canaan,  
at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo;  
they got no spoils of silver.
- 20** From heaven the stars fought,  
from their courses they fought against Sisera.
- 21** The torrent Kishon swept them away,  
the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon.  
March on, my soul, with might!

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50 Judges 5:11 Or *archers*; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

51 Judges 5:14 Septuagint; Hebrew *in Amalek*

52 Judges 5:14 Hebrew *commander's*

- 22** “Then loud beat the horses’ hoofs  
with the galloping, galloping of his steeds.
- 23** “Curse Meroz, says the angel of the LORD,  
curse its inhabitants thoroughly,  
because they did not come to the help of the LORD,  
to the help of the LORD against the mighty.
- 24** “Most blessed of women be Jael,  
the wife of Heber the Kenite,  
of tent-dwelling women most blessed.
- 25** He asked for water and she gave him milk;  
she brought him curds in a noble’s bowl.
- 26** She sent her hand to the tent peg  
and her right hand to the workmen’s mallet;  
she struck Sisera;  
she crushed his head;  
she shattered and pierced his temple.
- 27** Between her feet  
he sank, he fell, he lay still;  
between her feet  
he sank, he fell;  
where he sank,  
there he fell—dead.
- 28** “Out of the window she peered,  
the mother of Sisera wailed through the lattice:  
‘Why is his chariot so long in coming?  
Why tarry the hoofbeats of his chariots?’
- 29** Her wisest princesses answer,  
indeed, she answers herself,
- 30** ‘Have they not found and divided the spoil?—  
A womb or two for every man;  
spoil of dyed materials for Sisera,  
spoil of dyed materials embroidered,  
two pieces of dyed work embroidered for the neck as spoil?’
- 31** “So may all your enemies perish, O LORD!  
But your friends be like the sun as he rises in his might.”

And the land had rest for forty years.

## Midian Oppresses Israel

**Judges 6** The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. **2** And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds. **3** For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. **4** They would encamp against them and devour the produce of the land, as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep or ox or donkey. **5** For they would come up with their livestock and their tents; they would come like locusts in number—both they and their camels could not be counted—so that they laid waste the land as they came in. **6** And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of Israel cried out for help to the LORD.

**7** When the people of Israel cried out to the LORD on account of the Midianites, **8** the LORD sent a prophet to the people of Israel. And he said to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of slavery. **9** And I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. **10** And I said to you, ‘I am the LORD your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.’ But you have not obeyed my voice.”

## The Call of Gideon

**11** Now the angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. **12** And the angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, “The LORD is with you, O mighty man of valor.” **13** And Gideon said to him, “Please, my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian.” **14** And the LORD<sup>53</sup> turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?” **15** And he said to him, “Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.” **16** And the LORD said to him, “But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.” **17** And he said to him, “If now I have

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53 Judges 6:14 Septuagint *the angel of the Lord*; also verse 16

found favor in your eyes, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me. **18** Please do not depart from here until I come to you and bring out my present and set it before you.” And he said, “I will stay till you return.”

**19** So Gideon went into his house and prepared a young goat and unleavened cakes from an ephah<sup>54</sup> of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and the broth he put in a pot, and brought them to him under the terebinth and presented them. **20** And the angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and put them on this rock, and pour the broth over them.” And he did so. **21** Then the angel of the LORD reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes. And fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes. And the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.

**22** Then Gideon perceived that he was the angel of the LORD. And Gideon said, “Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face.” **23** But the LORD said to him, “Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall not die.” **24** Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and called it, The LORD Is Peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites.

**25** That night the LORD said to him, “Take your father’s bull, and the second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it **26** and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of the stronghold here, with stones laid in due order. Then take the second bull and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah that you shall cut down.” **27** So Gideon took ten men of his servants and did as the LORD had told him. But because he was too afraid of his family and the men of the town to do it by day, he did it by night.

## **Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal**

**28** When the men of the town rose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was broken down, and the Asherah beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered on the altar that had been built. **29** And they said to one another, “Who has done this thing?” And after they had searched and inquired, they said, “Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing.” **30** Then the men of the town said to Joash, “Bring out your son, that he may die, for he has broken down the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah beside it.” **31** But Joash said to all who stood against him, “Will you contend for Baal? Or will you save him? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself, because his altar has

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<sup>54</sup> Judges 6:19 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters

been broken down.” **32** Therefore on that day Gideon<sup>55</sup> was called Jerubbaal, that is to say, “Let Baal contend against him,” because he broke down his altar.

**33** Now all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East came together, and they crossed the Jordan and encamped in the Valley of Jezreel. **34** But the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon, and he sounded the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called out to follow him. **35** And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, and they too were called out to follow him. And he sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet them.

## The Sign of the Fleece

**36** Then Gideon said to God, “If you will save Israel by my hand, as you have said, **37** behold, I am laying a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is dew on the fleece alone, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you have said.” **38** And it was so. When he rose early next morning and squeezed the fleece, he wrung enough dew from the fleece to fill a bowl with water. **39** Then Gideon said to God, “Let not your anger burn against me; let me speak just once more. Please let me test just once more with the fleece. Please let it be dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground let there be dew.” **40** And God did so that night; and it was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was dew.

## Gideon’s Three Hundred Men

**Judges 7** Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod. And the camp of Midian was north of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

**2** The LORD said to Gideon, “The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’ **3** Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, ‘Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home and hurry away from Mount Gilead.’” Then 22,000 of the people returned, and 10,000 remained.

**4** And the LORD said to Gideon, “The people are still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there, and anyone of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ shall go with you, and anyone of

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55 [Judges 6:32](#) Hebrew *he*

whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' shall not go." **5** So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "Every one who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set by himself. Likewise, every one who kneels down to drink." **6** And the number of those who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths, was 300 men, but all the rest of the people knelt down to drink water. **7** And the LORD said to Gideon, "With the 300 men who lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand, and let all the others go every man to his home." **8** So the people took provisions in their hands, and their trumpets. And he sent all the rest of Israel every man to his tent, but retained the 300 men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

**9** That same night the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand. **10** But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant. **11** And you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp." Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outposts of the armed men who were in the camp. **12** And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the East lay along the valley like locusts in abundance, and their camels were without number, as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance. **13** When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to his comrade. And he said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and behold, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat." **14** And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given into his hand Midian and all the camp."

