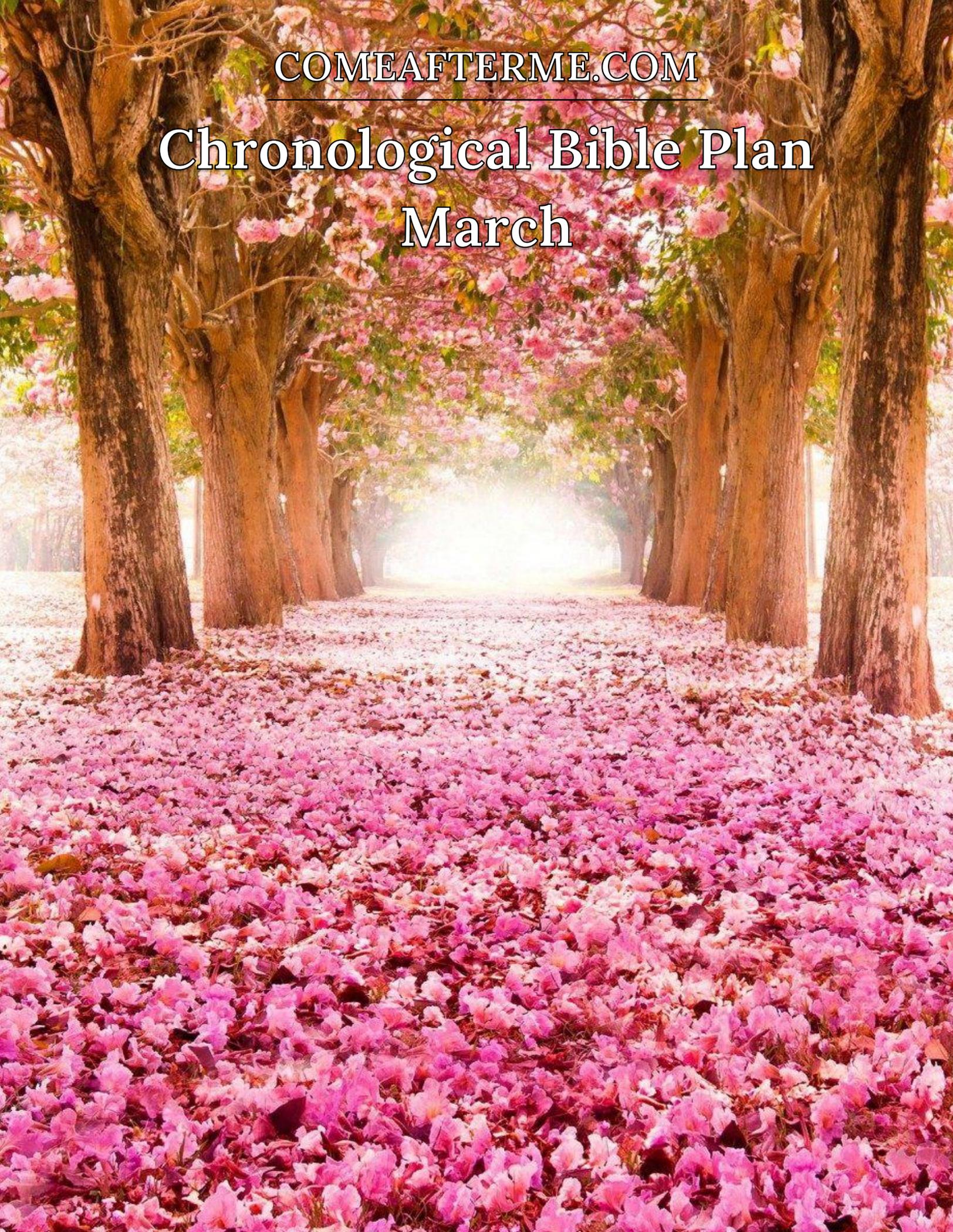


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# Chronological Bible Plan

## March



# MARCH



**“Every day I will bless you and praise  
your name forever and ever” (Ps 145:2)**

March 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 9	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 11	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 12	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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March 28	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 29	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 30	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
March 31	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer



### Cleansing the Camp (c. 2–19 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 5:1–4

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Command the Israelites to expel from the camp every leper, everyone who has a discharge, and whoever becomes defiled by a corpse.

3 You must expel both men and women; you must put them outside the camp, so that they will not defile their camps, among which I live.”

4 So the Israelites did so, and expelled them outside the camp. As the LORD had spoken to Moses, so the Israelites did.

### Case Law—Restitution When Defrauded Party Is Deceased (c. 2–19 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 5:5–10

5 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

6 “Tell the Israelites, ‘When a man or a woman commits any sin that people commit, thereby breaking faith with the LORD, and that person is found guilty,

7 then he must confess his sin that he has committed and must make full reparation, add one fifth to it, and give it to whomever he wronged.

8 But if the individual has no close relative to whom reparation can be made for the wrong, the reparation for the wrong must be paid to the LORD for the priest, in addition to the ram of atonement by which atonement is made for him.

9 Every offering of all the Israelites’ holy things that they bring to the priest will be his.

10 Every man’s holy things will be his; whatever any man gives the priest will be his.”

### Case Law—Suspicion of Unfaithfulness (c. 2–19 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 5:11–31

#### The Case Presented

11 The LORD spoke to Moses:

12 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘If any man’s wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him,

13 and a man has sexual relations with her without her husband knowing it, and it is hidden that she has defiled herself, since there was no witness against her, nor was she caught—

14 and if jealous feelings come over him and he becomes suspicious of his wife, when she is defiled; or if jealous feelings come over him and he becomes suspicious of his wife, when she is not defiled—

#### Preparation for the Ritual Ordeal

15 then the man must bring his wife to the priest, and he must bring the offering required for her, one tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he must not pour olive oil on it or put frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering of suspicion, a grain offering for remembering, for bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 “Then the priest will bring her near and have her stand before the LORD.

17 The priest will then take holy water in a pottery jar, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle, and put it into the water.

18 Then the priest will have the woman stand before the LORD, uncover the woman’s head, and put the grain offering for remembering in her hands, which is the grain offering of suspicion. The priest will hold in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse.

#### The Oath-Imprecation

19 Then the priest will put the woman under oath and say to the her, “If no other man has had sexual relations with you, and if you have not gone astray and become defiled while under your husband’s authority, may you be free from this bitter water that brings a curse.

20 But if you have gone astray while under your husband’s authority, and if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has had sexual relations with you....”

21 Then the priest will put the woman under the oath of the curse and will say to the her, “The LORD make you an attested curse among your people, if the LORD makes your thigh fall away and your abdomen swell;

22 and this water that causes the curse will go into your stomach, and make your abdomen swell and your thigh rot.” Then the woman must say, “Amen, amen.”

23 “Then the priest will write these curses on a scroll and then scrape them off into the bitter water.

24 He will make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and the water that brings a curse will enter her to produce bitterness.

**Execution of the Ritual Ordeal**

25 The priest will take the grain offering of suspicion from the woman's hand, wave the grain offering before the LORD, and bring it to the altar.

26 Then the priest will take a handful of the grain offering as its memorial portion, burn it on the altar, and afterward make the woman drink the water.

27 When he has made her drink the water, then, if she has defiled herself and behaved unfaithfully toward her husband, the water that brings a curse will enter her to produce bitterness—her abdomen will swell, her thigh will fall away, and the woman will become a curse among her people.

28 But if the woman has not defiled herself, and is clean, then she will be free of ill effects and will be able to bear children.

**The Case Summarized**

29 "This is the law for cases of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself, 30 or when jealous feelings come over a man and he becomes suspicious of his wife; then he must have the woman stand before the LORD, and the priest will carry out all this law upon her.

31 Then the man will be free from iniquity, but that woman will bear the consequences of her iniquity."

## The Nazirite Vow (c. 2–19 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 6:1–21

**Introduction**

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

2 "Speak to the Israelites, and tell them, 'When either a man or a woman takes a special vow, to take a vow as a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, [cf. [Judg 13:5](#); [1 Sam 1:11](#); [Amos 2:11–12](#); [Luke 1:15](#); [Acts 21:23–27](#)]

**Prohibitions for the Vow**

3 he must separate himself from wine and strong drink, he must drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from strong drink, nor may he drink any juice of grapes, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins.

4 All the days of his separation he must not eat anything that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.

5 "All the days of the vow of his separation no razor may be used on his head until the time is fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD. He will be holy, and he must let the locks of hair on his head grow long.

6 "All the days that he separates himself to the LORD he must not contact a dead body.

7 He must not defile himself even for his father or his mother or his brother or his sister if they die, because the separation for his God is on his head.

8 All the days of his separation he must be holy to the LORD.

**Purification from Corpse Defilement**

9 "If anyone dies very suddenly beside him and he defiles his consecrated head, then he must shave his head on the day of his purification—on the seventh day he must shave it.

10 On the eighth day he is to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the entrance to the tent of meeting.

11 Then the priest will offer one for a purification offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because of his transgression in regard to the corpse. So he must reconsecrate his head on that day.

12 He must rededicate to the LORD the days of his separation and bring a male lamb in its first year as a reparation offering, but the former days will not be counted because his separation was defiled.

**Completion Rituals of the Nazirite Vow**

13 "Now this is the law of the Nazirite: When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he must be brought to the entrance of the tent of meeting,

14 and he must present his offering to the LORD: one male lamb in its first year without blemish for a burnt offering, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish for a purification offering, one ram without blemish for a peace offering,

15 and a basket of bread made without yeast, cakes of fine flour mixed with olive oil, wafers made without yeast and smeared with olive oil, and their grain offering and their drink offerings.

16 "Then the priest must present all these before the LORD and offer his purification offering and his burnt offering.

17 Then he must offer the ram as a peace offering to the LORD, with the basket of bread made without yeast; the priest must also offer his grain offering and his drink offering.

18 "Then the Nazirite must shave his consecrated head at the entrance to the tent of meeting and must take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire where the peace offering is burning.

19 And the priest must take the boiled shoulder of the ram, one cake made without yeast from the basket, and one wafer made without yeast, and put them on the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated head;

20 then the priest must wave them as a wave offering before the LORD; it is a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the raised offering. After this the Nazirite may drink wine.'

#### Summary

21 "This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the LORD his offering according to his separation, as well as whatever else he can provide. Thus he must fulfill his vow that he makes, according to the law of his separation."

### High Priestly Blessing (c. 2–19 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 6:22–27

22 The LORD spoke to Moses:

23 "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is the way you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:

24 "The LORD bless you and protect you;

25 The LORD make his face to shine upon you,  
and be gracious to you;

26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon you  
and give you peace."

27 So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

### Silver Trumpets Crafted (c. 2–19 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 10:1–10

#### For Gathering and Disembarking the Camps

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 "Make two trumpets of silver; you are to make them from a single hammered piece. You will use them for assembling the community and for directing the traveling of the camps.

3 When they blow them both, all the community must come to you to the entrance of the tent of meeting.

4 "But if they blow with one trumpet, then the leaders, the heads of the thousands of Israel, must come to you.

5 When you blow an alarm, then the camps that are located on the east side must begin to travel.

6 And when you blow an alarm the second time, then the camps that are located on the south side must begin to travel. An alarm must be sounded for their journeys.

7 But when you assemble the community, you must blow, but you must not sound an alarm.

#### For Rallying to Battle and Rejoicing in Festival Offerings

8 The sons of Aaron, the priests, must blow the trumpets; and they will be to you for an eternal ordinance throughout your generations.

9 If you go to war in your land against an adversary who opposes you, then you must sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the LORD your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.

10 "Also in the time when you rejoice, such as on your appointed festivals or at the beginnings of your months, you must blow with your trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings, so that they may become a memorial for you before your God: I am the LORD your God."

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### Departure from Sinai (20 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 10:11, 12a, 13

- 11 On the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle of the testimony.  
 12a So the Israelites set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai;  
 13 This was the first time they set out on their journey according to the commandment of the LORD, by the authority of Moses.

### The Leadership of Yahweh (20 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Exodus 40:36–37

Numbers 9:17–23

36 But when the cloud was lifted up from the tabernacle the Israelites would set out on all their journeys;

37 but if the cloud was not lifted up, then they would not journey further

until the day it was lifted up.

17 Whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the Israelites would begin their journey; and in whatever place the cloud settled, there the Israelites would make camp.

18 At the commandment of the LORD the Israelites would begin their journey, and at the commandment of the LORD they would make camp; as long as the cloud remained settled over the tabernacle they would camp.

19 When the cloud remained over the tabernacle many days, then the Israelites obeyed the instructions of the LORD and did not journey.

20 When the cloud remained over the tabernacle a number of days, they remained camped according to the LORD's commandment, and according to the LORD's commandment they would journey.

21 And when the cloud remained only from evening until morning, when the cloud was taken up the following morning, then they traveled on. Whether by day or by night, when the cloud was taken up they traveled.

22 Whether it was for two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud prolonged its stay over the tabernacle, the Israelites remained camped without traveling; but when it was taken up, they traveled on.

23 At the commandment of the LORD they camped, and at the commandment of the LORD they traveled on; they kept the instructions of the LORD according to the commandment of the LORD, by the authority of Moses.

### Canaan Bound (20 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)

Numbers 10:14–32

#### Marching Order of the Tribes

14 The standard of the camp of the Judahites set out first according to their companies, and over his company was Nahshon son of Amminadab.

15 Over the company of the tribe of Issacharites was Nathanel son of Zuar,

16 and over the company of the tribe of the Zebulunites was Elion son of Helon.

17 Then the tabernacle was dismantled, and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set out, carrying the tabernacle.

18 The standard of the camp of Reuben set out according to their companies; over his company was Elizur son of Shedeur.

19 Over the company of the tribe of the Simeonites was Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai,

20 and over the company of the tribe of the Gadites was Eliasaph son of Deuel.

21 And the Kohathites set out, carrying the articles for the sanctuary; the tabernacle was to be set up before they arrived.

22 And the standard of the camp of the Ephraimites set out according to their companies; over his company was Elishama son of Ammihud.

23 Over the company of the tribe of the Manassehites was Gamaliel son of Pedahzur,

24 and over the company of the tribe of Benjaminites was Abidan son of Gideoni.

25 The standard of the camp of the Danites set out, which was the rear guard of all the camps by their companies; over his company was Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

26 Over the company of the tribe of the Asherites was Pagiel son of Ocran,

27 and over the company of the tribe of the Naphtalites was Ahira son of Enan.

28 These were the traveling arrangements of the Israelites according to their companies when they traveled.

#### **Moses Asks His Brother-in-law Hobab to Join Them**

29 Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel, the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are journeying to the place about which the LORD said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us and we will treat you well, for the LORD has promised good things for Israel."

30 But Hobab said to him, "I will not go, but I will go instead to my own land and to my kindred."

31 Moses said, "Do not leave us, because you know places for us to camp in the wilderness, and you could be our guide.

32 And if you come with us, it is certain that whatever good things the LORD will favor us with, we will share with you as well."

### **From Sinai to Kibroth-hattaavah/Taberah (20–22 Iyyar [May] 1445 BC)**

Numbers 10:33–36

Numbers 33:16

33 So they traveled from the mountain of the LORD three days' journey; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD was traveling before them during the three days' journey, to find a resting place for them.

34 And the cloud of the LORD was over them by day, when they traveled from the camp.

35 And when the ark traveled, Moses would say, "Rise up, O LORD! May your enemies be scattered, and may those who hate you flee before you!"

36 And when it came to rest he would say, "Return, O LORD, to the many thousands of Israel!"

16 They traveled from the desert of Sinai

and camped at Kibroth Hattaavah [Taberah].

### **First Rebellion—General Grumbling (23 Iyyar [May/June] 1445 BC)**

Numbers 11:1–3

1 When the people complained, it displeased the LORD. When the LORD heard it, his anger burned, and so the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outer parts of the camp.

2 When the people cried to Moses, he prayed to the LORD, and the fire died out.

3 So he called the name of that place Taberah because there the fire of the LORD burned among them.

### **Second Rebellion—The People Demand Meat (c. 24–26 Iyyar [May/June] 1445 BC)**

Numbers 11:4–34

#### **The People Complain—They are Tired of Eating Manna and Crave Meat**

4 Now the mixed multitude who were among them craved more desirable foods, and so the Israelites wept again and said, "If only we had meat to eat!

5 We remember the fish we used to eat freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic.

6 But now we are dried up, and there is nothing at all before us except this manna!" [[1 Cor 10:1–6](#)]

7 (Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium.

8 And the people went about and gathered it, and ground it with mills or pounded it in mortars; they baked it in pans and made cakes of it. It tasted like fresh olive oil.

9 And when the dew came down on the camp in the night, the manna fell with it.)

#### **Moses Complains—He Asks God to Kill Him Instead of Burdening Him with the People**

10 Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of his tent; and when the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly, Moses was also displeased.

11 And Moses said to the LORD, "Why have you afflicted your servant? Why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of this entire people on me?"

12 Did I conceive this entire people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your arms, as a foster father bears a nursing child,' to the land which you swore to their fathers?

13 From where shall I get meat to give to this entire people, for they cry to me, 'Give us meat, that we may eat!'

14 I am not able to bear this entire people alone, because it is too heavy for me!

15 But if you are going to deal with me like this, then kill me immediately. If I have found favor in your sight then do not let me see my trouble."

**Yahweh Speaks—Assemble Seventy Elders and Prepare to Eat Meat!**

16 The LORD said to Moses, “Gather to me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know are elders of the people and officials over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting; let them take their position there with you.

17 Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take part of the spirit that is on you, and will put it on them, and they will bear some of the burden of the people with you, so that you do not bear it all by yourself.

18 “And say to the people, ‘Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, and you will eat meat, for you have wept in the hearing of the LORD, saying, “Who will give us meat to eat, for life was good for us in Egypt?” Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you will eat.

19 You will eat, not just one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days,

20 but a whole month, until it comes out your nostrils and makes you sick, because you have despised the LORD who is among you and have wept before him, saying, “Why did we ever come out of Egypt?””

**Moses Expresses Disbelief to Yahweh**

21 Moses said, “The people around me are 600,000 on foot; but you say, ‘I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month.’

22 Would they have enough if the flocks and herds were slaughtered for them? If all the fish of the sea were caught for them, would they have enough?”

**Yahweh Speaks—“Is my hand shortened?”**

23 And the LORD said to Moses, “Is the LORD’s hand shortened? Now you will see whether my word to you will come true or not!”

**Yahweh Sends His Spirit Upon the Seventy Elders**

24 So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD. He then gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and had them stand around the tabernacle.

25 And the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to them, and he took some of the Spirit that was on Moses and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but did not do so again.

26 But two men remained in the camp; one’s name was Eldad, and the other’s name was Medad. And the spirit rested on them. (Now they were among those in the registration, but had not gone to the tabernacle.) So they prophesied in the camp.

27 And a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!”

28 Joshua son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his choice young men, said, “My lord Moses, stop them!”

29 Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for me? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!”

30 Then Moses returned to the camp along with the elders of Israel.

**Yahweh Covers the Earth with Meat (more than 400 square miles of quail)**

31 Now a wind went out from the LORD and brought quail from the sea, and let them fall near the camp, about a day’s journey on this side, and about a day’s journey on the other side, all around the camp, and about three feet high on the surface of the ground.

32 And the people stayed up all that day, all that night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail. The one who gathered the least gathered ten homers, and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp.

**Yahweh Strikes the People With a Great Plague**

33 But while the meat was still between their teeth, before they chewed it, the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague.

34 So the name of that place was called Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people that craved different food.

**From Kibroth-hattaavah/Taberah to Hazeroth (c. 27–30 Iyyar [May/June] 1445 BC)**

Numbers 11:35

35 The people traveled from Kibroth Hattaavah to Hazeroth, and they stayed at Hazeroth.

Numbers 33:17

17 They traveled from Kibroth Hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.

**Miriam and Aaron Challenge Moses’ Authority (c. 1–7 Sivan [May/June] 1445 BC)**

Numbers 12:1–15

**Miriam and Aaron Speak Against Moses**

1 Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman he had married (for he had married an Ethiopian woman).

2 They said, “Has the LORD only spoken through Moses? Has he not also spoken through us?” And the LORD heard it.

3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more so than any man on the face of the earth.)

**Yahweh Speaks—“Why were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”**

4 The LORD spoke immediately to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam: “The three of you come to the tent of meeting.” So the three of them went.

5 And the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent; he then called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward.

6 The LORD said, “Hear now my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known to him in a vision; I will speak with him in a dream.

7 My servant Moses is not like this; he is faithful in all my house. [[Heb 3:1–6](#)]

8 With him I will speak face to face, openly, and not in riddles; and he will see the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”

**The Judgment Against Miriam**

9 The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he departed.

10 When the cloud departed from above the tent, Miriam became leprous as snow. Then Aaron looked at Miriam, and she was leprous!

11 So Aaron said to Moses, “O my lord, please do not hold this sin against us, in which we have acted foolishly and have sinned!

12 Do not let her be like a baby born dead, whose flesh is half-consumed when it comes out of its mother’s womb!”

13 Then Moses cried to the LORD, “Heal her now, O God.”

**Yahweh Has Mercy on Miriam**

14 The LORD said to Moses, “If her father had only spit in her face, would she not have been disgraced for seven days? Shut her out from the camp seven days, and afterward she can be brought back in again.”

15 So Miriam was shut outside of the camp for seven days, and the people did not journey on until Miriam was brought back in.

**From Hazeroth to the Wilderness of Paran/Kadesh-barnea (c. mid June 1445 BC)**

Numbers 12:16

Num 10:12b

16 After that the people moved from Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

12b and the cloud settled in the wilderness of Paran.

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**Twelve Spies Sent to Canaan (late Summer/early Fall 1445 BC)****Numbers 13****Yahweh Sanctions the People's Desire to Send Spies Into Canaan (see Deut 1:19–25)**

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Send out men to investigate the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. You are to send one man from each ancestral tribe, each one a leader among them.”

3 So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran at the command of the LORD. All of them were leaders of the Israelites.

**List of Tribal Spies (Moses gives Hoshea the Ephraimite the name Joshua)**

4 Now these were their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur;

5 from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori;

6 from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh;

7 from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph;

8 from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun;

9 from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu;

10 from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi;

11 from the tribe of Joseph, namely, the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi son of Susi;

12 from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli;

13 from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael;

14 from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vopshi;

15 from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Maki.

16 These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to investigate the land. And Moses gave Hoshea son of Nun the name Joshua.

**Moses Gives the Spies Their Assignment**

17 When Moses sent them to investigate the land of Canaan, he told them, “Go up through the Negev, and then go up into the hill country

18 and see what the land is like, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, few or many,

19 and whether the land they live in is good or bad, and whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or fortified cities,

20 and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether or not there are forests in it. And be brave, and bring back some of the fruit of the land.” Now it was the time of year for the first ripe grapes.

**Journey of the Spies**

21 So they went up and investigated the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, at the entrance of Hamath.

22 When they went up through the Negev, they came to Hebron where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, descendants of Anak, were living. (Now Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

23 When they came to the valley of Eshcol, they cut down from there a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a staff between two men, as well as some of the pomegranates and the figs.

24 That place was called the Eshcol Valley, because of the cluster of grapes that the Israelites cut from there.

25 They returned from investigating the land after forty days.

**The Spies Report to Moses, Aaron and the People**

26 They came back to Moses and Aaron and to the whole community of the Israelites in the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh. They reported to the whole community and showed the fruit of the land.

27 They told Moses, “We went to the land where you sent us. It is indeed flowing with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.

28 But the inhabitants are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. Moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there.

29 The Amalekites live in the land of the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan.”

30 Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses, saying, “Let us go up and occupy it, for we are well able to conquer it.”

31 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against these people, because they are stronger than we are!”

32 Then they presented the Israelites with a discouraging report of the land they had investigated, saying, “The land that we passed through to investigate is a land that devours its inhabitants. All the people we saw there are of great stature.

33 We even saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak came from the Nephilim), and we seemed like grasshoppers both to ourselves and to them.”

## The Israelites Revolt (late Summer/early Fall 1445 BC)

### Numbers 14

#### Rebellion—The People Demand to Return to Egypt

1 Then all the community raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night.

2 And all the Israelites murmured against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had perished in this wilderness!

3 Why has the LORD brought us into this land only to be killed by the sword, that our wives and our children should become plunder? Wouldn’t it be better for us to return to Egypt?”

4 So they said to one another, “Let’s appoint a leader and return to Egypt.”

#### Joshua and Caleb Beg the People to Believe God

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell down with their faces to the ground before the whole assembled community of the Israelites.

6 And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, two of those who had investigated the land, tore their garments.

7 They said to the whole community of the Israelites, “The land we passed through to investigate is an exceedingly good land.

8 If the LORD delights in us, then he will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land that is flowing with milk and honey.

9 Only do not rebel against the LORD, and do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection has turned aside from them, but the LORD is with us. Do not fear them!”

10a However, the whole community threatened to stone them.

#### Yahweh Intervenes and Prepares to Destroy Israel

10b But the glory of the LORD appeared to all the Israelites at the tent of meeting.

11 The LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me, and how long will they not believe in me, in spite of the signs that I have done among them?

12 I will strike them with the pestilence, and I will disinherit them; I will make you into a nation that is greater and mightier than they!”

#### Moses Intercedes for the People for the Sake of Yahweh’s Name

13 Moses said to the LORD, “When the Egyptians hear it—for you brought up this people by your power from among them—

14 then they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that you, LORD, are among this people, that you, LORD, are seen face to face, that your cloud stands over them, and that you go before them by day in a pillar of cloud and in a pillar of fire by night.

15 If you kill this entire people at once, then the nations that have heard of your fame will say,

16 ‘Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land that he swore to them, he killed them in the wilderness.’

17 So now, let the power of my Lord be great, just as you have said,

18 ‘The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in loyal love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children until the third and fourth generations.’

19 Please forgive the iniquity of this people according to your great loyal love, just as you have forgiven this people from Egypt even until now.”

#### Yahweh Forgives the People but Will Not Let Them Enter Canaan

20 Then the LORD said, “I have forgiven them as you asked.

21 But truly, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD.

22 For all the people have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have tempted me now these ten times, and have not obeyed me,

23 they will by no means see the land that I swore to their fathers, nor will any of them who despised me see it.

24 Only my servant Caleb, because he had a different spirit and has followed me fully—I will bring him into the land where he had gone, and his descendants will possess it.

25 (Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites were living in the valleys.) Tomorrow, turn and journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.”

#### The People Continue to Murmur and Yahweh Pronounces a Death Sentence on Them

26 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron:

27 “How long must I bear with this evil congregation that murmurs against me? I have heard the complaints of the Israelites that they murmured against me.

28 Say to them, ‘As I live, says the LORD, I will surely do to you just what you have spoken in my hearing.

29 Your dead bodies will fall in this wilderness—all those of you who were numbered, according to your full number, from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against me.

30 You will by no means enter into the land where I swore to settle you. The only exceptions are Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua

son of Nun.

31 But I will bring in your little ones, whom you said would become victims of war, and they will enjoy the land that you have despised.

32 But as for you, your dead bodies will fall in this wilderness,

33 and your children will wander in the wilderness forty years and suffer for your unfaithfulness, until your dead bodies lie finished in the wilderness.

34 According to the number of the days you have investigated this land, forty days—one day for a year—you will suffer for your iniquities, forty years, and you will know what it means to thwart me.

35 I, the LORD, have said, “I will surely do so to all this evil congregation that has gathered together against me. In this wilderness they will be finished, and there they will die!””

#### **The Ten Spies are Immediately Killed by a Plague (Joshua and Caleb spared)**

36 The men whom Moses sent to investigate the land, who returned and made the whole community murmur against him by producing an evil report about the land,

37 those men who produced the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the LORD.

38 But Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among the men who went to investigate the land, lived.

#### **The People’s False Repentance**

39 When Moses told these things to all the Israelites, the people mourned greatly.

40 And early in the morning they went up to the crest of the hill country, saying, “Here we are, and we will go up to the place that the LORD commanded, for we have sinned.”

41 But Moses said, “Why are you now transgressing the commandment of the LORD? It will not succeed!

42 Do not go up, for the LORD is not among you, and you will be defeated before your enemies.

43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you will fall by the sword. Because you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you.”

44 But they dared to go up to the crest of the hill, although neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses departed from the camp.

45 So the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country swooped down and attacked them as far as Hormah.

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**Wilderness Wandering: Hope for a Future Generation (1444–1408 BC)**

Numbers 15:1–31

**Law Concerning the Meal and Drink Offerings to be Added to Every Appropriate Animal Sacrifice**

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When you enter the land where you are to live, which I am giving you,

3 and you make an offering by fire to the LORD from the herd or from the flock (whether a burnt offering or a sacrifice for discharging a vow or as a freewill offering or in your solemn feasts) to create a pleasing aroma to the LORD,

4 then the one who presents his offering to the LORD must bring a grain offering of one-tenth of an ephah of finely ground flour mixed with one fourth of a hin of olive oil.

5 You must also prepare one-fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering with the burnt offering or the sacrifice for each lamb.

6 Or for a ram, you must prepare as a grain offering two-tenths of an ephah of finely ground flour mixed with one-third of a hin of olive oil,

7 and for a drink offering you must offer one-third of a hin of wine as a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

8 And when you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering or a sacrifice for discharging a vow or as a peace offering to the LORD,

9 then a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of finely ground flour mixed with half a hin of olive oil must be presented with the young bull,

10 and you must present as the drink offering half a hin of wine with the fire offering as a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

11 This is what is to be done for each ox, or each ram, or each of the male lambs or the goats.

12 You must do so for each one according to the number that you prepare.

**The Law Applies to Foreigners and Israelites Alike**

13 “Every native-born person must do these things in this way to present an offering made by fire as a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

14 If a resident foreigner is living with you—or whoever is among you in future generations—and prepares an offering made by fire as a pleasing aroma to the LORD, he must do it the same way you are to do it.

15 One statute must apply to you who belong to the congregation and to the resident foreigner who is living among you, as a permanent statute for your future generations. You and the resident foreigner will be alike before the LORD.

16 One law and one custom must apply to you and to the resident foreigner who lives alongside you.”

**Contribution of the First of the Dough**

17 The LORD spoke to Moses:

18 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When you enter the land to which I am bringing you

19 and you eat some of the food of the land, you must offer up a raised offering to the LORD.

20 You must offer up a cake of the first of your finely ground flour as a raised offering; as you offer the raised offering of the threshing floor, so you must offer it up.

21 You must give to the LORD some of the first of your finely ground flour as a raised offering in your future generations.

**Atonement for Inadvertent Sin by the Community**

22 “If you sin unintentionally and do not observe all these commandments that the LORD has spoken to Moses—

23 all that the LORD has commanded you by the authority of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded Moses and continuing through your future generations—

24 then if anything is done unintentionally without the knowledge of the community, the whole community must prepare one young bull for a burnt offering—for a pleasing aroma to the LORD—along with its grain offering and its customary drink offering, and one male goat for a purification offering.

25 And the priest is to make atonement for the whole community of the Israelites, and they will be forgiven, because it was unintentional and they have brought their offering, an offering made by fire to the LORD, and their purification offering before the LORD, for their unintentional offense.

26 And the whole community of the Israelites and the resident foreigner who lives among them will be forgiven, since all the people were involved in the unintentional offense.

**Atonement for Inadvertent Sin by the Individual**

27 “If any person sins unintentionally, then he must bring a yearling female goat for a purification offering.

28 And the priest must make atonement for the person who sins unintentionally—when he sins unintentionally before the LORD—to make atonement for him, and he will be forgiven.

29 You must have one law for the person who sins unintentionally, both for the native-born among the Israelites and for the resident foreigner who lives among them.

**Death Penalty for High-handed Sins**

30 “But the person who acts defiantly, whether native-born or a resident foreigner, insults the LORD. That person must be cut off

from among his people.

31 Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken his commandment, that person must be completely cut off. His iniquity will be on him.”

### Wilderness Wandering: Case Law—Capital Punishment for Sabbath Violation (1444–1408 BC)

Numbers 15:32–41

#### A Man is Stoned for Working on the Sabbath

32 When the Israelites were in the wilderness they found a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day.

33 Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and to the whole community.

34 They put him in custody, because there was no clear instruction about what should be done to him.

35 Then the LORD said to Moses, “The man must surely be put to death; the whole community must stone him with stones outside the camp.”

36 So the whole community took him outside the camp and stoned him to death, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

#### Tassels—A Visual Reminder to Serve Yahweh

37 The LORD spoke to Moses:

38 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them to make tassels for themselves on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and put a blue thread on the tassel of the corners.

39 You must have this tassel so that you may look at it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and obey them and so that you do not follow after your own heart and your own eyes that lead you to unfaithfulness.

40 Thus you will remember and obey all my commandments and be holy to your God.

41 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD your God.”

### Wilderness Wandering: Korah Incites Rebellion (1444–1408 BC)

Numbers 16:1–17:11

#### Korah Covets the Priesthood and Incites a Rebellion to Get It

16:1 Now Korah son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth, who were Reubenites, took men

2 and rebelled against Moses, along with some of the Israelites, 250 leaders of the community, chosen from the assembly, famous men.

3 And they assembled against Moses and Aaron, saying to them, “You take too much upon yourselves, seeing that the whole community is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the community of the LORD?”

#### Moses Inquires of Yahweh (see Numbers 20:6)

4 When Moses heard it he fell down with his face to the ground.

#### Moses Tells Korah Yahweh’s Decision

5 Then he said to Korah and to all his company, “In the morning the LORD will make known who are his, and who is holy. He will cause that person to approach him; the person he has chosen he will cause to approach him. [2 Tim 2:19]

6 Do this, Korah, you and all your company: Take censers,

7 put fire in them, and set incense on them before the LORD tomorrow, and the man whom the LORD chooses will be holy. You take too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi!”

#### Moses Reveals the True Motive Behind Korah’s Rebellion

8 Moses said to Korah, “Listen now, you sons of Levi!

9 Does it seem too small a thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the community of Israel to bring you near to himself, to perform the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the community to minister to them?

10 He has brought you near and all your brothers, the sons of Levi, with you. Do you now seek the priesthood also?

11 Therefore you and all your company have assembled together against the LORD! And Aaron—what is he that you murmur against him?”

#### Moses Tries to Talk With Dathan and Abiram But They Refuse

12 Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they said, “We will not come up.

13 Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of the land that flows with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness? Now do you want to make yourself a prince over us?”

14 Moreover, you have not brought us into a land that flows with milk and honey, nor given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Do you think you can blind these men? We will not come up.”

15 Moses was very angry, and he said to the LORD, “Have no respect for their offering! I have not taken so much as one donkey from them, nor have I harmed any one of them!”

#### **Moses Repeats Yahweh’s Instructions**

16 Then Moses said to Korah, “You and all your company present yourselves before the LORD—you and they, and Aaron—tomorrow. 17 And each of you take his censer, put incense in it, and then each of you present his censer before the LORD: 250 censers, along with you, and Aaron—each of you with his censer.”

18 So everyone took his censer, put fire in it, and set incense on it, and stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting, with Moses and Aaron.

#### **Yahweh Prepares to Kill the Entire Community**

19 When Korah assembled the whole community against them at the entrance of the tent of meeting, then the glory of the LORD appeared to the whole community.

20 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron:

21 “Separate yourselves from among this community, that I may consume them in an instant.”

22 Then they threw themselves down with their faces to the ground and said, “O God, the God of the spirits of all people, will you be angry with the whole community when only one man sins?”

#### **Yahweh Permits the People to Separate Themselves from Korah’s Assembly**

23 So the LORD spoke to Moses:

24 “Tell the community: ‘Get away from around the homes of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.’”

25 Then Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel went after him.

26 And he said to the community, “Move away from the tents of these wicked men, and do not touch anything they have, lest you be destroyed because of all their sins.”

27 So they got away from the homes of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram on every side, and Dathan and Abiram came out and stationed themselves in the entrances of their tents with their wives, their children, and their toddlers.

#### **Yahweh Kills the Assembly of Korah**

28 Then Moses said, “This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will.

29 If these men die a natural death, or if they share the fate of all men, then the LORD has not sent me.

30 But if the LORD does something entirely new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up along with all that they have, and they go down alive to the grave, then you will know that these men have despised the LORD!”

31 When he had finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open,

32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, along with their households, and all Korah’s men, and all their goods.

33 They and all that they had went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed over them. So they perished from among the community. [[Jude 1:4, 10–13](#)]

34 All the Israelites who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, “What if the earth swallows us too?”

35 Then a fire went out from the LORD and devoured the 250 men who offered incense.

#### **Korah’s Censers Turned Into a Covering for the Altar**

36 The LORD spoke to Moses:

37 “Tell Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to pick up the censers out of the flame, for they are holy, and then scatter the coals of fire at a distance.

38 As for the censers of these men who sinned at the cost of their lives, they must be made into hammered sheets for covering the altar, because they presented them before the LORD and sanctified them. They will become a sign to the Israelites.”

39 So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers presented by those who had been burned up, and they were hammered out as a covering for the altar.

40 It was a memorial for the Israelites, that no outsider who is not a descendant of Aaron should approach to burn incense before the LORD, that he might not become like Korah and his company—just as the LORD had spoken by the authority of Moses.

#### **The People Are Angered by Korah’s Death and Assemble Against Moses and Aaron**

41 But on the next day the whole community of Israelites murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, “You have killed the LORD’s people!”

**Yahweh Sends a Plague Against the Entire Community**

42 When the community assembled against Moses and Aaron, they turned toward the tent of meeting—and the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.

43 Then Moses and Aaron stood before the tent of meeting.

44 The LORD spoke to Moses:

45a “Get away from this community, so that I can consume them in an instant!”

**Yahweh Permits Moses and Aaron to Save the People**

45b But they threw themselves down with their faces to the ground.

46 Then Moses said to Aaron, “Take the censer, put burning coals from the altar in it, place incense on it, and go quickly into the assembly and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone out from the LORD—the plague has begun!”

47 So Aaron did as Moses commanded and ran into the middle of the assembly, where the plague was just beginning among the people. So he placed incense on the coals and made atonement for the people.

48 He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.

49 Now 14,700 people died in the plague, in addition to those who died in the event with Korah.

50 Then Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and the plague was stopped.

**Yahweh Instructs Moses to Prepare a Ceremony of Confirmation**

17:1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Speak to the Israelites, and receive from them a staff from each tribe, one from every tribal leader, twelve staffs; you must write each man’s name on his staff.

3 You must write Aaron’s name on the staff of Levi; for one staff is for the head of every tribe.

4 You must place them in the tent of meeting before the ark of the covenant where I meet with you.

5 And the staff of the man whom I choose will blossom; so I will rid myself of the complaints of the Israelites, which they murmur against you.”

6 So Moses spoke to the Israelites, and each of their leaders gave him a staff, one for each leader, according to their tribes—twelve staffs; the staff of Aaron was among their staffs.

7 Then Moses placed the staffs before the LORD in the tent of the testimony.

**Yahweh Confirms His Selection of the Aaronic Priesthood**

8 On the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony—and the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted, and brought forth buds, and produced blossoms, and yielded almonds!

9 So Moses brought out all the staffs from before the LORD to all the Israelites. They looked at them, and each man took his staff.

10 The LORD said to Moses, “Bring Aaron’s staff back before the testimony to be preserved for a sign to the rebels, so that you may bring their murmurings to an end before me, that they will not die.” [[Heb 9:3–4](#)]

11 So Moses did as the LORD commanded him—this is what he did.

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## Wilderness Wandering: Duties and Provisions for Levites and Priests (1444–1408 BC)

Numbers 17:12–18:32

### Priests and Levites to Bear Sole Responsibility for Any Future Encroachment on the Tabernacle

17:12 The Israelites said to Moses, “We are bound to die! We perish, we all perish!

13 Anyone who even comes close to the tabernacle of the LORD will die! Are we all to die?”

18:1 The LORD said to Aaron, “You and your sons and your tribe with you must bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you must bear the iniquity of your priesthood.

2 “Bring with you your brothers, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, so that they may join with you and minister to you while you and your sons with you are before the tent of the testimony.

3 They must be responsible to care for you and to care for the entire tabernacle. However, they must not come near the furnishings of the sanctuary and the altar, or both they and you will die.

4 They must join with you, and they will be responsible for the care of the tent of meeting, for all the service of the tent, but no unauthorized person may approach you.

5 You will be responsible for the care of the sanctuary and the care of the altar, so that there will be no more wrath on the Israelites.

6 I myself have chosen your brothers the Levites from among the Israelites. They are given to you as a gift from the LORD, to perform the duties of the tent of meeting.

7 But you and your sons with you are responsible for your priestly duties, for everything at the altar and within the curtain. And you must serve. I give you the priesthood as a gift for service; but the unauthorized person who approaches must be put to death.”

