

Book of 2 Kings

Commentary

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Contents

Chapter 1.....	3
Chapter 2.....	7
Chapter 3.....	12
Chapter 4.....	17
Chapter 5.....	22
Chapter 6.....	27
Chapter 7.....	32
Chapter 8.....	35
Chapter 9.....	39
Chapter 10.....	43
Chapter 11.....	47
Chapter 12.....	50
Chapter 13.....	53
Chapter 14.....	57
Chapter 15.....	61
Chapter 16.....	65
Chapter 17.....	69
Chapter 18.....	74
Chapter 19.....	78
Chapter 20.....	83
Chapter 21.....	88
Chapter 22.....	91
Chapter 23.....	94
Chapter 24.....	101
Chapter 25.....	104

Chapter 1

(Verse 1): **Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.**

Moab rebelled: David had conquered Moab (2 Samuel 8: 2), and it may have become independent upon the death of Solomon, then Omri, king of Israel, subjugated it (as we learned from the Moabite stone = a historical archaeological stone). The Moabites paid tribute to Israel (2 Kings 3: 4) during the period of Omri's reign. Perhaps after the army was dispersed and after Ahab died, Moab seized the opportunity and disobeyed Israel.

(Verse 2): **Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria, and was injured; so he sent messengers and said to them, "Go, inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury."**

Baal-Zebub: It means the god of flies, the one who prevents flies from them. The fact that the king asks Baal-Zebub is evidence of his lack of faith in God, and that he is continuing on the path of his fathers, that is, the worship of Baal.

(Verse 3): **But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?'"**

Notice that **the angel of the Lord** told Elijah what happened, as he did not need a human to tell him.

(Verses 4-7): **Now therefore, thus says the Lord: 'You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" So Elijah departed. 5 And when the messengers returned to him, he said to them, "Why have you come back?" 6 So they said to him, "A man came up to meet us, and said to us, 'Go, return to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Thus says the Lord: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'"" 7 Then he said to them, "What kind of man was it who came up to meet you and told you these words?"**

(Verse 8): **So they answered him, "A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."**

A hairy man: That is, his clothing is made of hair. Hair is the clothing of the poorest people and the clothing of the prophets.

(Verses 9-12): **Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: "Man of God, the king has said, 'Come down!'" 10 So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. 11 Then he sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty men. And he answered and said to him: "Man of God, thus has the king said, 'Come down quickly!'" 12 So Elijah answered and said to them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.**

Note that the king sent 50 men to capture one man, which indicates his fear of Elijah from what he heard about him or saw from him. Despite this, he sent to capture him and imprison him. Rather, it is strange that the leaders of the first and second fifties said to him, "**Man of God, thus has the king said.**" Therefore, they knew that he was a man of God, but they spoke to him as if they also had authority over him and did not treat him with sufficient respect. They thought he was under their king's rule and command. Most likely, these soldiers were worshipers of Baal, like their king, and they thought that God was the God of Elijah on the level of Baal or lower than him. This incident showed Elijah's authority and power, for how great the authority and power of God are.

Some blame Elijah for this harsh ruling, that fire came down from heaven to consume the soldiers, but as we have seen, Elijah knows everything through an angel speaking to him. He would not have ordered fire to fall on the soldiers except with the approval and guidance of God. The fact that God accepts and the fire descends shows God's acceptance and satisfaction. Afterwards, in (verse 15), we find the angel saying to Elijah:

Go down with him; do not be afraid of him = then, communication is still continuing between God and Elijah. Elijah here does not avenge himself but rather seeks the glory of God. Therefore, God responds oppositely to what happened when the disciples asked for fire to descend from heaven. They were seeking revenge for their dignity, so Christ rejected their request.

We notice God's wrath against those who consult unclean spirits. This was Saul's downfall, and this is what everyone who deals with evil spirits does (magic, sorcery, ... etc.). Whoever goes to consult these people and deal with them should know that he will meet the fate of Ahaziah and die and perish. The strange thing is that Ahaziah would have accepted the death sentence if Baal-Zebub had issued it, but in his blindness, he rejected God, his prophet, and God's decision. The state of blindness that befell Ahaziah was because he dealt with blind and mute gods!! Whoever follows blind and mute gods will become like them. God's powerful announcements are like fire that descends from heaven, caused by people's decline and distance from God. They are powerful announcements and harsh discipline that may deter them. Elijah asking for fire from heaven so that everyone would know that God was angry with them and notice the many problems during the reign of Ahaziah due to the lack of blessings:

1. War with Syria in his father's days.

2. Moab's disobedience.
3. His fall from through the lattice and his illness.
4. He reigned for only two years. Therefore, misfortunes are caused by a lack of blessing due to evil.