**15** As soon as Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped. And he returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the LORD has given the host of Midian into your hand." **16** And he divided the 300 men into three companies and put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars, with torches inside the jars. **17** And he said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise. When I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. **18** When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then blow the trumpets also on every side of all the camp and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'"

## **Gideon Defeats Midian**

**19** So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch. And they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that

were in their hands. **20** Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars. They held in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow. And they cried out, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" **21** Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the army ran. They cried out and fled. **22** When they blew the 300 trumpets, the LORD set every man's sword against his comrade and against all the army. And the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah,<sup>56</sup> as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. **23** And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after Midian.

**24** Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites and capture the waters against them, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were called out, and they captured the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan. **25** And they captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. Then they pursued Midian, and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon across the Jordan.

## Gideon Defeats Zebah and Zalmunna

**Judges 8** Then the men of Ephraim said to him, "What is this that you have done to us, not to call us when you went to fight against Midian?" And they accused him fiercely. **2** And he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the grape harvest of Abiezer? **3** God has given into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. What have I been able to do in comparison with you?" Then their anger<sup>57</sup> against him subsided when he said this.

**4** And Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed over, he and the 300 men who were with him, exhausted yet pursuing. **5** So he said to the men of Succoth, "Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." **6** And the officials of Succoth said, "Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?" **7** So Gideon said, "Well then, when the LORD has given Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will flail your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers." **8** And from there he went up to Penuel, and spoke to them in the same way, and the men of Penuel answered him as the

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<sup>56</sup> Judges 7:22 Some Hebrew manuscripts *Zeredah*

<sup>57</sup> Judges 8:3 Hebrew *their spirit*

men of Succoth had answered. **9** And he said to the men of Penuel, “When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.”

**10** Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about 15,000 men, all who were left of all the army of the people of the East, for there had fallen 120,000 men who drew the sword. **11** And Gideon went up by the way of the tent dwellers east of Nobah and Jogbehah and attacked the army, for the army felt secure. **12** And Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and he pursued them and captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and he threw all the army into a panic.

**13** Then Gideon the son of Joash returned from the battle by the ascent of Heres. **14** And he captured a young man of Succoth and questioned him. And he wrote down for him the officials and elders of Succoth, seventy-seven men. **15** And he came to the men of Succoth and said, “Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me, saying, ‘Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your men who are exhausted?’” **16** And he took the elders of the city, and he took thorns of the wilderness and briers and with them taught the men of Succoth a lesson. **17** And he broke down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

**18** Then he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, “Where are the men whom you killed at Tabor?” They answered, “As you are, so were they. Every one of them resembled the son of a king.” **19** And he said, “They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As the LORD lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not kill you.” **20** So he said to Jether his firstborn, “Rise and kill them!” But the young man did not draw his sword, for he was afraid, because he was still a young man. **21** Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, “Rise yourself and fall upon us, for as the man is, so is his strength.” And Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and he took the crescent ornaments that were on the necks of their camels.

## Gideon’s Ephod

**22** Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian.”

**23** Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you.” **24** And Gideon said to them, “Let me make a request of you: every one of you give me the earrings from his spoil.” (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

**25** And they answered, “We will willingly give them.” And they spread a cloak, and every man threw in it the earrings of his spoil. **26** And the

weight of the golden earrings that he requested was 1,700 shekels<sup>58</sup> of gold, besides the crescent ornaments and the pendants and the purple garments worn by the kings of Midian, and besides the collars that were around the necks of their camels. **27** And Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his city, in Ophrah. And all Israel whored after it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family. **28** So Midian was subdued before the people of Israel, and they raised their heads no more. And the land had rest for forty years in the days of Gideon.

## The Death of Gideon

**29** Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and lived in his own house. **30** Now Gideon had seventy sons, his own offspring,<sup>59</sup> for he had many wives.

**31** And his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he called his name Abimelech. **32** And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, at Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

**33** As soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel turned again and whored after the Baals and made Baal-berith their god. **34** And the people of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side, **35** and they did not show steadfast love to the family of Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel.

## Abimelech's Conspiracy

**Judges 9** Now Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to his mother's relatives and said to them and to the whole clan of his mother's family, **2** "Say in the ears of all the leaders of Shechem, 'Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubbaal rule over you, or that one rule over you?' Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh."

**3** And his mother's relatives spoke all these words on his behalf in the ears of all the leaders of Shechem, and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our brother." **4** And they gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless fellows, who followed him. **5** And he went to his father's house at Ophrah and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, for he hid himself. **6** And all the leaders of Shechem came together, and all Beth-millo,

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<sup>58</sup> Judges 8:26 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

<sup>59</sup> Judges 8:30 Hebrew *who came from his own loins*

and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the pillar at Shechem.

**7** When it was told to Jotham, he went and stood on top of Mount Gerizim and cried aloud and said to them, “Listen to me, you leaders of Shechem, that God may listen to you. **8** The trees once went out to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, ‘Reign over us.’ **9** But the olive tree said to them, ‘Shall I leave my abundance, by which gods and men are honored, and go hold sway over the trees?’ **10** And the trees said to the fig tree, ‘You come and reign over us.’ **11** But the fig tree said to them, ‘Shall I leave my sweetness and my good fruit and go hold sway over the trees?’ **12** And the trees said to the vine, ‘You come and reign over us.’ **13** But the vine said to them, ‘Shall I leave my wine that cheers God and men and go hold sway over the trees?’ **14** Then all the trees said to the bramble, ‘You come and reign over us.’ **15** And the bramble said to the trees, ‘If in good faith you are anointing me king over you, then come and take refuge in my shade, but if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon.’