### Provision for the Priests

8 The LORD spoke to Aaron, “See, I have given you the responsibility for my raised offerings; I have given all the holy things of the Israelites to you as your priestly portion and to your sons as a perpetual ordinance.

9 Of all the most holy offerings reserved from the fire this will be yours: Every offering of theirs, whether from every grain offering or from every purification offering or from every reparation offering which they bring to me, will be most holy for you and for your sons.

10 You are to eat it as a most holy offering; every male may eat it. It will be holy to you.

11 “And this is yours: the raised offering of their gift, along with all the wave offerings of the Israelites. I have given them to you and to your sons and daughters with you as a perpetual ordinance. Everyone who is ceremonially clean in your household may eat of it.

12 “All the best of the olive oil and all the best of the wine and of the wheat, the first fruits of these things that they give to the LORD, I have given to you.

13 And whatever first ripe fruit in their land they bring to the LORD will be yours; everyone who is ceremonially clean in your household may eat of it.

14 “Everything devoted in Israel will be yours.

15 The firstborn of every womb which they present to the LORD, whether human or animal, will be yours. Nevertheless, the firstborn sons you must redeem, and the firstborn males of unclean animals you must redeem.

16 And those that must be redeemed you are to redeem when they are a month old, according to your estimation, for five shekels of silver according to the sanctuary shekel (which is twenty gerahs).

17 But you must not redeem the firstborn of a cow or a sheep or a goat; they are holy. You must splash their blood on the altar and burn their fat for an offering made by fire for a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

18 And their meat will be yours, just as the breast and the right hip of the raised offering is yours.

19 All the raised offerings of the holy things that the Israelites offer to the LORD, I have given to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a perpetual ordinance. It is a covenant of salt forever before the LORD for you and for your descendants with you.”

### Provision for the Levites (the Levitical Tithe)

20 The LORD spoke to Aaron, “You will have no inheritance in their land, nor will you have any portion of property among them—I am your portion and your inheritance among the Israelites.

21 See, I have given the Levites all the tithes in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they perform—the service of the tent of meeting.

22 No longer may the Israelites approach the tent of meeting, or else they will bear their sin and die.

23 But the Levites must perform the service of the tent of meeting, and they must bear their iniquity. It will be a perpetual ordinance throughout your generations that among the Israelites the Levites have no inheritance.

24 But I have given to the Levites for an inheritance the tithes of the Israelites that are offered to the LORD as a raised offering. That is why I said to them that among the Israelites they are to have no inheritance.”

### A Tenth of the Levitical Tithe Goes to the Priests

25 The LORD spoke to Moses:

26 “You are to speak to the Levites, and you must tell them, ‘When you receive from the Israelites the tithe that I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you are to offer up from it as a raised offering to the LORD a tenth of the tithe.’”

27 And your raised offering will be credited to you as though it were grain from the threshing floor or as new wine from the winepress.

28 Thus you are to offer up a raised offering to the LORD of all your tithes which you receive from the Israelites; and you must give the LORD's raised offering from it to Aaron the priest.

29 From all your gifts you must offer up every raised offering due the LORD, from all the best of it, and the holiest part of it.'

30 "Therefore you will say to them, 'When you offer up the best of it, then it will be credited to the Levites as the product of the threshing floor and as the product of the winepress.

31 And you may eat it in any place, you and your household, because it is your wages for your service in the tent of meeting.

32 And you will bear no sin concerning it when you offer up the best of it. And you must not profane the holy things of the Israelites, or else you will die.'"

## Wilderness Wandering: The Red Heifer and Water of Purification (1444–1408 BC)

### Numbers 19

#### Preparation of the Ashes of a Red Heifer

1 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron:

2 "This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD has commanded: 'Instruct the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without blemish, which has no defect and has never carried a yoke.

3 You must give it to Eleazar the priest so that he can take it outside the camp, and it must be slaughtered before him.

4 Eleazar the priest is to take some of its blood with his finger, and sprinkle some of the blood seven times directly in front of the tent of meeting.

5 Then the heifer must be burned in his sight—its skin, its flesh, its blood, and its offal is to be burned.

6 And the priest must take cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet wool and throw them into the midst of the fire where the heifer is burning.

7 Then the priest must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and afterward he may come into the camp, but the priest will be ceremonially unclean until evening.

8 The one who burns it must wash his clothes in water and bathe himself in water. He will be ceremonially unclean until evening.

9 "'Then a man who is ceremonially clean must gather up the ashes of the red heifer and put them in a ceremonially clean place outside the camp. They must be kept for the community of the Israelites for use in the water of purification—it is a purification for sin.

10 The one who gathers the ashes of the heifer must wash his clothes and be ceremonially unclean until evening. This will be a permanent ordinance both for the Israelites and the resident foreigner who lives among them.

#### General Rule for Purification

11 "'Whoever touches the corpse of any person will be ceremonially unclean seven days.

12 He must purify himself with water on the third day and on the seventh day, and so will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and the seventh day, then he will not be clean.

13 Anyone who touches the corpse of any dead person and does not purify himself defiles the tabernacle of the LORD. And that person must be cut off from Israel, because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him. He will be unclean; his uncleanness remains on him.

#### Purification in Specific Cases

14 "'This is the law: When a man dies in a tent, anyone who comes into the tent and all who are in the tent will be ceremonially unclean seven days.

15 And every open container that has no covering fastened on it is unclean.

16 And whoever touches the body of someone killed with a sword in the open fields, or the body of someone who died of natural causes, or a human bone, or a grave, will be unclean seven days.

17 "'For a ceremonially unclean person you must take some of the ashes of the heifer burnt for purification from sin and pour fresh running water over them in a vessel.

18 Then a ceremonially clean person must take hyssop, dip it in the water, and sprinkle it on the tent, on all its furnishings, and on the people who were there, or on the one who touched a bone, or one killed, or one who died, or a grave.

19 And the clean person must sprinkle the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he must purify him, and then he must wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and he will be clean in the evening.

20 But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself, that person must be cut off from among the community, because he has polluted the sanctuary of the LORD; the water of purification was not sprinkled on him, so he is unclean.

21 "'So this will be a perpetual ordinance for them: The one who sprinkles the water of purification must wash his clothes, and the one who touches the water of purification will be unclean until evening.

22 And whatever the unclean person touches will be unclean, and the person who touches it will be unclean until evening.'"

**Wilderness Wandering: Records of Camps (1444–1408 BC)**

Numbers 33:18–35

- 18 They traveled from Hazeroth and camped in Rithmah.
- 19 They traveled from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-perez.
- 20 They traveled from Rimmon-perez and camped in Libnah.
- 21 They traveled from Libnah and camped at Rissah.
- 22 They traveled from Rissah and camped in Kehelathah.
- 23 They traveled from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher.
- 24 They traveled from Mount Shepher and camped in Haradah.
- 25 They traveled from Haradah and camped in Makheloth.
- 26 They traveled from Makheloth and camped at Tahath.
- 27 They traveled from Tahath and camped at Terah.
- 28 They traveled from Terah and camped in Mithcah.
- 29 They traveled from Mithcah and camped in Hashmonah.
- 30 They traveled from Hashmonah and camped in Moseroth.
- 31 They traveled from Moseroth and camped in Bene-jaakan.
- 32 They traveled from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad.
- 33 They traveled from Hor-haggidgad and camped in Jotbathah.
- 34 They traveled from Jotbathah and camped in Abronah.
- 35 They traveled from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber.

**Wilderness Wandering: Moses' Prayer (c. 1444–1408 BC)**

Psalm 90

**A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God.**

- 1 O Lord, you have been our protector through all generations!
- 2 Even before the mountains came into existence,  
or you brought the world into being,  
you were the eternal God.
- 3 You make mankind return to the dust,  
and say, "Return, O people!"
- 4 Yes, in your eyes a thousand years  
are like yesterday that quickly passes,  
or like one of the divisions of the nighttime.
- 5 You bring their lives to an end and they "fall asleep."  
In the morning they are like the grass that sprouts up;
- 6 in the morning it glistens and sprouts up;  
at evening time it withers and dries up.
- 7 Yes, we are consumed by your anger;  
we are terrified by your wrath.
- 8 You are aware of our sins;  
you even know about our hidden sins.
- 9 Yes, throughout all our days we experience your raging fury;  
the years of our lives pass quickly, like a sigh.
- 10 The days of our lives add up to seventy years,  
or eighty, if one is especially strong.  
But even one's best years are marred by trouble and oppression.  
Yes, they pass quickly and we fly away.
- 11 Who can really fathom the intensity of your anger?  
Your raging fury causes people to fear you.
- 12 So teach us to consider our mortality,  
so that we might live wisely.
- 13 Turn back toward us, O LORD!  
How long must this suffering last?  
Have pity on your servants!
- 14 Satisfy us in the morning with your loyal love!  
Then we will shout for joy and be happy all our days!
- 15 Make us happy in proportion to the days you have afflicted us,

- in proportion to the years we have experienced trouble!
- 16 May your servants see your work!  
May their sons see your majesty!
- 17 May our sovereign God extend his favor to us!  
Make our endeavors successful!  
Yes, make them successful!

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### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) Psalm 90 is attributed to Moses in the superscription, and most conservative scholars accept Mosaic authorship. However, opinions as to *when* the psalm was written vary widely, and we don't have enough data to date it with certainty. I have chosen to place it in the last third of Moses' life (sometime during the wilderness wandering). Below are a selection of the opinions of commentators:
  - A) Delitzsch—" [Psalm 90] comes out of the midst of the dying off of the older generation during the march through the wilderness."
  - B) Allen P. Ross—"the occasion of his writing [Psalm 90] it is unknown. However, the period of the wilderness wanderings, when a generation of Israelites perished in the desert, readily suggests itself as the background for the psalm."
  - C) Albert Barnes—"It is impossible, of course, now to determine the time when the psalm was composed, but it may not improbably be supposed to have been near the close of the wanderings in the wilderness....It seems, then, not improper to regard this psalm as one of the last utterances of Moses, when the wanderings of the Hebrew people were about to cease; when an entire generation had been swept off; and when his own labors were soon to close."
  - D) Eric Lane—"It [Psalm 90] was composed at a time when numbers of the people were being struck dead as a judgment on their sin (vv. 5–8). Occasions when this happened include the people's complaint about their diet of manna (Num. 11:33) and their discouragement over the report of the spies (Num. 14:26–45). The one that fits best however, is Numbers 21:4–7, when further murmuring over food provoked a plague of venomous snakes from God."
  - E) James M. Boice—"If the psalm really is by Moses, as I believe, the historical setting is probably best understood by the incidents recorded in Numbers 20: (1) the death of Miriam, Moses' sister; (2) the sin of Moses in striking the rock in the wilderness, which kept him from entering the Promised Land; and (3) the death of Aaron, Moses' brother."

### Return to Kadesh-barnea (1 Nisan [March/April] 1407 BC)

Numbers 20:1a

Numbers 33:36

1a Then the entire community of Israel entered the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh.

36 They traveled from Ezion-geber and camped in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh.

### The Death of Miriam (c. 1 Nisan [March/April] 1407 BC)

Numbers 20:1b

1b Miriam died and was buried there.

### Moses Is Provoked to Sin (c. April–June 1407 BC)

Numbers 20:2–13

2 And there was no water for the community, and so they gathered themselves together against Moses and Aaron.

3 The people contended with Moses, saying, "If only we had died when our brothers died before the LORD!

4 Why have you brought up the LORD's community into this wilderness? So that we and our cattle should die here?

5 Why have you brought us up from Egypt only to bring us to this dreadful place? It is no place for grain, or figs, or vines, or pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink!"

6 So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting. They then threw themselves down with their faces to the ground, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them.

7 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

8 "Take the staff and assemble the community, you and Aaron your brother, and then speak to the rock before their eyes. It will pour forth its water, and you will bring water out of the rock for them, and so you will give the community and their beasts water to drink."

9 So Moses took the staff from before the LORD, just as he commanded him.

10 Then Moses and Aaron gathered the community together in front of the rock, and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring water out of this rock for you?"

11 Then Moses raised his hand, and struck the rock twice with his staff. And water came out abundantly. So the community drank, and their beasts drank too. [\[1 Cor 10:4\]](#)

12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me enough to show me as holy before the Israelites, therefore you will not bring this community into the land I have given them."

13 These are the waters of Meribah, because the Israelites contended with the LORD, and his holiness was maintained among them.

### Edom Refuses Israel Passage (c. April–June 1407 BC)

Numbers 20:14–21

14 Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom: "Thus says your brother Israel: 'You know all the hardships we have experienced,

15 how our ancestors went down into Egypt, and we lived in Egypt a long time, and the Egyptians treated us and our ancestors badly.

16 So when we cried to the LORD, he heard our voice and sent a messenger, and has brought us up out of Egypt. Now we are here in Kadesh, a town on the edge of your country.

17 Please let us pass through your country. We will not pass through the fields or through the vineyards, nor will we drink water from any well. We will go by the King's Highway; we will not turn to the right or the left until we have passed through your region.'"

18 But Edom said to him, "You will not pass through me, or I will come out against you with the sword."

19 Then the Israelites said to him, "We will go along the highway, and if we or our cattle drink any of your water, we will pay for it. We will only pass through on our feet, without doing anything else."

20 But he said, "You may not pass through." Then Edom came out against them with a large and powerful force.

21 So Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border; therefore Israel turned away from him.

### The Death of Aaron (1 Ab [July/August] 1407 BC)

Numbers 20:22–29

Numbers 33:37–39

22 So the entire company of Israelites traveled from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor.

37 They traveled from Kadesh and camped in Mount Hor at the edge of the land of Edom.

<p>23 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor, by the border of the land of Edom. He said:</p> <p>24 “Aaron will be gathered to his ancestors, for he will not enter into the land I have given to the Israelites because both of you rebelled against my word at the waters of Meribah.</p> <p>25 Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up on Mount Hor.</p> <p>26 Remove Aaron’s priestly garments and put them on Eleazar his son, and Aaron will be gathered to his ancestors and will die there.”</p> <p>27 So Moses did as the LORD commanded; and they went up Mount Hor in the sight of the whole community.</p> <p>28 And Moses removed Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazar.</p> <p>So Aaron died there on the top of the mountain.</p> <p>And Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain.</p> <p>29 When all the community saw that Aaron was dead, the whole house of Israel mourned for Aaron thirty days.</p>	<p>38 Aaron the priest ascended Mount Hor at the command of the LORD,</p> <p>and he died there in the fortieth year after the Israelites had come out of the land of Egypt on the first day of the fifth month.</p> <p>39 Now Aaron was 123 years old when he died in Mount Hor.</p>
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### Victory Over the Canaanite King of Arad (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 21:1–3	Numbers 33:40
<p>1 When the Canaanite king of Arad who lived in the Negev heard that Israel was approaching along the road to Atharim, he fought against Israel and took some of them prisoner.</p> <p>2 So Israel made a vow to the LORD and said, “If you will indeed deliver this people into our hand, then we will utterly destroy their cities.”</p> <p>3 The LORD listened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities. So the name of the place was called Hormah.</p>	<p>40 The king of Arad, the Canaanite king who lived in the south of the land of Canaan, heard about the approach of the Israelites.</p>

### The Bronze Serpent (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 21:4–9	Numbers 33:41–42
<p>4a Then they traveled from Mount Hor by the road to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom,</p>	<p>41 They traveled from Mount Hor and camped in Zalmonah.</p> <p>42 They traveled from Zalmonah and camped in Punon.</p>
<p>4b but the people became impatient along the way.</p> <p>5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness, for there is no bread or water, and we detest this worthless food.”</p> <p>6 So the LORD sent poisonous snakes among the people, and they bit the people; many people of Israel died.</p> <p>7 Then the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD that he would take away the snakes from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.</p> <p>8 The LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous snake and set it on a pole. When anyone who is bitten looks at it, he will live.”</p> <p>9 So Moses made a bronze snake and put it on a pole, so that if a snake had bitten someone, when he looked at the bronze snake he lived. [cf. <a href="#">2 Kgs 18:4</a>; <a href="#">John 3:11–16</a>]</p>	

### Journey Through Moab Toward the Amorites (September–December 1407 BC)

#### Numbers 21:10–20

10 The Israelites traveled on and camped in Oboth.  
 11 Then they traveled on from Oboth and camped at Iye Abarim, in the wilderness that is before Moab, on the eastern side.  
 12 From there they moved on and camped in the valley of Zered.  
 13 From there they moved on and camped on the other side of the Arnon, in the wilderness that extends from the regions of the Amorites, for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.  
 14 This is why it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD,

“Waheb in Suphah and the wadis,  
 the Arnon 15 and the slope of the valleys  
 that extends to the dwelling of Ar,  
 and falls off at the border of Moab.”

16 And from there they traveled to Beer; that is the well where the LORD spoke to Moses, “Gather the people and I will give them water.”

17 Then Israel sang this song:

“Spring up, O well, sing to it!

18 The well which the princes dug,  
 which the leaders of the people opened  
 with their scepters and their staffs.”

And from the wilderness they traveled to Mattanah;

19 and from Mattanah to Nahaliel; and from Nahaliel to Bamoth;  
 20 and from Bamoth

to the valley that is in the country of Moab,  
 near the top of Pisgah, which overlooks the wilderness.

#### Numbers 33:43–47

43 They traveled from Punon and camped in Oboth.  
 44 They traveled from Oboth and camped in Iye-abarim, on the border of Moab.  
 45 They traveled from Iim

and camped in Dibon-gad.

46 They traveled from Dibon-gad and camped in Almon-diblathaim.

47 They traveled from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim before Nebo.

### Victory Over Sihon of Heshbon and Og of Bashan (September–December 1407 BC)

#### Numbers 21:21–35

21 Then Israel sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites, saying,

22 “Let us pass through your land; we will not turn aside into the fields or into the vineyards, nor will we drink water from any well, but we will go along the King’s Highway until we pass your borders.”

23 But Sihon did not permit Israel to pass through his border; he gathered all his forces together and went out against Israel into the wilderness. When he came to Jahaz, he fought against Israel.

24 But the Israelites defeated him in battle and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the Ammonites, for the border of the Ammonites was strongly defended.

25 So Israel took all these cities; and Israel settled in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all its villages.

26 For Heshbon was the city of King Sihon of the Amorites. Now he had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken all of his land from his control, as far as the Arnon.

27 That is why those who speak in proverbs say,

“Come to Heshbon, let it be built.  
 Let the city of Sihon be established!

28 For fire went out from Heshbon,  
 a flame from the city of Sihon.  
 It has consumed Ar of Moab  
 and the lords of the high places of Arnon.

- 29 Woe to you, Moab.  
You are ruined, O people of Chemosh!  
He has made his sons fugitives,  
and his daughters the prisoners of King Sihon of the Amorites.
- 30 We have overpowered them;  
Heshbon has perished as far as Dibon.  
We have shattered them as far as Nophah,  
which reaches to Medeba.”

31 So the Israelites lived in the land of the Amorites.

32 Moses sent spies to reconnoiter Jaazer, and they captured its villages and dispossessed the Amorites who were there.

33 Then they turned and went up by the road to Bashan. And King Og of Bashan and all his forces marched out against them to do battle at Edrei.

34 And the LORD said to Moses, “Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand. You will do to him what you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon.

35 So they defeated Og, his sons, and all his people, until there were no survivors, and they possessed his land.

### In the Plains of Moab by the Jordan Across From Jericho (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 22:1	Numbers 33:48–49
1 The Israelites traveled on and camped in the plains of Moab on the side of the Jordan River across from Jericho.	48 They traveled from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan River across from Jericho. 49 They camped by the Jordan, from Beth-jeshimoth as far as Abel-shittim in the plains of Moab.

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**King Balak of Moab Asks Balaam to Curse Israel (September–December 1407 BC)**

Numbers 22:2–40

**King Balak of Moab and the Elders of Midian Conspire to Destroy Israel**

2 Balak son of Zippor saw all that the Israelites had done to the Amorites.

3 And the Moabites were greatly afraid of the people, because they were so numerous. The Moabites were sick with fear because of the Israelites.

4a So the Moabites said to the elders of Midian, “Now this mass of people will lick up everything around us, as the bull devours the grass of the field.

**Balak Asks Balaam to Curse Israel**

4b Now Balak son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at this time.

5 And he sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor at Pethor, which is by the Euphrates River in the land of Amaw, to summon him, saying, “Look, a nation has come out of Egypt. They cover the face of the earth, and they are settling next to me.

6 So now, please come and curse this nation for me, for they are too powerful for me. Perhaps I will prevail so that we may conquer them and drive them out of the land. For I know that whoever you bless is blessed, and whoever you curse is cursed.”

7 So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the fee for divination in their hand. They came to Balaam and reported to him the words of Balak.

8 He replied to them, “Stay here tonight, and I will bring back to you whatever word the LORD may speak to me.” So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam.

9 And God came to Balaam and said, “Who are these men with you?”

10 Balaam said to God, “Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent a message to me, saying,

11 “Look, a nation has come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the earth. Come now and put a curse on them for me; perhaps I will be able to defeat them and drive them out.”

12 But God said to Balaam, “You must not go with them; you must not curse the people, for they are blessed.”

13 So Balaam got up in the morning, and said to the princes of Balak, “Go to your land, for the LORD has refused to permit me to go with you.”

14 So the princes of Moab departed and went back to Balak and said, “Balaam refused to come with us.”

**Balak Asks a Second Time**

15 Balak again sent princes, more numerous and more distinguished than the first.

16 And they came to Balaam and said to him, “Thus says Balak son of Zippor: ‘Please do not let anything hinder you from coming to me.

17 For I will honor you greatly, and whatever you tell me I will do. So come, put a curse on this nation for me.’”

18 Balaam replied to the servants of Balak, “Even if Balak would give me his palace full of silver and gold, I could not transgress the commandment of the LORD my God to do less or more.

19 Now therefore, please stay the night here also, that I may know what more the LORD might say to me.”

20 God came to Balaam that night, and said to him, “If the men have come to call you, get up and go with them; but the word that I will say to you, that you must do.”

21 So Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab.

**Balaam’s Talking Donkey**

22 Then God’s anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him. Now he was riding on his donkey and his two servants were with him.

23 And the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn in his hand, so the donkey turned aside from the road and went into the field. But Balaam beat the donkey, to make her turn back to the road.

24 Then the angel of the LORD stood in a path among the vineyards, where there was a wall on either side.

25 And when the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she pressed herself into the wall, and crushed Balaam’s foot against the wall. So he beat her again.

26 Then the angel of the LORD went farther, and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left.

27 When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she crouched down under Balaam. Then Balaam was angry, and he beat his donkey with a staff.

28 Then the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, “What have I done to you that you have beaten me these three times?”

29 And Balaam said to the donkey, “You have made me look stupid; I wish there were a sword in my hand, for I would kill you right now.”

30 The donkey said to Balaam, “Am not I your donkey that you have ridden ever since I was yours until this day? Have I ever attempted to treat you this way?” And he said, “No.”

31 Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way with his sword drawn in his hand; so he bowed his head and threw himself down with his face to the ground.

32 The angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? Look, I came out to oppose you because what you are doing is perverse before me.

33 The donkey saw me and turned from me these three times. If she had not turned from me, I would have killed you but saved her alive."

34 Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood against me in the road. So now, if it is evil in your sight, I will go back home."

35 But the angel of the LORD said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but you may only speak the word that I will speak to you." So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

#### **Balak Meets Balaam**

36 When Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went out to meet him at a city of Moab which was on the border of the Arnon at the boundary of his territory.

37 Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not send again and again to you to summon you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?"

38 Balaam said to Balak, "Look, I have come to you. Now, am I able to speak just anything? I must speak only the word that God puts in my mouth."

39 So Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriath-huzoth.

40 And Balak sacrificed bulls and sheep, and sent some to Balaam, and to the princes who were with him.

### **Balaam's Seven Oracles (September–December 1407 BC)**

Numbers 22:41–24:24

#### **Balaam's First Oracle**

22:41 Then on the next morning Balak took Balaam, and brought him up to Bamoth Baal. From there he saw the extent of the nation.

23:1 Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams."

2 So Balak did just as Balaam had said. Balak and Balaam then offered on each altar a bull and a ram.

3 Balaam said to Balak, "Station yourself by your burnt offering, and I will go off; perhaps the LORD will come to meet me, and whatever he reveals to me I will tell you." Then he went to a deserted height.

4 Then God met Balaam, who said to him, "I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered on each altar a bull and a ram."

5 Then the LORD put a message in Balaam's mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and speak what I tell you."

6 So he returned to him, and he was still standing by his burnt offering, he and all the princes of Moab.

7 Then Balaam uttered his oracle, saying,

"Balak, the king of Moab, brought me from Aram,  
out of the mountains of the east, saying,  
'Come, pronounce a curse on Jacob for me;  
come, denounce Israel.'

8 How can I curse one whom God has not cursed,  
or how can I denounce one whom the LORD has not denounced?

9 For from the top of the rocks I see them;  
from the hills I watch them.  
Indeed, a nation that lives alone,  
and it will not be reckoned among the nations.

10 Who can count the dust of Jacob,  
Or number the fourth part of Israel?  
Let me die the death of the upright,  
and let the end of my life be like theirs."

11 Then Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies, but on the contrary you have only blessed them!"

12 Balaam replied, "Must I not be careful to speak what the LORD has put in my mouth?"

#### **Balaam's Second Oracle**

13 Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place from which you can observe them. You will see only a part of them, but you will not see all of them. Curse them for me from there."

14 So Balak brought Balaam to the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, where he built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

15 And Balaam said to Balak, "Station yourself here by your burnt offering, while I meet the LORD there.

16 Then the LORD met Balaam and put a message in his mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and speak what I tell you."

17 When Balaam came to him, he was still standing by his burnt offering, along with the princes of Moab. And Balak said to him, "What has the LORD spoken?"

18 Balaam uttered his oracle, and said,

"Rise up, Balak, and hear;

Listen to me, son of Zippor:

19 God is not a man, that he should lie,  
nor a human being, that he should change his mind.

Has he said, and will he not do it?

Or has he spoken, and will he not make it happen?

20 Indeed, I have received a command to bless;  
he has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

21 He has not looked on iniquity in Jacob,  
nor has he seen trouble in Israel.

The LORD their God is with them;

his acclamation as king is among them.

22 God brought them out of Egypt.  
They have, as it were, the strength of a wild bull.

23 For there is no spell against Jacob,  
nor is there any divination against Israel.

At this time it must be said of Jacob

and of Israel, 'Look at what God has done!'

24 Indeed, the people will rise up like a lioness,  
and like a lion raises himself up;  
they will not lie down until they eat their prey,  
and drink the blood of the slain."

25 Balak said to Balaam, "Neither curse them at all nor bless them at all!"

26 But Balaam replied to Balak, "Did I not tell you, 'All that the LORD speaks, I must do'?"

### **Balaam's Third Oracle**

27 Balak said to Balaam, "Come, please; I will take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God to let you curse them for me from there."

28 So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, that looks toward the wilderness.

29 Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build seven altars here for me, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams."

30 So Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

24:1 When Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go as at the other times to seek for omens, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

2 When Balaam lifted up his eyes, he saw Israel camped tribe by tribe; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

3 Then he uttered this oracle:

"The oracle of Balaam son of Beor;

the oracle of the man whose eyes are open;

4 the oracle of the one who hears the words of God,  
who sees a vision from the Almighty,  
although falling flat on the ground with eyes open:

5 'How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob,  
and your dwelling places, O Israel!

6 They are like valleys stretched forth,  
like gardens by the river's side,  
like aloes that the LORD has planted,  
and like cedar trees beside the waters.

7 He will pour the water out of his buckets,  
and their descendants will be like abundant water;

their king will be greater than Agag,  
and their kingdom will be exalted.

- 8 God brought them out of Egypt.  
They have, as it were, the strength of a young bull;  
they will devour hostile people  
and will break their bones  
and will pierce them through with arrows.
- 9 They crouch and lie down like a lion,  
and as a lioness, who can stir him?  
Blessed is the one who blesses you,  
and cursed is the one who curses you!”

10 Then Balak became very angry at Balaam, and he struck his hands together. Balak said to Balaam, “I called you to curse my enemies, and look, you have done nothing but bless them these three times!

11 So now, go back where you came from! I said that I would greatly honor you; but now the LORD has stood in the way of your honor.”

12 Balaam said to Balak, “Did I not also tell your messengers whom you sent to me,

13 ‘If Balak would give me his palace full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD to do either good or evil of my own will, but whatever the LORD tells me I must speak’?

14 And now, I am about to go back to my own people. Come now, and I will advise you as to what this people will do to your people in the future.”

#### **Balaam’s Fourth Oracle**

15 Then he uttered this oracle:

“The oracle of Balaam son of Beor;  
the oracle of the man whose eyes are open;  
16 the oracle of the one who hears the words of God,  
and who knows the knowledge of the Most High,  
who sees a vision from the Almighty,  
although falling flat on the ground with eyes open:

- 17 ‘I see him, but not now;  
I behold him, but not close at hand.  
A star will march forth out of Jacob,  
and a scepter will rise out of Israel.  
He will crush the skulls of Moab,  
and the heads of all the sons of Sheth.
- 18 Edom will be a possession,  
Seir, his enemies, will also be a possession;  
but Israel will act valiantly.
- 19 A ruler will be established from Jacob;  
he will destroy the remains of the city.”

#### **Balaam’s Fifth Oracle—Against the Amalekites**

20 Then Balaam looked on Amalek and delivered this oracle:

“Amalek was the first of the nations,  
but his end will be that he will perish.”

#### **Balaam’s Sixth Oracle—Against the Kenites**

21 Then he looked on the Kenites and uttered this oracle:

“Your dwelling place seems strong,  
and your nest is set on a rocky cliff.

- 22 Nevertheless the Kenite will be consumed.  
How long will Asshur take you away captive?”

#### **Balaam’s Seventh Oracle—Against Assyria**

23 Then he uttered this oracle:

“O, who will survive when God does this!  
24 Ships will come from the coast of Kittim,  
and will afflict Asshur, and will afflict Eber,  
and he will also perish forever.”

### Balaam Teaches Balak How to Corrupt Israel (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 24:25	Numbers 31:16a	Revelation 2:14
25 Balaam got up and departed and returned to his home, and Balak also went his way.	16a Look, these people through the counsel of Balaam caused the Israelites to act treacherously against the LORD in the matter of Peor—	14 But I have a few things against you: You have some people there who follow the teaching of Balaam, who instructed Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and commit sexual immorality.

### Israel Worships Baal of Peor (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 25

#### Israel Worships Baal of Peor and a Plague Strikes the People

- 1 When Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to commit sexual immorality with the daughters of Moab.
- 2 These women invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods; then the people ate and bowed down to their gods.
- 3 When Israel joined themselves to Baal-peor, the anger of the LORD flared up against Israel. [cf. [Num 31:16b](#)]

#### Yahweh Tells Moses How to Stop the Plague

- 4 The LORD said to Moses, “Arrest all the leaders of the people, and hang them up before the LORD in broad daylight, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.”
- 5 So Moses said to the judges of Israel, “Each of you must execute those of his men who were joined to Baal-peor.”

#### Phinehas Obeys Moses’ Command

- 6 Just then one of the Israelites came and brought to his brothers a Midianite woman in the plain view of Moses and of the whole community of the Israelites, while they were weeping at the entrance of the tent of meeting.
- 7 When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he got up from among the assembly, took a javelin in his hand,
- 8 and went after the Israelite man into the tent and thrust through the Israelite man and into the woman’s abdomen. So the plague was stopped from the Israelites.
- 9 Those that died in the plague were 24,000. [[1 Cor 10:8](#)]
- 10 The LORD spoke to Moses:
- 11 “Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites, when he manifested such zeal for my sake among them, so that I did not consume the Israelites in my zeal.
- 12 Therefore, announce: ‘I am going to give to him my covenant of peace.
- 13 So it will be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of a permanent priesthood, because he has been zealous for his God, and has made atonement for the Israelites.’”
- 14 Now the name of the Israelite who was stabbed—the one who was stabbed with the Midianite woman—was Zimri son of Salu, a leader of a clan of the Simeonites.
- 15 The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi daughter of Zur. He was a leader over the people of a clan of Midian.

#### Yahweh Initiates a War of Vengeance Against the Midianites

- 16 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:
- 17 “Bring trouble to the Midianites, and destroy them,
- 18 because they bring trouble to you by their treachery with which they have deceived you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, who was killed on the day of the plague that happened as a result of Peor.”

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**Second Census of Israel (September–December 1407 BC)****Numbers 26****Census Instructions**

- 1 After the plague the LORD said to Moses and to Eleazar son of Aaron the priest,
- 2 “Take a census of the whole community of Israelites, from twenty years old and upward, by their clans, everyone who can serve in the army of Israel.”
- 3 So Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them in the plains of Moab, by the Jordan River across from Jericho. They said,
- 4 “Number the people from twenty years old and upward, just as the LORD commanded Moses and the Israelites who went out from the land of Egypt.”

**Reuben’s Descendants**

- 5 Reuben was the firstborn of Israel. The Reubenites: from Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites; from Pallu, the family of the Palluites;
- 6 from Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; from Carmi, the family of the Carmites.
- 7 These were the families of the Reubenites; and those numbered of them were 43,730.
- 8 Pallu’s descendant was Eliab.
- 9 Eliab’s descendants were Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. It was Dathan and Abiram who as leaders of the community rebelled against Moses and Aaron with the followers of Korah when they rebelled against the LORD.
- 10 The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and Korah at the time that company died, when the fire consumed 250 men. So they became a warning.
- 11 But the descendants of Korah did not die.

**Simeon’s Descendants**

- 12 The Simeonites by their families: from Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites; from Jamin, the family of the Jaminites; from Jakin, the family of the Jakinites;
- 13 from Zerah, the family of the Zerahites; and from Shaul, the family of the Shaulites.
- 14 These were the families of the Simeonites, 22,200.

**Gad’s Descendants**

- 15 The Gadites by their families: from Zephon, the family of the Zephonites; from Haggi, the family of the Haggites; from Shuni, the family of the Shunites;
- 16 from Ozni, the family of the Oznites; from Eri, the family of the Erites;
- 17 from Arod, the family of the Arodites, and from Areli, the family of the Arelites.
- 18 These were the families of the Gadites according to those numbered of them, 40,500.

**Judah’s Descendants**

- 19 The descendants of Judah were Er and Onan, but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.
- 20 And the Judahites by their families were: from Shelah, the family of the Shelahites; from Perez, the family of the Perezites; and from Zerah, the family of the Zerahites.
- 21 And the Perezites were: from Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; from Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.
- 22 These were the families of Judah according to those numbered of them, 76,500.

**Issachar’s Descendants**

- 23 The Issacharites by their families: from Tola, the family of the Tolaites; from Puah, the family of the Puites;
- 24 from Jashub, the family of the Jashubites; and from Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.
- 25 These were the families of Issachar, according to those numbered of them, 64,300.

**Zebulun’s Descendants**

- 26 The Zebulunites by their families: from Sered, the family of the Sardites; from Elon, the family of the Elonites; from Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.
- 27 These were the families of the Zebulunites, according to those numbered of them, 60,500.

**Joseph—Manasseh’s Descendants**

- 28 The descendants of Joseph by their families: Manasseh and Ephraim.
- 29 The Manassehites: from Machir, the family of the Machirites (now Machir became the father of Gilead); from Gilead, the family of the Gileadites.
- 30 These were the Gileadites: from Iezer, the family of the Iezerites; from Helek, the family of the Helekites;
- 31 from Asriel, the family of the Asrielites; from Shechem, the family of the Shechemites;
- 32 from Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites; from Hopher, the family of the Hopherites.
- 33 Now Zelophehad son of Hopher had no sons, but only daughters; and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah,

Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

34 These were the families of Manasseh; those numbered of them were 52,700.

#### **Joseph—Ephraim's Descendants**

35 These are the Ephraimites by their families: from Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthelahites; from Beker, the family of the Bekerites; from Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.

36 Now these were the Shuthelahites: from Eran, the family of the Eranites.

37 These were the families of the Ephraimites, according to those numbered of them, 32,500. These were the descendants of Joseph by their families.

#### **Benjamin's Descendants**

38 The Benjaminites by their families: from Bela, the family of the Belaites; from Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites; from Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites;

39 from Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites; from Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.

40 The descendants of Bela were Ard and Naaman. From Ard, the family of the Ardites; from Naaman, the family of the Naamanites.

41 These are the Benjaminites, according to their families, and according to those numbered of them, 45,600.

#### **Dan's Descendants**

42 These are the Danites by their families: from Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These were the families of Dan, according to their families.

43 All the families of the Shuhahites according to those numbered of them were 64,400.

#### **Asher's Descendants**

44 The Asherites by their families: from Imnah, the family of the Imnahites; from Ishvi, the family of the Ishvites; from Beriah, the family of the Beriahites.

45 From the Beriahites: from Heber, the family of the Heberites; from Malkiel, the family of the Malkielites.

46 Now the name of the daughter of Asher was Serah.

47 These are the families of the Asherites, according to those numbered of them, 53,400.

#### **Naphtali's Descendants**

48 The Naphtalites by their families: from Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites; from Guni, the family of the Gunites;

49 from Jezer, the family of the Jezerites; from Shillem, the family of the Shillemites.

50 These were the families of Naphtali according to their families; and those numbered of them were 45,400.

#### **Total (net decline of 1,820 or around 0.3%)**

51 These were those numbered of the Israelites, 601,730.

#### **Instructions for the Division of the Land**

52 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

53 "To these the land must be divided as an inheritance according to the number of the names.

54 To a larger group you will give a larger inheritance, and to a smaller group you will give a smaller inheritance. To each one its inheritance must be given according to the number of people in it.

55 The land must be divided by lot; and they will inherit in accordance with the names of their ancestral tribes.

56 Their inheritance must be apportioned by lot among the larger and smaller groups.

#### **Levi's Descendants**

57 And these are the Levites who were numbered according to their families: from Gershon, the family of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites; from Merari, the family of the Merarites.

58 These are the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korahites. Kohath became the father of Amram.

59 Now the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt. And to Amram she bore Aaron, Moses, and Miriam their sister.

60 And to Aaron were born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

61 But Nadab and Abihu died when they offered strange fire before the LORD.

#### **Conclusion of the Second Census**

62 Those of them who were numbered were 23,000, all males from a month old and upward, for they were not numbered among the Israelites; no inheritance was given to them among the Israelites.

63 These are those who were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the Israelites in the plains of Moab along the Jordan River opposite Jericho.

64 But there was not a man among these who had been among those numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest when they numbered the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai.

65 For the LORD had said of them, “They will surely die in the wilderness.” And there was not left a single man of them, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

### Case Law—Daughters of Zelophehad (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 27:1–11

#### The Case Presented

1 Then the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh of the families of Manasseh, the son Joseph came forward. Now these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

2 And they stood before Moses and Eleazar the priest and the leaders of the whole assembly at the entrance to the tent of meeting and said,

3 “Our father died in the wilderness, although he was not part of the company of those that gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but he died for his own sin, and he had no sons.

4 Why should the name of our father be lost from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among the relatives of our father.”

5 So Moses brought their case before the LORD.

#### Case Decision and Derived Principles

6 The LORD said to Moses:

7 “The daughters of Zelophehad have a valid claim. You must indeed give them possession of an inheritance among their father’s relatives, and you must transfer the inheritance of their father to them.

8 And you must tell the Israelites, ‘If a man dies and has no son, then you must transfer his inheritance to his daughter;

9 and if he has no daughter, then you are to give his inheritance to his brothers;

10 and if he has no brothers, then you are to give his inheritance to his father’s brothers;

11 and if his father has no brothers, then you are to give his inheritance to his relative nearest to him from his family, and he will possess it. This will be for the Israelites a legal requirement, as the LORD commanded Moses.”

### Moses Commissions Joshua as His Successor (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 27:12–23

#### Yahweh Foretells Moses’ Approaching Death

12 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go up this mountain of the Abarim range, and see the land I have given to the Israelites.

13 When you have seen it, you will be gathered to your ancestors, as Aaron your brother was gathered to his ancestors.

14 For in the wilderness of Zin when the community rebelled against me, you rebelled against my command to show me as holy before their eyes over the water—the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.”

#### Moses, Concerned for the People, Entreats Yahweh to Appoint a New Leader

15 Then Moses spoke to the LORD:

16 “Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all humankind, appoint a man over the community, [cf. [Heb 12:9](#)]

17 who will go out before them, and who will come in before them, and who will lead them out, and who will bring them in, so that the community of the LORD may not be like sheep that have no shepherd.”

#### Yahweh’s Instructions for Moses’ Successor

18 The LORD replied to Moses, “Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is such a spirit, and lay your hand on him;

19 set him before Eleazar the priest and before the whole community, and commission him publicly.