Let us also notice God's long suffering and mercy. He did not destroy him immediately but rather gave him many opportunities and sent him warnings. The destruction of two groups of his men and his illness are warnings.

(Verses 13-16): **Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: "Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. 14 Look, fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties. But let my life now be precious in your sight." 15 And the angel of the Lord said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he arose and went down with him to the king. 16 Then he said to him, "Thus says the Lord: 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'"**

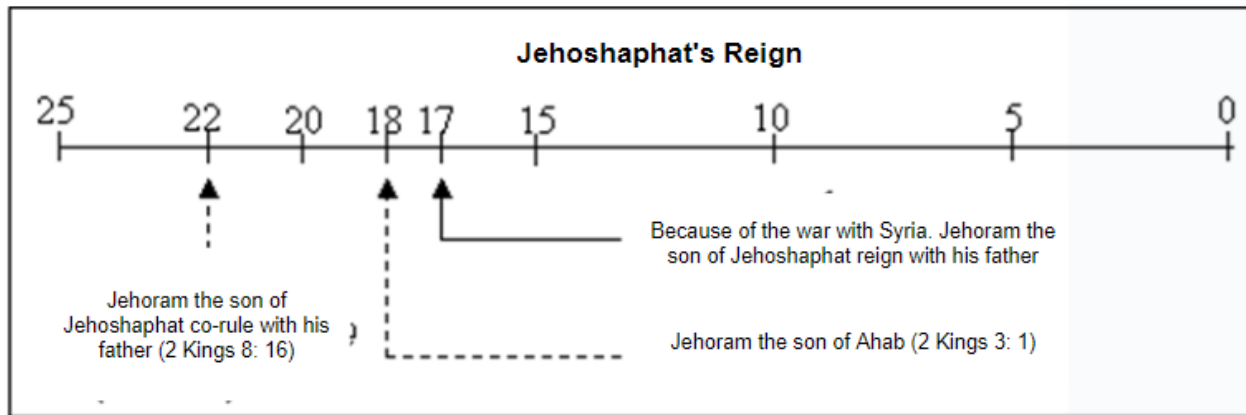
Neither the king nor the first and second fifty men benefited from what happened; rather, the leader of the third fifty heard about what happened to his two colleagues because there were witnesses to the incident, and people gathered around Elijah to see his deeds. God certainly wants such work to spread and be spread so that the people fear God. It was not an act in secret. If it had been done in secret, the glory of God would not have been revealed, and what happened would have been considered personal revenge against Elijah. Therefore, we find the leader of the third fifty falling on his knees. He benefited from what happened and feared God, the God of Elijah, and submitted to the Lord and Elijah, the Prophet of the Lord. We will not receive anything from God except by submitting and prostrating to Him in supplication. We notice Elijah leaving unscathed from the house of the king who wanted to kill or imprison him?! Can anyone attack a man of God if God wants to protect him? Therefore, the angel says to Elijah, "**do not be afraid of him**," meaning of the king." The king and his men, and even his entire army, are in the hands of God. That is why Christ said to Pilate, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above."

(Verses 17-18): **So Ahaziah died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. Because he had no son, Jehoram became king in his place, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. 18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?**

Jehoram became king in his place, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah: Compare with (2 Kings 3: 1). "Now Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria

in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years." And compare with (1 Kings 22: 42) we find that Jehoshaphat reigned for 25 years. And with (2 Kings 8: 16) " Now in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat having been king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign as king of Judah."

For the overlapping verses, see the drawing. The solution to the problem is simple: Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, reigned with his father in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat. This was likely because Jehoshaphat was busy in the Syrian war with Ahab, so he left the kingdom to his son as king, deputy king, or co-king, and three years before Jehoshaphat's death, he may have actually involved him in the rule. This custom was widespread among the kings of Judah, Israel, Babylon, and others, for the father to involve his son in rule.



According to the drawing, we note that Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, reigned twice, once as his father's deputy due to the war with Syria in the 17th year of his father, and once three years before his father's death, when he actually participated in ruling with his father, that is, in the 22nd year of his father. We note that in the calculations, the parts of the year are counted as a full year. That is why it was said in the fifth year of Jehoram son of Ahab, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat reigned. The period was four years, but there seem to be fractions of a year here or there. **Jehoram became king** = Jehoram was the son of Ahab and brother of Ahaziah (2 Kings 3: 1). The Septuagint adds here that Jehoram was the son of Ahab.

Chapter 2

In the previous chapter, we find an evil king leaving the world in shame, and here we see a great prophet leaving the world in glory. Elijah was transported to heaven in his body, like Enoch.