**16** “Now therefore, if you acted in good faith and integrity when you made Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house and have done to him as his deeds deserved—**17** for my father fought for you and risked his life and delivered you from the hand of Midian, **18** and you have risen up against my father’s house this day and have killed his sons, seventy men on one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his female servant, king over the leaders of Shechem, because he is your relative—**19** if you then have acted in good faith and integrity with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. **20** But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the leaders of Shechem and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the leaders of Shechem and from Beth-millo and devour Abimelech.” **21** And Jotham ran away and fled and went to Beer and lived there, because of Abimelech his brother.

## The Downfall of Abimelech

**22** Abimelech ruled over Israel three years. **23** And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem, and the leaders of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech, **24** that the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the men of Shechem, who strengthened his hands to kill his brothers. **25** And the leaders of Shechem

put men in ambush against him on the mountaintops, and they robbed all who passed by them along that way. And it was told to Abimelech.

**26** And Gaal the son of Ebed moved into Shechem with his relatives, and the leaders of Shechem put confidence in him. **27** And they went out into the field and gathered the grapes from their vineyards and trod them and held a festival; and they went into the house of their god and ate and drank and reviled Abimelech. **28** And Gaal the son of Ebed said, “Who is Abimelech, and who are we of Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem; but why should we serve him? **29** Would that this people were under my hand! Then I would remove Abimelech. I would say<sup>60</sup> to Abimelech, ‘Increase your army, and come out.’”

**30** When Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was kindled. **31** And he sent messengers to Abimelech secretly,<sup>61</sup> saying, “Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed and his relatives have come to Shechem, and they are stirring up<sup>62</sup> the city against you. **32** Now therefore, go by night, you and the people who are with you, and set an ambush in the field. **33** Then in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, rise early and rush upon the city. And when he and the people who are with him come out against you, you may do to them as your hand finds to do.”

**34** So Abimelech and all the men who were with him rose up by night and set an ambush against Shechem in four companies. **35** And Gaal the son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance of the gate of the city, and Abimelech and the people who were with him rose from the ambush. **36** And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, “Look, people are coming down from the mountaintops!” And Zebul said to him, “You mistake<sup>63</sup> the shadow of the mountains for men.” **37** Gaal spoke again and said, “Look, people are coming down from the center of the land, and one company is coming from the direction of the Diviners’ Oak.” **38** Then Zebul said to him, “Where is your mouth now, you who said, ‘Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?’ Are not these the people whom you despised? Go out now and fight with them.” **39** And Gaal went out at the head of the leaders of Shechem and fought with Abimelech. **40** And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him. And many fell wounded, up to the entrance of the gate. **41** And Abimelech lived at Arumah, and Zebul drove out Gaal and his relatives, so that they could not dwell at Shechem.

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60 Judges 9:29 Septuagint; Hebrew *and he said*

61 Judges 9:31 Or *at Tormah*

62 Judges 9:31 Hebrew *besieging*, or *closing up*

63 Judges 9:36 Hebrew *You see*

**42** On the following day, the people went out into the field, and Abimelech was told. **43** He took his people and divided them into three companies and set an ambush in the fields. And he looked and saw the people coming out of the city. So he rose against them and killed them. **44** Abimelech and the company that was with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city, while the two companies rushed upon all who were in the field and killed them. **45** And Abimelech fought against the city all that day. He captured the city and killed the people who were in it, and he razed the city and sowed it with salt.

**46** When all the leaders of the Tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered the stronghold of the house of El-berith. **47** Abimelech was told that all the leaders of the Tower of Shechem were gathered together. **48** And Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people who were with him. And Abimelech took an axe in his hand and cut down a bundle of brushwood and took it up and laid it on his shoulder. And he said to the men who were with him, "What you have seen me do, hurry and do as I have done." **49** So every one of the people cut down his bundle and following Abimelech put it against the stronghold, and they set the stronghold on fire over them, so that all the people of the Tower of Shechem also died, about 1,000 men and women.

**50** Then Abimelech went to Thebez and encamped against Thebez and captured it. **51** But there was a strong tower within the city, and all the men and women and all the leaders of the city fled to it and shut themselves in, and they went up to the roof of the tower. **52** And Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower to burn it with fire. **53** And a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull. **54** Then he called quickly to the young man his armor-bearer and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest they say of me, 'A woman killed him.'" And his young man thrust him through, and he died. **55** And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, everyone departed to his home. **56** Thus God returned the evil of Abimelech, which he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers. **57** And God also made all the evil of the men of Shechem return on their heads, and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

## **Tola and Jair**

**Judges 10** After Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola the son of Puah, son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, and he lived at Shamir in the hill

country of Ephraim. **2** And he judged Israel twenty-three years. Then he died and was buried at Shamir.

**3** After him arose Jair the Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty-two years.

**4** And he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty cities, called Havvoth-jair to this day, which are in the land of Gilead. **5** And Jair died and was buried in Kamon.

## Further Disobedience and Oppression

**6** The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroath, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. And they forsook the LORD and did not serve him. **7** So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites, **8** and they crushed and oppressed the people of Israel that year. For eighteen years they oppressed all the people of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. **9** And the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah and against Benjamin and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.

**10** And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, “We have sinned against you, because we have forsaken our God and have served the Baals.”

**11** And the LORD said to the people of Israel, “Did I not save you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites, from the Ammonites and from the Philistines? **12** The Sidonians also, and the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you, and you cried out to me, and I saved you out of their hand.

**13** Yet you have forsaken me and served other gods; therefore I will save you no more. **14** Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress.” **15** And the people of Israel said to the LORD, “We have sinned; do to us whatever seems good to you. Only please deliver us this day.” **16** So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD, and he became impatient over the misery of Israel.

**17** Then the Ammonites were called to arms, and they encamped in Gilead. And the people of Israel came together, and they encamped at Mizpah.

**18** And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said one to another, “Who is the man who will begin to fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

## Jephthah Delivers Israel

**Judges 11** Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. **2** And Gilead's wife also bore him sons. And when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out and said to him, "You shall not have an inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman." **3** Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless fellows collected around Jephthah and went out with him.