20 Then you must delegate some of your authority to him, so that the whole community of the Israelites will be obedient.

21 And he will stand before Eleazar the priest, who will seek counsel for him before the LORD by the decision of the Urim. At his command they will go out, and at his command they will come in, he and all the Israelites with him, the whole community.”

#### Moses Commissions Joshua to Lead the People After His Death

22 So Moses did as the LORD commanded him; he took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before the whole community.

23 He laid his hands on him and commissioned him, just as the LORD commanded, by the authority of Moses.

## Required Sacrifices to be Offered Each Year (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 28–29

### Daily Offerings

28:1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Command the Israelites: ‘With regard to my offering, be sure to offer my food for my offering made by fire, as a pleasing aroma to me at its appointed time.’

3 You will say to them, ‘This is the offering made by fire which you must offer to the LORD: two unblemished lambs one year old each day for a continual burnt offering.

4 The first lamb you must offer in the morning, and the second lamb you must offer in the late afternoon,

5 with one-tenth of an ephah of finely ground flour as a grain offering mixed with one quarter of a hin of pressed olive oil.

6 It is a continual burnt offering that was instituted on Mount Sinai as a pleasing aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

7 “‘And its drink offering must be one quarter of a hin for each lamb. You must pour out the strong drink as a drink offering to the LORD in the holy place.

8 And the second lamb you must offer in the late afternoon; just as you offered the grain offering and drink offering in the morning, you must offer it as an offering made by fire, as a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

### Weekly (Sabbath) Offerings

9 “‘On the Sabbath day, you must offer two unblemished lambs a year old, and two-tenths of an ephah of finely ground flour as a grain offering, mixed with olive oil, along with its drink offering.

10 This is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the continual burnt offering and its drink offering. [[Matt 12:5](#)]

### Monthly (Rosh Chodesh) Offerings

11 “‘On the first day of each month you must offer as a burnt offering to the LORD two young bulls, one ram, and seven unblemished lambs a year old,

12 with three-tenths of an ephah of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil as a grain offering for each bull, and two-tenths of an ephah of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil as a grain offering for the ram,

13 and one-tenth of an ephah of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil as a grain offering for each lamb, as a burnt offering for a pleasing aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

14 For their drink offerings, include half a hin of wine with each bull, one-third of a hin for the ram, and one-fourth of a hin for each lamb. This is the burnt offering for each month throughout the months of the year.

15 And one male goat must be offered to the LORD as a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering and its drink offering.

### Spring—The Passover

16 “‘On the fourteenth day of the first month is the LORD’s Passover.

### Spring—Offerings for the Feast of Unleavened Bread

17 And on the fifteenth day of this month is the festival. For seven days bread made without yeast must be eaten.

18 And on the first day there is to be a holy assembly; you must do no ordinary work on it.

19 “‘But you must offer to the LORD an offering made by fire, a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs one year old; they must all be unblemished.

20 And their grain offering is to be of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil. For each bull you must offer three-tenths of an ephah, and two-tenths for the ram.

21 For each of the seven lambs you are to offer one-tenth of an ephah,

22 as well as one goat for a purification offering, to make atonement for you.

23 You must offer these in addition to the burnt offering in the morning which is for a continual burnt offering.

24 In this manner you must offer daily throughout the seven days the food of the sacrifice made by fire as a sweet aroma to the LORD. It is to be offered in addition to the continual burnt offering and its drink offering.

25 On the seventh day you are to have a holy assembly, you must do no regular work.

### Spring—Offerings for the Feasts of Weeks (Pentecost)

26 “‘Also, on the day of the first fruits, when you bring a new grain offering to the LORD during your Feast of Weeks, you are to have a holy assembly. You must do no ordinary work.

27 But you must offer as the burnt offering, as a sweet aroma to the LORD, two young bulls, one ram, seven lambs one year old,

28 with their grain offering of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil: three-tenths of an ephah for each bull, two-tenths for the one ram,

29 with one-tenth for each of the seven lambs,

30 as well as one male goat to make an atonement for you.

31 You are to offer them with their drink offerings in addition to the continual burnt offering and its grain offering—they must be unblemished.

**Fall—Offerings for the Feast of Trumpets**

29:1 ““On the first day of the seventh month, you are to hold a holy assembly. You must not do your ordinary work, for it is a day of blowing trumpets for you.

2 You must offer a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the LORD: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs one year old without blemish.

3 ““Their grain offering is to be of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil, three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths of an ephah for the ram,

4 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs,

5 with one male goat for a purification offering to make an atonement for you;

6 this is in addition to the monthly burnt offering and its grain offering, and the daily burnt offering with its grain offering and their drink offerings as prescribed, as a sweet aroma, a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD.

**Fall—Offerings for the Day of Atonement**

7 ““On the tenth day of this seventh month you are to have a holy assembly. You must humble yourselves; you must not do any work on it.

8 But you must offer a burnt offering as a pleasing aroma to the LORD, one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without blemish.

9 Their grain offering must be of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil, three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram,

10 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs,

11 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the purification offering for atonement and the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and their drink offerings.

**Fall—Offerings for the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths**

12 ““On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you are to have a holy assembly; you must do no ordinary work, and you must keep a festival to the LORD for seven days.

13 You must offer a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a pleasing aroma to the LORD: thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs each one year old, all of them without blemish.

14 Their grain offering must be of finely ground flour mixed with olive oil, three-tenths of an ephah for each of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths of an ephah for each of the two rams,

15 and one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs,

16 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering.

17 ““On the second day you must offer twelve young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs one year old, all without blemish,

18 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number as prescribed,

19 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and their drink offerings.

20 ““On the third day you must offer eleven bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs one year old, all without blemish,

21 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number as prescribed,

22 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering.

23 ““On the fourth day you must offer ten bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs one year old, all without blemish,

24 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number as prescribed,

25 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering.

26 ““On the fifth day you must offer nine bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs one year old, all without blemish,

27 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number as prescribed,

28 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering.

29 ““On the sixth day you must offer eight bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs one year old, all without blemish,

30 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number as prescribed,

31 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering.

32 ““On the seventh day you must offer seven bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs one year old, all without blemish,

33 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their number as prescribed,  
 34 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering.  
 35 “On the eighth day you are to have a holy assembly; you must do no ordinary work on it.  
 36 But you must offer a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, as a pleasing aroma to the LORD, one bull, one ram, seven lambs one year old, all of them without blemish,  
 37 and with their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, according to their number as prescribed,  
 38 along with one male goat for a purification offering, in addition to the continual burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering.

#### Summary

39 “These things you must present to the LORD at your appointed times, in addition to your vows and your freewill offerings, as your burnt offerings, your grain offerings, your drink offerings, and your peace offerings.”  
 40 So Moses told the Israelites everything, just as the LORD had commanded him.

## Laws Concerning Vows (September–December 1407 BC)

### Numbers 30

#### General Principle for Vows

1 Moses told the leaders of the tribes concerning the Israelites, “This is what the LORD has commanded:  
 2 If a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath of binding obligation on himself, he must not break his word, but must do whatever he has promised. [[Matt 5:33–37](#)]

#### Vows of Unmarried Women

3 “If a young woman who is still living in her father’s house makes a vow to the LORD or places herself under an obligation,  
 4 and her father hears of her vow or the obligation to which she has pledged herself, and her father remains silent about her, then all her vows will stand, and every obligation to which she has pledged herself will stand.  
 5 But if her father overrules her when he hears about it, then none of her vows or her obligations which she has pledged for herself will stand. And the LORD will release her from it, because her father overruled her.

#### Vows of Newly Married Women

6 “And if she marries a husband while under a vow, or she uttered anything impulsively by which she has pledged herself,  
 7 and her husband hears about it, but remains silent about her when he hears about it, then her vows will stand and her obligations which she has pledged for herself will stand.  
 8 But if when her husband hears it he overrules her, then he will nullify the vow she has taken, and whatever she uttered impulsively which she has pledged for herself. And the LORD will release her from it.

#### Vows of Widowed or Divorced Women

9 “But every vow of a widow or of a divorced woman which she has pledged for herself will remain intact.

#### Vows of Married Women

10 If she made the vow in her husband’s house or put herself under obligation with an oath,  
 11 and her husband heard about it, but remained silent about her, and did not overrule her, then all her vows will stand, and every obligation which she pledged for herself will stand.  
 12 But if her husband clearly nullifies them when he hears them, then whatever she says by way of vows or obligations will not stand. Her husband has made them void, and the LORD will release her from them.  
 13 “Any vow or sworn obligation that would bring affliction to her, her husband can confirm or nullify.  
 14 But if her husband remains completely silent about her from day to day, he thus confirms all her vows or all her obligations which she is under; he confirms them because he remained silent about when he heard them.  
 15 But if he should nullify them after he has heard them, then he will bear her iniquity.”

#### Summary

16 These are the statutes that the LORD commanded Moses, relating to a man and his wife, and a father and his young daughter who is still living in her father’s house.

## Yahweh's War of Vengeance Against Midian is Carried Out (September–December 1407 BC)

### Numbers 31

#### **The War of Vengeance Against Midian is Carried Out (initiated in Num 25:17)**

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Exact vengeance for the Israelites on the Midianites—after that you will be gathered to your people.”

3 So Moses spoke to the people: “Arm men from among you for the war, to attack the Midianites and to execute the LORD’s vengeance on Midian.

4 You must send to the battle a thousand men from every tribe throughout all the tribes of Israel.”

5 So a thousand from every tribe, twelve thousand armed for battle in all, were provided out of the thousands of Israel.

6 So Moses sent them to the war, one thousand from every tribe, with Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, who was in charge of the holy articles and the signal trumpets.

7 They fought against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses, and they killed every male.

8 They killed the kings of Midian in addition to those slain—Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba—five Midianite kings. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword.

#### **The Spoils of War**

9 The Israelites took the women of Midian captives along with their little ones, and took all their herds, all their flocks, and all their goods as plunder.

10 They burned all their towns where they lived and all their encampments.

11 They took all the plunder and all the spoils, both people and animals.

12 They brought the captives and the spoils and the plunder to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the Israelite community, to the camp on the plains of Moab, along the Jordan River across from Jericho.

#### **Moses Orders All Male Children and Sexually Active Women to be Killed**

13 Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the community went out to meet them outside the camp.

14 But Moses was furious with the officers of the army, the commanders over thousands and commanders over hundreds, who had come from service in the war.

15 Moses said to them, “Have you allowed all the women to live?

16 Look, these people through the counsel of Balaam caused the Israelites to act treacherously against the LORD in the matter of Peor—which resulted in the plague among the community of the LORD!

17 Now therefore kill every boy, and kill every woman who has had sexual intercourse with a man.

18 But all the young women who have not had sexual intercourse with a man will be yours.

#### **Purification After War**

19 “Any of you who has killed anyone or touched any of the dead, remain outside the camp for seven days; purify yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.

20 You must purify each garment and everything that is made of skin, everything made of goat’s hair, and everything made of wood.”

21 Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone into the battle, “This is the ordinance of the law that the LORD commanded Moses:

22 ‘Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead,

23 everything that may stand the fire, you are to pass through the fire, and it will be ceremonially clean, but it must still be purified with the water of purification. Anything that cannot withstand the fire you must pass through the water.

24 You must wash your clothes on the seventh day, and you will be ceremonially clean, and afterward you may enter the camp.’”

#### **Plunder Divided Equally Between the Warriors and the Congregation**

##### **Priests Received 1/500<sup>th</sup> of Warrior’s Share, Levites Received 1/50<sup>th</sup> of Congregation’s Share**

25 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

26 “You and Eleazar the priest, and all the family leaders of the community, take the sum of the plunder that was captured, both people and animals.

27 Divide the plunder into two parts, one for those who took part in the war—who went out to battle—and the other for all the community.

28 “You must exact a tribute for the LORD from the fighting men who went out to battle: one life out of five hundred, from the people, the cattle, and from the donkeys and the sheep.

29 You are to take it from their half-share and give it to Eleazar the priest for a raised offering to the LORD.

30 From the Israelites’ half-share you are to take one portion out of fifty of the people, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep—from every kind of animal—and you are to give them to the Levites, who are responsible for the care of the LORD’s tabernacle.”

31 So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.

32 The spoil that remained of the plunder which the fighting men had gathered was 675,000 sheep,  
 33 72,000 cattle,  
 34 61,000 donkeys,  
 35 and 32,000 young women who had never had sexual intercourse with a man.  
 36 The half-portion of those who went to war numbered 337,500 sheep;  
 37 the LORD's tribute from the sheep was 675.  
 38 The cattle numbered 36,000; the LORD's tribute was 72.  
 39 The donkeys were 30,500, of which the LORD's tribute was 61.  
 40 The people were 16,000, of which the LORD's tribute was 32 people.  
 41 So Moses gave the tribute, which was the LORD's raised offering, to Eleazar the priest, as the LORD commanded Moses.  
 42 From the Israelites' half-share that Moses had separated from the fighting men,  
 43 there were 337,500 sheep from the portion belonging to the community,  
 44 36,000 cattle,  
 45 30,500 donkeys,  
 46 and 16,000 people.  
 47 From the Israelites' share Moses took one of every fifty people and animals and gave them to the Levites who were responsible for the care of the Lord's tabernacle, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

#### **Army Commanders Bring a Special Offering of Gratitude for No Casualties**

48 Then the officers who were over the thousands of the army, the commanders over thousands and the commanders over hundreds, approached Moses  
 49 and said to him, "Your servants have taken a count of the men who were in the battle, who were under our authority, and not one is missing.  
 50 So we have brought as an offering for the LORD what each man found: gold ornaments, armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and necklaces, to make atonement for ourselves before the LORD."  
 51 Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from them, all of it in the form of ornaments.  
 52 All the gold of the offering they offered up to the LORD from the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds weighed 16,750 shekels.  
 53 Each soldier had taken plunder for himself.  
 54 So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds and brought it into the tent of meeting as a memorial for the Israelites before the LORD.

## **Reuben and Gad Settle on the East Side of Jordan (September–December 1407 BC)**

### **Numbers 32**

#### **Reuben and Gad Ask to Stay on the East Side of Jordan**

1 Now the Reubenites and the Gadites possessed a very large number of cattle. When they saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were ideal for cattle,  
 2 the Gadites and the Reubenites came and addressed Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the community. They said,  
 3 "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon,  
 4 the land that the LORD subdued before the community of Israel, is ideal for cattle, and your servants have cattle."  
 5 So they said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants for our inheritance. Do not have us cross the Jordan River."

#### **Moses Misunderstands Their Intentions**

6 Moses said to the Gadites and the Reubenites, "Must your brothers go to war while you remain here?  
 7 Why do you frustrate the intent of the Israelites to cross over into the land which the LORD has given them?  
 8 Your fathers did the same thing when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to see the land.  
 9 When they went up to the Eshcol Valley and saw the land, they frustrated the intent of the Israelites so that they did not enter the land that the LORD had given them.  
 10 So the anger of the LORD was kindled that day, and he swore,  
 11 'Because they have not followed me wholeheartedly, not one of the men twenty years old and upward who came from Egypt will see the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
 12 except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, and Joshua son of Nun, for they followed the LORD wholeheartedly.'  
 13 So the LORD's anger was kindled against the Israelites, and he made them wander in the wilderness for forty years, until all that generation that had done wickedly before the LORD was finished.  
 14 Now look, you are standing in your fathers' place, a brood of sinners, to increase still further the fierce wrath of the LORD against the Israelites.

15 For if you turn away from following him, he will once again abandon them in the wilderness, and you will be the reason for their destruction.”

#### **The Two Tribes Explain**

16 Then they came very close to him and said, “We will build sheep folds here for our flocks and cities for our families,  
17 but we will maintain ourselves in armed readiness and go before the Israelites until whenever we have brought them to their place. Our descendants will be living in fortified towns as a protection against the inhabitants of the land.  
18 We will not return to our homes until every Israelite has his inheritance.  
19 For we will not accept any inheritance on the other side of the Jordan River and beyond, because our inheritance has come to us on this eastern side of the Jordan.”

#### **Moses Agrees to their Request**

20 Then Moses replied, “If you will do this thing, and if you will arm yourselves for battle before the LORD,  
21 and if all your armed men cross the Jordan before the LORD until he drives out his enemies from his presence  
22 and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you may return and be free of your obligation to the LORD and to Israel. This land will then be your possession in the LORD’s sight.  
23 “But if you do not do this, then look, you will have sinned against the LORD. And know that your sin will find you out.  
24 So build cities for your descendants and pens for your sheep, but do what you have said you would do.”  
25 So the Gadites and the Reubenites replied to Moses, “Your servants will do as my lord commands.  
26 Our children, our wives, our flocks, and all our livestock will be there in the cities of Gilead,  
27 but your servants will cross over, every man armed for war, to do battle in the LORD’s presence, just as my lord says.”

#### **The Agreement is Witnessed Before the Leaders**

28 So Moses gave orders about them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and to the heads of the families of the Israelite tribes.  
29 Moses said to them: “If the Gadites and the Reubenites cross the Jordan with you, each one equipped for battle in the LORD’s presence, and you conquer the land, then you must allot them the territory of Gilead as their possession.  
30 But if they do not cross over with you armed, they must receive possessions among you in Canaan.”  
31 Then the Gadites and the Reubenites answered, “Your servants will do what the LORD has spoken.  
32 We will cross armed in the LORD’s presence into the land of Canaan, and then the possession of our inheritance that we inherit will be ours on this side of the Jordan River.”

#### **Moses Divides the Land (Half-tribe of Manasseh Joins Reuben and Gad)**

33 So Moses gave to the Gadites, the Reubenites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph the realm of King Sihon of the Amorites, and the realm of King Og of Bashan, the entire land with its cities and the territory surrounding them.  
34 The Gadites rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer,  
35 Atroth Shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah,  
36 Beth Nimrah, and Beth Haran as fortified cities, and constructed pens for their flocks.  
37 The Reubenites rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim,  
38 Nebo, Baal Meon (with a change of name), and Sibmah. They renamed the cities they built.  
39 The descendants of Machir son of Manasseh went to Gilead, took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who were in it.  
40 So Moses gave Gilead to Machir, son of Manasseh, and he lived there.  
41 Now Jair son of Manasseh went and captured their small towns and named them Havvoth Jair.  
42 Then Nobah went and captured Kenath and its villages and called it Nobah after his own name.

### **The Inheritance of Reuben, Gad and East Manasseh (September–December 1407 BC)**

Joshua 13:8–12, 14–33

#### **General Survey of the Inheritance—Levi Excluded**

8 The other half of Manasseh, Reuben, and Gad received their allotted tribal lands beyond the Jordan, just as Moses, the LORD’s servant, had assigned them.  
9 Their territory started from Aroer (on the edge of the Arnon Valley), included the city in the middle of the valley, the whole plain of Medeba as far as Dibon,  
10 and all the cities of King Sihon of the Amorites who ruled in Heshbon, and ended at the Ammonite border.  
11 Their territory also included Gilead, Geshurite and Maacathite territory, all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan to Salecah—  
12 the whole kingdom of Og in Bashan, who ruled in Ashtaroth and Edrei. (He was one of the few remaining Rephaites.) Moses defeated them and took their lands.  
14 However, Moses did not assign land as an inheritance to the Levites; their inheritance is the sacrificial offerings made to the LORD

God of Israel, as he instructed them.

### **Reuben's Inheritance**

15 Moses assigned land to the tribe of Reuben by its clans.

16 Their territory started at Aroer (on the edge of the Arnon Valley) and included the city in the middle of the valley, the whole plain of Medeba,

17 Heshbon and all its surrounding cities on the plain, including Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon,

18 Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath,

19 Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shahar on the hill in the valley,

20 Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth.

21 It encompassed all the cities of the plain and the whole realm of King Sihon of the Amorites who ruled in Heshbon. Moses defeated him and the Midianite leaders Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba (they were subjects of Sihon and lived in his territory).

22 The Israelites killed Balaam son of Beor, the omen reader, along with the others.

23 The border of the tribe of Reuben was the Jordan. The land allotted to the tribe of Reuben by its clans included these cities and their towns.

### **Gad's Inheritance**

24 Moses assigned land to the tribe of Gad by its clans.

25 Their territory included Jazer, all the cities of Gilead, and half of Ammonite territory as far as Aroer near Rabbah.

26 Their territory ran from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the territory of Debir.

27 It included the valley of Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, and the rest of the realm of King Sihon of Heshbon, the area east of the Jordan to the end of the Sea of Kinnereth.

28 The land allotted to the tribe of Gad by its clans included these cities and their towns.

### **East Manasseh's Inheritance**

29 Moses assigned land to the half-tribe of Manasseh by its clans.

30 Their territory started at Mahanaim and encompassed all Bashan, the whole realm of King Og of Bashan, including all sixty cities in Havvoth Jair in Bashan.

31 Half of Gilead, Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities in the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were assigned to the descendants of Makir son of Manasseh, to half the descendants of Makir by their clans.

### **Summary**

32 These are the land assignments made by Moses on the plains of Moab east of the Jordan River opposite Jericho.

33 However, Moses did not assign land as an inheritance to the Levites; their inheritance is the LORD God of Israel, as he instructed them.

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## Instructions for Occupying Canaan (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 33:50–56

50 The LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho. He said:

51 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan,

52 you must drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved images, all their molten images, and demolish their high places.

53 You must dispossess the inhabitants of the land and live in it, for I have given you the land to possess it.

54 You must divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families. To a larger group you must give a larger inheritance, and to a smaller group you must give a smaller inheritance. Everyone’s inheritance must be in the place where his lot falls. You must inherit according to your ancestral tribes.

55 But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, then those whom you allow to remain will be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your side, and will cause you trouble in the land where you will be living.

56 And what I intended to do to them I will do to you.”

## Boundaries of the Promised Land (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 34:1–15

### Introduction

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Give these instructions to the Israelites, and tell them: ‘When you enter Canaan, the land that has been assigned to you as an inheritance, the land of Canaan with its borders,

### Southern Border

3 your southern border will extend from the wilderness of Zin along the Edomite border, and your southern border will run eastward to the extremity of the Salt Sea,

4 and then the border will turn from the south to the Scorpion Ascent, continue to Zin, and then its direction will be from the south to Kadesh Barnea. Then it will go to Hazar Addar and pass over to Azmon.

5 There the border will turn from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, and then its direction is to the sea.

### Western Border

6 “And for a western border you will have the Great Sea. This will be your western border.

### Northern Border

7 “And this will be your northern border: From the Great Sea you will draw a line to Mount Hor;

8 from Mount Hor you will draw a line to Lebo Hamath, and the direction of the border will be to Zedad.

9 The border will continue to Ziphron, and its direction will be to Hazar Enan. This will be your northern border.

### Eastern Border

10 “For your eastern border you will draw a line from Hazar Enan to Shepham.

11 The border will run down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain, and the border will descend and reach the eastern side of the Sea of Chinnereth.

12 Then the border will continue down the Jordan River and its direction will be to the Salt Sea. This will be your land by its borders that surround it.”

### Land to be Divided Between the Nine Remaining Tribes (including the half-tribe of Manasseh)

13 Then Moses commanded the Israelites: “This is the land which you will inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to be given to the nine and a half tribes,

14 because the tribe of the Reubenites by their families, the tribe of the Gadites by their families, and half of the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance.

15 The two and a half tribes have received their inheritance on this side of the Jordan, east of Jericho, toward the sunrise.”

## Leaders Appointed to Distribute the Land (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 34:16–29

16 The LORD said to Moses:

17 “These are the names of the men who are to allocate the land to you as an inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun.

18 You must take one leader from every tribe to assist in allocating the land as an inheritance.

19 These are the names of the men: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh;

20 from the tribe of the Simeonites, Shemuel son of Ammihud;

21 from the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad son of Kislou;  
 22 and from the tribe of the Danites, a leader, Bukki son of Jogli.  
 23 From the Josephites, Haniel son of Ephod, a leader from the tribe of Manasseh;  
 24 from the tribe of the Ephraimites, a leader, Kemuel son of Shiphtan;  
 25 from the tribe of the Zebulunites, a leader, Elizaphan son of Parnach;  
 26 from the tribe of the Issacharites, a leader, Paltiel son of Azzan;  
 27 from the tribe of the Asherites, a leader, Ahihud son of Shelomi;  
 28 and from the tribe of the Naphtalites, a leader, Pedahel son of Ammihud.”  
 29 These are the ones whom the LORD commanded to divide up the inheritance among the Israelites in the land of Canaan.

### Cities for the Levites (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 35:1–8

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the Moabite plains by the Jordan near Jericho. He said:  
 2 “Instruct the Israelites to give the Levites towns to live in from the inheritance the Israelites will possess. You must also give the Levites grazing land around the towns.  
 3 Thus they will have towns in which to live, and their grazing lands will be for their cattle, for their possessions, and for all their animals.  
 4 The grazing lands around the towns that you will give to the Levites must extend to a distance of 500 yards from the town wall.  
 5 “You must measure from outside the wall of the town on the east 1,000 yards, and on the south side 1,000 yards, and on the west side 1,000 yards, and on the north side 1,000 yards, with the town in the middle. This territory must belong to them as grazing land for the towns.  
 6 Now from these towns that you will give to the Levites you must select six towns of refuge to which a person who has killed someone may flee. And you must give them forty-two other towns.  
 7 “So the total of the towns you will give the Levites is forty-eight. You must give these together with their grazing lands.  
 8 The towns you will give must be from the possession of the Israelites. From the larger tribes you must give more; and from the smaller tribes fewer. Each must contribute some of its own towns to the Levites in proportion to the inheritance allocated to each.

### Cities of Refuge (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 35:9–34

#### Establishment of Six Cities of Refuge

9 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:  
 10 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When you cross over the Jordan River into the land of Canaan,  
 11 you must then designate some towns as towns of refuge for you, to which a person who has killed someone unintentionally may flee.  
 12 And they must stand as your towns of refuge from the avenger in order that the killer may not die until he has stood trial before the community.  
 13 These towns that you must give shall be your six towns for refuge.  
 14 “You must give three towns on this side of the Jordan, and you must give three towns in the land of Canaan; they must be towns of refuge.  
 15 These six towns will be places of refuge for the Israelites, and for the foreigner, and for the settler among them, so that anyone who kills any person accidentally may flee there.

#### Laws Governing Murder Cases

16 “But if he hits someone with an iron tool so that he dies, he is a murderer. The murderer must surely be put to death.  
 17 If he strikes him by throwing a stone large enough that he could die, and he dies, he is a murderer. The murderer must surely be put to death.  
 18 Or if he strikes him with a wooden hand weapon so that he could die, and he dies, he is a murderer. The murderer must surely be put to death.  
 19 The avenger of blood himself must kill the murderer; when he meets him, he must kill him.  
 20 “But if he strikes him out of hatred or throws something at him intentionally so that he dies,  
 21 or with enmity he strikes him with his hand and he dies, the one who struck him must surely be put to death, for he is a murderer. The avenger of blood must kill the murderer when he meets him.

#### Laws Governing Manslaughter Cases

22 “But if he strikes him suddenly, without enmity, or throws anything at him unintentionally,  
 23 or with any stone large enough that a man could die, without seeing him, and throws it at him, and he dies, even though he was not his enemy nor sought his harm,

24 then the community must judge between the slayer and the avenger of blood according to these decisions.

25 The community must deliver the slayer out of the hand of the avenger of blood, and the community must restore him to the town of refuge to which he fled, and he must live there until the death of the high priest, who was anointed with the consecrated oil.

26 But if the slayer at any time goes outside the boundary of the town to which he had fled,

27 and the avenger of blood finds him outside the borders of the town of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the slayer, he will not be guilty of blood,

28 because the slayer should have stayed in his town of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest, the slayer may return to the land of his possessions.

29 So these things must be a statutory ordinance for you throughout your generations, in all the places where you live.

#### **Proper Legal Procedure (Witnesses) and Prohibition of Ransoming the Guilty**

30 “Whoever kills any person, the murderer must be put to death by the testimony of witnesses; but one witness cannot testify against any person to cause him to be put to death.

31 Moreover, you must not accept a ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death; he must surely be put to death.

32 And you must not accept a ransom for anyone who has fled to a town of refuge, to allow him to return home and live on his own land before the death of the high priest.

#### **Theological Rationale Behind the Laws**

33 “You must not pollute the land where you live, for blood defiles the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed there, except by the blood of the person who shed it.

34 Therefore do not defile the land that you will inhabit, in which I live, for I the LORD live among the Israelites.”

## Epilogue—Daughters of Zelophehad (September–December 1407 BC)

### Numbers 36

#### **Historical Background (see Numbers 27:1–11)**

1 Then the heads of the family groups of the Gileadites, the descendant of Machir, the descendant of Manasseh, who were from the Josephite families, approached and spoke before Moses and the leaders who were the heads of the Israelite families.

2 They said, “The LORD commanded my lord to give the land as an inheritance by lot to the Israelites; and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters.

#### **The Case Presented by the Gileadite Clans**

3 Now if they should be married to one of the men from another Israelite tribe, their inheritance would be taken from the inheritance of our fathers and added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry. As a result, it will be taken from the lot of our inheritance.

4 And when the Jubilee of the Israelites is to take place, their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry. So their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of our ancestral tribe.”

#### **Moses Presents the Case Adjudication at Yahweh’s Command**

5 Then Moses gave a ruling to the Israelites by the word of the LORD: “What the tribe of the Josephites is saying is right.

6 This is what the LORD has commanded for Zelophehad’s daughters: ‘Let them marry whomever they think best, only they must marry within the family of their father’s tribe.

7 In this way the inheritance of the Israelites will not be transferred from tribe to tribe. But every one of the Israelites must retain the ancestral heritage.

8 And every daughter who possesses an inheritance from any of the tribes of the Israelites must become the wife of a man from any family in her father’s tribe, so that every Israelite may retain the inheritance of his fathers.

9 No inheritance may pass from tribe to tribe. But every one of the tribes of the Israelites must retain its inheritance.”

10 As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the daughters of Zelophehad did.

11 For the daughters of Zelophehad—Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah—were married to the sons of their uncles.

12 They were married into the families of the Manassehites, the descendants of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father’s family.

#### **Conclusion of the Case and the Book of Numbers**

13 These are the commandments and the decisions that the LORD commanded the Israelites through the authority of Moses, on the plains of Moab by the Jordan River opposite Jericho.

## Prologue to First Mosaic Speech (1 Shebat [January/February] 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 1:1–5

- 1 This is what Moses said to the assembly of Israel in the Transjordanian wastelands, the arid country opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazereth, and Di Zahab
- 2 Now it is ordinarily an eleven-day journey from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by way of Mount Seir.
- 3 However, it was not until the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year that Moses addressed the Israelites just as the LORD had instructed him to do.
- 4 This took place after the defeat of King Sihon of the Amorites, whose capital was in Heshbon, and King Og of Bashan, whose capital was in Ashtaroth, specifically in Edrei.
- 5 So it was in the Transjordan, in Moab, that Moses began to deliver these words:

## First Mosaic Speech: Remembering the Past – Part 1 (1 Shebat [January/February] 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 1:6–2:37

### Departure from Horeb/Sinai (see Numbers 10:11)

- 1:6 The LORD our God spoke to us at Horeb and said, “You have stayed in the area of this mountain long enough.
- 7 Get up now, resume your journey, heading for the Amorite hill country, to all its areas including the arid country, the highlands, the Shephelah, the Negev, and the coastal plain—all of Canaan and Lebanon as far as the Great River, that is, the Euphrates.
- 8 Look! I have already given the land to you. Go, occupy the territory that I, the LORD, promised to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to their descendants.”

### Leaders for the Tribes (see Numbers 11:10–30)

- 9 I also said to you at that time, “I am no longer able to sustain you by myself.
- 10 The LORD your God has increased your population to the point that you are now as numerous as the very stars of the sky.
- 11 Indeed, may the LORD, the God of your ancestors, make you a thousand times more numerous than you are now, blessing you just as he said he would!
- 12 But how can I alone bear up under the burden of your hardship and strife?
- 13 Select wise and practical men, those known among your tribes, whom I may appoint as your leaders.”
- 14 You replied to me that what I had said to you was good.
- 15 So I chose as your tribal leaders wise and well-known men, placing them over you as administrators of groups of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, and also as other tribal officials.
- 16 I furthermore admonished your judges at that time that they should pay attention to issues among your fellow citizens and judge fairly, whether between one citizen and another or a citizen and a resident foreigner.
- 17 They must not discriminate in judgment, but hear the lowly and the great alike. Nor should they be intimidated by human beings, for judgment belongs to God. If the matter being adjudicated is too difficult for them, they should bring it before me for a hearing.
- 18 So I instructed you at that time regarding everything you should do.

### Rebellion at Kadesh-barnea (see Numbers 13–14)

- 19 Then we left Horeb and passed through all that immense, forbidding wilderness that you saw on the way to the Amorite hill country as the LORD our God had commanded us to do, finally arriving at Kadesh Barnea.
- 20 Then I said to you, “You have come to the Amorite hill country which the LORD our God is about to give us.
- 21 Look, he has placed the land in front of you! Go up, take possession of it, just as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, said to do. Do not be afraid or discouraged!”
- 22 So all of you approached me and said, “Let’s send some men ahead of us to scout out the land and bring us back word as to how we should attack it and what the cities are like there.”
- 23 I thought this was a good idea, so I sent twelve men from among you, one from each tribe.
- 24 They left and went up to the hill country, coming to the Eshcol Valley, which they scouted out.
- 25 Then they took some of the produce of the land and carried it back down to us. They also brought a report to us, saying, “The land that the LORD our God is about to give us is good.”
- 26 You were not willing to go up, however, but instead rebelled against the LORD your God.
- 27 You complained among yourselves privately and said, “Because the LORD hates us he brought us from Egypt to deliver us over to the Amorites so they could destroy us!
- 28 What is going to happen to us? Our brothers have drained away our courage by describing people who are more numerous and taller than we are, and great cities whose defenses appear to be as high as heaven itself! Moreover, they said they saw Anakites there.”
- 29 So I responded to you, “Do not be terrified of them!
- 30 The LORD your God is about to go ahead of you; he will fight for you, just as you saw him do in Egypt

31 and in the desert, where you saw him carrying you along like a man carries his son. This he did everywhere you went until you came to this very place.”

32 However, through all this you did not have confidence in the LORD your God,

33 the one who was constantly going before you to find places for you to set up camp. He appeared by fire at night and cloud by day, to show you the way you ought to go.

34 When the LORD heard you, he became angry and made this vow:

35 “Not a single person of this evil generation will see the good land that I promised to give to your ancestors!

36 The exception is Caleb son of Jephunneh; he will see it and I will give him and his descendants the territory on which he has walked, because he has wholeheartedly followed me.”

37 As for me, the LORD was also angry with me on your account. He said, “You also will not be able to go there.

38 However, Joshua son of Nun, your assistant, will go. Encourage him, because he will enable Israel to inherit the land.

39 Also, your infants, who you thought would die on the way, and your children, who as yet do not know good from bad, will go there; I will give them the land and they will possess it.

40 But as for you, turn back and head for the desert by the way to the Red Sea.”

41 Then you responded to me and admitted, “We have sinned against the LORD. We will now go up and fight as the LORD our God has told us to do.” So you each put on your battle gear and prepared to go up to the hill country.

42 But the LORD told me: “Tell them this: ‘Do not go up and fight, because I will not be with you and you will be defeated by your enemies.’”

43 I spoke to you, but you did not listen. Instead you rebelled against the LORD and recklessly went up to the hill country.

44 The Amorite inhabitants of that area confronted you and chased you like a swarm of bees, striking you down from Seir as far as Hormah.

45 Then you came back and wept before the LORD, but he paid no attention to you whatsoever.

46 Therefore, you remained at Kadesh for a long time—indeed, for the full time.

#### **Setting Out Toward Canaan After the Wilderness Wanderings (see Numbers 20:14–21)**

2:1 Then we turned and set out toward the desert land on the way to the Red Sea just as the LORD told me to do, detouring around Mount Seir for a long time.

2 At this point the LORD said to me,

3 “You have circled around this mountain long enough; now turn north.

4 Instruct these people as follows: ‘You are about to cross the border of your relatives the descendants of Esau, who inhabit Seir. They will be afraid of you, so watch yourselves carefully.

5 Do not be hostile toward them, because I am not giving you any of their land, not even a footprint, for I have given Mount Seir as an inheritance for Esau.

6 You may purchase food to eat and water to drink from them.

7 All along the way I, the LORD your God, have blessed your every effort. I have been attentive to your travels through this great wasteland. These forty years I have been with you; you have lacked for nothing.”

8 So we turned away from our relatives the descendants of Esau, the inhabitants of Seir, turning from the desert route, from Elat and Ezion Geber, and traveling the way of the Moab wastelands.

#### **Journey Through Moab Toward the Amorites (see Numbers 21:10–20)**

9 Then the LORD said to me, “Do not harass Moab and provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as your territory. This is because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as their possession.

10 (The Emites used to live there, a people as powerful, numerous, and tall as the Anakites.

11 These people, as well as the Anakites, are also considered Rephaites; the Moabites call them Emites.

12 Previously the Horites lived in Seir but the descendants of Esau dispossessed and destroyed them and settled in their place, just as Israel did to the land it came to possess, the land the LORD gave them.)

13 Now, get up and cross the Wadi Zered.” So we did so.

14 Now the length of time it took for us to go from Kadesh Barnea to the crossing of Wadi Zered was thirty-eight years, time for all the military men of that generation to die, just as the LORD had vowed to them.

15 Indeed, it was the very hand of the LORD that eliminated them from within the camp until they were all gone.

16 So it was that after all the military men had been eliminated from the community,

17 the LORD said to me,

18 “Today you are going to cross the border of Moab, that is, of Ar.

19 But when you come close to the Ammonites, do not harass or provoke them because I am not giving you any of the Ammonites’ land as your possession; I have already given it to Lot’s descendants as their possession.

20 (That also is considered to be a land of the Rephaites. The Rephaites lived there originally; the Ammonites call them Zamzummites.

21 They are a people as powerful, numerous, and tall as the Anakites. But the LORD destroyed the Rephaites in advance of the

Ammonites, so they dispossessed them and settled down in their place.

22 This is exactly what he did for the descendants of Esau who lived in Seir when he destroyed the Horites before them so that they could dispossess them and settle in their area to this very day.

23 As for the Avvites who lived in settlements as far west as Gaza, Caphtorites who came from Crete destroyed them and settled down in their place.)

24 Get up, make your way across Wadi Arnon. Look! I have already delivered over to you Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Go ahead! Take it! Engage him in war!

25 This very day I will begin to fill all the people of the earth with dread and to terrify them when they hear about you. They will shiver and shake in anticipation of your approach.”

**Victory Over King Sihon of Heshbon (see Numbers 21:21–32)**

26 Then I sent messengers from the Kedemoth Desert to King Sihon of Heshbon with an offer of peace:

27 “Let me pass through your land; I will keep strictly to the roadway. I will not turn aside to the right or the left.

28 Sell me food for cash so that I can eat and sell me water to drink. Just allow me to go through on foot,

29 just as the descendants of Esau who live at Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did for me, until I cross the Jordan to the land the LORD our God is giving us.”

30 But King Sihon of Heshbon was unwilling to allow us to pass near him because the LORD our God had made him obstinate and stubborn so that he might deliver him over to you this very day.

31 The LORD said to me, “Look! I have already begun to give over Sihon and his land to you. Start right now to take his land as your possession.”

32 When Sihon and all his troops emerged to encounter us in battle at Jahaz,

33 the LORD our God delivered him over to us and we struck him down, along with his sons and everyone else.

34 At that time we seized all his cities and put every one of them under divine judgment, including even the women and children; we left no survivors.

35 We kept only the livestock and plunder from the cities for ourselves.

36 From Aroer, which is at the edge of Wadi Arnon (it is the city in the wadi), all the way to Gilead there was not a town able to resist us—the LORD our God gave them all to us.

37 However, you did not approach the land of the Ammonites, the Wadi Jabbok, the cities of the hill country, or any place else forbidden by the LORD our God.