(Verses 1-8): **And it came to pass, when the Lord was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. 2 Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they went down to Bethel. 3 Now the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent!" 4 Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to Jericho." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they came to Jericho. 5 Now the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?" So he answered, "Yes, I know; keep silent!" 6 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So the two of them went on. 7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan. 8 Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.**

Elisha served Elijah (1 Kings 19: 21 + 2 Kings 3: 11) and was his disciple. In (verse 2), **Then Elijah said** = Elijah knew that the time of his transition had come, and probably Elisha knew that as well. Therefore, out of Elisha's love for Elijah, he did not want to leave him in his last hours. And Elijah's saying, "**for the Lord has sent me**" = we understand from it that God planned for him the events of those last hours and sent him to the gathering places of the prophets to visit them, reach out to them, encourage them, and bless them with his last words before his departure. Elijah's saying to Elisha, "**Stay here**" = that is, in Gilgal, because he wanted to be alone before his departure or because he had pity for his disciple. Elisha knew his love or how he would be transmitted, and out of his humility, he did not want anyone to know. This puts to shame those who talk about their success in their service and their talents. In (verse 3), **the sons of the prophets** = they are the students in the school of the prophets, and Elijah was their leader. They knew that Elijah's transmission was near, perhaps through a declaration from God or from Elijah, so they encouraged Elisha and comforted him. Elisha's saying, "**keep silent!**" means he does not want to speak about the matter to avoid increasing his sadness. Elijah began visiting the schools of the prophets from Bethel to Jericho. Finally, in (verse 6), he says:

for the Lord has sent me on to the Jordan ... Then Elijah divided the Jordan...so why did he divide the Jordan?

1. So that his ascension would be across the Jordan in an isolated place, just as Moses ascended to die on Mount Nebo.

2. Just as Moses divided the sea so that the children of Israel could pass from slavery to freedom, Elijah does the same thing to draw everyone's attention to abandon the worship of idols that enslaved them, such as the slavery of Egypt.

3. The previous dividing of the Jordan River by Joshua and the people's crossing into earthly Canaan symbolized the believers' entry after death into heavenly Canaan (the dividing of the Jordan indicates death). Thus, Elijah's crossing of the Jordan River symbolizes his transition to a new life and his ascension to heaven. Thus, Christ, by his death, split the river (the river of death) for us so that our crossing would be easy (it is easier to cross a river whose waters have dried up than to cross it while its water is flowing). Christ, by his death, swallowed death and dried up its dangerous currents for us, so our passage across the Jordan (or across death) became easy. Therefore, the church prays, "There is no death for your servants. O Lord, but it is a transition" = not drowning in the waters of the Jordan, but rather a crossing. Our crossing to heaven has become easy.

4. Elijah's ascent in this way symbolizes what will happen next with Christ (with a difference).

5. It is a testimony to a corrupt generation of Elijah's holiness, fiery zeal, and ardent love for God.

so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground = an easy crossing on dry ground. But the word "**dry ground**" came in Hebrew as "desolation," meaning a land that has been destroyed. The meaning is that Elijah left the land devastated by idol worship to go and be with God only so that he could rest. Not as we say now, resting in the sense of death, because Elijah has not died yet, but he rested as he left the land full of sins and idolatry.

In verse (7) **And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went** = this indicates a large number of prophets, as we noted previously from the large number of places that Elijah visited with Elisha to check on them before his transition, for God does not leave Himself without a witness. As the Apostle Paul said, "But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more" (Romans 5: 20). Idol worship spread in Israel. Therefore, we find God increasing the number of prophets to support the weak, and miracles even increased so that they might understand where the truth is.

(Verses 9-10): **And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me." 10 So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so."**

Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me: The firstborn has a share of two (Deuteronomy 21: 17), as Elisha considered himself the firstborn son of Elijah. As we said, Elijah was considered the father of all the prophets, and Elisha, with his question, wants to be the firstborn. He is not greedy for an earthly or temporal inheritance, wealth, or health; rather, he seeks spiritual power to help him in service. He asks Elijah to intercede for him with God. It is a request for strength to serve, so he would be like the firstborn among the prophets, leading them in service, risks, and duties, and this kind of greed

makes God happy. Therefore, the Apostle Paul says: "This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work." (1 Timothy 3: 1). Because whoever sought to the position of a bishop in the time of the Apostle Paul was not seeking glory or anything else, but rather knew that he would serve the people of God while being exposed to humiliation, torture, and martyrdom. **You have asked a hard thing:** Elisha is asking for a hard service that he might not have estimated its magnitude. In addition, Elijah does not have the right to appoint his successor and give him what he wants, for God is the one who appoints and gives to whomever He wants. In (2 Kings 6: 17) we see Elisha's disciple; through Elisha's prayers, had his eyes opened, and he sees the chariots of fire because this is a spiritual vision and is not for every human being. Elijah knows that his transition will be in a chariot of fire, which is not visible to every human being. The sign that Elijah gave to Elisha was that he would see these fiery chariots carrying him. If he saw them, God had given him a spiritual vision that would qualify him for this service, and he would have been accepted as a successor to his teacher Elijah. When Elisha saw this scene, he realized that God had given him the power of sight and spiritual insight to see and understand what no one else could see or understand.