**4** After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel. **5** And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob. **6** And they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our leader, that we may fight against the Ammonites." **7** But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?" **8** And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we have turned to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the Ammonites and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." **9** Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight against the Ammonites, and the LORD gives them over to me, I will be your head." **10** And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The LORD will be witness between us, if we do not do as you say." **11** So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and leader over them. And Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah.

**12** Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites and said, "What do you have against me, that you have come to me to fight against my land?" **13** And the king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel on coming up from Egypt took away my land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; now therefore restore it peaceably." **14** Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites **15** and said to him, "Thus says Jephthah: Israel did not take away the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites, **16** but when they came up from Egypt, Israel went through the wilderness to the Red Sea and came to Kadesh. **17** Israel then sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, 'Please let us pass through your land,' but the king of Edom would not listen. And they sent also to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel remained at Kadesh.

**18** "Then they journeyed through the wilderness and went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab and arrived on the east side of the land of Moab and camped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not enter the

territory of Moab, for the Arnon was the boundary of Moab. **19** Israel then sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon, and Israel said to him, 'Please let us pass through your land to our country,' **20** but Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory, so Sihon gathered all his people together and encamped at Jahaz and fought with Israel. **21** And the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them. So Israel took possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. **22** And they took possession of all the territory of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan. **23** So then the LORD, the God of Israel, dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel; and are you to take possession of them? **24** Will you not possess what Chemosh your god gives you to possess? And all that the LORD our God has dispossessed before us, we will possess. **25** Now are you any better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever contend against Israel, or did he ever go to war with them? **26** While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, 300 years, why did you not deliver them within that time? **27** I therefore have not sinned against you, and you do me wrong by making war on me. The LORD, the Judge, decide this day between the people of Israel and the people of Ammon." **28** But the king of the Ammonites did not listen to the words of Jephthah that he sent to him.

## Jephthah's Tragic Vow

**29** Then the Spirit of the LORD was upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh and passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites. **30** And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD and said, "If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, **31** then whatever<sup>64</sup> comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites shall be the LORD's, and I will offer it<sup>65</sup> up for a burnt offering." **32** So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them, and the LORD gave them into his hand. **33** And he struck them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as Abel-keramim, with a great blow. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.

**34** Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah. And behold, his daughter came out to meet him with tambourines and with dances. She was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. **35** And as soon as he

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64 Judges 11:31 Or *whoever*

65 Judges 11:31 Or *him*

saw her, he tore his clothes and said, “Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low, and you have become the cause of great trouble to me. For I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot take back my vow.”

**36** And she said to him, “My father, you have opened your mouth to the LORD; do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, now that the LORD has avenged you on your enemies, on the Ammonites.” **37** So she said to her father, “Let this thing be done for me: leave me alone two months, that I may go up and down on the mountains and weep for my virginity, I and my companions.” **38** So he said, “Go.” Then he sent her away for two months, and she departed, she and her companions, and wept for her virginity on the mountains. **39** And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to his vow that he had made. She had never known a man, and it became a custom in Israel **40** that the daughters of Israel went year by year to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in the year.

## Jephthah’s Conflict with Ephraim

**Judges 12** The men of Ephraim were called to arms, and they crossed to Zaphon and said to Jephthah, “Why did you cross over to fight against the Ammonites and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house over you with fire.” **2** And Jephthah said to them, “I and my people had a great dispute with the Ammonites, and when I called you, you did not save me from their hand. **3** And when I saw that you would not save me, I took my life in my hand and crossed over against the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?” **4** Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought with Ephraim. And the men of Gilead struck Ephraim, because they said, “You are fugitives of Ephraim, you Gileadites, in the midst of Ephraim and Manasseh.” **5** And the Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan against the Ephraimites. And when any of the fugitives of Ephraim said, “Let me go over,” the men of Gilead said to him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” When he said, “No,” **6** they said to him, “Then say Shibboleth,” and he said, “Sibboleth,” for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and slaughtered him at the fords of the Jordan. At that time 42,000 of the Ephraimites fell.

**7** Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in his city in Gilead.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Judges 12:7 Septuagint; Hebrew *in the cities of Gilead*

## **Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon**

**8** After him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. **9** He had thirty sons, and thirty daughters he gave in marriage outside his clan, and thirty daughters he brought in from outside for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years.

**10** Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

**11** After him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel, and he judged Israel ten years. **12** Then Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

**13** After him Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. **14** He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys, and he judged Israel eight years. **15** Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

## **The Birth of Samson**

**Judges 13** And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

**2** There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children. **3** And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son.

**4** Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, **5** for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines." **6** Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. I did not ask him where he was from, and he did not tell me his name, **7** but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"

**8** Then Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, "O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born." **9** And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her. **10** So the woman ran quickly and

told her husband, “Behold, the man who came to me the other day has appeared to me.” **11** And Manoah arose and went after his wife and came to the man and said to him, “Are you the man who spoke to this woman?” And he said, “I am.” **12** And Manoah said, “Now when your words come true, what is to be the child’s manner of life, and what is his mission?” **13** And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. **14** She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her let her observe.”

**15** Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “Please let us detain you and prepare a young goat for you.” **16** And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “If you detain me, I will not eat of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD.” (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.) **17** And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?” **18** And the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?” **19** So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to the one who works<sup>67</sup> wonders, and Manoah and his wife were watching. **20** And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar. Now Manoah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their faces to the ground.

**21** The angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. **22** And Manoah said to his wife, “We shall surely die, for we have seen God.” **23** But his wife said to him, “If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these.” **24** And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him. **25** And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

## Samson’s Marriage

**Judges 14** Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw one of the daughters of the Philistines. **2** Then he came up and told his father and mother, “I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah. Now get her for me as my wife.” **3** But his father and mother said to him, “Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our

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<sup>67</sup> Judges 13:19 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *Lord, and working*

people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she is right in my eyes."