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## First Mosaic Speech: Remembering the Past – Part 2 (1 Shebat [January/February] 1406 BC)

### Deuteronomy 3

#### **Victory Over King Og of Bashan (see Numbers 21:33–35)**

1 Next we set out on the route to Bashan, but King Og of Bashan and his whole army came out to meet us in battle at Edrei.  
 2 The LORD, however, said to me, “Don’t be afraid of him because I have already given him, his whole army, and his land to you. You will do to him exactly what you did to King Sihon of the Amorites who lived in Heshbon.”  
 3 So the LORD our God did indeed give over to us King Og of Bashan and his whole army and we struck them down until not a single survivor was left.  
 4 We captured all his cities at that time—there was not a town we did not take from them—sixty cities, all the region of Argob, the dominion of Og in Bashan.  
 5 All of these cities were fortified by high walls, gates, and locking bars; in addition there were a great many open villages.  
 6 We put all of these under divine judgment just as we had done to King Sihon of Heshbon—every occupied city, including women and children.  
 7 But all the livestock and plunder from the cities we kept for ourselves.  
 8 So at that time we took the land of the two Amorite kings in the Transjordan from Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon  
 9 (the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion and the Amorites call it Senir),  
 10 all the cities of the plateau, all of Gilead and Bashan as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.  
 11 Only King Og of Bashan was left of the remaining Rephaites. (It is noteworthy that his sarcophagus was made of iron. Does it not, indeed, still remain in Rabbath of the Ammonites? It is thirteen and a half feet long and six feet wide according to standard measure.)

#### **Reuben and Gad Settle on the East Side of Jordan (see Numbers 32)**

12 This is the land we brought under our control at that time: The territory extending from Aroer by the Wadi Arnon and half the Gilead hill country with its cities I gave to the Reubenites and Gadites.  
 13 The rest of Gilead and all of Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to half the tribe of Manasseh. (All the region of Argob, that is, all Bashan, is called the land of Rephaim.  
 14 Jair, son of Manasseh, took all the Argob region as far as the border with the Geshurites and Maacathites (namely Bashan) and called it by his name, Havvoth-Jair, which it retains to this very day.)  
 15 I gave Gilead to Machir.  
 16 To the Reubenites and Gadites I allocated the territory extending from Gilead as far as Wadi Arnon (the exact middle of the wadi was a boundary) all the way to the Wadi Jabbok, the Ammonite border.  
 17 The Arabah and the Jordan River were also a border, from the sea of Chinnereth to the sea of the Arabah (that is, the Salt Sea), beneath the watershed of Pisgah to the east.  
 18 At that time I instructed you as follows: “The LORD your God has given you this land for your possession. You warriors are to cross over before your fellow Israelites equipped for battle.  
 19 But your wives, children, and livestock (of which I know you have many) may remain in the cities I have given you.  
 20 You must fight until the LORD gives your countrymen victory as he did you and they take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them on the other side of the Jordan River. Then each of you may return to his own territory that I have given you.”  
 21 I also commanded Joshua at the same time, “You have seen everything the LORD your God did to these two kings; he will do the same to all the kingdoms where you are going.  
 22 Do not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God will personally fight for you.”

#### **Moses Pleads With Yahweh to Enter Canaan**

23 Moreover, at that time I pleaded with the LORD,  
 24 “O, Lord GOD, you have begun to show me your greatness and strength. (What god in heaven or earth can rival your works and mighty deeds?)  
 25 Let me please cross over to see the good land on the other side of the Jordan River—this good hill country and the Lebanon!”  
 26 But the LORD was angry at me because of you and would not listen to me. Instead, he said to me, “Enough of that! Do not speak to me anymore about this matter.  
 27 Go up to the top of Pisgah and take a good look to the west, north, south, and east, for you will not be allowed to cross the Jordan.  
 28 Commission Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, because he will lead these people over and will enable them to inherit the land you will see.”  
 29 So we settled down in the valley opposite Beth Peor.

## First Mosaic Speech: Exhortation to Obey Yahweh (1 Shebat [January/February] 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 4:1–40

### The Responsibilities and Privileges of the Covenant

- 1 Now, Israel, pay attention to the statutes and ordinances I am about to teach you, so that you might live and go on to enter and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you.
- 2 Do not add a thing to what I command you nor subtract from it, so that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I am delivering to you.
- 3 You have witnessed what the LORD did at Baal Peor, how he eradicated from your midst everyone who followed Baal Peor.
- 4 But you who remained faithful to the LORD your God are still alive to this very day, every one of you.
- 5 Look! I have taught you statutes and ordinances just as the LORD my God told me to do, so that you might carry them out in the land you are about to enter and possess.
- 6 So be sure to do them, because this will testify of your wise understanding to the people who will learn of all these statutes and say, “Indeed, this great nation is a very wise people.”
- 7 In fact, what other great nation has a god so near to them like the LORD our God whenever we call on him?
- 8 And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this whole law that I am about to share with you today?

### Pass On the Memories of Mount Sinai

- 9 Again, however, pay very careful attention, lest you forget the things you have seen and disregard them for the rest of your life; instead teach them to your children and grandchildren.
- 10 You stood before the LORD your God at Horeb and he said to me, “Assemble the people before me so that I can tell them my commands. Then they will learn to revere me all the days they live in the land, and they will instruct their children.”
- 11 You approached and stood at the foot of the mountain, a mountain ablaze to the sky above it and yet dark with a thick cloud.
- 12 Then the LORD spoke to you from the middle of the fire; you heard speech but you could not see anything—only a voice was heard.
- 13 And he revealed to you the covenant he has commanded you to keep, the ten commandments, writing them on two stone tablets.
- 14 Moreover, at that same time the LORD commanded me to teach you statutes and ordinances for you to keep in the land which you are about to enter and possess.

### The Nature of Yahweh

- 15 Be very careful, then, because you saw no form at the time the LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the middle of the fire.
- 16 I say this so you will not corrupt yourselves by making an image in the form of any kind of figure. This includes the likeness of a human male or female,
- 17 any kind of land animal, any bird that flies in the sky,
- 18 anything that crawls on the ground, or any fish in the deep waters of the earth.
- 19 When you look up to the sky and see the sun, moon, and stars—the whole heavenly creation—you must not be seduced to worship and serve them, for the LORD your God has assigned them to all the people of the world.
- 20 You, however, the LORD has selected and brought from Egypt, that iron-smelting furnace, to be his special people as you are today.
- 21 But the LORD became angry with me because of you and vowed that I would never cross the Jordan nor enter the good land that he is about to give you.
- 22 So I must die here in this land; I will not cross the Jordan. But you are going over and will possess that good land.
- 23 Be on guard so that you do not forget the covenant of the LORD your God that he has made with you, and that you do not make an image of any kind, just as he has forbidden you.
- 24 For the LORD your God is a consuming fire; he is a jealous God. [[Heb 12:28–29](#)]

### Warnings of Future Exile for Disobedience

- 25 After you have produced children and grandchildren and have been in the land a long time, if you become corrupt and make an image of any kind and do other evil things before the LORD your God that enrage him,
- 26 I invoke heaven and earth as witnesses against you today that you will surely and swiftly be removed from the very land you are about to cross the Jordan to possess. You will not last long there because you will surely be annihilated.
- 27 Then the LORD will scatter you among the peoples and there will be very few of you among the nations where the LORD will drive you.
- 28 There you will worship gods made by human hands—wood and stone that can neither see, hear, eat, nor smell.
- 29 But if you seek the LORD your God from there, you will find him, if, indeed, you seek him with all your heart and soul.
- 30 In your distress when all these things happen to you in the latter days, if you return to the LORD your God and obey him
- 31 (for he is a merciful God), he will not let you down or destroy you, for he cannot forget the covenant with your ancestors that he confirmed by oath to them.

**Meditate on the Marvels You Have Seen and the Uniqueness of Yahweh**

32 Indeed, ask about the distant past, starting from the day God created humankind on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether there has ever been such a great thing as this, or even a rumor of it.

33 Have a people ever heard the voice of God speaking from the middle of fire, as you yourselves have, and lived to tell about it?

34 Or has God ever before tried to deliver a nation from the middle of another nation, accompanied by judgments, signs, wonders, war, strength, power, and other very terrifying things like the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

35 You have been taught that the LORD alone is God—there is no other besides him. [[Mark 12:32](#)]

36 From heaven he spoke to you in order to teach you, and on earth he showed you his great fire from which you also heard his words.

37 Moreover, because he loved your ancestors, he chose their descendants who followed them and personally brought you out of Egypt with his great power

38 to dispossess nations greater and stronger than you and brought you here this day to give you their land as your property.

39 Today realize and carefully consider that the LORD is God in heaven above and on earth below—there is no other!

40 Keep his statutes and commandments that I am setting forth today so that it may go well with you and your descendants and that you may enjoy longevity in the land that the LORD your God is about to give you as a permanent possession.

**Moses Designates Three Cities of Refuge East of Jordan (February 1406 BC)**

Deuteronomy 4:41–43

41 Then Moses selected three cities in the Transjordan, toward the east.

42 Anyone who accidentally killed someone without hating him at the time of the accident could flee to one of those cities and be safe.

43 These cities are Bezer, in the desert plateau, for the Reubenites; Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan for the Manassehites.

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## Prologue to Second Mosaic Speech (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 4:44–49

44 This is the law that Moses set before the Israelites.

45 These are the stipulations, statutes, and ordinances that Moses spoke to the Israelites after he had brought them out of Egypt, 46 in the Transjordan, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, in the land of King Sihon of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon. (It is he whom Moses and the Israelites attacked after they came out of Egypt.

47 They possessed his land and that of King Og of Bashan—both of whom were Amorite kings in the Transjordan, to the east.

48 Their territory extended from Aroer at the edge of the Arnon valley as far as Mount Siyon—that is, Hermon—

49 including all the Arabah of the Transjordan in the east to the sea of the Arabah, beneath the watershed of Pishgah.)

## Second Mosaic Speech: General Covenant Stipulations – Part 1 (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 5–6

### Opening Exhortation

5:1 Then Moses called all the people of Israel together and said to them: “Listen, Israel, to the statutes and ordinances that I am about to deliver to you today; learn them and be careful to keep them!

2 The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb.

3 He did not make this covenant with our ancestors but with us, we who are here today, all of us living now.

4 The LORD spoke face to face with you at the mountain, from the middle of the fire.

5 (I was standing between the LORD and you at that time to reveal to you the message of the LORD, because you were afraid of the fire and would not go up the mountain.) He said:

### The Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20:1–17)

6 “I am the LORD your God, he who brought you from the land of Egypt, from the place of slavery.

7 You must not have any other gods besides me.

8 You must not make for yourself an image of anything in heaven above, on earth below, or in the waters beneath.

9 You must not worship or serve them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God. I punish the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons for the sin of the fathers who reject me,

10 but I show covenant faithfulness to the thousands who choose me and keep my commandments.

11 You must not make use of the name of the LORD your God for worthless purposes, for the LORD will not exonerate anyone who abuses his name that way.

12 Be careful to observe the Sabbath day just as the LORD your God has commanded you.

13 You are to work and do all your tasks in six days,

14 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. On that day you must not do any work, you, your son, your daughter, your male slave, your female slave, your ox, your donkey, any other animal, or the foreigner who lives with you, so that your male and female slaves, like yourself, may have rest.

15 Recall that you were slaves in the land of Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there by strength and power. That is why the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

16 Honor your father and your mother just as the LORD your God has commanded you to do, so that your days may be extended and that it may go well with you in the land that he is about to give you.

17 You must not murder.

18 You must not commit adultery.

19 You must not steal.

20 You must not offer false testimony against another.

21 You must not desire another man’s wife, nor should you crave his house, his field, his male and female servants, his ox, his donkey, or anything else he owns.”

### Israel Requests Moses to Mediate Yahweh’s Covenant (see Exodus 20:18–21)

22 The LORD said these things to your entire assembly at the mountain from the middle of the fire, the cloud, and the darkness with a loud voice, and that was all he said. Then he inscribed the words on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

23 Then, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness while the mountain was ablaze, all your tribal leaders and elders approached me.

24 You said, “The LORD our God has shown us his great glory and we have heard him speak from the middle of the fire. It is now clear to us that God can speak to human beings and they can keep on living.

25 But now, why should we die, because this intense fire will consume us! If we keep hearing the voice of the LORD our God we will die!

26 Who is there from the entire human race who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the middle of the fire as we have, and has lived?

27 You go near so that you can hear everything the LORD our God is saying and then you can tell us whatever he says to you; then we

will pay attention and do it.”

### **Yahweh Approves**

28 When the LORD heard you speaking to me, he said to me, “I have heard what these people have said to you—they have spoken well.

29 If only it would really be their desire to fear me and obey all my commandments in the future, so that it may go well with them and their descendants forever.

30 Go and tell them, ‘Return to your tents!’

31 But as for you, remain here with me so I can declare to you all the commandments, statutes, and ordinances that you are to teach them, so that they can carry them out in the land I am about to give them.”

32 Be careful, therefore, to do exactly what the LORD your God has commanded you; do not turn right or left!

33 Walk just as he has commanded you so that you may live, that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land you are going to possess.

### **Exhortation to Obey Yahweh**

6:1 Now these are the commandments, statutes, and ordinances that the LORD your God instructed me to teach you so that you may carry them out in the land where you are headed

2 and that you may so revere the LORD your God that you will keep all his statutes and commandments that I am giving you—you, your children, and your grandchildren—all your lives, to prolong your days.

3 Pay attention, Israel, and be careful to do this so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in number—as the LORD, God of your ancestors, said to you, you will have a land flowing with milk and honey.

### **The Shema**

4 Listen, Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

5 You must love the LORD your God with your whole mind, your whole being, and all your strength. [[Matt 22:34–38](#)]

### **Exhortation to Teach Yahweh’s Words**

6 These words I am commanding you today must be kept in mind,

7 and you must teach them to your children and speak of them as you sit in your house, as you walk along the road, as you lie down, and as you get up.

8 You should tie them as a reminder on your forearm and fasten them as symbols on your forehead.

9 Inscribe them on the doorframes of your houses and gates.

### **Worship Only Yahweh**

10 Then when the LORD your God brings you to the land he promised your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give you—a land with large, fine cities you did not build,

11 houses filled with choice things you did not accumulate, hewn out cisterns you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant—and you eat your fill,

12 be careful not to forget the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, that place of slavery.

13 You must revere the LORD your God, serve him, and take oaths using only his name. [[Matt 4:8–10](#)]

14 You must not go after other gods, those of the surrounding peoples,

15 for the LORD your God, who is present among you, is a jealous God and his anger will erupt against you and remove you from the land.

16 You must not put the LORD your God to the test as you did at Massah. [[Matt 4:5–7](#)]

17 Keep his commandments very carefully, as well as the stipulations and statutes he commanded you to observe.

18 Do whatever is proper and good before the LORD so that it may go well with you and that you may enter and occupy the good land that he promised your ancestors,

19 and that you may drive out all your enemies just as the LORD said.

### **How to Teach Your Children**

20 When your children ask you later on, “What are the stipulations, statutes, and ordinances that the LORD our God commanded you?”

21 you must say to them, “We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt in a powerful way.

22 And he brought signs and great, devastating wonders on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on his whole family before our very eyes.

23 He delivered us from there so that he could give us the land he had promised our ancestors.

24 The LORD commanded us to obey all these statutes and to revere him so that it may always go well for us and he may preserve us, as he has to this day.

25 We will be innocent if we carefully keep all these commandments before the LORD our God, just as he demands.”

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## Second Mosaic Speech: General Covenant Stipulations – Part 2 (February 1406 BC)

### Deuteronomy 7–8

#### **Completely Destroy the Sinful Nations of Canaan**

7:1 When the LORD your God brings you to the land that you are going to occupy and forces out many nations before you—Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and powerful than you—  
2 and he delivers them over to you and you attack them, you must utterly annihilate them. Make no treaty with them and show them no mercy!

3 You must not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons,

4 for they will turn your sons away from me to worship other gods. Then the anger of the LORD will erupt against you and he will quickly destroy you.

5 Instead, this is what you must do to them: You must tear down their altars, shatter their sacred pillars, cut down their sacred Asherah poles, and burn up their idols.

6 For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. He has chosen you to be his people, prized above all others on the face of the earth.

#### **Yahweh Chose Israel Out of Love and Faithfulness to His Promise—Therefore, Obey!**

7 It is not because you were more numerous than all the other peoples that the LORD favored and chose you—for in fact you were the least numerous of all peoples.

8 Rather it is because of his love for you and his faithfulness to the promise he solemnly vowed to your ancestors that the LORD brought you out with great power, redeeming you from the place of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9 So realize that the LORD your God is the true God, the faithful God who keeps covenant faithfully with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,

10 but who pays back those who hate him as they deserve and destroys them. He will not ignore those who hate him but will repay them as they deserve!

11 So keep the commandments, statutes, and ordinances that I today am commanding you to do.

#### **Obedience Will Bring Blessing**

12 If you obey these ordinances and are careful to do them, the LORD your God will faithfully keep covenant with you as he promised your ancestors.

13 He will love and bless you, and make you numerous. He will bless you with many children, with the produce of your soil, your grain, your new wine, your oil, the offspring of your oxen, and the young of your flocks in the land which he promised your ancestors to give you.

14 You will be blessed beyond all peoples; there will be no barrenness among you or your livestock.

15 The LORD will protect you from all sickness, and you will not experience any of the terrible diseases that you knew in Egypt; instead he will inflict them on all those who hate you.

16 You must destroy all the people whom the LORD your God is about to deliver over to you; you must not pity them or worship their gods, for that will be a snare to you.

#### **Yahweh Will Give Victory—Do Not Fear the Enemy**

17 If you think, “These nations are more numerous than I—how can I dispossess them?”

18 you must not fear them. You must carefully recall what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and all Egypt,

19 the great judgments you saw, the signs and wonders, the strength and power by which he brought you out—thus the LORD your God will do to all the people you fear.

20 Furthermore, the LORD your God will release hornets among them until the very last ones who hide from you perish.

21 You must not tremble in their presence, for the LORD your God, who is present among you, is a great and awesome God.

22 He, the God who leads you, will expel the nations little by little. You will not be allowed to destroy them all at once lest the wild animals overrun you.

23 The LORD your God will give them over to you; he will throw them into a great panic until they are destroyed.

24 He will hand over their kings to you and you will erase their very names from memory. Nobody will be able to resist you until you destroy them.

25 You must burn the images of their gods, but do not covet the silver and gold that covers them so much that you take it for yourself and thus become ensnared by it; for it is abhorrent to the LORD your God.

26 You must not bring any abhorrent thing into your house and thereby become an object of divine wrath along with it. You must absolutely detest and abhor it, for it is an object of divine wrath.

#### **Remember How Yahweh Led You—He Humbled and Disciplined You**

8:1 You must keep carefully all these commandments I am giving you today so that you may live, increase in number, and go in and occupy the land that the LORD promised to your ancestors.

2 Remember the whole way by which he has brought you these forty years through the desert so that he might, by humbling you, test you to see if you have it within you to keep his commandments or not.

3 So he humbled you by making you hungry and then feeding you with unfamiliar manna. He did this to teach you that humankind cannot live by bread alone, but also by everything that comes from the LORD's mouth. [[Matt 4:1-4](#); [Luke 4:1-4](#)]

4 Your clothing did not wear out nor did your feet swell all these forty years.

5 Be keenly aware that just as a parent disciplines his child, the LORD your God disciplines you.

6 So you must keep his commandments, live according to his standards, and revere him.

#### **Be Sure to Praise Yahweh for His Generous Provision**

7 For the LORD your God is bringing you to a good land, a land of brooks, springs, and fountains flowing forth in valleys and hills,

8 a land of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, and pomegranates, of olive trees and honey,

9 a land where you may eat food in plenty and find no lack of anything, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you can mine copper.

10 You will eat your fill and then praise the LORD your God because of the good land he has given you.

#### **Warning—Prosperity Can Lead to Pride**

11 Be sure you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments, ordinances, and statutes that I am giving you today.

12 When you eat your fill, when you build and occupy good houses,

13 when your cattle and flocks increase, when you have plenty of silver and gold, and when you have abundance of everything,

14 be sure you do not feel self-important and forget the LORD your God who brought you from the land of Egypt, the place of slavery,

15 and who brought you through the great, fearful desert of venomous serpents and scorpions, an arid place with no water. He

made water flow from a flint rock and

16 fed you in the desert with manna (which your ancestors had never before known) so that he might by humbling you test you and eventually bring good to you.

17 Be careful not to say, "My own ability and skill have gotten me this wealth."

18 You must remember the LORD your God, for he is the one who gives ability to get wealth; if you do this he will confirm his covenant that he made by oath to your ancestors, even as he has to this day.

#### **Warning—Disobedience Will Bring Destruction**

19 Now if you forget the LORD your God at all and follow other gods, worshiping and prostrating yourselves before them, I testify to you today that you will surely be annihilated.

20 Just like the nations the LORD is about to destroy from your sight, so he will do to you because you would not obey him.

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## Second Mosaic Speech: General Covenant Stipulations – Part 3 (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 9–11

### **Warning—Don't Allow Victory to Puff You Up. You are a Stubborn People!**

9:1 Listen, Israel: Today you are about to cross the Jordan so you can dispossess the nations there, people greater and stronger than you who live in large cities with extremely high fortifications.

2 They include the Anakites, a numerous and tall people whom you know about and of whom it is said, "Who is able to resist the Anakites?"

3 Understand today that the LORD your God who goes before you is a devouring fire; he will defeat and subdue them before you. You will dispossess and destroy them quickly just as he has told you.

4 Do not think to yourself after the LORD your God has driven them out before you, "Because of my own righteousness the LORD has brought me here to possess this land." It is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is driving them out ahead of you.

5 It is not because of your righteousness, or even your inner uprightness, that you have come here to possess their land. Instead, because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out ahead of you in order to confirm the promise he made on oath to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 Understand, therefore, that it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is about to give you this good land as a possession, for you are a stubborn people!

### **Remember the Rebellion at Mount Sinai (see Exodus 32:1–20)**

7 Remember—don't ever forget—how you provoked the LORD your God in the desert; from the time you left the land of Egypt until you came to this place you were constantly rebelling against him.

8 At Horeb you provoked him and he was angry enough with you to destroy you.

9 When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that the LORD made with you, I remained there forty days and nights, eating and drinking nothing.

10 The LORD gave me the two stone tablets, written by the very finger of God, and on them was everything he said to you at the mountain from the midst of the fire at the time of that assembly.

11 Now at the end of the forty days and nights the LORD presented me with the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant.

12 And he said to me, "Get up, go down at once from here because your people whom you brought out of Egypt have sinned! They have quickly turned from the way I commanded them and have made for themselves a cast metal image."

13 Moreover, he said to me, "I have taken note of these people; they are a stubborn lot!

14 Stand aside and I will destroy them, obliterating their very name from memory, and I will make you into a stronger and more numerous nation than they are."

15 So I turned and went down the mountain while it was blazing with fire; the two tablets of the covenant were in my hands.

16 When I looked, you had indeed sinned against the LORD your God and had cast for yourselves a metal calf; you had quickly turned aside from the way he had commanded you!

17 I grabbed the two tablets, threw them down, and shattered them before your very eyes.

18 Then I again fell down before the LORD for forty days and nights; I ate and drank nothing because of all the sin you had committed, doing such evil before the LORD as to enrage him.

19 For I was terrified at the LORD's intense anger that threatened to destroy you. [\[Heb 12:21\]](#) But he listened to me this time as well.

20 The LORD was also angry enough at Aaron to kill him, but at that time I prayed for him too.

21 As for your sinful thing that you had made, the calf, I took it, melted it down, ground it up until it was as fine as dust, and tossed the dust into the stream that flows down the mountain.

### **Parenthesis—Reference to Other Instances of Rebellion**

22 Moreover, you continued to provoke the LORD at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth-Hattaavah.

23 And when he sent you from Kadesh-Barnea and told you, "Go up and possess the land I have given you," you rebelled against the LORD your God and would neither believe nor obey him.

24 You have been rebelling against him from the very first day I knew you!

### **Sinai Narrative Resumed (see Exodus 32:30–35)**

25 I lay flat on the ground before the LORD for forty days and nights, for he had said he would destroy you.

26 I prayed to him: O, Lord GOD, do not destroy your people, your valued property that you have powerfully redeemed, whom you brought out of Egypt by your strength.

27 Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; ignore the stubbornness, wickedness, and sin of these people.

28 Otherwise the people of the land from which you brought us will say, "The LORD was unable to bring them to the land he promised them, and because of his hatred for them he has brought them out to kill them in the desert."

29 They are your people, your valued property, whom you brought out with great strength and power.

**The Covenant Renewed (see Exodus 34)**

10:1 At that same time the LORD said to me, “Carve out for yourself two stone tablets like the first ones and come up the mountain to me; also make for yourself a wooden ark.

2 I will write on the tablets the same words that were on the first tablets you broke, and you must put them into the ark.”

3 So I made an ark of acacia wood and carved out two stone tablets just like the first ones. Then I went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hands. [*This ark was a temporary storage place for the Tablets of the Covenant until Bezalel made the permanent ark—see Exod 37:1.*]

4 The LORD then wrote on the tablets the same words, the ten commandments, which he had spoken to you at the mountain from the middle of the fire at the time of that assembly, and he gave them to me.

5 Then I turned, went down the mountain, and placed the tablets into the ark I had made—they are still there, just as the LORD commanded me.

**Parenthesis—Aaron’s Death and Succession, Tribe of Levi Set Apart to Yahweh**

6 “During those days the Israelites traveled from Beeroth Bene-Yaaqan to Moserah. There Aaron died and was buried, and his son Eleazar became priest in his place.

7 From there they traveled to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a place of flowing streams.

8 At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the LORD’s covenant, to stand before the LORD to serve him, and to formulate blessings in his name, as they do to this very day.

9 Therefore Levi has no allotment or inheritance among his brothers; the LORD is his inheritance just as the LORD your God told him.

**Sinai Narrative Concluded (see Exodus 34)**

10 As for me, I stayed at the mountain as I did the first time, forty days and nights. The LORD listened to me that time as well and decided not to destroy you.

11 Then he said to me, “Get up, set out leading the people so they may go and possess the land I promised to give to their ancestors.”

**Loving God and Loving Others**

12 Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you except to revere him, to obey all his commandments, to love him, to serve him with all your mind and being,

13 and to keep the Lord’s commandments and statutes that I am giving you today for your own good?

14 The heavens—indeed the highest heavens—belong to the LORD your God, as does the earth and everything in it.

15 However, only to your ancestors did he show his loving favor, and he chose you, their descendants, from all peoples—as is apparent today.

16 Therefore, cleanse your heart and stop being so stubborn!

17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty, and awesome God who is unbiased and takes no bribe,

18 who justly treats the orphan and widow, and who loves resident foreigners, giving them food and

clothing. [[Acts 10:34](#); [Rom 2:11](#); [Gal 2:6](#); [Eph 6:9](#)]

19 So you must love the resident foreigner because you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.

20 Revere the LORD your God, serve him, be loyal to him and take oaths only in his name.

21 He is the one you should praise; he is your God, the one who has done these great and awesome things for you that you have seen.

22 When your ancestors went down to Egypt, they numbered only seventy, but now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars of the sky.

**Your Personal Experience of Yahweh’s Great Deeds Should Motivate You to Love Him**

11:1 You must love the LORD your God and do what he requires; keep his statutes, ordinances, and commandments at all times.

2 Bear in mind today that I am not speaking to your children who have not personally experienced the judgments of the LORD your God, which revealed his greatness, strength, and power.

3 They did not see the awesome deeds he performed in the midst of Egypt against Pharaoh king of Egypt and his whole land,

4 or what he did to the army of Egypt, including their horses and chariots, when he made the waters of the Red Sea overwhelm them while they were pursuing you and he annihilated them.

5 They did not see what he did to you in the desert before you reached this place,

6 or what he did to Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab the Reubenite, when the earth opened its mouth in the middle of the Israelite camp and swallowed them, their families, their tents, and all the property they brought with them.

7 I am speaking to you because you are the ones who saw all the great deeds of the LORD!

**Yahweh Intends Canaan’s Unique Agricultural Environment to Encourage Obedience**

8 Now pay attention to all the commandments I am giving you today, so that you may be strong enough to enter and possess the

land where you are headed,

9 and that you may enjoy long life in the land the LORD promised to give to your ancestors and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

10 For the land where you are headed is not like the land of Egypt from which you came, a land where you planted seed and which you irrigated by hand like a vegetable garden.

11 Instead, the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy is one of hills and valleys, a land that drinks in water from the rains, 12 a land the LORD your God looks after. He is constantly attentive to it from the beginning to the end of the year.

13 Now, if you pay close attention to my commandments that I am giving you today and love the LORD your God and serve him with all your mind and being,

14 then he promises, “I will send rain for your land in its season, the autumn and the spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine, and olive oil.

15 I will provide pasture for your livestock and you will eat your fill.”

16 Make sure you do not turn away to serve and worship other gods!

17 Then the anger of the LORD will erupt against you and he will close up the sky so that it does not rain. The land will not yield its produce, and you will soon be removed from the good land that the Lord is about to give you.

### **Keep Yahweh’s Words Before You**

18 Fix these words of mine into your mind and being, and tie them as a reminder on your hands and let them be symbols on your forehead.

19 Teach them to your children and speak of them as you sit in your house, as you walk along the road, as you lie down, and as you get up.

20 Inscribe them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates

21 so that your days and those of your descendants may be extended in the land which the LORD promised to give to your ancestors, like the days of heaven itself.

22 For if you carefully observe all of these commandments I am giving you and love the LORD your God, live according to his standards, and remain loyal to him,

23 then he will drive out all these nations ahead of you, and you will dispossess nations greater and stronger than you.

24 Every place you set your foot will be yours; your border will extend from the desert to Lebanon and from the River (that is, the Euphrates) as far as the Mediterranean Sea.

25 Nobody will be able to resist you; the LORD your God will spread the fear and terror of you over the whole land on which you walk, just as he promised you.

### **Blessing and Curse**

26 Take note—I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse:

27 the blessing if you take to heart the commandments of the LORD your God that I am giving you today,

28 and the curse if you pay no attention to his commandments and turn from the way I am setting before you today to pursue other gods you have not known.

29 When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are to possess, you must pronounce the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

30 Are they not across the Jordan River, toward the west, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah opposite Gilgal near the oak of Moreh?

31 For you are about to cross the Jordan to possess the land the LORD your God is giving you, and you will possess and inhabit it.

32 Be certain to keep all the statutes and ordinances that I am presenting to you today.

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## Second Mosaic Speech: Specific Covenant Stipulations – Part 1 (February 1406 BC)

### Deuteronomy 12–14

#### Introduction

12:1 These are the statutes and ordinances you must be careful to obey as long as you live in the land the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you to possess.

#### No God but Yahweh—Destroy All Idolatrous Places of Worship

2 You must by all means destroy all the places where the nations you are about to dispossess worship their gods—on the high mountains and hills and under every leafy tree.

3 You must tear down their altars, shatter their sacred pillars, burn up their sacred Asherah poles, and cut down the images of their gods; you must eliminate their very memory from that place.

#### Proper Worship of Yahweh at the Central Sanctuary

4 You must not worship the LORD your God the way they worship.

5 But you must seek only the place he chooses from all your tribes to establish his name as his place of residence, and you must go there.

6 And there you must take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the personal offerings you have prepared, your votive offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.

7 Both you and your families must feast there before the LORD your God and rejoice in all the output of your labor with which he has blessed you.

8 You must not do like we are doing here today, with everyone doing what seems best to him,

9 for you have not yet come to the final stop and inheritance the LORD your God is giving you.

10 When you do go across the Jordan River and settle in the land he is granting you as an inheritance and you find relief from all the enemies who surround you, you will live in safety.

11 Then you must come to the place the LORD your God chooses for his name to reside, bringing everything I am commanding you—your burnt offerings, sacrifices, tithes, the personal offerings you have prepared, and all your choice votive offerings which you devote to him.

12 You shall rejoice in the presence of the LORD your God, along with your sons, daughters, male and female servants, and the Levites in your villages (since they have no allotment or inheritance with you).

13 Make sure you do not offer burnt offerings in any place you wish,

14 for you may do so only in the place the LORD chooses in one of your tribal areas—there you may do everything I am commanding you.

#### Animals Eligible for Sacrifice Could Now be Eaten Locally (see Leviticus 17:1–11) / The Perpetual Sanctity of Blood

15 On the other hand, you may slaughter and eat meat as you please when the LORD your God blesses you in all your villages. Both the ritually pure and impure may eat it, whether it is a gazelle or an ibex.

16 However, you must not eat blood—pour it out on the ground like water.

17 You will not be allowed to eat in your villages your tithe of grain, new wine, olive oil, the firstborn of your herd and flock, any votive offerings you have vowed, or your freewill and personal offerings.

18 Only in the presence of the LORD your God may you eat these, in the place he chooses. This applies to you, your son, your daughter, your male and female servants, and the Levites in your villages. In that place you will rejoice before the LORD your God in all the output of your labor.

19 Be careful not to overlook the Levites as long as you live in the land.

20 When the LORD your God extends your borders as he said he would do and you say, “I want to eat meat just as I please,” you may do so as you wish.

21 If the place he chooses to locate his name is too far for you, you may slaughter any of your herd and flock he has given you just as I have stipulated; you may eat them in your villages just as you wish.

22 Like you eat the gazelle or ibex, so you may eat these; the ritually impure and pure alike may eat them.

23 However, by no means eat the blood, for the blood is life itself—you must not eat the life with the meat!

24 You must not eat it! You must pour it out on the ground like water.

25 You must not eat it so that it may go well with you and your children after you; you will be doing what is right in the LORD’s sight.

26 Only the holy things and votive offerings that belong to you, you must pick up and take to the place the LORD will choose.

27 You must offer your burnt offerings, both meat and blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; the blood of your other sacrifices you must pour out on his altar while you eat the meat.

28 Pay careful attention to all these things I am commanding you so that it may always go well with you and your children after you when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

**No God but Yahweh—Do Not Imitate Idolatrous Worship Practices**

29 When the LORD your God eliminates the nations from the place where you are headed and you dispossess them, you will settle down in their land.

30 After they have been destroyed from your presence, be careful not to be ensnared like they are; do not pursue their gods and say, “How do these nations serve their gods? I will do the same.”

31 You must not worship the LORD your God the way they do! For everything that is abhorrent to him, everything he hates, they have done when worshiping their gods. They even burn up their sons and daughters before their gods!

32 You must be careful to do everything I am commanding you. Do not add to it or subtract from it!

**Don't Be Enticed by False Prophets**

13:1 Suppose a prophet or one who foretells by dreams should appear among you and show you a sign or wonder,  
2 and the sign or wonder should come to pass concerning what he said to you, namely, “Let us follow other gods”—gods whom you have not previously known—”and let us serve them.”

3 You must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer, for the LORD your God will be testing you to see if you love him with all your mind and being.

4 You must follow the LORD your God and revere only him; and you must observe his commandments, obey him, serve him, and remain loyal to him.

5 As for that prophet or dreamer, he must be executed because he encouraged rebellion against the LORD your God who brought you from the land of Egypt, redeeming you from that place of slavery, and because he has tried to entice you from the way the LORD your God has commanded you to go. In this way you must purge out evil from within.

**Don't Be Enticed by Your Family and Friends**

6 Suppose your own full brother, your son, your daughter, your beloved wife, or your closest friend should seduce you secretly and encourage you to go and serve other gods that neither you nor your ancestors have previously known,

7 the gods of the surrounding people (whether near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other).

8 You must not give in to him or even listen to him; do not feel sympathy for him or spare him or cover up for him.

9 Instead, you must kill him without fail! Your own hand must be the first to strike him, and then the hands of the whole community.

10 You must stone him to death because he tried to entice you away from the LORD your God, who delivered you from the land of Egypt, that place of slavery.

11 Thus all Israel will hear and be afraid; no longer will they continue to do evil like this among you.

**Don't Be Enticed by Your Fellow Citizens**

12 Suppose you should hear in one of your cities, which the LORD your God is giving you as a place to live, that

13 some evil people have departed from among you to entice the inhabitants of their cities, saying, “Let's go and serve other gods” (whom you have not known before).

14 You must investigate thoroughly and inquire carefully. If it is indeed true that such a disgraceful thing is being done among you,  
15 you must by all means slaughter the inhabitants of that city with the sword; annihilate with the sword everyone in it, as well as the livestock.

16 You must gather all of its plunder into the middle of the plaza and burn the city and all its plunder as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God. It will be an abandoned ruin forever—it must never be rebuilt again.

17 You must not take for yourself anything that has been placed under judgment. Then the LORD will relent from his intense anger, show you compassion, have mercy on you, and multiply you as he promised your ancestors.

18 Thus you must obey the LORD your God, keeping all his commandments that I am giving you today and doing what is right before him.

**Forbidden Mourning Practices**

14:1 “You are the sons of the LORD your God. You shall not cut yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead.

2 For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

**Clean and Unclean Animals**

3 “You shall not eat any abomination.

4 These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat,

5 the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep.

6 Every animal that parts the hoof and has the hoof cloven in two and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat.

7 Yet of those that chew the cud or have the hoof cloven you shall not eat these: the camel, the hare, and the rock badger, because they chew the cud but do not part the hoof, are unclean for you.

8 And the pig, because it parts the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their

carcasses you shall not touch.

9 “Of all that are in the waters you may eat these: whatever has fins and scales you may eat.

10 And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you.

11 “You may eat all clean birds.

12 But these are the ones that you shall not eat: the eagle, the bearded vulture, the black vulture,

13 the kite, the falcon of any kind;

14 every raven of any kind;

15 the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind;

16 the little owl and the short-eared owl, the barn owl

17 and the tawny owl, the carrion vulture and the cormorant,

18 the stork, the heron of any kind; the hoopoe and the bat.

19 And all winged insects are unclean for you; they shall not be eaten.

20 All clean winged things you may eat.

21 “You shall not eat anything that has died naturally. You may give it to the sojourner who is within your towns, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. “You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

#### **The Festival Tithe**

22 “You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year.

23 And before the LORD your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.

24 And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the LORD your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the LORD your God chooses, to set his name there,

25 then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the LORD your God chooses

26 and spend the money for whatever you desire—oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the LORD your God and rejoice, you and your household.

27 And you shall not neglect the Levite who is within your towns, for he has no portion or inheritance with you.

#### **The Charity Tithe**

28 “At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns.

29 And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.

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## Second Mosaic Speech: Specific Covenant Stipulations – Part 2 (February 1406 BC)

### Deuteronomy 15–18

#### **The Sabbatical Year**

15:1 “At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release.

2 And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD’s release has been proclaimed.

3 Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release.

4 But there will be no poor among you; for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess—

5 if only you will strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today.

6 For the LORD your God will bless you, as he promised you, and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow, and you shall rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over you.

7 “If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother,

8 but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.

9 Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin.

10 You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.

11 For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’

12 “If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.

13 And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.

14 You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today.

16 But if he says to you, ‘I will not go out from you,’ because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you,

17 then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same.

18 It shall not seem hard to you when you let him go free from you, for at half the cost of a hired worker he has served you six years. So the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

#### **Firstborn Animals Consecrated to Yahweh**

19 “All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock.

20 You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose.

21 But if it has any blemish, if it is lame or blind or has any serious blemish whatever, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

22 You shall eat it within your towns. The unclean and the clean alike may eat it, as though it were a gazelle or a deer.

23 Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

#### **Spring Feast – The Passover (14th of First Month: Nisan) – Good Friday**

16:1 “Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night.

2 And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose, to make his name dwell there.

#### **Spring Feast – The Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th-22nd of First Month: Nisan) – Easter**

3 You shall eat no leavened bread with it. Seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste—that all the days of your life you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt.

4 No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the flesh that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain all night until morning.

5 You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you,

6 but at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt.

7 And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the LORD your God will choose. And in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents.

8 For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD your God. You shall do no work on it.

#### **Spring Feast – The Feasts of Weeks – Pentecost**

9 “You shall count seven weeks. Begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain.

10 Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you.

11 And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your towns, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are among you, at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there.

12 You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

#### **Fall Feast – The Feast of Tabernacles/Booths (15th-22nd of Seventh Month: Tishri)**

13 “You shall keep the Feast of Booths seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winepress.

14 You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are within your towns.

15 For seven days you shall keep the feast to the LORD your God at the place that the LORD will choose, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful.

16 “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.

17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.

#### **Appointment of Judges and Officers**

18 You must appoint judges and civil servants for each tribe in all your villages that the LORD your God is giving you, and they must judge the people fairly.

19 You must not pervert justice or show favor. Do not take a bribe, for bribes blind the eyes of the wise and distort the words of the righteous.

20 You must pursue justice alone so that you may live and inherit the land the LORD your God is giving you.

#### **Forbidden Worship Practices**

21 You must not plant any kind of tree as a sacred Asherah pole near the altar of the LORD your God which you build for yourself.

22 You must not erect a sacred pillar, a thing the LORD your God detests.

#### **Prohibition of Defective Animal Sacrifices**

17:1 You must not sacrifice to him a bull or sheep that has a blemish or any other defect, because that is considered offensive to the LORD your God. [cf. [Mal 1:6–9](#)]

#### **Death Penalty for Idolatry**

2 Suppose a man or woman is discovered among you—in one of your villages that the LORD your God is giving you—who sins before the Lord your God and breaks his covenant

3 by serving other gods and worshiping them—the sun, moon, or any other heavenly bodies which I have not permitted you to worship.