(Verses 11-12): **Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces.**

God glorified Elijah with this ascension so that the prophets would learn to bear witness to the truth like him, no matter the cost. The same words are directed to every servant. So that everyone's eyes will rise to the fact that there is life in heaven, and death is not an end, and so that everyone should do good deeds so that the moment of his transition will be glorious. Elisha's attachment to his teacher was a lesson for everyone to adhere to Christ to receive a blessing. Elisha refused to rest and remained attached to Elijah despite the hardships of the road. Elijah did not die; rather, he is preserved in a place we do not know, like Enoch. Most interpretations say that they are the two witnesses who will prophesy in the days of the Antichrist, and the Antichrist will kill them and hang their bodies, then the spirit of life will creep into them after three days, announcing the nearness of the end of the world (Revelation 11). **My father:** He was a disciple of Elijah, like his son. **the chariot of Israel and its horsemen** = Elijah was greater for Israel than an entire army with its chariots and horsemen. He guided them and warned them, and with his prayers and intercession, they would defeat the enemy, no matter how small their number. Elisha's tearing of his clothes was an expression of his grief at the loss of this great man.

Elijah's ascension in a chariot of fire was like someone entering victorious and triumphant. He lived with fire of the spirit, so he ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire. He lived with fiery zeal in his service and love, so a chariot of fire took him. Elijah was weak for a short period of his life when he said, "Now, Lord, take my life." Did he know the glory God had stored up for him at that time? This was a moment of despair and weakness. God, the Most Merciful, has forgiven this mistake, and we ought to thank God that he often forgives us for what we say in moments of despair.

What confirms the return of Elijah in the last days is the prophecy of Malachi (Malachi 4: 5, 6). He will come before the second coming of Christ when he comes for judgment. Just as in his first coming, he would turn the people of Israel from worshiping Baal to worshiping the true God, so he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children as in these days, because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. If the father's heart was hardened towards his son, then how could this father's harsh attitude toward God be?! This is Elijah's next work.

(Verses 13-18): He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan. 14 Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over. 15 Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him. 16 Then they said to him, "Look now, there are fifty strong men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master, lest perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley." And he said, "You shall not send anyone." 17 But when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, "Send them!" Therefore they sent fifty men, and they searched for three days but did not find him. 18 And when they came back to him, for he had stayed in Jericho, he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"

We notice that Elisha follows the same path as his spiritual father in everything, and here he is trying to cross the river, as Elijah did. So he struck the water for the first time, but it did not split. This was a test of Elisha's faith. He passed the test successfully and did not despair (and thus, God confirms his faith and our faith). He said, "**Where is the Lord God of Elijah?**" He called upon the Lord, the God of Elijah, with faith, and the strength came, and the river parted.

In (verse 16) **fifty strong men** = it seems that the prophets were like soldiers, each group of fifty men, and Elisha did not want to prevent them from searching for Elijah: 1) so that they would believe. 2) so that they would not say that he was happy with his new position and that he got rid of Elijah as his master and teacher and was in a hurry to become leader.

(Verses 19-25): Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the ground barren." 20 And he said, "Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it." So they brought it to him. 21 Then he went out to the source of the water, and cast in the salt there, and said, "Thus says the Lord: 'I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.'" 22 So the water remains healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke. 23 Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!" 24 So he turned around and looked at them, and pronounced a curse on them in the name of the Lord. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths. 25 Then he went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

Starting from here, we see many miracles performed by Elisha, almost double the miracles of Elijah. Miracles are a means by which God visits His people, Israel, so that they do not follow idols, do not falter between the two groups, and choose God and abandon the worship of Baal. Indeed, God wishes us to believe without seeing miracles (John 20: 29), but God allows it if there is no means other than the miracle. God loves His people and uses every means possible so that His people will not perish. We see that God allowed the existence of mighty prophets such as Elijah and Elisha, many schools of prophets numbering in the hundreds, many miracles, and even disciplinary punishments.

1. The miracle of the healing of water:

The city's men heard from the sons of the prophets what Elijah and Elisha did in the Jordan, so they seized the opportunity to ask him for a blessing for their city. The location of the city of Jericho was good. It was at the foot of the mountain, and in front of the city was the Jordan Plain, surrounded by palm trees and other trees and herbs that had a pleasant smell. The city's location was good for trade, but the water was bad, and the land was barren and unproductive. They attributed its barrenness to the poor quality of its water. Elisha asked for a bowl and salt. Salt does not purify the water but spoils it, the same as the bowl. But the bowl and salt are the substance of the miracle. Thus, water in the sacrament of baptism and human striving, it's God's grace that changes the corruption within us. Bringing a bowl and salt is a test for those who bring them, and with salt, the water becomes sweet, and so does the earth. Salt has a symbolic meaning, as it indicates incorruptibility. Thus, to reform our lives and paths, we must reform our hearts with the salt of grace. The miracle is symbolic and indicates that the religion of Israel has become corrupt, and if the people had listened to Elisha, they would have been healed. We note that man is a spirit and a body. The spirit accepts the work of grace, but as long as we are in the body, we need to see something material with our five senses, and here, this material thing was salt.