**4** His father and mother did not know that it was from the LORD, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines ruled over Israel.

**5** Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring. **6** Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. **7** Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she was right in Samson's eyes.

**8** After some days he returned to take her. And he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and behold, there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey. **9** He scraped it out into his hands and went on, eating as he went. And he came to his father and mother and gave some to them, and they ate. But he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey from the carcass of the lion.

**10** His father went down to the woman, and Samson prepared a feast there, for so the young men used to do. **11** As soon as the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him. **12** And Samson said to them, "Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can tell me what it is, within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes, **13** but if you cannot tell me what it is, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes." And they said to him, "Put your riddle, that we may hear it."

**14** And he said to them,

"Out of the eater came something to eat.  
Out of the strong came something sweet."

And in three days they could not solve the riddle.

**15** On the fourth<sup>68</sup> day they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband to tell us what the riddle is, lest we burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?" **16** And Samson's wife wept over him and said, "You only hate me; you do not love me. You have put a riddle to my people, and you have not told me what it is." And he said to her, "Behold, I have not told my father nor my mother, and shall I tell you?"

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68 Judges 14:15 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *seventh*

**17** She wept before him the seven days that their feast lasted, and on the seventh day he told her, because she pressed him hard. Then she told the riddle to her people. **18** And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

“What is sweeter than honey?  
What is stronger than a lion?”

And he said to them,

“If you had not plowed with my heifer,  
you would not have found out my riddle.”

**19** And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of the town and took their spoil and gave the garments to those who had told the riddle. In hot anger he went back to his father’s house. **20** And Samson’s wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

## **Samson Defeats the Philistines**

**Judges 15** After some days, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife with a young goat. And he said, “I will go in to my wife in the chamber.” But her father would not allow him to go in. **2** And her father said, “I really thought that you utterly hated her, so I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister more beautiful than she? Please take her instead.” **3** And Samson said to them, “This time I shall be innocent in regard to the Philistines, when I do them harm.” **4** So Samson went and caught 300 foxes and took torches. And he turned them tail to tail and put a torch between each pair of tails. **5** And when he had set fire to the torches, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines and set fire to the stacked grain and the standing grain, as well as the olive orchards.

**6** Then the Philistines said, “Who has done this?” And they said, “Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion.” And the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire. **7** And Samson said to them, “If this is what you do, I swear I will be avenged on you, and after that I will quit.” **8** And he struck them hip and thigh with a great blow, and he went down and stayed in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

**9** Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah and made a raid on Lehi. **10** And the men of Judah said, “Why have you come up against us?” They said, “We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us.”

**11** Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and

said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?” And he said to them, “As they did to me, so have I done to them.” **12** And they said to him, “We have come down to bind you, that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.” And Samson said to them, “Swear to me that you will not attack me yourselves.” **13** They said to him, “No; we will only bind you and give you into their hands. We will surely not kill you.” So they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

**14** When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands.

**15** And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1,000 men. **16** And Samson said,

“With the jawbone of a donkey,  
heaps upon heaps,  
with the jawbone of a donkey  
have I struck down a thousand men.”

**17** As soon as he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone out of his hand. And that place was called Ramath-lehi.<sup>69</sup>

**18** And he was very thirsty, and he called upon the LORD and said, “You have granted this great salvation by the hand of your servant, and shall I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?” **19** And God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and water came out from it. And when he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore the name of it was called En-hakkore;<sup>70</sup> it is at Lehi to this day. **20** And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

## Samson and Delilah

**Judges 16** Samson went to Gaza, and there he saw a prostitute, and he went in to her. **2** The Gazites were told, “Samson has come here.” And they surrounded the place and set an ambush for him all night at the gate of the city. They kept quiet all night, saying, “Let us wait till the light of the morning; then we will kill him.” **3** But Samson lay till midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts, and pulled them up, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.

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<sup>69</sup> Judges 15:17 *Ramath-lehi* means *the hill of the jawbone*

<sup>70</sup> Judges 15:19 *En-hakkore* means *the spring of him who called*

**4** After this he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. **5** And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Seduce him, and see where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to humble him. And we will each give you 1,100 pieces of silver." **6** So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that one could subdue you."

**7** Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man."

**8** Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she bound him with them. **9** Now she had men lying in ambush in an inner chamber. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he snapped the bowstrings, as a thread of flax snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

**10** Then Delilah said to Samson, "Behold, you have mocked me and told me lies. Please tell me how you might be bound." **11** And he said to her, "If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak and be like any other man." **12** So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And the men lying in ambush were in an inner chamber. But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread.

**13** Then Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me how you might be bound." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and fasten it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak and be like any other man." **14** So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web.<sup>71</sup> And she made them tight with the pin and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.

**15** And she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and you have not told me where your great strength lies." **16** And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death.

**17** And he told her all his heart, and said to her, "A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man."

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71 Judges 16:14 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *and fasten it tight . . . into the web*

**18** When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up again, for he has told me all his heart.” Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. **19** She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. **20** And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And he awoke from his sleep and said, “I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the LORD had left him. **21** And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison. **22** But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

## The Death of Samson

**23** Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to rejoice, and they said, “Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand.” **24** And when the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said, “Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us.”<sup>72</sup> **25** And when their hearts were merry, they said, “Call Samson, that he may entertain us.” So they called Samson out of the prison, and he entertained them. They made him stand between the pillars. **26** And Samson said to the young man who held him by the hand, “Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them.” **27** Now the house was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.

**28** Then Samson called to the LORD and said, “O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes.” **29** And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. **30** And Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines.” Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life. **31** Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years.