4 When it is reported to you and you hear about it, you must investigate carefully. If it is indeed true that such a disgraceful thing is being done in Israel,

5 you must bring to your city gates that man or woman who has done this wicked thing—that very man or woman—and you must stone that person to death.

6 At the testimony of two or three witnesses they must be executed. They cannot be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. [[Matt 18:16](#); [Heb 10:28](#)]

7 The witnesses must be first to begin the execution, and then all the people are to join in afterward. In this way you will purge evil from among you. [[1 Cor 5:13](#)]

#### **The Jurisdiction of the Central Tribunal**

8 If a matter is too difficult for you to judge—bloodshed, legal claim, or assault—matters of controversy in your villages—you must leave there and go up to the place the LORD your God chooses.

9 You will go to the Levitical priests and the judge in office in those days and seek a solution; they will render a verdict.

10 You must then do as they have determined at that place the LORD chooses. Be careful to do just as you are taught.

11 You must do what you are instructed, and the verdict they pronounce to you, without fail. Do not deviate right or left from what

they tell you.

12 The person who pays no attention to the priest currently serving the LORD your God there, or to the verdict—that person must die, so that you may purge evil from Israel.

13 Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and not be so presumptuous again.

#### **Laws Pertaining to Kingship**

14 When you come to the land the LORD your God is giving you and take it over and live in it and then say, “I will select a king like all the nations surrounding me,”

15 you must select without fail a king whom the LORD your God chooses. From among your fellow citizens you must appoint a king—you may not designate a foreigner who is not one of your fellow Israelites.

16 Moreover, he must not accumulate horses for himself or allow the people to return to Egypt to do so, for the LORD has said you must never again return that way.

17 Furthermore, he must not marry many wives lest his affections turn aside, and he must not accumulate much silver and gold.

18 When he sits on his royal throne he must make a copy of this law on a scroll given to him by the Levitical priests.

19 It must be with him constantly and he must read it as long as he lives, so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and observe all the words of this law and these statutes and carry them out.

20 Then he will not exalt himself above his fellow citizens or turn from the commandments to the right or left, and he and his descendants will enjoy many years ruling over his kingdom in Israel.

#### **Laws Pertaining to Levitical Inheritance**

18:1 The Levitical priests—indeed, the entire tribe of Levi—will have no allotment or inheritance with Israel; they may eat the burnt offerings of the LORD and of his inheritance.

2 They will have no inheritance in the midst of their fellow Israelites; the LORD alone is their inheritance, just as he had told them.

3 This shall be the priests’ fair allotment from the people who offer sacrifices, whether bull or sheep—they must give to the priest the shoulder, the jowls, and the stomach.

4 You must give them the best of your grain, new wine, and olive oil, as well as the best of your wool when you shear your flocks.

5 For the LORD your God has chosen them and their sons from all your tribes to stand and serve in his name permanently.

6 Suppose a Levite comes by his own free will from one of your villages, from any part of Israel where he is living, to the place the LORD chooses

7 and serves in the name of the LORD his God like his fellow Levites who stand there before the LORD.

8 He must eat the same share they do, despite any profits he may gain from the sale of his family’s inheritance.

#### **Divination and Sorcery Forbidden**

9 When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, you must not learn the abhorrent practices of those nations.

10 There must never be found among you anyone who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, anyone who practices divination, an omen reader, a soothsayer, a sorcerer,

11 one who casts spells, one who conjures up spirits, a practitioner of the occult, or a necromancer.

12 Whoever does these things is abhorrent to the LORD and because of these detestable things the LORD your God is about to drive them out from before you.

13 You must be blameless before the LORD your God.

14 Those nations that you are about to dispossess listen to omen readers and diviners, but the LORD your God has not given you permission to do such things.

#### **The Coming Prophet—Christ**

15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you—from your fellow Israelites; you must listen to him. [[Acts 3:22–23](#)]

16 This accords with what happened at Horeb in the day of the assembly. You asked the LORD your God: “Please do not make us hear the voice of the LORD our God any more or see this great fire any more lest we die.”

17 The LORD then said to me, “What they have said is good.

18 I will raise up a prophet like you for them from among their fellow Israelites. I will put my words in his mouth and he will speak to them whatever I command.

19 I will personally hold responsible anyone who then pays no attention to the words that prophet speaks in my name.

#### **Identifying False Prophets**

20 “But if any prophet presumes to speak anything in my name that I have not authorized him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must die.

21 Now if you say to yourselves, ‘How can we tell that a message is not from the LORD?’—

22 whenever a prophet speaks in my name and the prediction is not fulfilled, then I have not spoken it; the prophet has presumed to

“speak it, so you need not fear him.”

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## Second Mosaic Speech: Specific Covenant Stipulations – Part 3 (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 19–22

### Cities of Refuge

19:1 When the LORD your God destroys the nations whose land he is about to give you and you dispossess them and settle in their cities and houses,  
 2 you must set apart for yourselves three cities in the middle of your land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession.  
 3 You shall build a roadway and divide into thirds the whole extent of your land that the LORD your God is providing as your inheritance; anyone who kills another person should flee to the closest of these cities.  
 4 Now this is the law pertaining to one who flees there in order to live, if he has accidentally killed another without hating him at the time of the accident.  
 5 Suppose he goes with someone else to the forest to cut wood and when he raises the ax to cut the tree, the ax head flies loose from the handle and strikes his fellow worker so hard that he dies. The person responsible may then flee to one of these cities to save himself.  
 6 Otherwise the blood avenger will chase after the killer in the heat of his anger, eventually overtake him, and kill him, though this is not a capital case since he did not hate him at the time of the accident.  
 7 Therefore, I am commanding you to set apart for yourselves three cities.  
 8 If the LORD your God enlarges your borders as he promised your ancestors and gives you all the land he pledged to them,  
 9 and then you are careful to observe all these commandments I am giving you today (namely, to love the LORD your God and to always walk in his ways), then you must add three more cities to these three.  
 10 You must not shed innocent blood in your land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, for that would make you guilty.  
 11 However, suppose a person hates someone else and stalks him, attacks him, kills him, and then flees to one of these cities.  
 12 The elders of his own city must send for him and remove him from there to deliver him over to the blood avenger to die.  
 13 You must not pity him, but purge out the blood of the innocent from Israel, so that it may go well with you.

### Private Property Rights

14 You must not encroach on your neighbor's property, which will have been defined in the inheritance you will obtain in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

### Witnesses and the Protection of the Accused

15 A single witness may not testify against another person for any trespass or sin that he commits. A matter may be legally established only on the testimony of two or three witnesses. [[John 8:17](#); [2 Cor 13:1](#); [1 Tim 5:19](#)]

### Punishment for Perjury

16 If a false witness testifies against another person and accuses him of a crime,  
 17 then both parties to the controversy must stand before the LORD, that is, before the priests and judges who will be in office in those days.  
 18 The judges will thoroughly investigate the matter, and if the witness should prove to be false and to have given false testimony against the accused,  
 19 you must do to him what he had intended to do to the accused. In this way you will purge evil from among you.  
 20 The rest of the people will hear and become afraid to keep doing such evil among you.  
 21 You must not show pity; the principle will be a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, and a foot for a foot. [[Matt 5:38–42](#)]

### The Conduct of War—Introduction

20:1 When you go to war against your enemies and see chariotry and troops who outnumber you, do not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, is with you.  
 2 As you move forward for battle, the priest will approach and say to the soldiers,  
 3 "Listen, Israel! Today you are moving forward to do battle with your enemies. Do not be fainthearted. Do not fear and tremble or be terrified because of them,  
 4 for the LORD your God goes with you to fight on your behalf against your enemies to give you victory."

### The Conduct of War—Exemptions from Military Service

5 Moreover, the officers are to say to the troops, "Who among you has built a new house and not dedicated it? He may go home, lest he die in battle and someone else dedicate it.  
 6 Or who among you has planted a vineyard and not benefited from it? He may go home, lest he die in battle and someone else benefit from it.  
 7 Or who among you has become engaged to a woman but has not married her? He may go home, lest he die in battle and someone

else marry her.”

8 In addition, the officers are to say to the troops, “Who among you is afraid and fainthearted? He may go home so that he will not make his fellow soldier’s heart as fearful as his own.” [cf. [Judg 7:3](#)]

9 Then, when the officers have finished speaking, they must appoint unit commanders to lead the troops.

#### **The Conduct of War—Distant Enemy Cities**

10 When you approach a city to wage war against it, offer it terms of peace.

11 If it accepts your terms and submits to you, all the people found in it will become your slaves.

12 If it does not accept terms of peace but makes war with you, then you are to lay siege to it.

13 The LORD your God will deliver it over to you and you must kill every single male by the sword.

14 However, the women, little children, cattle, and anything else in the city—all its plunder—you may take for yourselves as spoil. You may take from your enemies the plunder that the LORD your God has given you.

15 This is how you are to deal with all those cities located far from you, those that do not belong to these nearby nations.

#### **The Conduct of War—Local Enemy Cities**

16 As for the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is going to give you as an inheritance, you must not allow a single living thing to survive.

17 Instead you must utterly annihilate them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—just as the LORD your God has commanded you,

18 so that they cannot teach you all the abhorrent ways they worship their gods, causing you to sin against the LORD your God.

#### **The Conduct of War—Proper Siege Practices**

19 If you besiege a city for a long time while attempting to capture it, you must not chop down its trees, for you may eat fruit from them and should not cut them down. A tree in the field is not human that you should besiege it!

20 However, you may chop down any tree you know is not suitable for food, and you may use it to build siege works against the city that is making war with you until that city falls.

#### **Atonement for Unsolved Murder**

21:1 If a homicide victim should be found lying in a field in the land the LORD your God is giving you, and no one knows who killed him,

2 your elders and judges must go out and measure how far it is to the cities in the vicinity of the corpse.

3 Then the elders of the city nearest to the corpse must take from the herd a heifer that has not been worked—that has never pulled with the yoke—

4 and bring the heifer down to a wadi with flowing water, to a valley that is neither plowed nor sown. There at the wadi they are to break the heifer’s neck.

5 Then the Levitical priests will approach (for the LORD your God has chosen them to serve him and to pronounce blessings in his name, and to decide every judicial verdict)

6 and all the elders of that city nearest the corpse must wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley.

7 Then they must proclaim, “Our hands have not spilled this blood, nor have we witnessed the crime.

8 Do not blame your people Israel whom you redeemed, O LORD, and do not hold them accountable for the bloodshed of an innocent person.” Then atonement will be made for the bloodshed.

9 In this manner you will purge out the guilt of innocent blood from among you, for you must do what is right before the LORD.

#### **Laws for Marrying a Captive of War**

10 When you go out to do battle with your enemies and the LORD your God allows you to prevail and you take prisoners,

11 if you should see among them an attractive woman whom you wish to take as a wife,

12 you may bring her back to your house. She must shave her head, trim her nails,

13 discard the clothing she was wearing when captured, and stay in your house, lamenting for her father and mother for a full month. After that you may have sexual relations with her and become her husband and she your wife.

14 If you are not pleased with her, then you must let her go where she pleases. You cannot in any case sell her; you must not take advantage of her, since you have already humiliated her.

#### **Firstborn Rights Protected**

15 Suppose a man has two wives, one whom he loves more than the other, and they both bear him sons, with the firstborn being the child of the less loved wife.

16 In the day he divides his inheritance he must not appoint as firstborn the son of the favorite wife in place of the other wife’s son who is actually the firstborn.

17 Rather, he must acknowledge the son of the less loved wife as firstborn and give him the double portion of all he has, for that son

is the beginning of his father’s procreative power—to him should go the right of the firstborn.

### **Dealing With a Rebellious Child**

18 If a person has a stubborn, rebellious son who pays no attention to his father or mother, and they discipline him to no avail, 19 his father and mother must seize him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his city.

20 They must declare to the elders of his city, “Our son is stubborn and rebellious and pays no attention to what we say—he is a glutton and drunkard.”

21 Then all the men of his city must stone him to death. In this way you will purge out wickedness from among you, and all Israel will hear about it and be afraid.

### **Proper Treatment of the Body of Those Hanged for a Capital Crime**

22 If a person commits a sin punishable by death and is executed, and you hang the corpse on a tree,

23 his body must not remain all night on the tree; instead you must make certain you bury him that same day, for the one who is left exposed on a tree is cursed by God. You must not defile your land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. [[Gal 3:13](#)]

### **Loving Your Neighbor By Caring for His Property**

22:1 When you see your neighbor’s ox or sheep going astray, do not ignore it; you must return it without fail to your neighbor.

2 If the owner does not live near you or you do not know who the owner is, then you must corral the animal at your house and let it stay with you until the owner looks for it; then you must return it to him.

3 You shall do the same to his donkey, his clothes, or anything else your neighbor has lost and you have found; you must not refuse to get involved.

4 When you see your neighbor’s donkey or ox fallen along the road, do not ignore it; instead, you must be sure to help him get the animal on its feet again.

### **Gender-distinct Clothing**

5 A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor should a man dress up in women’s clothing, for anyone who does this is offensive to the LORD your God.

### **Proper Care of Natural Resources**

6 If you happen to notice a bird’s nest along the road, whether in a tree or on the ground, and there are chicks or eggs with the mother bird sitting on them, you must not take the mother from the young.

7 You must be sure to let the mother go, but you may take the young for yourself. Do this so that it may go well with you and you may have a long life.

### **Loving Your Neighbor By Caring for His Safety**

8 If you build a new house, you must construct a guard rail around your roof to avoid being culpable in the event someone should fall from it.

### **Improper Mixtures**

9 You must not plant your vineyard with two kinds of seed; otherwise the entire yield, both of the seed you plant and the produce of the vineyard, will be defiled.

10 You must not plow with an ox and a donkey harnessed together.

11 You must not wear clothing made with wool and linen meshed together.

### **Tassels**

12 You shall make yourselves tassels for the four corners of the clothing you wear. [[Num 15:37–41](#)]

### **Accusation of Premarital Infidelity**

13 Suppose a man marries a woman, has sexual relations with her, and then rejects her,

14 accusing her of impropriety and defaming her reputation by saying, “I married this woman but when I had sexual relations with her I discovered she was not a virgin!”

15 Then the father and mother of the young woman must produce the evidence of virginity for the elders of the city at the gate.

16 The young woman’s father must say to the elders, “I gave my daughter to this man and he has rejected her.

17 Moreover, he has raised accusations of impropriety by saying, ‘I discovered your daughter was not a virgin,’ but this is the evidence of my daughter’s virginity!” The cloth must then be spread out before the city’s elders.

18 The elders of that city must then seize the man and punish him.

19 They will fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the young woman’s father, for the man who made the

accusation ruined the reputation of an Israelite virgin. She will then become his wife and he may never divorce her as long as he lives.

20 But if the accusation is true and the young woman was not a virgin,

21 the men of her city must bring the young woman to the door of her father's house and stone her to death, for she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel by behaving like a prostitute while living in her father's house. In this way you will purge evil from among you.

#### **Adultery**

22 If a man is caught having sexual relations with a married woman both the man who had relations with the woman and the woman herself must die; in this way you will purge evil from Israel.

23 If a virgin is engaged to a man and another man meets her in the city and has sexual relations with her,

24 you must bring the two of them to the gate of that city and stone them to death, the young woman because she did not cry out though in the city and the man because he violated his neighbor's fiancée; in this way you will purge evil from among you.

#### **Rape**

25 But if the man came across the engaged woman in the field and overpowered her and raped her, then only the rapist must die.

26 You must not do anything to the young woman—she has done nothing deserving of death. This case is the same as when someone attacks another person and murders him,

27 for the man met her in the field and the engaged woman cried out, but there was no one to rescue her.

28 Suppose a man comes across a virgin who is not engaged and overpowers and rapes her and they are discovered.

29 The man who has raped her must pay her father fifty shekels of silver and she must become his wife because he has violated her; he may never divorce her as long as he lives.

#### **Marrying Your Father's Wife Prohibited**

30 A man may not marry his father's former wife and in this way dishonor his father.

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## Second Mosaic Speech: Specific Covenant Stipulations – Part 4 (February 1406 BC)

### Deuteronomy 23–26

#### Those Excluded from the Assembly of Yahweh

- 23:1 A man with crushed or severed genitals may not enter the assembly of the LORD.
- 2 A person of illegitimate birth may not enter the assembly of the LORD; to the tenth generation no one related to him may do so.
- 3 An Ammonite or Moabite may not enter the assembly of the LORD; to the tenth generation none of their descendants shall ever do so,
- 4 for they did not meet you with food and water on the way as you came from Egypt, and furthermore, they hired Balaam son of Beor of Pethor in Aram Naharaim to curse you.
- 5 But the LORD your God refused to listen to Balaam and changed the curse to a blessing, for the LORD your God loves you.
- 6 You must not seek peace and prosperity for them through all the ages to come.
- 7 You must not hate an Edomite, for he is your relative; you must not hate an Egyptian, for you lived as a foreigner in his land.
- 8 Children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

#### Uncleanness and Sanitary Conditions in the Military Camp

- 9 When you go out as an army against your enemies, guard yourselves against anything impure.
- 10 If there is someone among you who is impure because of some nocturnal emission, he must leave the camp; he may not reenter it immediately.
- 11 When evening arrives he must wash himself with water and then at sunset he may reenter the camp.
- 12 You are to have a place outside the camp to serve as a latrine.
- 13 You must have a spade among your other equipment and when you relieve yourself outside you must dig a hole with the spade and then turn and cover your excrement.
- 14 For the LORD your God walks about in the middle of your camp to deliver you and defeat your enemies for you. Therefore your camp should be holy, so that he does not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you.

#### Fugitive Slaves

- 15 You must not return an escaped slave to his master when he has run away to you.
- 16 Indeed, he may live among you in any place he chooses, in whichever of your villages he prefers; you must not oppress him.

#### Cult Prostitution Forbidden

- 17 There must never be a sacred prostitute among the young women of Israel nor a sacred male prostitute among the young men of Israel.
- 18 You must never bring the pay of a female prostitute or the wage of a male prostitute into the temple of the LORD your God in fulfillment of any vow, for both of these are abhorrent to the LORD your God.

#### Interest on Loans

- 19 You must not charge interest on a loan to your fellow Israelite, whether on money, food, or anything else that has been loaned with interest. [[Exod 22:25](#); [Lev 25:35–37](#); [Ps 15:5](#)]
- 20 You may lend with interest to a foreigner, but not to your fellow Israelite; if you keep this command the LORD your God will bless you in all you undertake in the land you are about to enter to possess.

#### Keeping Vows

- 21 When you make a vow to the LORD your God you must not delay in fulfilling it, for otherwise he will surely hold you accountable as a sinner.
- 22 If you refrain from making a vow, it will not be sinful.
- 23 Whatever you vow, you must be careful to do what you have promised, such as what you have vowed to the LORD your God as a freewill offering.

#### Permission to Satisfy Hunger

- 24 When you enter the vineyard of your neighbor you may eat as many grapes as you please, but you must not take away any in a container.
- 25 When you go into the ripe grain fields of your neighbor you may pluck off the kernels with your hand, but you must not use a sickle on your neighbor's ripe grain.

#### Case Law—Remarriage to a Previous Wife Subsequent to Her Remarriage is Forbidden

- 24:1 If a man marries a woman and she does not please him because he has found something offensive in her, then he may draw up a divorce document, give it to her, and evict her from his house. [[Matt 5:31–32](#); [19:3–9](#); [Mark 10:2–9](#)]
- 2 When she has left him she may go and become someone else's wife.

3 If the second husband rejects her and then divorces her, gives her the papers, and evicts her from his house, or if the second husband who married her dies,

4 her first husband who divorced her is not permitted to remarry her after she has become ritually impure, for that is offensive to the LORD. You must not bring guilt on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

#### **Exemption from Military Service**

5 When a man is newly married, he need not go into the army nor be obligated in any way; he must be free to stay at home for a full year and bring joy to the wife he has married.

#### **Proper Security for Loans (grouped)**

6 One must not take either lower or upper millstones as security on a loan, for that is like taking a life itself as security.

10 When you make any kind of loan to your neighbor, you may not go into his house to claim what he is offering as security.

11 You must stand outside and the person to whom you are making the loan will bring out to you what he is offering as security.

12 If the person is poor you may not use what he gives you as security for a covering.

13 You must by all means return to him at sunset the item he gave you as security so that he may sleep in his outer garment and bless you for it; it will be considered a just deed by the LORD your God.

17 You must not pervert justice due a resident foreigner or an orphan, or take a widow's garment as security for a loan.

18 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I am commanding you to do all this.

#### **Capital Punishment for Kidnapping and Selling into Slavery**

7 If a man is found kidnapping a person from among his fellow Israelites, and regards him as mere property and sells him, that kidnapper must die. In this way you will purge evil from among you.

#### **Leprosy**

8 Be careful during an outbreak of leprosy to follow precisely all that the Levitical priests instruct you; as I have commanded them, so you should do.

9 Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam along the way after you left Egypt.

#### **Proper Treatment of Poor Workers**

14 You must not oppress a lowly and poor servant, whether one from among your fellow Israelites or from the resident foreigners who are living in your land and villages.

15 You must pay his wage that very day before the sun sets, for he is poor and his life depends on it. Otherwise he will cry out to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin.

#### **Trans-generational Punishment Forbidden**

16 Fathers must not be put to death for what their children do, nor children for what their fathers do; each must be put to death for his own sin.

#### **Loving the Poor**

19 Whenever you reap your harvest in your field and leave some unraked grain there, you must not return to get it; it should go to the resident foreigner, orphan, and widow so that the LORD your God may bless all the work you do. [cf. [Ruth 2:2–3](#)]

20 When you beat your olive tree you must not repeat the procedure; the remaining olives belong to the resident foreigner, orphan, and widow.

21 When you gather the grapes of your vineyard you must not do so a second time; they should go to the resident foreigner, orphan, and widow.

22 Remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt; therefore, I am commanding you to do all this.

#### **Appropriate Punishment for the Guilty**

25:1 If controversy arises between people, they should go to court for judgment. When the judges hear the case, they shall exonerate the innocent but condemn the guilty.

2 Then, if the guilty person is sentenced to a beating, the judge shall force him to lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of blows his wicked behavior deserves.

3 The judge may sentence him to forty blows, but no more. If he is struck with more than these, you might view your fellow Israelite with contempt.

#### **Those Who Work are Entitled to Profit from their Labor**

4 You must not muzzle your ox when it is treading grain. [[1 Cor 9:3–11](#); [1 Tim 5:17–18](#)]

**Case Law—Preserving the Family Line**

5 If brothers live together and one of them dies without having a son, the dead man's wife must not remarry someone outside the family. Instead, her late husband's brother must go to her, marry her, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law. [[Matt 22:23–32](#); [Mark 12:18–27](#); [Luke 20:27–38](#)]

6 Then the first son she bears will continue the name of the dead brother, thus preventing his name from being blotted out of Israel.

7 But if the man does not want to marry his brother's widow, then she must go to the elders at the town gate and say, "My husband's brother refuses to preserve his brother's name in Israel; he is unwilling to perform the duty of a brother-in-law to me!"

8 Then the elders of his city must summon him and speak to him. If he persists, saying, "I don't want to marry her,"

9 then his sister-in-law must approach him in view of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, and spit in his face. She will then respond, "Thus may it be done to any man who does not maintain his brother's family line!"

10 His family name will be referred to in Israel as "the family of the one whose sandal was removed."

**Case Law—Improper Intervention**

11 If two men get into a hand-to-hand fight, and the wife of one of them gets involved to help her husband against his attacker, and she reaches out her hand and grabs his genitals,

12 then you must cut off her hand—do not pity her.

**Honest Weights and Measures**

13 You must not have in your bag different stone weights, a heavy and a light one.

14 You must not have in your house different measuring containers, a large and a small one.

15 You must have an accurate and correct stone weight and an accurate and correct measuring container, so that your life may be extended in the land the LORD your God is about to give you.

16 For anyone who acts dishonestly in these ways is abhorrent to the LORD your God.

**Complete Destruction of the Amalekites**

17 Remember what the Amalekites did to you on your way from Egypt,

18 how they met you along the way and cut off all your stragglers in the rear of the march when you were exhausted and tired; they were unafraid of God.

19 So when the LORD your God gives you relief from all the enemies who surround you in the land he is giving you as an inheritance, you must wipe out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven—do not forget!

**Ceremony Celebrating Possession of Canaan**

26:1 When you enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you occupy it and live in it,

2 you must take the first of all the ground's produce you harvest from the land the LORD your God is giving you, place it in a basket, and go to the place where he chooses to locate his name.

3 You must go to the priest in office at that time and say to him, "I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD promised to our ancestors to give us."

4 The priest will then take the basket from you and set it before the altar of the LORD your God.

5 Then you must affirm before the LORD YOUR GOD, "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor, and he went down to Egypt and lived there as a foreigner with a household few in number, but there he became a great, powerful, and numerous people.

6 But the Egyptians mistreated and oppressed us, forcing us to do burdensome labor.

7 So we cried out to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, and he heard us and saw our humiliation, toil, and oppression.

8 Therefore the LORD brought us out of Egypt with tremendous strength and power, as well as with great awe-inspiring signs and wonders.

9 Then he brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

10 So now, look! I have brought the first of the ground's produce that you, LORD, have given me." Then you must set it down before the LORD your God and worship before him.

11 You will celebrate all the good things that the LORD your God has given you and your family, along with the Levites and the resident foreigners among you.

12 When you finish tithing all your income in the third year (the year of tithing), you must give it to the Levites, the resident foreigners, the orphans, and the widows so that they may eat to their satisfaction in your villages.

13 Then you shall say before the LORD your God, "I have removed the sacred offering from my house and given it to the Levites, the resident foreigners, the orphans, and the widows just as you have commanded me. I have not violated or forgotten your commandments.

14 I have not eaten anything when I was in mourning, or removed any of it while ceremonially unclean, or offered any of it to the dead; I have obeyed you and have done everything you have commanded me.

15 Look down from your holy dwelling place in heaven and bless your people Israel and the land you have given us, just as you promised our ancestors—a land flowing with milk and honey."

**Covenant Summary and Conclusion**

16 Today the LORD your God is commanding you to keep these statutes and ordinances, something you must do with all your heart and soul.

17 Today you have declared the LORD to be your God, and that you will walk in his ways, keep his statutes, commandments, and ordinances, and obey him.

18 And today the LORD has declared you to be his special people (as he already promised you) so you may keep all his commandments.

19 Then he will elevate you above all the nations he has made and you will receive praise, fame, and honor. You will be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he has said.

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## Covenantal Blessings and Curses (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 27:1–29:1

### Instructions for the Law to be Preserved in Stone on Mount Ebal

- 27:1 Then Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people: “Pay attention to all the commandments I am giving you today.  
 2 When you cross the Jordan River to the land the LORD your God is giving you, you must erect great stones and cover them with plaster.  
 3 Then you must inscribe on them all the words of this law when you cross over, so that you may enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey just as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, said to you.  
 4 So when you cross the Jordan you must erect on Mount Ebal these stones about which I am commanding you today, and you must cover them with plaster.  
 5 Then you must build an altar there to the LORD your God, an altar of stones—do not use an iron tool on them.  
 6 You must build the altar of the LORD your God with whole stones and offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God.  
 7 Also you must offer fellowship offerings and eat them there, rejoicing before the LORD your God.  
 8 You must inscribe on the stones all the words of this law, making them clear.”

### Exhortation to Obey the Covenant

- 9 Then Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel: “Be quiet and pay attention, Israel. Today you have become the people of the LORD your God.  
 10 You must obey him and keep his commandments and statutes that I am giving you today.”

### Instructions for the Covenant Ceremony

- 11 Moreover, Moses commanded the people that day:  
 12 “The following tribes must stand to bless the people on Mount Gerizim when you cross the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin.  
 13 And these other tribes must stand for the curse on Mount Ebal: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. [cf. [Josh 8:30–35](#)]

### Responsive Reading of Covenant Curses

- 14 “The Levites will call out to every Israelite with a loud voice:  
 15 ‘Cursed is the one who makes a carved or metal image—something abhorrent to the LORD, the work of the craftsman—and sets it up in a secret place.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 16 ‘Cursed is the one who disrespects his father and mother.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 17 ‘Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor’s boundary marker.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 18 ‘Cursed is the one who misleads a blind person on the road.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 19 ‘Cursed is the one who perverts justice for the resident foreigner, the orphan, and the widow.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 20 ‘Cursed is the one who has sexual relations with his father’s former wife, for he dishonors his father.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 21 ‘Cursed is the one who commits bestiality.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 22 ‘Cursed is the one who has sexual relations with his sister, the daughter of either his father or mother.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 23 ‘Cursed is the one who has sexual relations with his mother-in-law.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 24 ‘Cursed is the one who kills his neighbor in private.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 25 ‘Cursed is the one who takes a bribe to kill an innocent person.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’  
 26 ‘Cursed is the one who refuses to keep the words of this law.’ Then all the people will say, ‘Amen!’ [[Gal 3:10](#)]

### Covenant Blessings for Obedience

- 28:1 “If you indeed obey the LORD your God and are careful to observe all his commandments I am giving you today, the LORD your God will elevate you above all the nations of the earth.  
 2 All these blessings will come to you in abundance if you obey the LORD your God:  
 3 You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the field.  
 4 Your children will be blessed, as well as the produce of your soil, the offspring of your livestock, the calves of your herds, and the lambs of your flocks.  
 5 Your basket and your mixing bowl will be blessed.  
 6 You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.  
 7 The LORD will cause your enemies who attack you to be struck down before you; they will attack you from one direction but flee from you in seven different directions.  
 8 The LORD will decree blessing for you with respect to your barns and in everything you do—yes, he will bless you in the land he is

giving you.

9 The LORD will designate you as his holy people just as he promised you, if you keep his commandments and obey him.

10 Then all the peoples of the earth will see that you belong to the LORD, and they will respect you.

11 The LORD will greatly multiply your children, the offspring of your livestock, and the produce of your soil in the land which he promised your ancestors he would give you.

12 The LORD will open for you his good treasure house, the heavens, to give you rain for the land in its season and to bless all you do; you will lend to many nations but you will not borrow from any.

13 The LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you will always end up at the top and not at the bottom, if you obey his commandments which I am urging you today to be careful to do.

14 But you must not turn away from all the commandments I am giving you today, to either the right or left, nor pursue other gods and worship them.

#### **Covenant Curses for Disobedience—Summary Statement**

15 “But if you ignore the LORD your God and are not careful to keep all his commandments and statutes I am giving you today, then all these curses will come upon you in full force:

16 You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the field.

17 Your basket and your mixing bowl will be cursed.

18 Your children will be cursed, as well as the produce of your soil, the calves of your herds, and the lambs of your flocks.

19 You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out.

#### **Covenant Curses for Disobedience—Exposition and Warning**

20 “The LORD will send on you a curse, confusing you and opposing you in everything you undertake until you are destroyed and quickly perish because of the evil of your deeds, in that you have forsaken me.

21 The LORD will plague you with deadly diseases until he has completely removed you from the land you are about to possess.

22 He will afflict you with weakness, fever, inflammation, infection, sword, blight, and mildew; these will attack you until you perish.

23 The sky above your heads will be bronze and the earth beneath you iron.

24 The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; it will come down on you from the sky until you are destroyed.

25 “The LORD will allow you to be struck down before your enemies; you will attack them from one direction but flee from them in seven directions and will become an object of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth.

26 Your carcasses will be food for every bird of the sky and wild animal of the earth, and there will be no one to chase them off.

27 The LORD will afflict you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors, eczema, and scabies, all of which cannot be healed.

28 The LORD will also subject you to madness, blindness, and confusion of mind.

29 You will feel your way along at noon like the blind person does in darkness and you will not succeed in anything you do; you will be constantly oppressed and continually robbed, with no one to save you.

30 You will be engaged to a woman and another man will rape her. You will build a house but not live in it. You will plant a vineyard but not even begin to use it.

31 Your ox will be slaughtered before your very eyes but you will not eat of it. Your donkey will be stolen from you as you watch and will not be returned to you. Your flock of sheep will be given to your enemies and there will be no one to save you.

32 Your sons and daughters will be given to another people while you look on in vain all day, and you will be powerless to do anything about it.

33 As for the produce of your land and all your labor, a people you do not know will consume it, and you will be nothing but oppressed and crushed for the rest of your lives.

34 You will go insane from seeing all this.

35 The LORD will afflict you in your knees and on your legs with painful, incurable boils—from the soles of your feet to the top of your head.

36 The LORD will force you and your king whom you will appoint over you to go away to a people whom you and your ancestors have not known, and you will serve other gods of wood and stone there.

37 You will become an occasion of horror, a proverb, and an object of ridicule to all the peoples to whom the LORD will drive you.

38 “You will take much seed to the field but gather little harvest, because locusts will consume it.

39 You will plant vineyards and cultivate them, but you will not drink wine or gather in grapes, because worms will eat them.

40 You will have olive trees throughout your territory but you will not anoint yourself with olive oil, because the olives will drop off the trees while still unripe.

41 You will bear sons and daughters but not keep them, because they will be taken into captivity.

42 Whirring locusts will take over every tree and all the produce of your soil.

43 The foreigners who reside among you will become higher and higher over you and you will become lower and lower.

44 They will lend to you but you will not lend to them; they will become the head and you will become the tail!

45 All these curses will fall on you, pursuing and overtaking you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the LORD your God by keeping his commandments and statutes that he has given you.

46 These curses will be a perpetual sign and wonder with reference to you and your descendants.

47 “Because you have not served the LORD your God joyfully and wholeheartedly with the abundance of everything you have, 48 instead in hunger, thirst, nakedness, and poverty you will serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you. They will place an iron yoke on your neck until they have destroyed you.

49 The LORD will raise up a distant nation against you, one from the other side of the earth as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,

50 a nation of stern appearance that will have no regard for the elderly or pity for the young.

51 They will devour the offspring of your livestock and the produce of your soil until you are destroyed. They will not leave you with any grain, new wine, olive oil, calves of your herds, or lambs of your flocks until they have destroyed you.

52 They will besiege all of your villages until all of your high and fortified walls collapse—those in which you put your confidence throughout the land. They will besiege all your villages throughout the land the LORD your God has given you.

53 You will then eat your own offspring, the flesh of the sons and daughters the LORD your God has given you, because of the severity of the siege by which your enemies will constrict you.

54 The man among you who is by nature tender and sensitive will turn against his brother, his beloved wife, and his remaining children.

55 He will withhold from all of them his children’s flesh that he is eating (since there is nothing else left), because of the severity of the siege by which your enemy will constrict you in your villages.

56 Likewise, the most tender and delicate of your women, who would never think of putting even the sole of her foot on the ground because of her daintiness, will turn against her beloved husband, her sons and daughters,

57 and will secretly eat her afterbirth and her newborn children (since she has nothing else), because of the severity of the siege by which your enemy will constrict you in your villages.

58 “If you refuse to obey all the words of this law, the things written in this scroll, and refuse to fear this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God,

59 then the LORD will increase your punishments and those of your descendants—great and long-lasting afflictions and severe, enduring illnesses.

60 He will infect you with all the diseases of Egypt that you dreaded, and they will persistently afflict you.

61 Moreover, the LORD will bring upon you every kind of sickness and plague not mentioned in this scroll of commandments, until you have perished.

62 There will be very few of you left, though at one time you were as numerous as the stars in the sky, because you will have disobeyed the LORD your God.

63 This is what will happen: Just as the LORD delighted to do good for you and make you numerous, he will take delight in destroying and decimating you. You will be uprooted from the land you are about to possess.

64 The LORD will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods that neither you nor your ancestors have known, gods of wood and stone.

65 Among those nations you will have no rest nor will there be a place of peaceful rest for the soles of your feet, for there the LORD will give you an anxious heart, failing eyesight, and a spirit of despair.

66 Your life will hang in doubt before you; you will be terrified by night and day and will have no certainty of surviving from one day to the next.

67 In the morning you will say, ‘If only it were evening!’ And in the evening you will say, ‘I wish it were morning!’ because of the things you will fear and the things you will see.

68 Then the LORD will make you return to Egypt by ship, over a route I said to you that you would never see again. There you will sell yourselves to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.”

### **Conclusion**

29:1 These are the words of the covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant he had made with them at Horeb.

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## Third Mosaic Speech: A Way Back from Apostasy (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 29:2–30:20

### An Exhortation to Covenant Renewal

29:2 Moses proclaimed to all Israel as follows: “You have seen all that the LORD did in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, all his servants, and his land.

3 Your eyes have seen the great judgments, those signs and mighty wonders.

4 But to this very day the LORD has not given you an understanding mind, perceptive eyes, or discerning ears! [\[Rom 11:8\]](#)

5 I have led you through the desert for forty years. Your clothing has not worn out nor have your sandals deteriorated.

6 You have eaten no bread and drunk no wine or beer—all so that you might know that I am the LORD your God!

7 When you came to this place King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan came out to make war and we defeated them.

8 Then we took their land and gave it as an inheritance to Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

9 “Therefore, keep the terms of this covenant and obey them so that you may be successful in everything you do.

### The Significance and Scope of the Covenantal Renewal

10 You are standing today, all of you, before the LORD your God—the heads of your tribes, your elders, your officials, every Israelite man,

11 your infants, your wives, and the foreigners living in your encampment, those who chop wood and those who carry water—

12 so that you may enter by oath into the covenant the LORD your God is making with you today.

13 Today he will affirm that you are his people and that he is your God, just as he promised you and as he swore by oath to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

14 It is not with you alone that I am making this covenant by oath,

15 but with whoever stands with us here today before the LORD our God as well as those not with us here today.

### Warning Against Disobedience

16 “(For you know how we lived in the land of Egypt and how we crossed through the nations as we traveled.

17 You have seen their detestable things and idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold.)

18 Beware that the heart of no man, woman, clan, or tribe among you turns away from the LORD our God today to pursue and serve the gods of those nations; beware that there is among you no root producing poisonous and bitter fruit. [\[Heb 12:15\]](#)

19 When such a person hears the words of this oath he secretly blesses himself and says, “I will have peace though I continue to walk with a stubborn spirit.” This will destroy the watered ground with the parched.

20 The LORD will be unwilling to forgive him, and his intense anger will rage against that man; all the curses written in this scroll will fall upon him and the LORD will obliterate his name from memory.

21 The LORD will single him out for judgment from all the tribes of Israel according to all the curses of the covenant written in this scroll of the law.

22 The generation to come—your descendants who will rise up after you, as well as the foreigner who will come from distant places—will see the afflictions of that land and the illnesses that the LORD has brought on it.

23 The whole land will be covered with brimstone, salt, and burning debris; it will not be planted nor will it sprout or produce grass. It will resemble the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD destroyed in his intense anger.

24 Then all the nations will ask, “Why has the LORD done all this to this land? What is this fierce, heated display of anger all about?”

25 Then people will say, “Because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

26 They went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods they did not know and that he did not permit them to worship.

27 That is why the LORD’s anger erupted against this land, bringing on it all the curses written in this scroll.

28 So the LORD has uprooted them from their land in anger, wrath, and great rage and has deported them to another land, as is clear today.”

29 Secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those that are revealed belong to us and our descendants forever, so that we might obey all the words of this law.

### A Way Back from Apostasy

30:1 “When you have experienced all these things, both the blessings and the curses I have set before you, you will reflect upon them in all the nations where the LORD your God has banished you.

2 Then if you and your descendants turn to the LORD your God and obey him with your whole mind and being just as I am commanding you today,

3 the LORD your God will reverse your captivity and have pity on you. He will turn and gather you from all the peoples among whom he has scattered you.

4 Even if your exiles are in the most distant land, from there the LORD your God will gather you and bring you back.

5 Then he will bring you to the land your ancestors possessed and you also will possess it; he will do better for you and multiply you more than he did your ancestors.

6 The LORD your God will also cleanse your heart and the hearts of your descendants so that you may love him with all your mind and being and so that you may live.

7 Then the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies, on those who hate you and persecute you.

8 You will return and obey the LORD, keeping all his commandments I am giving you today.

9 The LORD your God will make the labor of your hands abundantly successful and multiply your children, the offspring of your cattle, and the produce of your soil. For the LORD your God will once more rejoice over you to make you prosperous just as he rejoiced over your ancestors,

10 if you obey the LORD your God and keep his commandments and statutes that are written in this scroll of the law. But you must turn to him with your whole mind and being.

### Choose Life!

11 “This commandment I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it too remote.

12 It is not in heaven, as though one must say, “Who will go up to heaven to get it for us and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?”

13 And it is not across the sea, as though one must say, “Who will cross over to the other side of the sea and get it for us and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?”