2. The miracle of the youth of Bethel:

Elisha went to visit the school of the prophets in Bethel, and there in Bethel was Jeroboam's calf. The people of Bethel hated those who rebuked them for this worship, and that is why they always mocked the prophets in the school of prophets in Bethel, and now they mock Elisha and his baldness. This in itself is a great shame for someone to mock another for his weakness or flaw, so how much more if this man is a prophet? And their saying, "**Go up, you baldhead!**" = is a mockery of the story of Elijah's ascension to heaven. It is as if they were mocking Elisha, saying, "Go up to heaven like your teacher, for we do not want you." The fault was not in the youth but in their parents, who incited them to do this taught them to mock God's prophets, and even sent them to expel Elisha. Elisha's curse on them was zeal for the glory of God, who is being dishonoured in this place. If Elisha's curse on them was for personal dignity, God would not have responded to him. Let us note that the death of children is a discipline for their parents. There are now 42 homes with the rest of their families in deep grief after their children died. Let us note the danger of mocking men of God. However, another opinion is that the word youth means youthful age. They will be responsible for their work. Whether this or that, Elisha's curse on the boys was a discipline for all of Bethel to fear God, whom they had abandoned.

Chapter 3

(Verses 1-3): **Now Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, but not like his father and mother; for he put away the sacred pillar of Baal that his father had made. 3 Nevertheless he persisted in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.**

Jehoram, son of Ahab, reigned because his brother Ahaziah had died and left no son. He reigned in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat. Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, had reigned over Judah with his father for two years (2 Kings 1:17). The reason for the familiarity and warmth between Judah and Israel is that Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat had married Athaliah, daughter of Ahab. The strange thing is that while the king of Israel, Jehoram, abandoned the worship of Baal, the worship of Baal entered Judah. Jezebel, Ahab's wife, was the head of evil for the two kingdoms. Jehoram, king of Judah, was the son of Jehoshaphat, and his wife was Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel. God remembered for Jehoram his good deed in eliminating the worship of Baal, but this is like someone who abandons one sin and clings to the rest of his sins.

(Verses 4-12): **Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepbreeder, and he regularly paid the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs and the wool of one hundred thousand rams. 5 But it happened, when Ahab died, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. 6 So King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. 7 Then he went and sent to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?" And he said, "I will go up; I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." 8 Then he said, "Which way shall we go up?" And he answered, "By way of the Wilderness of Edom." 9 So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom, and they marched on that roundabout route seven days; and there was no water for the army, nor for the animals that followed them. 10 And the king of Israel said, "Alas! For the Lord has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab." 11 But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?" So one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said, "Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah." 12 And Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the Lord is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.**

Moab submitted to Omri and paid tribute of 100,000 sheep. It rebelled in the days of Ahaziah, perhaps because of his weakness and illness. In verse 8, there were two roads to Moab; the first was an easy road to the east, then crossing the Jordan, then south. The second is a much more difficult route. They head to the south, west of the Sea of Lot, then to the east, to Edom, and from there, to the north, to Moab. Jehoshaphat preferred the more difficult and longer route, as Moab expected an attack from the north, where the kings of Israel and Judah were expected to take the easy route. It did not expect the attack to be from the south. There is a second reason for Jehoshaphat's choice: for the Edomite army to

join them. This king of Edom is most likely the agent appointed by the king of Judah (1 Kings 22: 47), or he is an Edomite king appointed by Jehoshaphat and subject to him. But there was mismanagement on the part of the kings, as they led their armies this long march, with a large army, without sufficient supplies of water, on roads that did not have water. In verse 10, the words of the King of Israel mean that God led them to this fate because of their sins. In (11), we find Jehoshaphat belatedly asking about a prophet. But in general, his question about a prophet is evidence of his piety. One of the servants of the king of Israel answered: **Elisha the son of Shaphat is here** = Was Elisha somewhere close to them, or was he walking with the army, or did the Lord show them his presence soon in response to their prayer? We don't quite know. But Elisha likely followed them on his own to be the chariot of Israel and its horsemen. The king did not discover that this treasure was with him, but it was discovered by a simple soldier who was with him. Here, we must note that when we seek God from the heart, we must find God. Note that the distant wisemen wanted and put in their hearts to find Christ, and they found Him, but the priests, the chief priests, and Herod did not want Christ, so they did not recognize Him, but rather crucified him.