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<sup>72</sup> Judges 16:24 Or who has multiplied our slain

## Micah and the Levite

**Judges 17** There was a man of the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Micah. **2** And he said to his mother, “The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and also spoke it in my ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it.” And his mother said, “Blessed be my son by the LORD.” **3** And he restored the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother. And his mother said, “I dedicate the silver to the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a carved image and a metal image. Now therefore I will restore it to you.” **4** So when he restored the money to his mother, his mother took 200 pieces of silver and gave it to the silversmith, who made it into a carved image and a metal image. And it was in the house of Micah. **5** And the man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and household gods, and ordained<sup>73</sup> one of his sons, who became his priest. **6** In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

**7** Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. **8** And the man departed from the town of Bethlehem in Judah to sojourn where he could find a place. And as he journeyed, he came to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah. **9** And Micah said to him, “Where do you come from?” And he said to him, “I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to sojourn where I may find a place.” **10** And Micah said to him, “Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year and a suit of clothes and your living.” And the Levite went in. **11** And the Levite was content to dwell with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons. **12** And Micah ordained the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. **13** Then Micah said, “Now I know that the LORD will prosper me, because I have a Levite as priest.”

## Danites Take the Levite and the Idol

**Judges 18** In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the people of Dan was seeking for itself an inheritance to dwell in, for until then no inheritance among the tribes of Israel had fallen to them. **2** So the people of Dan sent five able men from the whole number of their tribe, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to explore it. And they said to them, “Go and explore the land.” And they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there. **3** When they were by the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite.

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<sup>73</sup> Judges 17:5 Hebrew *filled the hand of*; also verse 12

And they turned aside and said to him, “Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?” **4** And he said to them, “This is how Micah dealt with me: he has hired me, and I have become his priest.” **5** And they said to him, “Inquire of God, please, that we may know whether the journey on which we are setting out will succeed.” **6** And the priest said to them, “Go in peace. The journey on which you go is under the eye of the LORD.”

**7** Then the five men departed and came to Laish and saw the people who were there, how they lived in security, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and unsuspecting, lacking<sup>74</sup> nothing that is in the earth and possessing wealth, and how they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with anyone. **8** And when they came to their brothers at Zorah and Eshtaol, their brothers said to them, “What do you report?” **9** They said, “Arise, and let us go up against them, for we have seen the land, and behold, it is very good. And will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go, to enter in and possess the land. **10** As soon as you go, you will come to an unsuspecting people. The land is spacious, for God has given it into your hands, a place where there is no lack of anything that is in the earth.”

**11** So 600 men of the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol, **12** and went up and encamped at Kiriath-jearim in Judah. On this account that place is called Mahaneh-dan<sup>75</sup> to this day; behold, it is west of Kiriath-jearim. **13** And they passed on from there to the hill country of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah.

**14** Then the five men who had gone to scout out the country of Laish said to their brothers, “Do you know that in these houses there are an ephod, household gods, a carved image, and a metal image? Now therefore consider what you will do.” **15** And they turned aside there and came to the house of the young Levite, at the home of Micah, and asked him about his welfare. **16** Now the 600 men of the Danites, armed with their weapons of war, stood by the entrance of the gate. **17** And the five men who had gone to scout out the land went up and entered and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the metal image, while the priest stood by the entrance of the gate with the 600 men armed with weapons of war.

**18** And when these went into Micah’s house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the metal image, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?” **19** And they said to him, “Keep quiet; put your hand on your mouth and come with us and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe

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<sup>74</sup> Judges 18:7 Compare 18:10; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

<sup>75</sup> Judges 18:12 *Mahaneh-dan* means *camp of Dan*

and clan in Israel?" **20** And the priest's heart was glad. He took the ephod and the household gods and the carved image and went along with the people.

**21** So they turned and departed, putting the little ones and the livestock and the goods in front of them. **22** When they had gone a distance from the home of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house were called out, and they overtook the people of Dan. **23** And they shouted to the people of Dan, who turned around and said to Micah, "What is the matter with you, that you come with such a company?" **24** And he said, "You take my gods that I made and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How then do you ask me, 'What is the matter with you?'" **25** And the people of Dan said to him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows fall upon you, and you lose your life with the lives of your household." **26** Then the people of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his home.

**27** But the people of Dan took what Micah had made, and the priest who belonged to him, and they came to Laish, to a people quiet and unsuspecting, and struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city with fire. **28** And there was no deliverer because it was far from Sidon, and they had no dealings with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth-rehob. Then they rebuilt the city and lived in it. **29** And they named the city Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor, who was born to Israel; but the name of the city was Laish at the first. **30** And the people of Dan set up the carved image for themselves, and Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses,<sup>76</sup> and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land. **31** So they set up Micah's carved image that he made, as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.

## A Levite and His Concubine

**Judges 19** In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite was sojourning in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, who took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. **2** And his concubine was unfaithful to<sup>77</sup> him, and she went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months. **3** Then her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back. He had with him his servant and a couple of donkeys. And she brought him into her father's house. And when the girl's father saw him,

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<sup>76</sup> Judges 18:30 Or *Manasseh*

<sup>77</sup> Judges 19:2 Septuagint, Old Latin *became angry with*

he came with joy to meet him. **4** And his father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and he remained with him three days. So they ate and drank and spent the night there. **5** And on the fourth day they arose early in the morning, and he prepared to go, but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Strengthen your heart with a morsel of bread, and after that you may go." **6** So the two of them sat and ate and drank together. And the girl's father said to the man, "Be pleased to spend the night, and let your heart be merry." **7** And when the man rose up to go, his father-in-law pressed him, till he spent the night there again. **8** And on the fifth day he arose early in the morning to depart. And the girl's father said, "Strengthen your heart and wait until the day declines." So they ate, both of them. **9** And when the man and his concubine and his servant rose up to depart, his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Behold, now the day has waned toward evening. Please, spend the night. Behold, the day draws to its close. Lodge here and let your heart be merry, and tomorrow you shall arise early in the morning for your journey, and go home."

**10** But the man would not spend the night. He rose up and departed and arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a couple of saddled donkeys, and his concubine was with him. **11** When they were near Jebus, the day was nearly over, and the servant said to his master, "Come now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it." **12** And his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into the city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel, but we will pass on to Gibeah." **13** And he said to his young man, "Come and let us draw near to one of these places and spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah." **14** So they passed on and went their way. And the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, **15** and they turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. And he went in and sat down in the open square of the city, for no one took them into his house to spend the night.