14 For the thing is very near you—it is in your mouth and in your mind so that you can do it. [[Rom 10:6–9](#)]

15 “Look! I have set before you today life and prosperity on the one hand, and death and disaster on the other.

16 What I am commanding you today is to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to obey his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances. Then you will live and become numerous and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you are about to possess.

17 However, if you turn aside and do not obey, but are lured away to worship and serve other gods,

18 I declare to you this very day that you will certainly perish! You will not extend your time in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.

19 Today I invoke heaven and earth as a witness against you that I have set life and death, blessing and curse, before you. Therefore choose life so that you and your descendants may live!

20 I also call on you to love the LORD your God, to obey him and be loyal to him, for he gives you life and enables you to live continually in the land the LORD promised to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

## Yahweh Commissions Joshua as Israel’s Next Leader (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 31:1–23

### I Will Not Go With You, But Yahweh Will

1 Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.

2 He said to them, “Today I am a hundred and twenty years old. I am no longer able to get about, and the LORD has said to me, ‘You will not cross the Jordan.’

3 As for the LORD your God, he is about to cross over before you; he will destroy these nations before you and dispossess them. As for Joshua, he is about to cross before you just as the LORD has said.

4 The LORD will do to them just what he did to Sihon and Og, the Amorite kings, and to their land, which he destroyed.

5 The LORD will deliver them over to you and you will do to them according to the whole commandment I have given you.

6 Be strong and courageous! Do not fear or tremble before them, for the LORD your God is the one who is going with you. He will not fail you or abandon you!” [[Heb 13:5](#)]

### Moses Publically Encourages His Successor

7 Then Moses called out to Joshua in the presence of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you will accompany these people to the land that the LORD promised to give their ancestors, and you will enable them to inherit it.

8 The LORD is indeed going before you—he will be with you; he will not fail you or abandon you. Do not be afraid or discouraged!”

### Moses Arranges for the Law to Be Read Every Seven Years

9 Then Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitical priests, who carry the ark of the LORD’s covenant, and to all Israel’s elders.

10 He commanded them: “At the end of seven years, at the appointed time of the cancellation of debts, at the Feast of Temporary Shelters,

11 when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place he chooses, you must read this law before them within their hearing.

12 Gather the people—men, women, and children, as well as the resident foreigners in your villages—so they may hear and thus learn about and fear the LORD your God and carefully obey all the words of this law.

13 Then their children, who have not known this law, will also hear about and learn to fear the LORD your God for as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”

**Yahweh Commissions Joshua**

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, “The day of your death is near. Summon Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting so that I can commission him.” So Moses and Joshua presented themselves in the tent of meeting.

15 The LORD appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud that stood above the door of the tent.

16 Then the LORD said to Moses, “You are about to die, and then these people will begin to prostitute themselves with the foreign gods of the land into which they are going. They will reject me and break my covenant that I have made with them.

17 At that time my anger will erupt against them and I will abandon them and hide my face from them until they are devoured. Many disasters and distresses will overcome them so that they will say at that time, ‘Have not these disasters overcome us because our God is not among us?’

18 But I will certainly hide myself at that time because of all the wickedness they will have done by turning to other gods.

19 Now write down for yourselves the following song and teach it to the Israelites. Put it into their very mouths so that this song may serve as my witness against the Israelites!

20 For after I have brought them to the land I promised to their ancestors—one flowing with milk and honey—and they eat their fill and become fat, then they will turn to other gods and worship them; they will reject me and break my covenant.

21 Then when many disasters and distresses overcome them this song will testify against them, for their descendants will not forget it. I know the intentions they have in mind today, even before I bring them to the land I have promised.”

22 So on that day Moses wrote down this song and taught it to the Israelites,

23 and the LORD commissioned Joshua son of Nun, “Be strong and courageous, for you will take the Israelites to the land I have promised them, and I will be with you.”

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## The Song of Moses (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 31:24–32:52

### Introduction

31:24 When Moses finished writing on a scroll the words of this law in their entirety,  
 25 he commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the LORD's covenant,  
 26 "Take this scroll of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. It will remain there as a witness against you,  
 27 for I know about your rebellion and stubbornness. Indeed, even while I have been living among you to this very day, you have rebelled against the LORD; you will be even more rebellious after my death!  
 28 Gather to me all your tribal elders and officials so I can speak to them directly about these things and call the heavens and the earth to witness against them.  
 29 For I know that after I die you will totally corrupt yourselves and turn away from the path I have commanded you to walk. Disaster will confront you in the days to come because you will act wickedly before the LORD, inciting him to anger because of your actions."  
 30 Then Moses recited the words of this song from start to finish in the hearing of the whole assembly of Israel.

### Invocation of Witnesses

32:1 Listen, O heavens, and I will speak;  
 hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.  
 2 My teaching will drop like the rain,  
 my sayings will drip like the dew,  
 as rain drops upon the grass,  
 and showers upon new growth.  
 3 For I will proclaim the name of the LORD;  
 you must acknowledge the greatness of our God.

### A Faithful God and a Faithless People

4 As for the Rock, his work is perfect,  
 for all his ways are just.  
 He is a reliable God who is never unjust,  
 he is fair and upright. [[Rev 15:3](#)]  
 5 His people have been unfaithful to him;  
 they have not acted like his children—this is their sin.  
 They are a perverse and deceitful generation.  
 6 Is this how you repay the LORD,  
 you foolish, unwise people?  
 Is he not your father, your creator?  
 He has made you and established you.

### Remember Yahweh's Care for His Covenantal Nation

7 Remember the ancient days;  
 bear in mind the years of past generations.  
 Ask your father and he will inform you,  
 your elders, and they will tell you.  
 8 When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance,  
 when he divided up humankind,  
 he set the boundaries of the peoples,  
 according to the number of the heavenly assembly.  
 9 For the LORD's allotment is his people,  
 Jacob is his special possession.  
 10 The LORD found him in a desolate land,  
 in an empty wasteland where animals howl.  
 He continually guarded him and taught him;  
 he continually protected him like the pupil of his eye. [cf. [Zech 2:8](#); [Ps 17:8](#)]  
 11 Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,  
 that hovers over its young,  
 so the LORD spread out his wings and took him,  
 he lifted him up on his pinions.  
 12 The LORD alone was guiding him,

no foreign god was with him.

- 13 He enabled him to travel over the high terrain of the land,  
and he ate of the produce of the fields.  
He provided honey for him from the cliffs,  
and olive oil from the hardest of rocks,  
14 butter from the herd  
and milk from the flock,  
along with the fat of lambs,  
rams and goats of Bashan,  
along with the best of the kernels of wheat;  
and from the juice of grapes you drank wine.

#### **Israel's Prosperity and Rebellion**

- 15 But Jeshurun became fat and kicked,  
you got fat, thick, and stuffed!  
Then he deserted the God who made him,  
and treated the Rock who saved him with contempt.  
16 They made him jealous with other gods,  
they enraged him with abhorrent idols.  
17 They sacrificed to demons, not God,  
to gods they had not known;  
to new gods who had recently come along,  
gods your ancestors had not known about.  
18 You have forgotten the Rock who fathered you,  
and put out of mind the God who gave you birth.

#### **Yahweh's Determination to Judge Israel**

- 19 But the LORD took note and despised them  
because his sons and daughters enraged him.  
20 He said, "I will reject them,  
I will see what will happen to them;  
for they are a perverse generation,  
children who show no loyalty.  
21 They have made me jealous with false gods,  
enraging me with their worthless gods;  
so I will make them jealous with a people they do not recognize,  
with a nation slow to learn I will enrage them. [\[Rom 10:19\]](#)  
22 For a fire has been kindled by my anger,  
and it burns to lowest Sheol;  
it consumes the earth and its produce,  
and ignites the foundations of the mountains.  
23 I will increase their disasters,  
I will use up my arrows on them.  
24 They will be starved by famine,  
eaten by plague, and bitterly stung;  
I will send the teeth of wild animals against them,  
along with the poison of creatures that crawl in the dust.  
25 The sword will make people childless outside,  
and terror will do so inside;  
they will destroy both the young man and the virgin,  
the infant and the gray-haired man.

#### **Yahweh Will Also Judge the Nations He Uses to Judge Israel**

- 26 "I said, 'I want to cut them in pieces.  
I want to make people forget they ever existed.  
27 But I fear the reaction of their enemies,  
for their adversaries would misunderstand  
and say, "Our power is great,  
and the LORD has not done all this!"

- 28 They are a nation devoid of wisdom,  
and there is no understanding among them.
- 29 I wish that they were wise and could understand this,  
and that they could comprehend what will happen to them.”
- 30 How can one man chase a thousand of them,  
and two pursue ten thousand;  
unless their Rock had delivered them up,  
and the LORD had handed them over?
- 31 For our enemies’ rock is not like our Rock,  
as even our enemies concede.
- 32 For their vine is from the stock of Sodom,  
and from the fields of Gomorrah.  
Their grapes contain venom,  
their clusters of grapes are bitter.
- 33 Their wine is snakes’ poison,  
the deadly venom of cobras.
- 34 “Is this not stored up with me?” says the LORD,  
“Is it not sealed up in my storehouses?”
- 35 I will get revenge and pay them back [[Rom 12:19](#); [Heb 10:30](#)]  
at the time their foot slips;  
for the day of their disaster is near,  
and the impending judgment is rushing upon them!”

#### Vindication of Israel and Yahweh

- 36 The LORD will judge his people, [[Heb 10:30](#)]  
and will change his plans concerning his servants;  
when he sees that their power has disappeared,  
and that no one is left, whether confined or set free.
- 37 He will say, “Where are their gods,  
the rock in whom they sought security,  
38 who ate the best of their sacrifices,  
and drank the wine of their drink offerings?  
Let them rise and help you;  
let them be your refuge!
- 39 “See now that I, indeed I, am he!” says the LORD,  
“and there is no other god besides me.  
I kill and give life,  
I smash and I heal,  
and none can resist my power.
- 40 For I raise up my hand to heaven,  
and say, ‘As surely as I live forever,  
41 I will sharpen my lightning-like sword,  
and my hand will grasp hold of the weapon of judgment;  
I will execute vengeance on my foes,  
and repay those who hate me!
- 42 I will make my arrows drunk with blood,  
and my sword will devour flesh—  
the blood of the slaughtered and captured,  
the chief of the enemy’s leaders!”
- 43 [*“Rejoice with him, you heavens,  
and let all of God’s angels worship him.”*] [[Heb 1:6](#)] (NLT)  
Cry out, O nations, with his people, [[Rom 15:10](#)]  
for he will avenge his servants’ blood;  
he will take vengeance against his enemies,  
and make atonement for his land and people.

#### Moses’ Last Warning

- 44 Then Moses went with Joshua son of Nun and recited all the words of this song to the people.
- 45 When Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel

46 he said to them, “Keep in mind all the words I am solemnly proclaiming to you today; you must command your children to observe carefully all the words of this law.

47 For this is no idle word for you—it is your life! By this word you will live a long time in the land you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.”

#### **Yahweh Tells Moses to Prepare for Death**

48 Then the LORD said to Moses that same day,

49 “Go up to this Abarim hill country, to Mount Nebo (which is in the land of Moab opposite Jericho) and look at the land of Canaan that I am giving to the Israelites as a possession.

50 You will die on the mountain that you ascend and join your deceased ancestors, just as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and joined his deceased ancestors,

51 for both of you rebelled against me among the Israelites at the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the desert of Zin when you did not show me proper respect among the Israelites.

52 You will see the land before you, but you will not enter the land that I am giving to the Israelites.”

## The Blessing of Moses (February 1406 BC)

### Deuteronomy 33

#### **Introduction and Historical Review**

1 This is the blessing Moses the man of God pronounced upon the Israelites before his death.

2 He said:

The LORD came from Sinai

and revealed himself to Israel from Seir.

He appeared in splendor from Mount Paran,

and came forth with ten thousand holy ones. [cf. [Acts 7:53](#); [Gal. 3:19](#); [Heb. 2:2](#)]

With his right hand he gave a fiery law to them.

3 Surely he loves the people;

all your holy ones are in your power.

And they sit at your feet,

each receiving your words.

4 Moses delivered to us a law,

an inheritance for the assembly of Jacob.

5 The LORD was king over Jeshurun,

when the leaders of the people assembled,

the tribes of Israel together.

#### **Reuben**

6 May Reuben live and not die,

and may his people multiply.

#### **Judah**

7 And this is the blessing to Judah. He said,

Listen, O LORD, to Judah’s voice,

and bring him to his people.

May his power be great,

and may you help him against his foes.

#### **Levi**

8 Of Levi he said:

Your Thummim and Urim belong to your godly one,

whose authority you challenged at Massah,

and with whom you argued at the waters of Meribah.

9 He said to his father and mother, “I have not seen him,”

and he did not acknowledge his own brothers

or know his own children,

for they kept your word,

and guarded your covenant.

10 They will teach Jacob your ordinances

and Israel your law;  
they will offer incense as a pleasant odor,  
and a whole offering on your altar.

- 11 Bless, O LORD, his goods,  
and be pleased with his efforts;  
undercut the legs of any who attack him,  
and of those who hate him, so that they cannot stand.

#### **Benjamin**

- 12 Of Benjamin he said:  
The beloved of the LORD will live safely by him;  
he protects him all the time,  
and the LORD places him on his chest.

#### **Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh**

- 13 Of Joseph he said:  
May the LORD bless his land  
with the harvest produced by the sky, by the dew,  
and by the depths crouching beneath;  
14 with the harvest produced by the daylight  
and by the moonlight;  
15 with the best of the ancient mountains  
and the harvest produced by the age-old hills;  
16 with the harvest of the earth and its fullness  
and the pleasure of him who resided in the burning bush.  
May blessing rest on Joseph's head,  
and on the top of the head of the one set apart from his brothers.  
17 May the firstborn of his bull bring him honor,  
and may his horns be those of a wild ox;  
with them may he gore all peoples,  
all the far reaches of the earth.  
They are the ten thousands of Ephraim,  
and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

#### **Zebulun and Issachar**

- 18 Of Zebulun he said:  
Rejoice, Zebulun, when you go outside,  
and Issachar, when you are in your tents.  
19 They will summon peoples to the mountain,  
there they will sacrifice proper sacrifices;  
for they will enjoy the abundance of the seas,  
and the hidden treasures of the shores.

#### **Gad**

- 20 Of Gad he said:  
Blessed be the one who enlarges Gad.  
Like a lioness he will dwell;  
he will tear at an arm—indeed, a scalp.  
21 He has selected the best part for himself,  
for the portion of the ruler is set aside there;  
he came with the leaders of the people,  
he obeyed the righteous laws of the LORD  
and his ordinances with Israel.

#### **Dan**

- 22 Of Dan he said:  
Dan is a lion's cub;  
he will leap forth from Bashan.

**Naphtali**

23 Of Naphtali he said:  
O Naphtali, overflowing with favor,  
and full of the LORD's blessing,  
possess the west and south.

**Asher**

24 Of Asher he said:  
Asher is blessed with children,  
may he be favored by his brothers  
and may he dip his foot in olive oil.  
25 The bars of your gates will be made of iron and bronze,  
and may you have lifelong strength.

**Conclusion—General Praise and Blessing**

26 There is no one like God, O Jeshurun,  
who rides through the sky to help you,  
on the clouds in majesty.  
27 The everlasting God is a refuge,  
and underneath you are his eternal arms;  
he has driven out enemies before you,  
and has said, "Destroy!"  
28 Israel lives in safety,  
the fountain of Jacob is quite secure,  
in a land of grain and new wine;  
indeed, its heavens rain down dew.  
29 You have joy, Israel! Who is like you?  
You are a people delivered by the LORD,  
your protective shield and your exalted sword.  
May your enemies cringe before you;  
may you trample on their backs.

**The Death of Moses (February 1406 BC)**

Deuteronomy 34:1–7

1 Then Moses ascended from the deserts of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the summit of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. The LORD showed him the whole land—Gilead to Dan,  
2 and all of Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the distant sea,  
3 the Negev, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of the date palm trees, as far as Zoar.  
4 Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it, but you will not cross over there."  
5 So Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab as the LORD had said.  
6 He buried him in the land of Moab near Beth Peor, but no one knows his exact burial place to this very day. [[Jude 1:9](#)]  
7 Moses was 120 years old when he died, but his eye was not dull nor had his vitality departed.

**Israel Mourns Moses' Death (Adar [March] 1406 BC)**

Deuteronomy 34:8–12

8 The Israelites mourned for Moses in the deserts of Moab for thirty days; then the days of mourning for Moses ended.  
9 Now Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had placed his hands on him; and the Israelites listened to him and did just what the LORD had commanded Moses.  
10 No prophet ever again arose in Israel like Moses, who knew the LORD face to face.  
11 He did all the signs and wonders the LORD had sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, all his servants, and the whole land,  
12 and he displayed great power and awesome might in view of all Israel.

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## Yahweh's Charge to Joshua (c. 1 Nisan [March/April] 1406 BC)

Joshua 1:1–9

1 After Moses the LORD's servant died, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant:

2 "Moses my servant is dead. Get ready! Cross the Jordan River! Lead these people into the land which I am ready to hand over to them.

3 I am handing over to you every place you set foot, as I promised Moses.

4 Your territory will extend from the wilderness in the south to Lebanon in the north. It will extend all the way to the great River Euphrates in the east (including all of Syria) and all the way to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

5 No one will be able to resist you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not abandon you or leave you alone. [\[Heb 13:5\]](#)

6 Be strong and brave! You must lead these people in the conquest of this land that I solemnly promised their ancestors I would hand over to them.

7 Make sure you are very strong and brave! Carefully obey all the law my servant Moses charged you to keep! Do not swerve from it to the right or to the left, so that you may be successful in all you do.

8 This law scroll must not leave your lips! You must memorize it day and night so you can carefully obey all that is written in it. Then you will prosper and be successful.

9 I repeat, be strong and brave! Don't be afraid and don't panic, for I, the LORD your God, am with you in all you do."

## Joshua Sends Two Spies to Jericho (4–9 Nisan [March/April] 1406 BC)

Joshua 1:10–3:5

### Day 1—Joshua Gives Instructions to Prepare to Cross the Jordan (4 Nisan)

1:10 Joshua instructed the leaders of the people:

11 "Go through the camp and command the people, 'Prepare your supplies, for within three days you will cross the Jordan River and begin the conquest of the land the LORD your God is ready to hand over to you.'"

12 Joshua told the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh:

13 "Remember what Moses the LORD's servant commanded you. The LORD your God is giving you a place to settle and is handing this land over to you.

14 Your wives, children and cattle may stay in the land that Moses assigned to you east of the Jordan River. But all you warriors must cross over armed for battle ahead of your brothers. You must help them

15 until the LORD gives your brothers a place like yours to settle and they conquer the land the LORD your God is ready to hand over to them. Then you may go back to your allotted land and occupy the land Moses the LORD's servant assigned you east of the Jordan."

16 They told Joshua, "We will do everything you say. We will go wherever you send us.

17 Just as we obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. But may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses!

18 Any man who rebels against what you say and does not obey all your commands will be executed. But be strong and brave!"

### Day 1—Joshua Sends Two Spies to Jericho (4 Nisan)

2:1 Joshua son of Nun sent two spies out from Shittim secretly and instructed them: "Find out what you can about the land, especially Jericho." They stopped at the house of a prostitute named Rahab and spent the night there.

2 The king of Jericho received this report: "Note well! Israelite men have come here tonight to spy on the land."

3 So the king of Jericho sent this order to Rahab: "Turn over the men who came to you—the ones who came to your house—for they have come to spy on the whole land!"

4 But the woman hid the two men and replied, "Yes, these men were clients of mine, but I didn't know where they came from.

5 When it was time to shut the city gate for the night, the men left. I don't know where they were heading. Chase after them quickly, for you have time to catch them!"

6 (Now she had taken them up to the roof and had hidden them in the stalks of flax she had spread out on the roof.)

7 Meanwhile the king's men tried to find them on the road to the Jordan River near the fords. The city gate was shut as soon as they set out in pursuit of them.

8 Now before the spies went to sleep, Rahab went up to the roof.

9 She said to the men, "I know the LORD is handing this land over to you. We are absolutely terrified of you, and all who live in the land are cringing before you.

10 For we heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you left Egypt and how you annihilated the two Amorite kings, Sihon and Og, on the other side of the Jordan.

11 When we heard the news we lost our courage and no one could even breathe for fear of you. For the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on earth below!

12 So now, promise me this with an oath sworn in the LORD's name. Because I have shown allegiance to you, show allegiance to my family. Give me a solemn pledge

13 that you will spare the lives of my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all who belong to them, and rescue us from death."

14 The men said to her, “If you die, may we die too! If you do not report what we’ve been up to, then, when the LORD hands the land over to us, we will show unswerving allegiance to you.”

15 Then Rahab let them down by a rope through the window. (Her house was built as part of the city wall; she lived in the wall.)

16 She told them, “Head to the hill country, so the ones chasing you don’t find you. Hide from them there for three days, long enough for those chasing you to return. Then you can be on your way.”

17 The men said to her, “We are not bound by this oath you made us swear unless the following conditions are met:

18 When we invade the land, tie this red rope in the window through which you let us down, and gather together in your house your father, mother, brothers, and all who live in your father’s house.

19 Anyone who leaves your house will be responsible for his own death—we are innocent in that case! But if anyone with you in the house is harmed, we will be responsible.

20 If you should report what we’ve been up to, we are not bound by this oath you made us swear.”

21 She said, “I agree to these conditions.” She sent them on their way and then tied the red rope in the window. [\[James 2:25\]](#)

22a They went to the hill country

#### **Day 2—Hiding in the Hills (5 Nisan)**

22b and stayed there for three days, long enough for those chasing them to return. Their pursuers looked all along the way but did not find them.

#### **Day 3—The Spies Return (6 Nisan)**

23 Then the two men returned—they came down from the hills, crossed the river, came to Joshua son of Nun, and reported to him all they had discovered.

24 They told Joshua, “Surely the LORD is handing over all the land to us! All who live in the land are cringing before us!”

#### **Day 4—Journey to the Jordan River (7 Nisan)**

3:1a Bright and early the next morning Joshua and the Israelites left Shittim and came to the Jordan.

#### **Day 5—Beside the Jordan (8 Nisan)**

1b They camped there before crossing the river.

#### **Day 6—Preparations for the Crossing (9 Nisan)**

2 After three days the leaders went through the camp

3 and commanded the people: “When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the Levitical priests, you must leave here and walk behind it.

4 But stay about three thousand feet behind it. Keep your distance so you can see which way you should go, for you have not traveled this way before.”

5 Joshua told the people, “Ritually consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform miraculous deeds among you.”

### **Crossing the Jordan (10 Nisan [April] 1406 BC)**

Joshua 3:6–4:24

#### **Day 7—Crossing the Jordan (10 Nisan)**

3:6 Joshua told the priests, “Pick up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people.” So they picked up the ark of the covenant and went ahead of the people.

7 The LORD told Joshua, “This very day I will begin to honor you before all Israel so they will know that I am with you just as I was with Moses.

8 Instruct the priests carrying the ark of the covenant, ‘When you reach the bank of the Jordan River, wade into the water.’”

9 Joshua told the Israelites, “Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God!”

10 Joshua continued, “This is how you will know the living God is among you and that he will truly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites.

11 Look! The ark of the covenant of the Ruler of the whole earth is ready to enter the Jordan ahead of you.

12 Now select for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one per tribe.

13 When the feet of the priests carrying the ark of the LORD, the Ruler of the whole earth, touch the water of the Jordan, the water coming downstream toward you will stop flowing and pile up.”

14 So when the people left their tents to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them.

15 When the ones carrying the ark reached the Jordan and the feet of the priests carrying the ark touched the surface of the water—(the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest time)—

16 the water coming downstream toward them stopped flowing. It piled up far upstream at Adam (the city near Zarethan); there was no water at all flowing to the sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea). The people crossed the river opposite Jericho.

17 The priests carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan. All Israel crossed over on dry ground until the entire nation was on the other side.

### **Memorial Commemorating the Crossing**

4:1 When the entire nation was on the other side, the LORD told Joshua,

2 “Select for yourselves twelve men from the people, one per tribe.

3 Instruct them, ‘Pick up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests stand firmly, and carry them over with you and put them in the place where you camp tonight.’”

4 Joshua summoned the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one per tribe.

5 Joshua told them, “Go in front of the ark of the LORD your God to the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to put a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the Israelite tribes.

6 The stones will be a reminder to you. When your children ask someday, ‘Why are these stones important to you?’

7 tell them how the water of the Jordan stopped flowing before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the water of the Jordan stopped flowing. These stones will be a lasting memorial for the Israelites.”

8 The Israelites did just as Joshua commanded. They picked up twelve stones, according to the number of the Israelite tribes, from the middle of the Jordan as the LORD had instructed Joshua. They carried them over with them to the camp and put them there.

9 Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan in the very place where the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stood. They remain there to this very day.

10 Now the priests carrying the ark of the covenant were standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything the Lord had commanded Joshua to tell the people was accomplished, in accordance with all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people went across quickly,

11 and when all the people had finished crossing, the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed as the people looked on.

### **Eastern Tribes Keep Their Word**

12 The Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed for battle ahead of the Israelites, just as Moses had instructed them.

13 About forty thousand battle-ready troops marched past the LORD to fight on the plains of Jericho.

14 That day the LORD brought honor to Joshua before all Israel. They respected him all his life, just as they had respected Moses.

15 The LORD told Joshua,

16 “Instruct the priests carrying the ark of the covenantal laws to come up from the Jordan.”

17 So Joshua instructed the priests, “Come up from the Jordan!”

18 The priests carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the middle of the Jordan, and as soon as they set foot on dry land, the water of the Jordan flowed again and returned to flood stage.

### **First Camp at Gilgal**

19 The people went up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month and camped in Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho.

20 Now Joshua set up in Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken from the Jordan.

21 He told the Israelites, “When your children someday ask their fathers, ‘What do these stones represent?’

22 explain to your children, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry ground.’

23 For the LORD your God dried up the water of the Jordan before you while you crossed over. It was just like when the LORD your God dried up the Red Sea before us while we crossed it.

24 He has done this so all the nations of the earth might recognize the LORD’s power and so you might always obey the LORD your God.”

## **Circumcision of the New Generation (April 1406 BC)**

Joshua 5:1–12

### **Fear Grips the Enemy Nations**

1 When all the Amorite kings on the west side of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the seacoast heard how the LORD had dried up the water of the Jordan before the Israelites while they crossed, they lost their courage and could not even breathe for fear of the Israelites.

### **The New Generation Circumcised**

2 At that time the LORD told Joshua, “Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites once again.”

3 So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites on the Hill of the Foreskins.

4 This is why Joshua had to circumcise them: All the men old enough to fight when they left Egypt died on the journey through the desert after they left Egypt.

5 Now all the men who left were circumcised, but all the sons born on the journey through the desert after they left Egypt were

uncircumcised.

6 Indeed, for forty years the Israelites traveled through the desert until all the men old enough to fight when they left Egypt, the ones who had disobeyed the LORD, died off. For the LORD had sworn a solemn oath to them that he would not let them see the land he had sworn on oath to give them, a land rich in milk and honey.

7 He replaced them with their sons, whom Joshua circumcised. They were uncircumcised; their fathers had not circumcised them along the way.

8 When all the men had been circumcised, they stayed there in the camp until they had healed.

9 The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have taken away the disgrace of Egypt from you." So that place is called Gilgal even to this day.

#### **First Passover in Canaan (14 Nisan)**

10 So the Israelites camped in Gilgal and celebrated the Passover in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the plains of Jericho.

11 They ate some of the produce of the land the day after the Passover, including unleavened bread and roasted grain.

12 The manna stopped appearing the day they ate some of the produce of the land; the Israelites never ate manna again.

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#### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) The chronological headings in today's reading follow the arrangement suggested by David M. Howard in his article, "Three Days' in Joshua 1–3: Resolving a Chronological Conundrum," *JETS* 41/4 (Dec 1998): 539–550.

## The Destruction of Jericho (c. May 1406 BC)

Joshua 5:13–6:27

### Jesus—The Commander of the LORD's Army

5:13 When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him holding a drawn sword. Joshua approached him and asked him, "Are you on our side or allied with our enemies?"

14 He answered, "Truly I am the commander of the LORD's army. Now I have arrived!" Joshua bowed down with his face to the ground and asked, "What does my master want to say to his servant?"

15 The commander of the LORD's army answered Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, because the place where you stand is holy." Joshua did so.

6:1 Now Jericho was shut tightly because of the Israelites. No one was allowed to leave or enter.

2 The LORD told Joshua, "See, I am about to defeat Jericho for you, along with its king and its warriors.

3 Have all the warriors march around the city one time; do this for six days.

4 Have seven priests carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the horns.

5 When you hear the signal from the ram's horn, have the whole army give a loud battle cry. Then the city wall will collapse and the warriors should charge straight ahead."

### The First Day of Walking

6 So Joshua son of Nun summoned the priests and instructed them, "Pick up the ark of the covenant, and seven priests must carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark of the LORD."

7 And he told the army, "Move ahead and march around the city, with armed troops going ahead of the ark of the LORD."

8 When Joshua gave the army its orders, the seven priests carrying the seven rams' horns before the LORD moved ahead and blew the horns as the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed behind.

9 Armed troops marched ahead of the priests blowing the horns, while the rear guard followed along behind the ark blowing rams' horns.

10 Now Joshua had instructed the army, "Do not give a battle cry or raise your voices; say nothing until the day I tell you, 'Give the battle cry.' Then give the battle cry!"

11 So Joshua made sure they marched the ark of the LORD around the city one time. Then they went back to the camp and spent the night there.

### The Second Day of Walking

12 Bright and early the next morning Joshua had the priests pick up the ark of the LORD.

13 The seven priests carrying the seven rams' horns before the ark of the LORD marched along blowing their horns. Armed troops marched ahead of them, while the rear guard followed along behind the ark of the LORD blowing rams' horns.

14a They marched around the city one time on the second day, then returned to the camp.

### The Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Days of Walking

14b They did this six days in all.

### The Seventh Day—"Shout, for the LORD has given you the city"

15 On the seventh day they were up at the crack of dawn and marched around the city as before—only this time they marched around it seven times.

16 The seventh time around, the priests blew the rams' horns and Joshua told the army, "Give the battle cry, for the LORD is handing the city over to you!

17 The city and all that is in it must be set apart for the LORD, except for Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house, because she hid the spies we sent.

18 But be careful when you are setting apart the riches for the LORD. If you take any of it, you will make the Israelite camp subject to annihilation and cause a disaster.

19 All the silver and gold, as well as bronze and iron items, belong to the LORD. They must go into the LORD's treasury."

### The Fall of Jericho

20 The rams' horns sounded and when the army heard the signal, they gave a loud battle cry. The wall collapsed and the warriors charged straight ahead into the city and captured it. [[Heb 11:30](#)]

21 They annihilated with the sword everything that breathed in the city, including men and women, young and old, as well as cattle, sheep, and donkeys.

22 Joshua told the two men who had spied on the land, "Enter the prostitute's house and bring out the woman and all who belong to her as you promised her."

23 So the young spies went and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all who belonged to her. They brought out her

whole family and took them to a place outside the Israelite camp.

24 But they burned the city and all that was in it, except for the silver, gold, and bronze and iron items they put in the treasury of the LORD's house.

25 Yet Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, her father's family, and all who belonged to her. She lives in Israel to this very day because she hid the messengers Joshua sent to spy on Jericho. [[Heb 11:31](#)]

#### Joshua's Curse

26 At that time Joshua made this solemn declaration: "The man who attempts to rebuild this city of Jericho will stand condemned before the LORD. He will lose his firstborn son when he lays its foundations and his youngest son when he erects its gates!" [cf. [1 Kgs 16:34](#)]

27 The LORD was with Joshua and he became famous throughout the land.

## The Sin of Achan (c. May/June 1406 BC)

### Joshua 7

#### The First Attack on Ai

1 But the Israelites disobeyed the command about the city's riches. Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, stole some of the riches. The LORD was furious with the Israelites.

2 Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai (which is located near Beth Aven, east of Bethel) and instructed them, "Go up and spy on the land." So the men went up and spied on Ai.

3 They returned and reported to Joshua, "Don't send the whole army. About two or three thousand men are adequate to defeat Ai. Don't tire out the whole army, for Ai is small."

4 So about three thousand men went up, but they fled from the men of Ai.

5 The men of Ai killed about thirty-six of them and chased them from in front of the city gate all the way to the fissures and defeated them on the steep slope. The people's courage melted away like water.

#### Joshua Panics

6 Joshua tore his clothes; he and the leaders of Israel lay face down on the ground before the ark of the LORD until evening and threw dirt on their heads.

7 Joshua prayed, "O, Master, LORD! Why did you bring these people across the Jordan to hand us over to the Amorites so they could destroy us?"

8 If only we had been satisfied to live on the other side of the Jordan! O Lord, what can I say now that Israel has retreated before its enemies?"

9 When the Canaanites and all who live in the land hear about this, they will turn against us and destroy the very memory of us from the earth. What will you do to protect your great reputation?"

#### Sin in the Camp

10 The LORD responded to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying there face down?"

11 Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenantal commandment! They have taken some of the riches; they have stolen them and deceitfully put them among their own possessions.

12 The Israelites are unable to stand before their enemies; they retreat because they have become subject to annihilation. I will no longer be with you, unless you destroy what has contaminated you.

13 Get up! Ritually consecrate the people and tell them this: 'Ritually consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, because the LORD God of Israel says, "You are contaminated, O Israel! You will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove what is contaminating you."

14 In the morning you must approach in tribal order. The tribe the LORD selects must approach by clans. The clan the LORD selects must approach by families. The family the LORD selects must approach man by man.

15 The one caught with the riches must be burned up along with all who belong to him, because he violated the LORD's covenant and did such a disgraceful thing in Israel."

#### Achan's Sin is Revealed

16 Bright and early the next morning Joshua made Israel approach in tribal order and the tribe of Judah was selected.

17 He then made the clans of Judah approach and the clan of the Zerahites was selected. He made the clan of the Zerahites approach and Zabdi was selected.

18 He then made Zabdi's family approach man by man and Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, was selected.

19 So Joshua said to Achan, "My son, honor the LORD God of Israel and give him praise! Tell me what you did; don't hide anything from me!"

20 Achan told Joshua, "It is true. I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel in this way:

21 I saw among the goods we seized a nice robe from Babylon, two hundred silver pieces, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels. I wanted them, so I took them. They are hidden in the ground right in the middle of my tent with the silver underneath."

22 Joshua sent messengers who ran to the tent. The things were hidden right in his tent, with the silver underneath.

23 They took it all from the middle of the tent, brought it to Joshua and all the Israelites, and placed it before the LORD.

#### **Achan's Entire Family is Destroyed**

24 Then Joshua and all Israel took Achan, son of Zerah, along with the silver, the robe, the bar of gold, his sons, daughters, ox, donkey, sheep, tent, and all that belonged to him and brought them up to the Valley of Disaster.

25 Joshua said, "Why have you brought disaster on us? The LORD will bring disaster on you today!" All Israel stoned him to death. (They also stoned and burned the others.)

26 Then they erected over him a large pile of stones (it remains to this very day) and the LORD's anger subsided. So that place is called the Valley of Disaster to this very day.

## The Destruction of Ai (c. June 1406 BC)

### Joshua 8

#### **Preparations for the Second Attack on Ai**

1 The LORD told Joshua, "Don't be afraid and don't panic! Take the whole army with you and march against Ai! See, I am handing over to you the king of Ai, along with his people, city, and land.

2 Do to Ai and its king what you did to Jericho and its king, except you may plunder its goods and cattle. Set an ambush behind the city!"

3 Joshua and the whole army marched against Ai. Joshua selected thirty thousand brave warriors and sent them out at night.

4 He told them, "Look, set an ambush behind the city. Don't go very far from the city; all of you be ready!

5 I and all the troops who are with me will approach the city. When they come out to fight us like before, we will retreat from them.

6 They will attack us until we have lured them from the city, for they will say, 'They are retreating from us like before.' We will retreat from them.

7 Then you rise up from your hiding place and seize the city. The LORD your God will hand it over to you.

8 When you capture the city, set it on fire. Do as the LORD says! See, I have given you orders."

#### **The Ambush is Set**

9 Joshua sent them away and they went to their hiding place west of Ai, between Bethel and Ai. Joshua spent that night with the army.

10 Bright and early the next morning Joshua gathered the army, and he and the leaders of Israel marched at the head of it to Ai.

11 All the troops that were with him marched up and drew near the city. They camped north of Ai on the other side of the valley.

12 He took five thousand men and set an ambush west of the city between Bethel and Ai.

13 The army was in position—the main army north of the city and the rear guard west of the city. That night Joshua went into the middle of the valley.

#### **The Trap is Sprung**

14 When the king of Ai saw Israel, he and his whole army quickly got up the next day and went out to fight Israel at the meeting place near the Arabah. But he did not realize men were hiding behind the city.

15 Joshua and all Israel pretended to be defeated by them and they retreated along the way to the desert.

16 All the reinforcements in Ai were ordered to chase them; they chased Joshua and were lured away from the city.

17 No men were left in Ai or Bethel; they all went out after Israel. They left the city wide open and chased Israel.

18 The LORD told Joshua, "Hold out toward Ai the curved sword in your hand, for I am handing the city over to you." So Joshua held out toward Ai the curved sword in his hand.

#### **The Fall of Ai**

19 When he held out his hand, the men waiting in ambush rose up quickly from their place and attacked. They entered the city, captured it, and immediately set it on fire.

20 When the men of Ai turned around, they saw the smoke from the city ascending into the sky and were so shocked they were unable to flee in any direction. In the meantime the men who were retreating to the desert turned against their pursuers.

21 When Joshua and all Israel saw that the men in ambush had captured the city and that the city was going up in smoke, they turned around and struck down the men of Ai.

22 At the same time the men who had taken the city came out to fight, and the men of Ai were trapped in the middle. The Israelites struck them down, leaving no survivors or refugees.

23 But they captured the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

- 24 When Israel had finished killing all the men of Ai who had chased them toward the desert (they all fell by the sword), all Israel returned to Ai and put the sword to it.
- 25 Twelve thousand men and women died that day, including all the men of Ai.
- 26 Joshua kept holding out his curved sword until Israel had annihilated all who lived in Ai.
- 27 But Israel did plunder the cattle and the goods of the city, in accordance with the LORD's orders to Joshua.
- 28 Joshua burned Ai and made it a permanently uninhabited mound (it remains that way to this very day).
- 29 He hung the king of Ai on a tree, leaving him exposed until evening. At sunset Joshua ordered that his corpse be taken down from the tree. They threw it down at the entrance of the city gate and erected over it a large pile of stones (it remains to this very day).

**Joshua Carries Out Moses' Instructions (see Deut 27:1–8)**

- 30 Then Joshua built an altar for the LORD God of Israel on Mount Ebal,
- 31 just as Moses the LORD's servant had commanded the Israelites. As described in the law scroll of Moses, it was made with uncut stones untouched by an iron tool. They offered burnt sacrifices on it and sacrificed tokens of peace.
- 32 There, in the presence of the Israelites, Joshua inscribed on the stones a duplicate of the law written by Moses.
- 33 All the people, rulers, leaders, and judges were standing on either side of the ark, in front of the Levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD. Both resident foreigners and native Israelites were there. Half the people stood in front of Mount Gerizim and the other half in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the LORD's servant had previously instructed to them to do for the formal blessing ceremony.
- 34 Then Joshua read aloud all the words of the law, including the blessings and the curses, just as they are written in the law scroll.
- 35 Joshua read aloud every commandment Moses had given before the whole assembly of Israel, including the women, children, and resident foreigners who lived among them.

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**The Gibeonite Deception (c. Summer 1406 BC)**

## Joshua 9

**Summary Statement Concerning Southern and Northern Coalitions**

1 When the news reached all the kings on the west side of the Jordan—in the hill country, the lowlands, and all along the Mediterranean coast as far as Lebanon (including the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites)—  
2 they formed an alliance to fight against Joshua and Israel.

**Gibeon Decides to Save Itself Through Deception**

3 When the residents of Gibeon heard what Joshua did to Jericho and Ai,  
4 they did something clever. They collected some provisions and put worn-out sacks on their donkeys, along with worn-out wineskins that were ripped and patched.  
5 They had worn-out, patched sandals on their feet and dressed in worn-out clothes. All their bread was dry and hard.  
6 They came to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, “We have come from a distant land. Make a treaty with us.”  
7 The men of Israel said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you live near us. So how can we make a treaty with you?”  
8 But they said to Joshua, “We are willing to be your subjects.” So Joshua said to them, “Who are you and where do you come from?”  
9 They told him, “Your subjects have come from a very distant land because of the reputation of the LORD your God, for we have heard the news about all he did in Egypt  
10 and all he did to the two Amorite kings on the other side of the Jordan—King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan in Ashtaroth.  
11 Our leaders and all who live in our land told us, ‘Take provisions for your journey and go meet them. Tell them, “We are willing to be your subjects. Make a treaty with us.”’  
12 This bread of ours was warm when we packed it in our homes the day we started out to meet you, but now it is dry and hard.  
13 These wineskins we filled were brand new, but look how they have ripped. Our clothes and sandals have worn out because it has been a very long journey.”