(Verses 13-20): **Then Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother." But the king of Israel said to him, "No, for the Lord has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab." 14 And Elisha said, "As the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you, nor see you. 15 But now bring me a musician." Then it happened, when the musician played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him. 16 And he said, "Thus says the Lord: 'Make this valley full of ditches.' 17 For thus says the Lord: 'You shall not see wind, nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink.' 18 And this is a simple matter in the sight of the Lord; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. 19 Also you shall attack every fortified city and every choice city, and shall cut down every good tree, and stop up every spring of water, and ruin every good piece of land with stones." 20 Now it happened in the morning, when the grain offering was offered, that suddenly water came by way of Edom, and the land was filled with water.**

3. The miracle of quenching the army's thirst

Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother = He removed the statue but left the priests of Baal. Elisha here boldly rebukes him for that. He probably took them with him during this battle. **But the king of Israel said to him, "No"** = His refusal to go to the prophets of Baal indicates that he left the prophets of Baal for political reasons and not because he was convinced by them (most likely he left them in peace on the instructions of his controlling mother, Jezebel). In verse 14, **I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah** = God listens for Jehoshaphat's sake, and this is the benefit of having a righteous man among the people. Jehoshaphat is the one who asked about the presence of a prophet. But the presence of Jehoshaphat among these evil people caused him many hardships, and because of this, God blamed him (2 Chronicles 19: 1-3 + 20-37). Jehoshaphat was exposed to great dangers before during his war with Ahab, and now he is exposed to many hardships. God responds to

him for his righteousness, but He disciplines him to learn so that he will not associate with evil people again. Every company with evil people causes loss. In (verse 15) **But now bring me a musician** = Just as David used to play the harp for Saul to cast out the evil spirit, thus Elisha felt the presence of an evil spirit among the army because of the presence of these evil prophets of Baal. He wanted to do what David did: praise and chant to dismiss this evil spirit and please God with his people. Amid his praise and chanting, the hand of the Lord was upon him, and he said in (verse 16): **Make this valley full of ditches** = ditches are to preserve the falling water from the rain. This commandment is a test of faith for them, as they will dig without any evidence of rain falling but in preparation for an unseen blessing prepared for them. The days were not winter days or rainy days. We must believe God's promises and the glory prepared for us, even if we do not see signs, and we must strive (and dig ditches in the ground) with faith, waiting for this glory.

In our lives now, we strive, and grace pours out. Striving = (digging the ditches). And Grace = (rainfall). In (verse 17), **nor shall you see rain** = for the rain fell far away from them and ran from the mountains onto the valley they were in. In (verse 18), **He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand** = the water was the pledge of the greater blessing, meaning the victory over Moab. In (verse 19), the Moabites were harshly chastised because they had killed all the Israelite captives and offered them as sacrifices to Chemosh, their god.

In (verse 20), **when the grain offering was offered** = the time of offering in the temple in Jerusalem. The religious Jehoshaphat will not offer an offering outside Jerusalem and the temple, but rather, he will pray at the time of the offering, as he is accustomed to lifting his heart to God at the time of the offering (and thus, we find that Daniel's prayer was at this well-known hour). Jehoshaphat turned his face to the temple, as Solomon had said.

Note: - See (1 Samuel 10: 5). We find that the custom of the school of the prophets is to use the flute in their prayers and praises; Elisha is from the school of the prophets. Perhaps, but probably, they prayed the Psalms of David after David had composed them, of course.

came by way of Edom = because the rain fell on Edom.

(Verses 21-27): **And when all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to bear arms and older were gathered; and they stood at the border. 22 Then they rose up early in the morning, and the sun was shining on the water; and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood. 23 And they said, "This is blood; the kings have surely struck swords and have killed one another; now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!" 24 So when they came to the camp of Israel, Israel rose up and attacked the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they entered their land, killing the Moabites. 25 Then they destroyed the cities, and each man threw a stone on every good piece of land and filled it; and they stopped up all the springs of water and cut down all the good trees. But they left the stones of Kir Haraseth intact. However the slingers surrounded and attacked it. 26 And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him seven hundred men who drew swords, to break through to the king of Edom, but they could not.**

27 Then he took his eldest son who would have reigned in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering upon the wall; and there was great indignation against Israel. So they departed from him and returned to their own land.

as red as blood: The Moabites had never seen this valley with water in it before, so the filling of the valley was a miracle that the Moabites did not understand. God put an illusion in the minds of the Moabites to imagine that this red water was blood, but it was water with silt (the dust of the land of Edom coming from it), and with the reflection of the sun on the water, they imagined that it was blood. Strangely, a person sees what he dreams of. They desired to see the blood of Israel, so they saw it, but their own illusions inspired it. What we want and crave so much is easy for us to believe. Therefore, it is easy to deceive those who deceive themselves, and it is easy to destroy those who deceive themselves (Revelation 20: 8). **the kings have surely struck swords and have killed one another** = that is, Jehoshaphat is fighting against Jehoram.