**16** And behold, an old man was coming from his work in the field at evening. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was sojourning in Gibeah. The men of the place were Benjaminites. **17** And he lifted up his eyes and saw the traveler in the open square of the city. And the old man said, "Where are you going? And where do you come from?" **18** And he said to him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to the house of the LORD,<sup>78</sup> but no one has taken me into his house. **19** We have straw and feed for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and your female servant and the young man

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<sup>78</sup> Judges 19:18 Septuagint *my home*; compare verse 29

with your servants. There is no lack of anything.” **20** And the old man said, “Peace be to you; I will care for all your wants. Only, do not spend the night in the square.” **21** So he brought him into his house and gave the donkeys feed. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

## **Gibeah’s Crime**

**22** As they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, worthless fellows, surrounded the house, beating on the door. And they said to the old man, the master of the house, “Bring out the man who came into your house, that we may know him.” **23** And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, “No, my brothers, do not act so wickedly; since this man has come into my house, do not do this vile thing. **24** Behold, here are my virgin daughter and his concubine. Let me bring them out now. Violate them and do with them what seems good to you, but against this man do not do this outrageous thing.” **25** But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and made her go out to them. And they knew her and abused her all night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go. **26** And as morning appeared, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her master was, until it was light.

**27** And her master rose up in the morning, and when he opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way, behold, there was his concubine lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold. **28** He said to her, “Get up, let us be going.” But there was no answer. Then he put her on the donkey, and the man rose up and went away to his home. **29** And when he entered his house, he took a knife, and taking hold of his concubine he divided her, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. **30** And all who saw it said, “Such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day; consider it, take counsel, and speak.”

## **Israel’s War with the Tribe of Benjamin**

**Judges 20** Then all the people of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled as one man to the LORD at Mizpah. **2** And the chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, 400,000 men on foot that drew the sword. **3** (Now the people of Benjamin heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the people of Israel said, “Tell us, how did this evil happen?” **4** And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, “I came to Gibeah that

belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. **5** And the leaders of Gibeah rose against me and surrounded the house against me by night. They meant to kill me, and they violated my concubine, and she is dead. **6** So I took hold of my concubine and cut her in pieces and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel, for they have committed abomination and outrage in Israel. **7** Behold, you people of Israel, all of you, give your advice and counsel here.”

**8** And all the people arose as one man, saying, “None of us will go to his tent, and none of us will return to his house. **9** But now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we will go up against it by lot, **10** and we will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to bring provisions for the people, that when they come they may repay Gibeah of Benjamin for all the outrage that they have committed in Israel.” **11** So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one man.

**12** And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, “What evil is this that has taken place among you? **13** Now therefore give up the men, the worthless fellows in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and purge evil from Israel.” But the Benjaminites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel. **14** Then the people of Benjamin came together out of the cities to Gibeah to go out to battle against the people of Israel. **15** And the people of Benjamin mustered out of their cities on that day 26,000 men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who mustered 700 chosen men. **16** Among all these were 700 chosen men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. **17** And the men of Israel, apart from Benjamin, mustered 400,000 men who drew the sword; all these were men of war.

**18** The people of Israel arose and went up to Bethel and inquired of God, “Who shall go up first for us to fight against the people of Benjamin?” And the LORD said, “Judah shall go up first.”

**19** Then the people of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. **20** And the men of Israel went out to fight against Benjamin, and the men of Israel drew up the battle line against them at Gibeah. **21** The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and destroyed on that day 22,000 men of the Israelites. **22** But the people, the men of Israel, took courage, and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day. **23** And the people of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until the evening. And they inquired of the LORD, “Shall we again draw

near to fight against our brothers, the people of Benjamin?" And the LORD said, "Go up against them."

**24** So the people of Israel came near against the people of Benjamin the second day. **25** And Benjamin went against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed 18,000 men of the people of Israel. All these were men who drew the sword. **26** Then all the people of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. **27** And the people of Israel inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, **28** and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, "Shall we go out once more to battle against our brothers, the people of Benjamin, or shall we cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand."

**29** So Israel set men in ambush around Gibeah. **30** And the people of Israel went up against the people of Benjamin on the third day and set themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times. **31** And the people of Benjamin went out against the people and were drawn away from the city. And as at other times they began to strike and kill some of the people in the highways, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, and in the open country, about thirty men of Israel. **32** And the people of Benjamin said, "They are routed before us, as at the first." But the people of Israel said, "Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways." **33** And all the men of Israel rose up out of their place and set themselves in array at Baal-tamar, and the men of Israel who were in ambush rushed out of their place from Maareh-geba.<sup>79</sup> **34** And there came against Gibeah 10,000 chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was hard, but the Benjaminites did not know that disaster was close upon them. **35** And the LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and the people of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin that day. All these were men who drew the sword. **36** So the people of Benjamin saw that they were defeated.

The men of Israel gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. **37** Then the men in ambush hurried and rushed against Gibeah; the men in ambush moved out and struck all the city with the edge of the sword. **38** Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in the main ambush was that when they made a great cloud of smoke rise up out of the city **39** the men of Israel should turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty men of Israel. They said, "Surely they are defeated before us, as

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<sup>79</sup> Judges 20:33 Some Septuagint manuscripts *place west of Geba*

in the first battle.” **40** But when the signal began to rise out of the city in a column of smoke, the Benjaminites looked behind them, and behold, the whole of the city went up in smoke to heaven. **41** Then the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were dismayed, for they saw that disaster was close upon them. **42** Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness, but the battle overtook them. And those who came out of the cities were destroying them in their midst. **43** Surrounding the Benjaminites, they pursued them and trod them down from Nohah<sup>80</sup> as far as opposite Gibeah on the east. **44** Eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell, all of them men of valor. **45** And they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon. Five thousand men of them were cut down in the highways. And they were pursued hard to Gidom, and 2,000 men of them were struck down. **46** So all who fell that day of Benjamin were 25,000 men who drew the sword, all of them men of valor. **47** But 600 men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon and remained at the rock of Rimmon four months. **48** And the men of Israel turned back against the people of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword, the city, men and beasts and all that they found. And all the towns that they found they set on fire.