**Joshua Did Not Ask Counsel From Yahweh**

14 The men examined some of their provisions, but they failed to ask the LORD’s advice.  
15 Joshua made a peace treaty with them and agreed to let them live. The leaders of the community sealed it with an oath.

**Gibeon’s Deception Discovered**

16 Three days after they made the treaty with them, the Israelites found out they were from the local area and lived nearby.  
17 So the Israelites set out and on the third day arrived at their cities—Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim.  
18 The Israelites did not attack them because the leaders of the community had sworn an oath to them in the name of the LORD God of Israel. The whole community criticized the leaders,  
19 but all the leaders told the whole community, “We swore an oath to them in the name of the LORD God of Israel. So now we can’t hurt them!  
20 We must let them live so we can escape the curse attached to the oath we swore to them.”  
21 The leaders then added, “Let them live.” So they became woodcutters and water carriers for the whole community, as the leaders had decided.

**Joshua Confronts the Gibeonites**

22 Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said to them, “Why did you trick us by saying, ‘We live far away from you,’ when you really live nearby?  
23 Now you are condemned to perpetual servitude as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.”  
24 They said to Joshua, “It was carefully reported to your subjects how the LORD your God commanded Moses his servant to assign you the whole land and to destroy all who live in the land from before you. Because of you we were terrified we would lose our lives, so we did this thing.  
25 So now we are in your power. Do to us what you think is good and appropriate.  
26 Joshua did as they said; he kept the Israelites from killing them  
27 and that day made them woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the LORD at the divinely chosen site. (They continue in that capacity to this very day.)

## The Southern Campaign (c. Fall 1406 – 1400 BC)

### Joshua 10

#### Reprisal Against Gibeon by the Five Kings of the Southern Coalition

1 Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua captured Ai and annihilated it and its king as he did Jericho and its king. He also heard how the people of Gibeon made peace with Israel and lived among them.

2 All Jerusalem was terrified because Gibeon was a large city, like one of the royal cities. It was larger than Ai and all its men were warriors.

3 So King Adoni-Zedek of Jerusalem sent this message to King Hoham of Hebron, King Piram of Jarmuth, King Japhia of Lachish, and King Debir of Eglon:

4 “Come to my aid so we can attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites.”

5 So the five Amorite kings (the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon) and all their troops gathered together and advanced. They deployed their troops and fought against Gibeon.

6 The men of Gibeon sent this message to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, “Do not abandon your subjects! Rescue us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings living in the hill country are attacking us.”

#### Joshua Comes to Gibeon’s Rescue

7 So Joshua and his whole army, including the bravest warriors, marched up from Gilgal.

8 The LORD told Joshua, “Don’t be afraid of them, for I am handing them over to you. Not one of them can resist you.”

9 Joshua attacked them by surprise after marching all night from Gilgal.

10 The LORD routed them before Israel. Israel thoroughly defeated them at Gibeon. They chased them up the road to the pass of Beth Horon and struck them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah.

#### The Pursuit

11 As they fled from Israel on the slope leading down from Beth Horon, the LORD threw down on them large hailstones from the sky, all the way to Azekah. They died—in fact, more died from the hailstones than the Israelites killed with the sword.

12 The day the LORD delivered the Amorites over to the Israelites, Joshua prayed to the LORD before Israel:

“O sun, stand still over Gibeon!  
O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon!”

13 The sun stood still and the moon stood motionless while the nation took vengeance on its enemies. The event is recorded in the Scroll of the Upright One. The sun stood motionless in the middle of the sky and did not set for about a full day.

14 There has not been a day like it before or since. The LORD obeyed a man, for the LORD fought for Israel!

#### Southern Coalition Kings Defeated

16 The five Amorite kings ran away and hid in the cave at Makkedah.

17 Joshua was told, “The five kings have been found hiding in the cave at Makkedah.”

18 Joshua said, “Roll large stones over the mouth of the cave and post guards in front of it.

19 But don’t you delay! Chase your enemies and catch them! Don’t allow them to retreat to their cities, for the LORD your God is handing them over to you.”

20 Joshua and the Israelites almost totally wiped them out, but some survivors did escape to the fortified cities.

21 Then the whole army safely returned to Joshua at the camp in Makkedah. No one dared threaten the Israelites.

22 Joshua said, “Open the cave’s mouth and bring the five kings out of the cave to me.”

23 They did as ordered; they brought the five kings out of the cave to him—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon.

24 When they brought the kings out to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the commanders of the troops who accompanied him, “Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings.” So they came up and put their feet on their necks.

25 Then Joshua said to them, “Don’t be afraid and don’t panic! Be strong and brave, for the LORD will do the same thing to all your enemies you fight.

26 Then Joshua executed them and hung them on five trees. They were left hanging on the trees until evening.

27 At sunset Joshua ordered his men to take them down from the trees. They threw them into the cave where they had hidden and piled large stones over the mouth of the cave. (They remain to this very day.)

#### Destruction of the Seven Southern Cities

28 That day Joshua captured Makkedah and put the sword to it and its king. He annihilated everyone who lived in it; he left no survivors. He did to its king what he had done to the king of Jericho.

29 Joshua and all Israel marched from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against it.

30 The LORD handed it and its king over to Israel, and Israel put the sword to all who lived there; they left no survivors. They did to its

king what they had done to the king of Jericho.

31 Joshua and all Israel marched from Libnah to Lachish. He deployed his troops and fought against it.

32 The LORD handed Lachish over to Israel and they captured it on the second day. They put the sword to all who lived there, just as they had done to Libnah.

33 Then King Horam of Gezer came up to help Lachish, but Joshua struck down him and his army until no survivors remained.

34 Joshua and all Israel marched from Lachish to Eglon. They deployed troops and fought against it.

35 That day they captured it and put the sword to all who lived there. That day they annihilated it just as they had done to Lachish.

36 Joshua and all Israel marched up from Eglon to Hebron and fought against it.

37 They captured it and put the sword to its king, all its surrounding cities, and all who lived in it; they left no survivors. As they had done at Eglon, they annihilated it and all who lived there.

38 Joshua and all Israel turned to Debir and fought against it.

39 They captured it, its king, and all its surrounding cities and put the sword to them. They annihilated everyone who lived there; they left no survivors. They did to Debir and its king what they had done to Libnah and its king and to Hebron.

#### **Summary of Southern Campaign**

40 Joshua defeated the whole land, including the hill country, the Negev, the lowlands, the slopes, and all their kings. He left no survivors. He annihilated everything that breathed, just as the LORD God of Israel had commanded.

41 Joshua conquered the area between Kadesh Barnea and Gaza and the whole region of Goshen, all the way to Gibeon.

42 Joshua captured in one campaign all these kings and their lands, for the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

43 [15] Then Joshua and all Israel returned to the camp at Gilgal.

## **The Northern Campaign (c. Fall 1406 – 1400 BC)**

Joshua 11:1–15

### **King Jabin's Mighty Northern Coalition**

1 When King Jabin of Hazor heard the news, he organized a coalition, including King Jobab of Madon, the king of Shimron, the king of Acshaph,

2 and the northern kings who ruled in the hill country, the Arabah south of Kinnereth, the lowlands, and the heights of Dor to the west.

3 Canaanites came from the east and west; Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites from the hill country; and Hivites from below Hermon in the area of Mizpah.

4 These kings came out with their armies; they were as numerous as the sand on the seashore and had a large number of horses and chariots.

5 All these kings gathered and joined forces at the Waters of Merom to fight Israel.

### **The Battle of Merom**

6 The LORD told Joshua, "Don't be afraid of them, for about this time tomorrow I will cause all of them to lie dead before Israel. You must hamstring their horses and burn their chariots."

7 Joshua and his whole army caught them by surprise at the Waters of Merom and attacked them.

8 The LORD handed them over to Israel and they struck them down and chased them all the way to Greater Sidon, Misrephoth Maim, and the Mizpah Valley to the east. They struck them down until no survivors remained.

9 Joshua did to them as the LORD had commanded him; he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.

### **Defeat of the Northern Coalition**

10 At that time Joshua turned, captured Hazor, and struck down its king with the sword, for Hazor was at that time the leader of all these kingdoms.

11 They annihilated everyone who lived there with the sword—no one who breathed remained—and burned Hazor.

12 Joshua captured all these royal cities and all their kings and annihilated them with the sword, as Moses the LORD's servant had commanded.

13 But Israel did not burn any of the cities located on mounds, except for Hazor; it was the only one Joshua burned.

14 The Israelites plundered all the goods of these cities and the cattle, but they totally destroyed all the people and allowed no one who breathed to live.

15 Moses the LORD's servant passed on the LORD's commands to Joshua, and Joshua did as he was told. He did not ignore any of the commands the LORD had given Moses.

## Canaan Is Conquered (c. Fall 1406 – 1400 BC)

Joshua 11:16–12:24

### Summary of the Conquest

11:16 Joshua conquered the whole land, including the hill country, all the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the lowlands, the Arabah, the hill country of Israel and its lowlands,  
 17 from Mount Halak on up to Seir, as far as Baal Gad in the Lebanon Valley below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and executed them.  
 18 Joshua campaigned against these kings for quite some time. [cf. [Exod 23:29](#)]  
 19 No city made peace with the Israelites (except the Hivites living in Gibeon); they had to conquer all of them,  
 20 for the LORD determined to make them obstinate so they would attack Israel. He wanted Israel to annihilate them without mercy, as he had instructed Moses.  
 21 At that time Joshua attacked and eliminated the Anakites from the hill country—from Hebron, Debir, Anab, and all the hill country of Judah and Israel. Joshua annihilated them and their cities.  
 22 No Anakites were left in Israelite territory, though some remained in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.  
 23 Joshua conquered the whole land, just as the LORD had promised Moses, and he assigned Israel their tribal portions. Then the land was free of war.

### Defeated Kings and Territories East of the Jordan

12:1 Now these are the kings of the land whom the Israelites defeated and drove from their land on the east side of the Jordan, from the Arnon Valley to Mount Hermon, including all the eastern Arabah:  
 2 King Sihon of the Amorites who lived in Heshbon and ruled from Aroer (on the edge of the Arnon Valley)—including the city in the middle of the valley and half of Gilead—all the way to the Jabbok Valley bordering Ammonite territory.  
 3 His kingdom included the eastern Arabah from the Sea of Kinnereth to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), including the route to Beth Jeshimoth and the area southward below the slopes of Pisgah.  
 4 The territory of King Og of Bashan, one of the few remaining Rephaites, who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei  
 5 and ruled over Mount Hermon, Salecah, all of Bashan to the border of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and half of Gilead as far as the border of King Sihon of Heshbon.  
 6 Moses the LORD's servant and the Israelites defeated them and Moses the LORD's servant assigned their land to Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

### Defeated Kings and Cities West of the Jordan

7 These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal Gad in the Lebanon Valley to Mount Halak on up to Seir. Joshua assigned this territory to the Israelite tribes,  
 8 including the hill country, the lowlands, the Arabah, the slopes, the wilderness, and the Negev—the land of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites:  
 9 the king of Jericho (one), the king of Ai—located near 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 Hopher (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 Acshaph (one),  
 21 the king of Taanach (one), the king of Megiddo (one),  
 22 the king of Kedesh (one), the king of Jokneam near Carmel (one),  
 23 the king of Dor—near Naphath Dor—(one), the king of Goyim—near Gilgal—(one),  
 24 the king of Tirzah (one), a total of thirty-one kings.

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### Chronological Notes

- 1) Joshua 10:15 is out of place chronologically. It is scarcely possible or logical that Joshua would have interrupted the completion of the battle's business near Gibeon and the other cities (including Makkedah: v. 10) and marched the entire congregation many miles back to their base camp at Gilgal, only to return to Makkedah and conclude the business of dealing with the Amorite coalition (vv. 16–27). The anomaly of v. 15's position is magnified when we realize that the words of this verse are found—intact and verbatim—in v. 43, where they make much more sense. Four solutions present themselves. First, those who see the *Book of Jashar* quote extending through v. 15 have little problem here, since this verse was thus part of that source, incorporated wholesale into the Book of Joshua. These scholars see v. 15 functioning proleptically, anticipating the end of the matter that comes in v. 43. In the *Book of Jashar*, the account would have omitted the details of the city-by-city conquests of vv. 16–42 and just concluded with the statement of v. 15/v. 43, which occurred just once in that book. Second, both verses could have been included intentionally, each closing off a section of the narrative. Third, other scholars see v. 15 as a scribal duplication (i.e., a transmission error), since the ends of vv. 14 and 42 are similar in Hebrew. Thus, only v. 43 should be seen as original. Fourth, the LXX omits both vv. 15 and 43, which may indicate that neither verse was present in the original text. Of these four possibilities, the second or third appears to be the most plausible.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David M. Howard, Jr., "Joshua," *NAC*, 251.

## Dividing the Land at Gilgal (1400 BC)

Joshua 13:1–7; 14:1–5

### God Commands Joshua to Divide the Land Among the Tribes

13:1 When Joshua was very old, the LORD told him, “You are very old, and a great deal of land remains to be conquered.

2 This is the land that remains: all the territory of the Philistines and all the Geshurites,

3 from the Shihor River east of Egypt northward to the territory of Ekron (it is regarded as Canaanite territory), including the area belonging to the five Philistine lords who ruled in Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron, as well as Avvite land

4 to the south; all the Canaanite territory, from Arah in the region of Sidon to Aphek, as far as Amorite territory;

5 the territory of Byblos and all Lebanon to the east, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo Hamath.

6 I will drive out before the Israelites all who live in the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth Maim, all the Sidonians; you be sure to parcel it out to Israel as I instructed you.”

7 Now, divide up this land among the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh.”

### Joshua Carries Out God’s Command—Levi Excluded

14:1 The following is a record of the territory assigned to the Israelites in the land of Canaan by Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the Israelite tribal leaders.

2 The land assignments to the nine-and-a-half tribes were made by drawing lots, as the LORD had instructed Moses.

3 Now Moses had assigned land to the two-and-a-half tribes east of the Jordan, but he assigned no land to the Levites.

4 The descendants of Joseph were considered as two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites were allotted no territory, though they were assigned cities in which to live, along with the grazing areas for their cattle and possessions.

5 The Israelites followed the LORD’s instructions to Moses and divided up the land.

## Judah’s Inheritance (1400 BC)

Joshua 14:6–15; 15:1–13, 20–62

### Caleb’s Faithfulness Is Rewarded

14:6 The men of Judah approached Joshua in Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, “You know what the LORD said about you and me to Moses, the man of God, at Kadesh Barnea.

7 I was forty years old when Moses, the LORD’s servant, sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy on the land and I brought back to him an honest report.

8 My countrymen who accompanied me frightened the people, but I remained loyal to the LORD my God.

9 That day Moses made this solemn promise: ‘Surely the land on which you walked will belong to you and your descendants permanently, for you remained loyal to the LORD your God.’

10 So now, look, the LORD has preserved my life, just as he promised, these past forty-five years since the LORD spoke these words to Moses, during which Israel traveled through the wilderness. Now look, I am today eighty-five years old.

11 Today I am still as strong as when Moses sent me out. I can fight and go about my daily activities with the same energy I had then.

12 Now, assign me this hill country which the LORD promised me at that time! No doubt you heard at that time that the Anakites live there in large, fortified cities. But, assuming the LORD is with me, I will conquer them, as the LORD promised.”

13 Joshua asked God to empower Caleb son of Jephunneh and assigned him Hebron.

14 So Hebron remains the assigned land of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this very day because he remained loyal to the LORD God of Israel.

15 (Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba. Arba was a famous Anakite.) Then the land was free of war.

### Judah’s Boundaries

15:1 The land allotted to the tribe of Judah by its clans reached to the border of Edom, to the Wilderness of Zin in the Negev far to the south.

2 Their southern border started at the southern tip of the Salt Sea,

3 extended south of the Scorpion Ascent, crossed to Zin, went up from the south to Kadesh Barnea, crossed to Hezron, went up to Addar, and turned toward Karka.

4 It then crossed to Azmon, extended to the Stream of Egypt, and ended at the sea. This was their southern border.

5 The eastern border was the Salt Sea to the mouth of the Jordan River. The northern border started north of the Salt Sea at the mouth of the Jordan,

6 went up to Beth Hoglah, crossed north of Beth Arabah, and went up to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben.

7 It then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, turning northward to Gilgal (which is opposite the Pass of Adummim south of the valley), crossed to the waters of En Shemesh and extended to En Rogel.

8 It then went up the Valley of Ben Hinnom to the slope of the Jebusites on the south (that is, Jerusalem), going up to the top of the hill opposite the Valley of Ben Hinnom to the west, which is at the end of the Valley of the Rephaites to the north.

9 It then went from the top of the hill to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, extended to the cities of Mount Ephron, and went to

Baalah (that is, Kiriath Jearim).

10 It then turned from Baalah westward to Mount Seir, crossed to the slope of Mount Jearim on the north (that is Kesalon), descended to Beth Shemesh, and crossed to Timnah.

11 It then extended to the slope of Ekron to the north, went toward Shikkeron, crossed to Mount Baalah, extended to Jabneel, and ended at the sea.

12 The western border was the Mediterranean Sea. These were the borders of the tribe of Judah and its clans.

#### **Caleb's Inheritance**

13 The LORD commanded Joshua to assign some of Judah's territory to Caleb son of Jephunneh. So Caleb was given the town of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), which had been named after Anak's ancestor.

#### **Judah's Cities—In the South (Negeb)**

20 This is the land assigned to the tribe of Judah by its clans:

21 These cities were located at the southern extremity of Judah's tribal land near the border of Edom: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur,

22 Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah,

23 Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan,

24 Ziph, Telem, Bealoth,

25 Hazor Hadattah, Kerioth Hezron (that is, Hazor),

26 Amam, Shema, Moladah,

27 Hazar Gaddah, Heshbon, Beth Pelet,

28 Hazar Shual, Beer Sheba, Biziothiah,

29 Baalah, Iim, Ezem,

30 Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah,

31 Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah,

32 Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon—a total of twenty-nine cities and their towns.

#### **Judah's Cities—In the Western Foothills (Shephelah)**

33 These cities were in the lowlands: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah,

34 Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam,

35 Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah,

36 Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (or Gederothaim)—a total of fourteen cities and their towns.

37 Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad,

38 Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel,

39 Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon,

40 Cabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish,

41 Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah—a total of sixteen cities and their towns.

42 Libnah, Ether, Ashan,

43 Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib,

44 Keilah, Aczib, and Mareshah—a total of nine cities and their towns.

#### **Judah's Cities—Philistine Cities**

45 Ekron and its surrounding towns and settlements;

46 from Ekron westward, all those in the vicinity of Ashdod and their towns;

47 Ashdod with its surrounding towns and settlements, and Gaza with its surrounding towns and settlements, as far as the Stream of Egypt and the border at the Mediterranean Sea.

#### **Judah's Cities—In the Hill Country (Har)**

48 These cities were in the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh,

49 Dannah, Kiriath Sannah (that is, Debir),

50 Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim,

51 Goshen, Holon, and Giloh—a total of eleven cities and their towns.

52 Arab, Dumah, Eshan,

53 Janim, Beth Tappuah, Apekah,

54 Humtah, Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior—a total of nine cities and their towns.

55 Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah,

56 Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah,

57 Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah—a total of ten cities and their towns.

58 Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor,

59 Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon—a total of six cities and their towns.  
60 Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim) and Rabbah—a total of two cities and their towns.

#### **Judah's Cities—In the Desert (Midbar)**

61 These cities were in the desert: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah,  
62 Nibshan, the city of Salt, and En Gedi—a total of six cities and their towns.

### **Joseph's Inheritance (1400 BC)**

Joshua 16:1–9; 17:1–11, 14–18

#### **Joseph's Border**

16:1 The land allotted to Joseph's descendants extended from the Jordan at Jericho to the waters of Jericho to the east, through the desert and on up from Jericho into the hill country of Bethel.

2 The southern border extended from Bethel to Luz, and crossed to Arkite territory at Ataroth.

3 It then descended westward to Japhletite territory, as far as the territory of lower Beth Horon and Gezer, and ended at the sea.

4 Joseph's descendants, Manasseh and Ephraim, were assigned their land.

#### **Ephraim's Border**

5 The territory of the tribe of Ephraim by its clans included the following: The border of their assigned land to the east was Ataroth Addar as far as upper Beth Horon.

6 It then extended on to the sea, with Micmethath on the north. It turned eastward to Taanath Shiloh and crossed it on the east to Janoah.

7 It then descended from Janoah to Ataroth and Naarah, touched Jericho, and extended to the Jordan River.

8 From Tappuah it went westward to the Valley of Kanah and ended at the sea. This is the land assigned to the tribe of Ephraim by its clans.

9 Also included were the cities set apart for the tribe of Ephraim within Manasseh's territory, along with their towns.

#### **West Manasseh's Border**

17:1 The tribe of Manasseh, Joseph's firstborn son, was also allotted land. The descendants of Makir, Manasseh's firstborn and the father of Gilead, received land, for they were warriors. They were assigned Gilead and Bashan.

2 The rest of Manasseh's descendants were also assigned land by their clans, including the descendants of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher, and Shemida. These are the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph by their clans.

3 Now Zelophehad son of Hephher, son of Gilead, son of Makir, son of Manasseh, had no sons, only daughters. These are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

4 They went before Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders and said, "The LORD told Moses to assign us land among our relatives." So Joshua assigned them land among their uncles, as the LORD had commanded.

5 Manasseh was allotted ten shares of land, in addition to the land of Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan,

6 for the daughters of Manasseh were assigned land among his sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh.

7 The border of Manasseh went from Asher to Micmethath which is near Shechem. It then went south toward those who live in Tappuah.

8 (The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but Tappuah, located on the border of Manasseh, belonged to the tribe of Ephraim.)

9 The border then descended southward to the Valley of Kanah. Ephraim was assigned cities there among the cities of Manasseh, but the border of Manasseh was north of the valley and ended at the sea.

10 Ephraim's territory was to the south, and Manasseh's to the north. The sea was Manasseh's western border and their territory touched Asher on the north and Issachar on the east.

11 Within Issachar's and Asher's territory Manasseh was assigned Beth Shean, Ibleam, the residents of Dor, En Dor, the residents of Taanach, the residents of Megiddo, the three of Napheth, and the towns surrounding all these cities.

#### **Joseph's Complaint**

14 The descendants of Joseph said to Joshua, "Why have you assigned us only one tribal allotment? After all, we have many people, for until now the LORD has enabled us to increase in number."

15 Joshua replied to them, "Since you have so many people, go up into the forest and clear out a place to live in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaites, for the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you."

16 The descendants of Joseph said, "The whole hill country is inadequate for us, and the Canaanites living down in the valley in Beth Shean and its surrounding towns and in the Valley of Jezreel have chariots with iron-rimmed wheels."

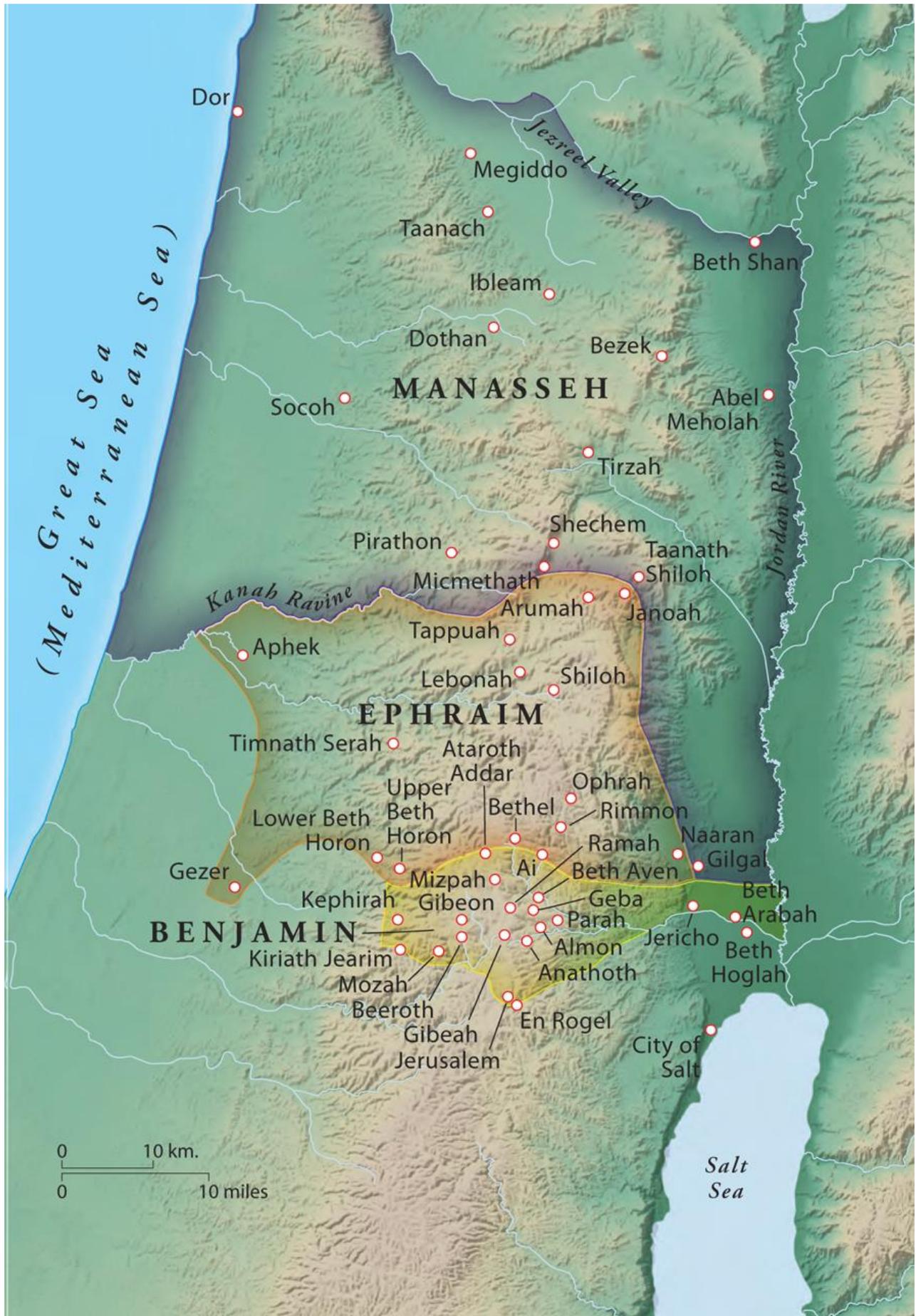
17 Joshua said to the family of Joseph—to both Ephraim and Manasseh: "You have many people and great military strength. You will not have just one tribal allotment."

18 The whole hill country will be yours; though it is a forest, you can clear it and it will be entirely yours. You can conquer the Canaanites, though they have chariots with iron-rimmed wheels and are strong.”

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## Dividing the Land at Shiloh (1400 BC)

Joshua 18:1–10

- 1 The entire Israelite community assembled at Shiloh and there they set up the tent of meeting. Though they had subdued the land, 2 seven Israelite tribes had not been assigned their allotted land.
- 3 So Joshua said to the Israelites: “How long do you intend to put off occupying the land the LORD God of your ancestors has given you?”
- 4 Pick three men from each tribe. I will send them out to walk through the land and make a map of it for me.
- 5 Divide it into seven regions. Judah will stay in its territory in the south, and the family of Joseph in its territory in the north.
- 6 But as for you, map out the land into seven regions and bring it to me. I will draw lots for you here before the LORD our God.
- 7 But the Levites will not have an allotted portion among you, for their inheritance is to serve the LORD. Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their allotted land east of the Jordan which Moses the LORD’s servant assigned them.”
- 8 When the men started out, Joshua told those going to map out the land, “Go, walk through the land, map it out, and return to me. Then I will draw lots for you before the LORD here in Shiloh.”
- 9 The men journeyed through the land and mapped it and its cities out into seven regions on a scroll. Then they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh.
- 10 Joshua drew lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD and divided the land among the Israelites according to their allotted portions.

## Inheritance of Remaining Tribes (1400 BC)

Joshua 18:11–19:46, 48–51

### Benjamin’s Inheritance

- 18:11 The first lot belonged to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans. Their allotted territory was between Judah and Joseph.
- 12 Their northern border started at the Jordan, went up to the slope of Jericho on the north, ascended westward to the hill country, and extended to the desert of Beth Aven.
- 13 It then crossed from there to Luz, to the slope of Luz to the south (that is, Bethel), and descended to Ataroth Addar located on the hill that is south of lower Beth Horon.
- 14 It then turned on the west side southward from the hill near Beth Horon on the south and extended to Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim), a city belonging to the tribe of Judah. This is the western border.
- 15 The southern side started on the edge of Kiriath Jearim and extended westward to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah.
- 16 The border then descended to the edge of the hill country near the Valley of Ben Hinnom located in the Valley of the Rephaites to the north. It descended through the Valley of Hinnom to the slope of the Jebusites to the south and then down to En Rogel.
- 17 It went northward, extending to En Shemesh and Geliloth opposite the Pass of Adummim, and descended to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben.
- 18 It crossed to the slope in front of the Arabah to the north and descended into the Arabah.
- 19 It then crossed to the slope of Beth Hoglah to the north and ended at the northern tip of the Salt Sea at the mouth of the Jordan River. This was the southern border.
- 20 The Jordan River borders it on the east. These were the borders of the land assigned to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans.
- 21 These cities belonged to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans: Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz,
- 22 Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel,
- 23 Avvim, Parah, Ophrah,
- 24 Kephrah Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba—a total of twelve cities and their towns.
- 25 Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth,
- 26 Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah,
- 27 Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah,
- 28 Zelah, Haeleph, the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath—a total of fourteen cities and their towns. This was the land assigned to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans.

### Simeon’s Inheritance (inside Judah’s)

- 19:1 The second lot belonged to the tribe of Simeon by its clans.
- 2 Their assigned land included Beer Sheba, Moladah,
- 3 Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem,
- 4 Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah,
- 5 Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah,
- 6 Beth Lebaath, and Sharuhem—a total of thirteen cities and their towns,
- 7 Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—a total of four cities and their towns,
- 8 as well as all the towns around these cities as far as Baalath Beer (Ramah of the Negev). This was the land assigned to the tribe of Simeon by its clans.
- 9 Simeon’s assigned land was taken from Judah’s allotted portion, for Judah’s territory was too large for them; so Simeon was

assigned land within Judah. [cf. [Gen 49:5–7](#)]

### **Zebulun's Inheritance**

- 10 The third lot belonged to the tribe of Zebulun by its clans. The border of their territory extended to Sarid.  
11 Their border went up westward to Maralah and touched Dabbesheth and the valley near Jokneam.  
12 From Sarid it turned eastward to the territory of Kisloth Tabor, extended to Daberath, and went up to Japhia.  
13 From there it crossed eastward to Gath Hepher and Eth Kazin and extended to Rimmon, turning toward Neah.  
14 It then turned on the north to Hannathon and ended at the Valley of Iphtah El.  
15 Their territory included Kattah, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem; in all they had twelve cities and their towns.  
16 This was the land assigned to the tribe of Zebulun by its clans, including these cities and their towns.

### **Issachar's Inheritance**

- 17 The fourth lot belonged to the tribe of Issachar by its clans.  
18 Their assigned land included Jezreel, Kesulloth, Shunem,  
19 Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath,  
20 Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez,  
21 Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah and Beth Pазzez.  
22 Their border touched Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth Shemesh, and ended at the Jordan. They had sixteen cities and their towns.  
23 This was the land assigned to the tribe of Issachar by its clans, including the cities and their towns.

### **Asher's Inheritance**

- 24 The fifth lot belonged to the tribe of Asher by its clans.  
25 Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Acshaph,  
26 Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal. Their border touched Carmel to the west and Shihor Libnath.  
27 It turned eastward toward Beth Dagon, touched Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtah El to the north, as well as the Valley of Emek and Neiel, and extended to Cabul on the north  
28 and on to Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon.  
29 It then turned toward Ramah as far as the fortified city of Tyre, turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea near Hebel, Aczib,  
30 Umah, Aphek, and Rehob. In all they had twenty-two cities and their towns.  
31 This was the land assigned to the tribe of Asher by its clans, including these cities and their towns.

### **Naphtali's Inheritance**

- 32 The sixth lot belonged to the tribe of Naphtali by its clans.  
33 Their border started at Heleph and the oak of Zaananim, went to Adami Nekeb, Jabneel and on to Lakkum, and ended at the Jordan River.  
34 It turned westward to Aznoth Tabor, extended from there to Hukok, touched Zebulun on the south, Asher on the west, and the Jordan on the east.  
35 The fortified cities included Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth,  
36 Adamah, Ramah, Hazor,  
37 Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor,  
38 Yiron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh. In all they had nineteen cities and their towns.  
39 This was the land assigned to the tribe of Naphtali by its clans, including the cities and their towns.

### **Dan's Inheritance**

- 40 The seventh lot belonged to the tribe of Dan by its clans.  
41 Their assigned land included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh,  
42 Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah,  
43 Elon, Timnah, Ekron,  
44 Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath,  
45 Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon,  
46 the waters of Jarkon, and Rakkon, including the territory in front of Joppa.  
48 This was the land assigned to the tribe of Dan by its clans, including these cities and their towns.

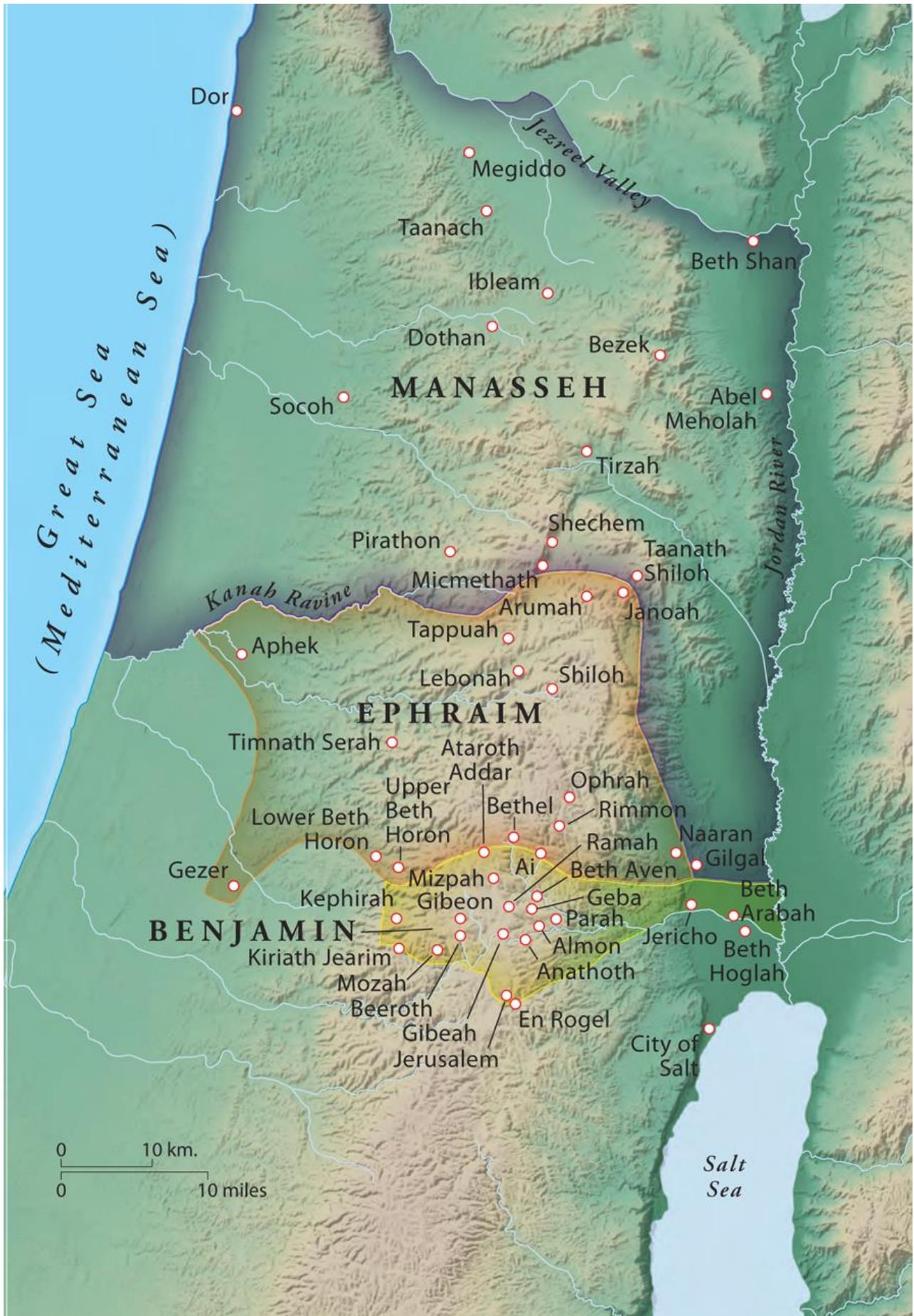
### **Joshua Given City of Timnath-serah in Ephraim**

- 49 When they finished dividing the land into its regions, the Israelites gave Joshua son of Nun some land.  
50 As the LORD had instructed, they gave him the city he requested—Timnath Serah in the Ephraimite hill country. He built up the city and lived in it.

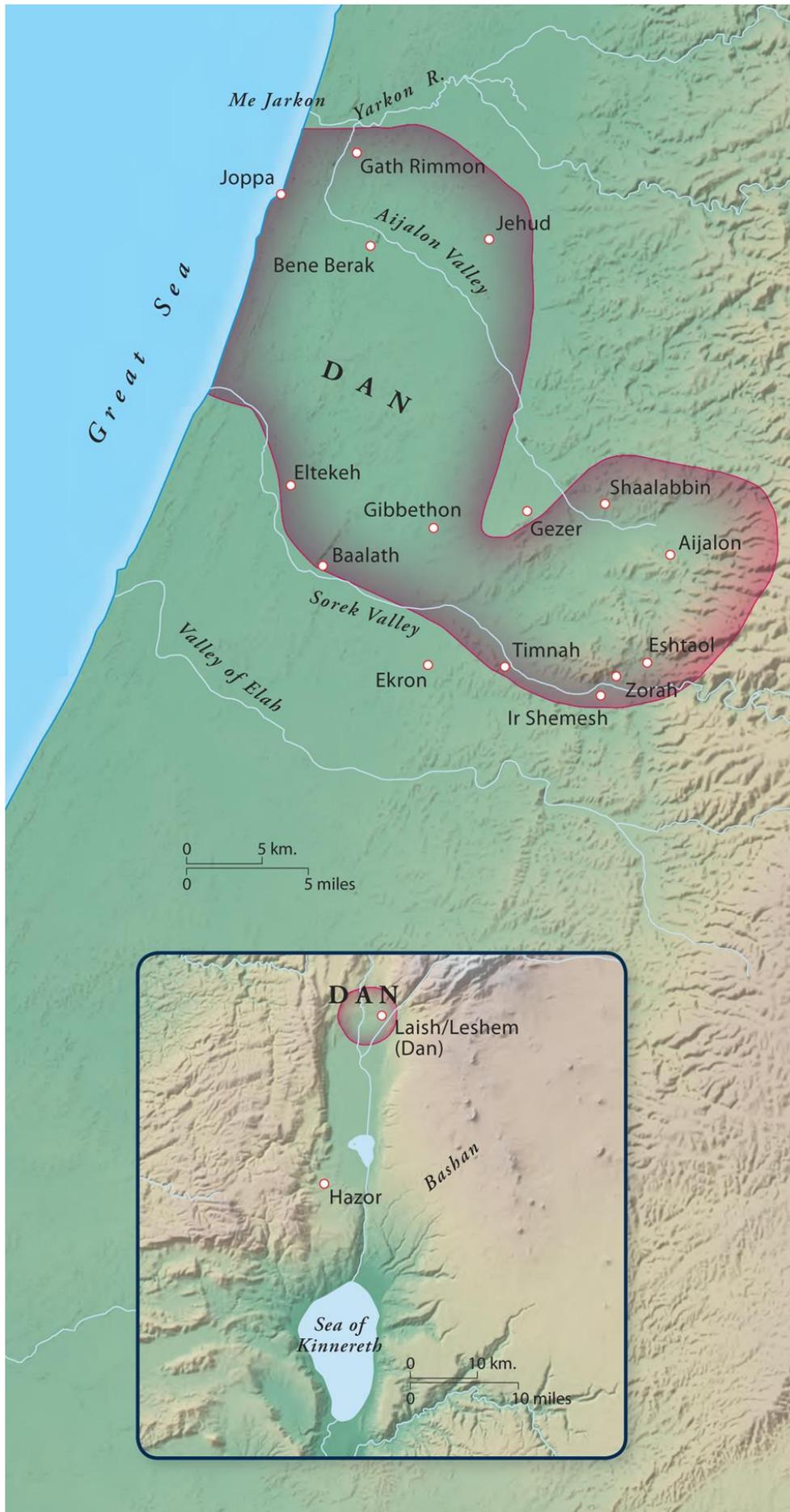
**Summary Statement**

51 These are the land assignments which Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the Israelite tribal leaders made by drawing lots in Shiloh before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting. So they finished dividing up the land.