Kir Haraseth: Kir means wall, and it may have been the only walled city, so the Israelis kept it after they demolished the rest of the cities, but they hit it with slings and attacked its people. **to break through to the king of Edom** = perhaps they found his front to be the weakest. **Then he took his eldest son who would have reigned in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering upon the wall** = that is, the king of Moab offered his son as a burnt offering to his god Chemosh so that he would be pleased with him, and this is a pagan custom.

Others believe that the one who was sacrificed was the son of the king of Edom, and they see that the words of the prophet Amos, " For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime." (Amos 2: 1) is evidence of this. Those who hold this opinion say that the fault of the king of Moab, whom Amos mentions in this prophecy, is that he burned the bones of his son in this war. However, this possibility is slight because if he had done that, Israel, Judah, and Edom would not have left without doing anything while they were victorious.

As for the accusation that God directs against Moab in (Amos 2:1) that they burned the bones of the king of Edom, this means that at another time, they took out the bones of one of the kings of Edom and burned them, but not at the time of this battle. Bringing out the bones of a dead person was a heinous insult. What an insult it would be if they brought out the bones of a king. By this, the Moabites intended to despise their enemy Edom during one of the wars between them. But what the king of Moab did here was a pagan custom for a father to offer his son as a sacrifice to appease his gods. In fact, the Jews learned this hideous custom from them and began offering their children as living sacrifices (Jeremiah 7: 31; Ezekiel 16: 20; 20: 26, 31).

Because of the horror of what the king of Moab did = **there was great indignation against Israel** = This means:

Either the king of Judah and the king of Edom were upset by what happened and were angry with the king of Israel because he was the reason for this war that ended in this bloody tragedy.

Or that Moab, when they saw the devastation that befell them and the death of the eldest son, became angry with Israel, which was the cause.

Chapter 4

(Verses 1-7): **A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves." 2 So Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil." 3 Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors—empty vessels; do not gather just a few. 4 And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones." 5 So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured it out. 6 Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not another vessel." So the oil ceased. 7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest."**

4. The miracle of the vessel being filled with oil

According to the law, the creditor had the right to enslave the debtor if he could not pay. **the wives of the sons of the prophets** = The prophets were getting married and living a normal life and doing their jobs. Elisha was their leader, so this woman approached him to solve her problem. **What shall I do for you?** = He will not be able to prevent this greedy creditor. **jar of oil** = enough to spread on a piece of bread. Once again, we meet striving and grace. The jar of oil was all the woman had, and we must make every effort. "You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin" (Hebrews 12: 4). Filling the vessel with oil is a blessing. Just as Christ asked for the five loaves of bread and the two fish (striving) and blessed them, and they fed 5,000 men (grace). **borrow** = a test of faith for the woman. The more she borrows, the more she will receive a blessing; the more she believes, the more she will have. **do not gather just a few** = let us ask God, for He gives liberally and without reproach. **you shall shut the door:** So that she may pray and direct her heart to God and praise and rejoice in God's work that will appear in the fullness of her vessels. It is a sign that the oil did not come from outside but is a real miracle. From this, it is understood that sacred things are not for the public to see, and our inner life is not for others. Our relationship with God is a secret relationship: "But you, when you pray, go into your room," Also, miracles are an act of love. Elisha's saying, "you shall shut the door," is similar to Christ's saying, "See that you tell no one." The miracle is an act of love, not a spectacle.

Then she came and told the man of God: She thought that the oil was from God and belonged to Him, and she asked, "What is the way I deal with what God has given me?" Thus, all our capabilities, hearts, thoughts, talents, and time are all God's, and let us ask Him, O Lord, it is all yours, so what do you want me to do with it? And God pours out His grace on us in our room when we have closed the door and fills us with His Holy Spirit. We must ask: Lord, what do you want me to do? Elisha's response was to sell the oil. Also, Elijah said, Make me a cake. Thus, Christ said: Distribute the five loaves of bread and the two fish. Therefore, there is a spiritual principle that we must be filled first, then we trade what we have taken and sell it, "and who is watered will also fill others."