## Wives Provided for the Tribe of Benjamin

**Judges 21** Now the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah, “No one of us shall give his daughter in marriage to Benjamin.” **2** And the people came to Bethel and sat there till evening before God, and they lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. **3** And they said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, why has this happened in Israel, that today there should be one tribe lacking in Israel?” **4** And the next day the people rose early and built there an altar and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. **5** And the people of Israel said, “Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to the LORD?” For they had taken a great oath concerning him who did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah, saying, “He shall surely be put to death.” **6** And the people of Israel had compassion for Benjamin their brother and said, “One tribe is cut off from Israel this day. **7** What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them any of our daughters for wives?”

**8** And they said, “What one is there of the tribes of Israel that did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah?” And behold, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh-gilead, to the assembly. **9** For when the people were mustered, behold, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there. **10** So the

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<sup>80</sup> Judges 20:43 Septuagint; Hebrew [at their] *resting place*

congregation sent 12,000 of their bravest men there and commanded them, "Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword; also the women and the little ones. **11** This is what you shall do: every male and every woman that has lain with a male you shall devote to destruction."

**12** And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead 400 young virgins who had not known a man by lying with him, and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

**13** Then the whole congregation sent word to the people of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon and proclaimed peace to them. **14** And Benjamin returned at that time. And they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead, but they were not enough for them. **15** And the people had compassion on Benjamin because the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

**16** Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?"

**17** And they said, "There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe not be blotted out from Israel. **18** Yet we cannot give them wives from our daughters." For the people of Israel had sworn, "Cursed be he who gives a wife to Benjamin." **19** So they said, "Behold, there is the yearly feast of the LORD at Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah." **20** And they commanded the people of Benjamin, saying, "Go and lie in ambush in the vineyards **21** and watch. If the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then come out of the vineyards and snatch each man his wife from the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. **22** And when their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, we will say to them, 'Grant them graciously to us, because we did not take for each man of them his wife in battle, neither did you give them to them, else you would now be guilty.'" **23** And the people of Benjamin did so and took their wives, according to their number, from the dancers whom they carried off. Then they went and returned to their inheritance and rebuilt the towns and lived in them. **24** And the people of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family, and they went out from there every man to his inheritance.

**25** In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

## Naomi Widowed

**Ruth 1** In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. **2** The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. **3** But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. **4** These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, **5** and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

## Ruth's Loyalty to Naomi

**6** Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. **7** So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. **8** But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. **9** The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. **10** And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." **11** But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? **12** Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, **13** would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me." **14** Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

**15** And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." **16** But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. **17** Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you." **18** And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

## Naomi and Ruth Return

**19** So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, “Is this Naomi?” **20** She said to them, “Do not call me Naomi;<sup>81</sup> call me Mara,<sup>82</sup> for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.

**21** I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?”

**22** So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

## Ruth Meets Boaz

**Ruth 2** Now Naomi had a relative of her husband’s, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. **2** And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor.” And she said to her, “Go, my daughter.”

**3** So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech. **4** And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem. And he said to the reapers, “The LORD be with you!” And they answered, “The LORD bless you.” **5** Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, “Whose young woman is this?” **6** And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, “She is the young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.” **7** She said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.’ So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest.”<sup>83</sup>

**8** Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. **9** Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn.” **10** Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, “Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”

**11** But Boaz answered her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left

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81 Ruth 1:20 Naomi means *pleasant*

82 Ruth 1:20 Mara means *bitter*

83 Ruth 2:7 Compare Septuagint, Vulgate; the meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain

your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. **12** The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!" **13** Then she said, "I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants."

**14** And at mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to her roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. **15** When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. **16** And also pull out some from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."

**17** So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah<sup>84</sup> of barley. **18** And she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied. **19** And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz." **20** And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers." **21** And Ruth the Moabite said, "Besides, he said to me, 'You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'" **22** And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, lest in another field you be assaulted." **23** So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

## Ruth and Boaz at the Threshing Floor

**Ruth 3** Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you? **2** Is not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. **3** Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. **4** But when he

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<sup>84</sup> Ruth 2:17 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters

lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do.” **5** And she replied, “All that you say I will do.”

**6** So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. **7** And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. **8** At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! **9** He said, “Who are you?” And she answered, “I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings<sup>85</sup> over your servant, for you are a redeemer.” **10** And he said, “May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. **11** And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. **12** And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. **13** Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the LORD lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning.”

**14** So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, “Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.” **15** And he said, “Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out.” So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. **16** And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, “How did you fare, my daughter?” Then she told her all that the man had done for her, **17** saying, “These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, ‘You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’” **18** She replied, “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today.”

## Boaz Redeems Ruth

**Ruth 4** Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, “Turn aside, friend; sit down here.” And he turned aside and sat down. **2** And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down. **3** Then he said to the redeemer, “Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. **4** So I thought I would tell you of it and say, ‘Buy it

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<sup>85</sup> Ruth 3:9 Compare 2:12; the word for *wings* can also mean *corners of a garment*

in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.’ If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you<sup>86</sup> will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you.” And he said, “I will redeem it.” **5** Then Boaz said, “The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth<sup>87</sup> the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance.” **6** Then the redeemer said, “I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.”

**7** Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. **8** So

when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself,” he drew off his sandal. **9** Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon.

**10** Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day.” **11** Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, “We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, **12** and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman.”

## Ruth and Boaz Marry

**13** So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. **14** Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! **15** He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.”

**16** Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. **17** And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

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86 Ruth 4:4 Hebrew *he*

87 Ruth 4:5 Masoretic Text *you also buy it from Ruth*

## The Genealogy of David

**18** Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron,  
**19** Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, **20** Amminadab  
fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, **21** Salmon fathered Boaz,  
Boaz fathered Obed, **22** Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

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