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## Cities of Refuge (1400 BC)

### Joshua 20

- 1 The LORD instructed Joshua:
- 2 “Have the Israelites select the cities of refuge that I told you about through Moses.
- 3 Anyone who accidentally kills someone can escape there; these cities will be a place of asylum from the avenger of blood.
- 4 The one who committed manslaughter should escape to one of these cities, stand at the entrance of the city gate, and present his case to the leaders of that city. They should then bring him into the city, give him a place to stay, and let him live there.
- 5 When the avenger of blood comes after him, they must not hand over to him the one who committed manslaughter, for he accidentally killed his fellow man without premeditation.
- 6 He must remain in that city until his case is decided by the assembly and the high priest dies. Then the one who committed manslaughter may return home to the city from which he escaped.”
- 7 So they selected Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.
- 8 Beyond the Jordan east of Jericho they selected Bezer in the desert on the plain belonging to the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead belonging to the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan belonging to the tribe of Manasseh.
- 9 These were the cities of refuge appointed for all the Israelites and for resident foreigners living among them. Anyone who accidentally killed someone could escape there and not be executed by the avenger of blood, at least until his case was reviewed by the assembly.

## Levi's Inheritance of Cities (1400 BC)

### Joshua 21:1–42

- 1 The tribal leaders of the Levites went before Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun and the Israelite tribal leaders
- 2 in Shiloh in the land of Canaan and said, “The LORD told Moses to assign us cities in which to live along with the grazing areas for our cattle.”
- 3 So the Israelites assigned these cities and their grazing areas to the Levites from their own holdings, as the LORD had instructed.

#### General Overview

- 4 The first lot belonged to the Kohathite clans.

The Levites who were descendants of Aaron the priest were allotted thirteen cities from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

- 5 The rest of Kohath's descendants were allotted ten cities from the clans of the tribe of Ephraim, and from the tribe of Dan and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

- 6 Gershon's descendants were allotted thirteen cities from the clans of the tribe of Issachar, and from the tribes of Asher and Naphtali and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

- 7 Merari's descendants by their clans were allotted twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

- 8 So the Israelites assigned to the Levites by lot these cities and their grazing areas, as the LORD had instructed Moses.

#### Priestly Kohathites' Inheritance

- 9 They assigned from the tribes of Judah and Simeon

the cities listed below.

- 10 They were assigned to the Kohathite clans of the Levites who were descendants of Aaron, for the first lot belonged to them.

- 11 They assigned them Kiriath Arba (Arba was the father of Anak), that is, Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, along with its surrounding grazing areas.

- 12 (Now the city's fields and surrounding towns they had

### 1 Chronicles 6:54–81

- 54 These were the areas where Aaron's descendants lived:

The following belonged to the Kohathite clan, for they received the first allotment:

- 61 The rest of Kohath's descendants were allotted ten cities in

the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh.

- 62 The clans of Gershom's descendants received thirteen cities within the territory of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh (in Bashan).

- 63 The clans of Merari's descendants were allotted twelve cities within the territory of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

- 64 So the Israelites gave to the Levites these cities and their pasturelands.

- 65 They allotted these previously named cities from the territory of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

- 55 They were allotted Hebron in the territory of Judah, as well as its surrounding pasturelands.

- 56 (But the city's land and nearby towns were

assigned to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his property.)  
 13 So to the descendants of Aaron the priest they assigned Hebron (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter), Libnah,  
 14 Jattir,  
 Eshtemoa,  
 15 Holon,  
 Debir,  
 16 Ain,  
 Juttah, and  
 Beth Shemesh, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of nine cities taken from these two tribes.  
 17 From the tribe of Benjamin they assigned  
 Gibeon,  
 Geba,  
 18 Anathoth, and Almon, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities.  
 19 The priests descended from Aaron received thirteen cities and their grazing areas.

#### **Nonpriestly Kohathites' Inheritance**

20 The rest of the Kohathite clans of the Levites were allotted cities from the tribe of Ephraim.  
 21 They assigned them  
 Shechem (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter) in the hill country of Ephraim,  
 Gezer,  
 22 Kibzaim, and  
 Beth Horon, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities.  
 23 From the tribe of Dan they assigned  
 Eltekeh,  
 Gibbethon,  
 24 Aijalon, and  
 Gath Rimmon, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities.  
 25 From the half-tribe of Manasseh they assigned  
 Taanach and  
 Gath Rimmon, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of two cities.  
 26 The rest of the Kohathite clans received ten cities and their grazing areas.

#### **Gershonites' Inheritance**

27 They assigned to the Gershonite clans of the Levites the following cities:  
 from the half-tribe of Manasseh:  
 Golan in Bashan (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter) and Beeshtarah, along with the grazing areas of each—a total of two cities;  
 28 from the tribe of Issachar:  
 Kishon,  
 Daberath,  
 29 Jarmuth, and  
 En Gannim, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities;

allotted to Caleb son of Jephunneh.)  
 57 The descendants of Aaron were also allotted as cities of refuge Hebron, Libnah and its pasturelands, Jattir, Eshtemoa and its pasturelands,  
 58 Hilez and its pasturelands,  
 Debir and its pasturelands,  
 59 Ashan and its pasturelands,  
 and  
 Beth Shemesh and its pasturelands.

60 Within the territory of the tribe of Benjamin they were allotted

Geba and its pasturelands,  
 Alemeth and its pasturelands, and Anathoth and its pasturelands.

Their clans were allotted thirteen cities in all.

66 The clans of Kohath's descendants also received territory within the tribe of Ephraim.

67 They were allotted as cities of refuge

Shechem and its pasturelands  
 (in the hill country of Ephraim),  
 Gezer and its pasturelands,  
 68 Jokmeam and its pasturelands,  
 Beth Horon and its pasturelands,

69 Aijalon and its pasturelands, and  
 Gath Rimmon and its pasturelands.

70 Within the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh, the rest of Kohath's descendants received  
 Aner and its pasturelands and  
 Bileam and its pasturelands.

71 The following belonged to Gershom's descendants:

Within the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh:  
 Golan in Bashan and its pasturelands and  
 Ashtaroth and its pasturelands.

72 Within the territory of the tribe of Issachar:

Kedesh and its pasturelands,  
 Daberath and its pasturelands,  
 73 Ramoth and its pasturelands, and  
 Anem and its pasturelands.

<p>30 from the tribe of Asher: Mishal, Abdon, 31 Helkath, and Rehob, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities; 32 from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter), Hammoth Dor, and Kartan, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of three cities. 33 The Gershonite clans received thirteen cities and their grazing areas.</p> <p><b>Merarites' Inheritance</b> 34 They assigned to the Merarite clans (the remaining Levites) the following cities: from the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam, Kartah, 35 Dimnah, and Nahalal, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities; 36 from the tribe of Reuben:  Bezer, Jahaz, 37 Kedemoth, and Mephaath, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities; 38 from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter), Mahanaim, 39 Heshbon, and Jazer, along with the grazing areas of each— a total of four cities. 40 The Merarite clans (the remaining Levites) were allotted twelve cities.</p> <p><b>Summary</b> 41 The Levites received within the land owned by the Israelites forty-eight cities in all and their grazing areas. 42 Each of these cities had grazing areas around it; they were alike in this regard.</p>	<p>74 Within the territory of the tribe of Asher: Mashal and its pasturelands, Abdon and its pasturelands, 75 Hukok and its pasturelands, and Rehob and its pasturelands.</p> <p>76 Within the territory of the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee and its pasturelands,  Hammon and its pasturelands, and Kiriathaim and its pasturelands.</p> <p>77 The following belonged to the rest of Merari's descendants:  Within the territory of the tribe of Zebulun:  Rimmono and its pasturelands, and Tabor and its pasturelands.</p> <p>78 Within the territory of the tribe of Reuben across the Jordan River east of Jericho: Bezer in the desert and its pasturelands, Jahzah and its pasturelands, 79 Kedemoth and its pasturelands, and Mephaath and its pasturelands.</p> <p>80 Within the territory of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead and its pasturelands,  Mahanaim and its pasturelands, 81 Heshbon and its pasturelands, and Jazer and its pasturelands.</p>
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### Summary of the Conquest (1400 BC)

Joshua 21:43–45

43 So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had solemnly promised to their ancestors, and they conquered it and lived in it.  
44 The LORD made them secure, in fulfillment of all he had solemnly promised their ancestors. None of their enemies could resist them.  
45 Not one of the LORD's faithful promises to the family of Israel was left unfulfilled; every one was realized.

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## Joshua's Farewell Address to Transjordan Tribes (1400 BC)

Joshua 22:1–8

### Joshua's Exhortation

- 1 Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh  
 2 and told them: "You have carried out all the instructions of Moses the LORD's servant, and you have obeyed all I have told you.  
 3 You have not abandoned your fellow Israelites this entire time, right up to this very day. You have completed the task given you by the LORD your God.  
 4 Now the LORD your God has made your fellow Israelites secure, just as he promised them. So now you may turn around and go to your homes in your own land which Moses the LORD's servant assigned to you east of the Jordan.  
 5 But carefully obey the commands and instructions Moses the LORD's servant gave you. Love the LORD your God, follow all his instructions, obey his commands, be loyal to him, and serve him with all your heart and being!"

### Joshua's Blessing

- 6 Joshua rewarded them and sent them on their way; they returned to their homes.  
 7 (Now to one half-tribe of Manasseh, Moses had assigned land in Bashan; and to the other half Joshua had assigned land on the west side of the Jordan with their fellow Israelites.) When Joshua sent them home, he rewarded them,  
 8 saying, "Take home great wealth, a lot of cattle, silver, gold, bronze, iron, and a lot of clothing. Divide up the goods captured from your enemies with your brothers."

## A Crisis of Loyalties (1400 BC)

Joshua 22:9–34

### The Crisis Begins

- 9 So the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh left the Israelites in Shiloh in the land of Canaan and headed home to their own land in Gilead, which they acquired by the LORD's command through Moses.  
 10 The Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh came to Gilead near the Jordan in the land of Canaan and built there, near the Jordan, an impressive altar.  
 11 The Israelites received this report: "Look, the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh have built an altar at the entrance to the land of Canaan, at Gilead near the Jordan on the Israelite side."  
 12 When the Israelites heard this, the entire Israelite community assembled at Shiloh to launch an attack against them.

### The Accusation

- 13 The Israelites sent Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the priest, to the land of Gilead to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.  
 14 He was accompanied by ten leaders, one from each of the Israelite tribes, each one a family leader among the Israelite clans.  
 15 They went to the land of Gilead to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and said to them:  
 16 "The entire community of the LORD says, 'Why have you disobeyed the God of Israel by turning back today from following the LORD? You built an altar for yourselves and have rebelled today against the LORD.  
 17 The sin we committed at Peor was bad enough. To this very day we have not purified ourselves; it even brought a plague on the community of the LORD.  
 18 Now today you dare to turn back from following the LORD! You are rebelling today against the LORD; tomorrow he may break out in anger against the entire community of Israel.  
 19 But if your own land is impure, cross over to the LORD's own land, where the LORD himself lives, and settle down among us. But don't rebel against the LORD or us by building for yourselves an altar aside from the altar of the LORD our God.  
 20 When Achan son of Zerah disobeyed the command about the city's riches, the entire Israelite community was judged, though only one man had sinned. He most certainly died for his sin!"

### The Defense

- 21 The Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the leaders of the Israelite clans:  
 22 "El, God, the LORD! El, God, the LORD! He knows the truth! Israel must also know! If we have rebelled or disobeyed the LORD, don't spare us today!  
 23 If we have built an altar for ourselves to turn back from following the LORD by making burnt sacrifices and grain offerings on it, or by offering tokens of peace on it, the LORD himself will punish us.  
 24 We swear we have done this because we were worried that in the future your descendants would say to our descendants, 'What relationship do you have with the LORD God of Israel?'  
 25 The LORD made the Jordan a boundary between us and you Reubenites and Gadites. You have no right to worship the LORD.' In this way your descendants might cause our descendants to stop obeying the LORD.  
 26 So we decided to build this altar, not for burnt offerings and sacrifices,

27 but as a reminder to us and you, and to our descendants who follow us, that we will honor the LORD in his very presence with burnt offerings, sacrifices, and tokens of peace. Then in the future your descendants will not be able to say to our descendants, ‘You have no right to worship the LORD.’

28 We said, ‘If in the future they say such a thing to us or to our descendants, we will reply, “See the model of the LORD’s altar that our ancestors made, not for burnt offerings or sacrifices, but as a reminder to us and you.”’

29 Far be it from us to rebel against the LORD by turning back today from following after the LORD by building an altar for burnt offerings, sacrifices, and tokens of peace aside from the altar of the LORD our God located in front of his dwelling place!’

#### The Resolution

30 When Phinehas the priest and the community leaders and clan leaders who accompanied him heard the defense of the Reubenites, Gadites, and the Manassehites, they were satisfied.

31 Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the priest, said to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the Manassehites, “Today we know that the LORD is among us, because you have not disobeyed the LORD in this. Now you have rescued the Israelites from the LORD’s judgment.”

32 Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the priest, and the leaders left the Reubenites and Gadites in the land of Gilead and reported back to the Israelites in the land of Canaan.

33 The Israelites were satisfied with their report and gave thanks to God. They said nothing more about launching an attack to destroy the land in which the Reubenites and Gadites lived.

34 The Reubenites and Gadites named the altar, “Surely it is a Reminder to us that the LORD is God.”

### Joshua’s Farewell Address to All Israel (c. 1380 BC)

#### Joshua 23

1 A long time passed after the LORD made Israel secure from all their enemies, and Joshua was very old.

2 So Joshua summoned all Israel, including the elders, rulers, judges, and leaders, and told them: “I am very old.

3 You saw everything the LORD your God did to all these nations on your behalf, for the LORD your God fights for you.

4 See, I have parceled out to your tribes these remaining nations, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, including all the nations I defeated.

5 The LORD your God will drive them out from before you and remove them, so you can occupy their land as the LORD your God promised you.

6 Be very strong! Carefully obey all that is written in the law scroll of Moses so you won’t swerve from it to the right or the left, 7 or associate with these nations that remain near you. You must not invoke or make solemn declarations by the names of their gods! You must not worship or bow down to them!

8 But you must be loyal to the LORD your God, as you have been to this very day.

9 “The LORD drove out from before you great and mighty nations; no one has been able to resist you to this very day.

10 One of you makes a thousand run away, for the LORD your God fights for you as he promised you he would.

11 Watch yourselves carefully! Love the LORD your God!

12 But if you ever turn away and make alliances with these nations that remain near you, and intermarry with them and establish friendly relations with them,

13 know for certain that the LORD our God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. They will trap and ensnare you; they will be a whip that tears your sides and thorns that blind your eyes until you disappear from this good land the LORD your God gave you.

14 “Look, today I am about to die. You know with all your heart and being that not even one of all the faithful promises the LORD your God made to you is left unfulfilled; every one was realized—not one promise is unfulfilled!

15 But in the same way every faithful promise the LORD your God made to you has been realized, it is just as certain, if you disobey, that the LORD will bring on you every judgment until he destroys you from this good land which the LORD your God gave you.

16 If you violate the covenantal laws of the LORD your God which he commanded you to keep, and follow, worship, and bow down to other gods, the LORD will be very angry with you and you will disappear quickly from the good land which he gave to you.”

### Covenant Renewal at Shechem (c. 1380 BC)

Joshua 24:1–28

Judges 2:6

#### Remembering the Past

1 Joshua assembled all the Israelite tribes at Shechem. He summoned Israel’s elders, rulers, judges, and leaders, and they appeared before God.

2 Joshua told all the people, “Here is what the LORD God of Israel says: ‘In the distant past your ancestors lived beyond the Euphrates River, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor. They worshiped other gods,

3 but I took your father Abraham from beyond the Euphrates and brought him into the entire land of Canaan. I made his descendants numerous; I gave him Isaac,

4 and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I assigned Mount Seir, while Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt.  
 5 I sent Moses and Aaron, and I struck Egypt down when I intervened in their land. Then I brought you out.  
 6 When I brought your fathers out of Egypt, you arrived at the sea. The Egyptians chased your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea.  
 7 Your fathers cried out for help to the LORD; he made the area between you and the Egyptians dark, and then drowned them in the sea. You witnessed with your very own eyes what I did in Egypt. You lived in the wilderness for a long time.  
 8 Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites who lived east of the Jordan. They fought with you, but I handed them over to you; you conquered their land and I destroyed them from before you.  
 9 Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, launched an attack against Israel. He summoned Balaam son of Beor to call down judgment on you.  
 10 I refused to respond to Balaam; he kept prophesying good things about you, and I rescued you from his power.  
 11 You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho, as well as the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites, fought with you, but I handed them over to you.  
 12 I sent terror ahead of you to drive out before you the two Amorite kings. I gave you the victory; it was not by your swords or bows.  
 13 I gave you a land in which you had not worked hard; you took up residence in cities you did not build and you are eating the produce of vineyards and olive groves you did not plant.'

### Renewal of Covenant Loyalty

14 Now obey the LORD and worship him with integrity and loyalty. Put aside the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt and worship the LORD.  
 15 If you have no desire to worship the LORD, choose today whom you will worship, whether it be the gods whom your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living. But I and my family will worship the LORD!"  
 16 The people responded, "Far be it from us to abandon the LORD so we can worship other gods!  
 17 For the LORD our God took us and our fathers out of slavery in the land of Egypt and performed these awesome miracles before our very eyes. He continually protected us as we traveled and when we passed through nations.  
 18 The LORD drove out from before us all the nations, including the Amorites who lived in the land. So we too will worship the LORD, for he is our God!"  
 19 Joshua warned the people, "You will not keep worshiping the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God who will not forgive your rebellion or your sins.  
 20 If you abandon the LORD and worship foreign gods, he will turn against you; he will bring disaster on you and destroy you, though he once treated you well."  
 21 The people said to Joshua, "No! We really will worship the LORD!"  
 22 Joshua said to the people, "Do you agree to be witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to worship the LORD?" They replied, "We are witnesses!"  
 23 Joshua said, "Now put aside the foreign gods that are among you and submit to the LORD God of Israel."  
 24 The people said to Joshua, "We will worship the LORD our God and obey him."

### Sealing the Covenant

25 That day Joshua drew up an agreement for the people, and he established rules and regulations for them in Shechem.  
 26 Joshua wrote these words in the Law Scroll of God. He then took a large stone and set it up there under the oak tree near the LORD's shrine.  
 27 Joshua said to all the people, "Look, this stone will be a witness against you, for it has heard everything the LORD said to us. It will be a witness against you if you deny your God."

28 When Joshua dismissed the people, they went to their allotted portions of land.

6 When Joshua dismissed the people, the Israelites went to their allotted portions of territory, intending to take possession of the land.

## The Death of Joshua (c. 1380 BC)

Joshua 24:29–33

29 After all this Joshua son of Nun, the LORD's servant, died at the age of one hundred ten.  
 30 They buried him in his allotted territory in Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.  
 31 Israel worshiped the LORD throughout Joshua's lifetime and as long as the elderly men who outlived him remained alive.

Judges 2:7–9

8 Joshua son of Nun, the LORD's servant, died at the age of one hundred ten.  
 9 The people buried him in his allotted land in Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.  
 7 The people worshiped the LORD throughout Joshua's lifetime and as long as the elderly men who outlived him remained alive.

These men had experienced firsthand everything the LORD had done for Israel.  
 32 The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem in the part of the field that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for one hundred pieces of money. So it became the inheritance of the tribe of Joseph.  
 33 Eleazar son of Aaron died, and they buried him in Gibeah in the hill country of Ephraim, where his son Phinehas had been assigned land.

These men had witnessed all the great things the LORD had done for Israel.

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### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) We know that Joshua died at the age of 110 (Josh 24:29; Judg 2:8). However, we are not told how old Joshua was at earlier points in his life. Instead we are told: a) Joshua was a “young man” at the time of the Exodus (Exod 33:11), b) Joshua was “old and advanced in years” at the end of the conquest of Canaan (Josh 13:1), and c) Joshua was “old and advanced in years” when he made his last exhortation to Israel (Josh 23:1—an event that took place “many days” after the conquest).
- 2) How old was Joshua when he was a “young man”? There are a few clues that can help us assign a reasonable age to Joshua at the time of the Exodus: a) Joshua was chosen to lead the attack against the Amalekites at Rephidim in 1446 BC (Exod 17:8–16), b) Joshua was a leader of the tribe of Ephraim and one of the 12 spies sent into Canaan by Moses in 1445 BC (Num 13:8, 16—Caleb was 40 at the time, cf. Josh 14:10), c) the minimum age for military service was 20 (Num 1:2–3), d) the minimum age for performing Levitical service in the Tabernacle was 25/30 (Num 4:3; 8:24), and e) Rehoboam was referred to as being “young” at the age of 41 (1 Kgs 14:21; inferred from 12:8). This data leads us to conclude that Joshua was most likely in his early 40s at the time of the Exodus (we infer that Joshua was older than Caleb due to the disparity in physical condition at the end of the conquest; cf. Josh 14:1–10).
- 3) If we guess that Joshua was 5 years older than Caleb (who was 39 at the time of the Exodus), then we have an age of 44 for Joshua at the time of the Exodus. Does this age make sense of all the relevant data? The age of 44 fits all the requirements of age given by the law, makes sense of Joshua being a tribal leader and a military commander, and yet still fits the description of “young man.” It also means that Joshua was 90 at the end of the conquest (Caleb being 85), which is a good age to fit the description of being “old and advanced in years” (cf. Eli in 1 Sam 4:15–18). Thus we conclude that Joshua died approximately 66 years after the exodus in 1446 - 66 = c. 1380 BC.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Petrovich suggests c. 1384 BC for Joshua’s death, making him 48 years old at the Exodus [Douglas Petrovich, “The Dating of Hazor’s Destruction in Joshua 11 By Way of Biblical, Archaeological, and Epigraphical Evidence,” *JETS*, 51/3 (Sept 2008) 496, n. 27]. Merrill speculates that Joshua was 30 at the Exodus, with a date of c. 1366 BC for his death [Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 147]. Steinmann suggests 1399–1379 BC for the period for the deaths of Joshua and the elders [Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul*, 106].

## Israel Takes Possession of the Land (c. 1380 – c. 1365 BC)

Judges 1:1–19a, 20, 22–26

Joshua 15:14–19

### Introduction

1 After Joshua died, the Israelites asked the LORD, “Who should lead the invasion against the Canaanites and launch the attack?”  
 2 The LORD said, “The men of Judah should take the lead. Be sure of this! I am handing the land over to them.”

### Judah and Simeon’s Upland Campaign

3 The men of Judah said to their relatives, the men of Simeon, “Invade our allotted land with us and help us attack the Canaanites. Then we will go with you into your allotted land.” So the men of Simeon went with them.  
 4 The men of Judah attacked, and the LORD handed the Canaanites and Perizzites over to them. They killed ten thousand men at Bezek.  
 5 They met Adoni-Bezek at Bezek and fought him. They defeated the Canaanites and Perizzites.  
 6 When Adoni-Bezek ran away, they chased him and captured him. Then they cut off his thumbs and big toes.  
 7 Adoni-Bezek said, “Seventy kings, with thumbs and big toes cut off, used to lick up food scraps under my table. God has repaid me for what I did to them.” They brought him to Jerusalem, where he died.

### The Conquest of Jerusalem

8 The men of Judah attacked Jerusalem and captured it. They put the sword to it and set the city on fire.

### Judah and Simeon’s Lowland Campaign

9 Later the men of Judah went down to attack the Canaanites living in the hill country, the Negev, and the lowlands.

### Caleb Conquers Hebron (Kiriath Arba)

10 The men of Judah attacked the Canaanites living in Hebron. (Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba.) They killed Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

### Othniel Conquers Debir (Kiriath Sepher)

11 From there they attacked the people of Debir. (Debir used to be called Kiriath Sepher.)  
 12 Caleb said, “To the man who attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher I will give my daughter Acsah as a wife.”  
 13 When Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, captured it, Caleb gave him his daughter Acsah as a wife.  
 14 One time Acsah came and charmed her father so she could ask him for some land. When she got down from her donkey, Caleb said to her, “What would you like?”  
 15 She answered, “Please give me a special present. Since you have given me land in the Negev, now give me springs of water.” So Caleb gave her both the upper and lower springs.

14 Caleb drove out from there three Anakites— Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, descendants of Anak.

15 From there he attacked the people of Debir. (Debir used to be called Kiriath Sepher.)  
 16 Caleb said, “To the man who attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher I will give my daughter Acsah as a wife.”  
 17 When Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s brother, captured it, Caleb gave Acsah his daughter to him as a wife.  
 18 One time Acsah came and charmed her father so that she could ask him for some land. When she got down from her donkey, Caleb said to her, “What would you like?”  
 19 She answered, “Please give me a special present. Since you have given me land in the Negev, now give me springs of water.” So he gave her both upper and lower springs.

### The Settlement of Arad

16 Now the descendants of the Kenite, Moses’ father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the City of Date Palm Trees to Arad in the desert of Judah, located in the Negev. They went and lived with the people of Judah.

### The Conquest of Zephath/Hormah

17 The men of Judah went with their brothers the men of Simeon and defeated the Canaanites living in Zephath. They wiped out Zephath. So people now call the city Hormah.

### The Conquest of the Lowland

18 The men of Judah captured Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron, and the territory surrounding each of these cities.

### Conclusion of the Judah-Simeon Alliance

19a The LORD was with the men of Judah. They conquered the hill country,  
 20 Caleb received Hebron, just as Moses had promised. He drove out the three Anakites.

### Joseph’s Conquest of Bethel

22 When the men of Joseph attacked Bethel, the LORD was with them.

23 When the men of Joseph spied out Bethel (it used to be called Luz),  
 24 the spies spotted a man leaving the city. They said to him, "If you show us a secret entrance into the city, we will reward you."  
 25 He showed them a secret entrance into the city, and they put the city to the sword. But they let the man and his extended family leave safely.  
 26 He moved to Hittite country and built a city. He named it Luz, and it has kept that name to this very day.

### Israel's Failure to Completely Obey God's Command (c. 1380 – c. 1365 BC)

Joshua 13:13; 15:63; Judges 1:19b, 21, 27–36

Joshua 16:10; 17:12–13

#### Failure of Transjordan Tribes

Josh 13:13 But the Israelites did not conquer the Geshurites and Maacathites; Geshur and Maacah live among Israel to this very day.

#### Failure of Judah

Josh 15:63 The men of Judah were unable to conquer the Jebusites living in Jerusalem. The Jebusites live with the people of Judah in Jerusalem to this very day.

Judg 1:19b but they could not conquer the people living in the coastal plain, because they had chariots with iron-rimmed wheels.

#### Failure of Benjamin

Judg 1:21 The men of Benjamin, however, did not conquer the Jebusites living in Jerusalem. The Jebusites live with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this very day.

#### Failure of West Manasseh

Judg 1:27 The men of Manasseh did not conquer Beth Shan, Taanach, or their surrounding towns. Nor did they conquer the people living in Dor, Ibleam, Megiddo or their surrounding towns.

The Canaanites managed to remain in those areas.

28 Whenever Israel was strong militarily, they forced the Canaanites to do hard labor, but they never totally conquered them.

#### Failure of Ephraim

Judg 1:29 The men of Ephraim did not conquer the Canaanites living in Gezer. The Canaanites lived among them in Gezer.

Josh 17:12 But the men of Manasseh were unable to conquer these cities;

the Canaanites managed to remain in those areas.

13 Whenever the Israelites were strong militarily, they forced the Canaanites to do hard labor, but they never totally conquered them.

Josh 16:10 The Ephraimites did not conquer the Canaanites living in Gezer. The Canaanites live among the Ephraimites to this very day and do hard labor as their servants.

#### Failure of Zebulun

30 The men of Zebulun did not conquer the people living in Kitron and Nahalol. The Canaanites lived among them and were forced to do hard labor.

#### Failure of Asher

31 The men of Asher did not conquer the people living in Acco or Sidon, nor did they conquer Ahlab, Aczib, Helbah, Aphek, or Rehob.

32 The people of Asher live among the Canaanites residing in the land because they did not conquer them.

#### Failure of Naphtali

33 The men of Naphtali did not conquer the people living in Beth Shemesh or Beth Anath. They live among the Canaanites residing in the land. The Canaanites living in Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were forced to do hard labor for them.

#### Failure of Dan

34 The Amorites forced the people of Dan to live in the hill country. They did not allow them to live in the coastal plain.

35 The Amorites managed to remain in Har Heres, Aijalon, and Shaalbim. Whenever the tribe of Joseph was strong militarily, the Amorites were forced to do hard labor.

36 The border of Amorite territory ran from the Scorpion Ascent to Sela and on up.

### God Confronts Israel (c. 1380 – c. 1365 BC)

Judges 2:1–5

- 1 The LORD's angelic messenger went up from Gilgal to Bokim. He said, "I brought you up from Egypt and led you into the land I had solemnly promised to give to your ancestors. I said, 'I will never break my agreement with you,
- 2 but you must not make an agreement with the people who live in this land. You should tear down the altars where they worship.' But you have disobeyed me. Why would you do such a thing?"
- 3 At that time I also warned you, 'If you disobey, I will not drive out the Canaanites before you. They will ensnare you and their gods will lure you away.'"
- 4 When the LORD's messenger finished speaking these words to all the Israelites, the people wept loudly.
- 5 They named that place Bokim and offered sacrifices to the LORD there.

### A Family Does What is Right in Its Own Eyes (c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC)

Judges 17:1–6

- 1 There was a man named Micah from the Ephraimite hill country.
- 2 He said to his mother, "You know the eleven hundred pieces of silver which were stolen from you, about which I heard you pronounce a curse? Look here, I have the silver. I stole it, but now I am giving it back to you." His mother said, "May the LORD reward you, my son!"
- 3 When he gave back to his mother the eleven hundred pieces of silver, his mother said, "I solemnly dedicate this silver to the LORD. It will be for my son's benefit. We will use it to make a carved image and a metal image."
- 4 When he gave the silver back to his mother, she took two hundred pieces of silver to a silversmith, who made them into a carved image and a metal image. She then put them in Micah's house.
- 5 Now this man Micah owned a shrine. He made an ephod and some personal idols and hired one of his sons to serve as a priest.
- 6 In those days Israel had no king. Each man did what he considered to be right.

### A Levite Does What is Right in His Own Eyes (c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC)

Judges 17:7–13

- 7 There was a young man from Bethlehem in Judah. He was a Levite who had been temporarily residing among the tribe of Judah.
- 8 This man left the town of Bethlehem in Judah to find another place to live. He came to the Ephraimite hill country and made his way to Micah's house.
- 9 Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" He replied, "I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah. I am looking for a new place to live."
- 10 Micah said to him, "Stay with me. Become my adviser and priest. I will give you ten pieces of silver per year, plus clothes and food."
- 11 So the Levite agreed to stay with the man; the young man was like a son to Micah.
- 12 Micah paid the Levite; the young man became his priest and lived in Micah's house.
- 13 Micah said, "Now I know God will make me rich, because I have this Levite as my priest."

### A Tribe Does What is Right in Its Own Eyes (c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC)

Judges 18

Joshua 19:47

#### Dan's Failure to Conquer Its Inheritance Leads to a Search

1 In those days Israel had no king.  
And in those days the Danite tribe was looking for a place to settle, because at that time they did not yet have a place to call their own among the tribes of Israel.

47a (The Danites failed to conquer their territory,

2 The Danites sent out from their whole tribe five representatives, capable men from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and explore it. They said to them, "Go, explore the land." They came to the Ephraimite hill country and spent the night at Micah's house.

#### The Spies Inquire of Micah's Levite

- 3 As they approached Micah's house, they recognized the accent of the young Levite. So they stopped there and said to him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?"
- 4 He told them what Micah had done for him, saying, "He hired me and I became his priest."
- 5 They said to him, "Seek a divine oracle for us, so we can know if we will be successful on our mission."
- 6 The priest said to them, "Go with confidence. The LORD will be with you on your mission."

**The Spies Discover and Appraise Laish**

7 So the five men journeyed on and arrived in Laish. They noticed that the people there were living securely, like the Sidonians do, undisturbed and unsuspecting. No conqueror was troubling them in any way. They lived far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with anyone.

**The Spies Report Back**

8 When the Danites returned to their tribe in Zorah and Eshtaol, their kinsmen asked them, “How did it go?”

9 They said, “Come on, let’s attack them, for we saw their land and it is very good. You seem lethargic, but don’t hesitate to invade and conquer the land.

10 When you invade, you will encounter unsuspecting people. The land is wide! God is handing it over to you—a place that lacks nothing on earth!”

**Some of the Danites Decide to Migrate**

11 So six hundred Danites, fully armed, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol.

12 They went up and camped in Kiriath Jearim in Judah. (To this day that place is called Camp of Dan. It is west of Kiriath Jearim.)

13 From there they traveled through the Ephraimite hill country and arrived at Micah’s house.

**They Acquire Micah’s Priest and Idols**

14 The five men who had gone to spy out the land of Laish said to their kinsmen, “Do you realize that inside these houses are an ephod, some personal idols, a carved image, and a metal image? Decide now what you want to do.”

15 They stopped there, went inside the young Levite’s house (which belonged to Micah), and asked him how he was doing.

16 Meanwhile the six hundred Danites, fully armed, stood at the entrance to the gate.

17 The five men who had gone to spy out the land broke in and stole the carved image, the ephod, the personal idols, and the metal image, while the priest was standing at the entrance to the gate with the six hundred fully armed men.

18 When these men broke into Micah’s house and stole the carved image, the ephod, the personal idols, and the metal image, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?”

19 They said to him, “Shut up! Put your hand over your mouth and come with us! You can be our adviser and priest. Wouldn’t it be better to be a priest for a whole Israelite tribe than for just one man’s family?”

20 The priest was happy. He took the ephod, the personal idols, and the carved image and joined the group.

21 They turned and went on their way, but they walked behind the children, the cattle, and their possessions.

**Micah’s Futile Pursuit**

22 After they had gone a good distance from Micah’s house, Micah’s neighbors gathered together and caught up with the Danites.

23 When they called out to the Danites, the Danites turned around and said to Micah, “Why have you gathered together?”

24 He said, “You stole my gods that I made, as well as this priest, and then went away. What do I have left? How can you have the audacity to say to me, ‘What do you want?’”

25 The Danites said to him, “Don’t say another word to us, or some very angry men will attack you, and you and your family will die.”

26 The Danites went on their way; when Micah realized they were too strong to resist, he turned around and went home.

**The Conquest of Laish**

27 Now the Danites took what Micah had made, as well as his priest, and came to Laish, where the people were undisturbed and unsuspecting. They struck them down with the sword and burned the city.

28 No one came to the rescue because the city was far from Sidon and they had no dealings with anyone. The city was in a valley near Beth Rehob. The Danites rebuilt the city and occupied it.

29 They named it Dan after their ancestor, who was one of Israel’s sons. But the city’s name used to be Laish.

30 The Danites worshiped the carved image. Jonathan, descendant of Gershom, son of Moses, and his descendants served as priests for the tribe of Dan until the time of the exile.

31 They worshiped Micah’s carved image the whole time God’s authorized shrine was in Shiloh.

47b so they went up and fought with Leshem and captured it. They put the sword to it, took possession of it, and lived in it. They renamed it Dan after their ancestor.)

## Chronological Notes

### 1) Judges 1:1–2:5.

- A) In a previous reading, we derived a date of c. 1380 BC for the death of Joshua. The next chronological notation we have is of the Mesopotamian oppression mentioned in Judges 3:8 which lasted for 8 years. How many years elapsed between Joshua’s death and the beginning of that first oppression?
- B) One indication of the length of this interval is found in Joshua 24:31: “Israel worshiped the LORD throughout Joshua’s lifetime and as long as the elderly men who outlived him remained alive. These men had experienced firsthand everything the LORD had done for Israel” (cf. Judges 2:7). Who are these men? Clearly, they cannot be part of the Exodus generation—that entire group of people wandered in the wilderness until they died (Num 14:26–35; 26:64–65). They must be those men who were under the age of 20 at the time of the Kadesh-barnea rebellion (military service age—cf. Num 14:29), most likely in their late teens (ages 17–19).
- C) For the sake of argument, let’s say that the elderly men who outlived Joshua were 19 at the time of the Kadesh-barnea rebellion of 1445 BC (Joshua was 45 at the time and so around 26 years older). This means that they were 84 when Joshua died in 1380 BC and thus already old. Most of them would have died within the next 5–10 years. This moves the calendar to c. 1375–1370 BC.
- D) The other relevant piece of textual data is found in Judges 2:10–11: “That entire generation passed away; a new generation grew up that had not personally experienced the LORD’s presence or seen what he had done for Israel. The Israelites did evil before the LORD by worshiping the Baals.” Once the elderly men who outlived Joshua died, another generation took their place. This generation consisted of the young men who had been growing up during the last years of the elders. If we allow 5–10 years for this generation to mature and fall into idolatry, the calendar has now moved to c. 1370–1360 BC, with 1370 representing the lower estimate of 10 years and 1360 representing the higher estimate of 20 years.
- E) In conclusion, we estimate approximately 15 years between Joshua’s death and the beginning of the first oppression—a date of c. 1365 BC.

### 2) Judges 17–21.

- A) Commentators agree that the two appendices of Judges (Judg 17–18 and Judg 19–21) are set in the same general period as the judge narratives from Othniel to Samson, but do not follow them chronologically.<sup>1</sup> The principle pieces of evidence offered in support of this view are the mention of “Jonathan the son [or descendant<sup>2</sup>] of Gershom, son of Moses” (Judg 18:30) and “Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron” (Judg 20:28). Unless both genealogical notations have been compressed, these references suggest that the events described in Judges 17–21 took place relatively early in the post-conquest period, probably within a century of the death of Joshua.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, I have placed Judges 17–21 after Judges 2:5 in the reading plan and dated them c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC.

## Textual Notes

### 1) Concerning Judges 18:30.

- A) The KJV, NASB, and LEB read “Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh.” The ESV, NIV, HCSB, NET, and NLT read

<sup>1</sup> Barry G. Webb, “The Book of Judges,” *NICOT*, pp. 35, 419. So also Dale Ralph Davis, *Judges: Such a Great Salvation* (Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2000), p. 211 n. 1; Daniel I. Block, “Judges, Ruth,” *NAC*, p. 511; Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, pp. 178–180; Herbert Wolf, “Judges,” *EBC*, Vol. 3, p. 489; Mark J. Boda, “Judges,” *EBC, Rev. Ed.*, Vol. 2, p. 1239; S. Talmon, *King, Cult and Calendar*, pp. 45–48; Arthur E. Cundall and Leon Morris, “Judges and Ruth,” *TOTC*, p. 176; F. Duane Lindsey, “Judges,” *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, p. 408. C. F. Keil & Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, p. 176; Israel P. Loken, *The Old Testament Historical Books: An Introduction*, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> The term “son of” (*ben*) usually indicates a direct father-son relationship, but it can also mean “descendant of,” as in the case of 1 Chronicles 4:1. In this verse, the sons of Judah are given as Pharez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur and Shobal. We know from Genesis 46:12 that Hezron was the son of Pharez, so Hezron was actually the *grandson* of Judah, not his direct son.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel I. Block, “Judges, Ruth,” *NAC*, 511.

“Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses.” Why the difference of translation? “It appears that certain scribes were uncomfortable with the association between this young Levite and Moses’ clan, and so they opted to connect him to the northern tribe of Manasseh by alluding to that idolatrous southern king Manasseh (2 Kgs 21), whose behavior caused the exile of the southern kingdom (2 Kgs 21:10–15; 23:26–27; 24:1–4).”<sup>4</sup> Most scholars agree that the original text identified Jonathan as a direct descendent of Moses.

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<sup>4</sup> For more detail, see the Note on v. 30 in Mark J. Boda, “Judges,” *EBC rev. ed.*, p. 1253 and Block, p. 513.