Let us pour everything at the feet of Christ. We notice that she is the one who pours, not Elisha, for she is the one who works after Elisha speaks to her. Thus, we have to serve, but after the church sends us, it is not within the authority of a person to delegate himself to the work of preaching (Romans 10: 15). Thus, we must trade as much as we can (all the vessels) as God's grace does not cease, but rather we are limited in our faith, and God is not limited in His giving. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. But he who thinks that he is not in need will not receive. Note what Elisha said = **pay your debt** = For because of the abundance of what we have received, we are indebted to the whole world and must give back (Romans 1: 14, 15). We are not afraid to give, but what is left will be enough to support us and our children = **and you and your sons live on the rest.**

(Verses 8-17): **Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food. 9 And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 10 Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there." 11 And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. 12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What can I do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?'" She answered, "I dwell among my own people." 14 So he said, "What then is to be done for her?" And Gehazi answered, "Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old." 15 So he said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the doorway. 16 Then he said, "About this time next year you shall embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord. Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!" 17 But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.**

5. The Shunammite gives birth to a son

Shunem = belonged to the tribe of Issachar. **notable woman** = a rich woman or a rich man's woman. But then we will discover that she had great spiritual qualities. It is comforting to find spiritual people amid this decadence in Israel. **she persuaded him** = Elisha passed by Shunem often on his way from Carmel to the cities of Galilee and the schools of the prophets in Gilgal and Bethel. He used to spend the night in a hotel when he came to Shunem. The woman noticed this and made **a small upper room** for him = a place separate from the rest of the house for the Prophet to be alone in. **Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king** = we see here that Elisha, after the battle of Moab and his work with the army, had a strong word at the king and the commander of the army, as they began to fear him, dread him, and listen to him despite their evil. **she has no son** = The woman did not mention this to Elisha, perhaps because she was desperate to solve this problem and perhaps because some are accustomed to leaving all their affairs to God without asking, as they trust in God's love and know that His choice is the best. The closest to logic is the second opinion. Where do we find a woman who does not want anything from the king or the commander of the army chief, who does not ask for land or money? She is content with

her life among her neighbours and family, rejecting any means to improve her living. She is content with what God has provided for her. She did not even ask for a son, but Gehazi was the one who asked for her.

(Verses 18-31): **And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. 19 And he said to his father, "My head, my head!" So he said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. 21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door upon him, and went out. 22 Then she called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back." 23 So he said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath." And she said, "It is well." 24 Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you." 25 And so she departed, and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel. So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, "Look, the Shunammite woman! 26 Please run now to meet her, and say to her, 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?'" And she answered, "It is well." 27 Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet, but Gehazi came near to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone; for her soul is in deep distress, and the Lord has hidden it from me, and has not told me." 28 So she said, "Did I ask a son of my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'" 29 Then he said to Gehazi, "Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child." 30 And the mother of the child said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you." So he arose and followed her. 31 Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has not awakened."**

My head, my head: Most likely, it is heatstroke. **Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath** = He either did not know that the boy had died, and she did not want him to share the grief, or he knew and did not believe that there was hope for his coming to life again. Most likely, this woman heard about Elijah's raising the widow's son in Zarephath in Sidon. So she went and had faith that Elisha would do the same thing for her, and she did not want her husband to hinder her, as her faith was strong. **do not slacken the pace for me** = drive the donkey quickly and do not worry about disturbing me. The servant ran before the donkey to urge it to walk quickly. **Please run now to meet her:** He knew from her coming at an unusual time that something had happened that required help. **It is well** = She wanted the Prophet himself and did not want to waste time. **to push her away** = he did not think about the woman's troubles, but rather about the duties of respect for the Prophet. As for the Prophet, he thought about her bitter pain. **Did I ask a son of my lord?** = From this sentence, Elisha understood that the child had died, so in her view, it was better for her not to have a child than to have a child, and then he dies, and she loses him. **take my staff** = the staff is in the hand of Elisha, is other than in the hand of Gehazi. Elisha is a prophet and a man of prayer, and God answered his prayer and his fervent prayer for the child. And God responded:

1. For the woman's amazing faith and her clinging to the Prophet as a man of God.
2. Because of the Prophet's faith and striving, he could have told her to go, and I will pray for you so that God may comfort you.

(Verses 32-37): **When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. 33 He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord. 34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. 35 He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. 36 And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite woman." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Pick up your son." 37 So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.**

6. Raising of the dead

and prayed to the Lord = with great faith. **walked back and forth in the house** = he walked around the house praying and crying because of his love for the family and the child. He slept on top of the boy to warm him and put his mouth on the boy's mouth to blow on him, so he did what he could.

(Like flour, salt, oil, and five loaves of bread...this is human striving).

But the grace of resurrection is from God.

(Verses 38-41): **And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets." 39 So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, though they did not know what they were. 40 Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, "Man of God, there is death in the pot!" And they could not eat it. 41 So he said, "Then bring some flour." And he put it into the pot, and said, "Serve it to the people, that they may eat." And there was nothing harmful in the pot.**

7. Healing the poisoned pot

This miracle most likely occurred at the time of the famine mentioned later in (Chapter 8). **wild vine** = which is likely to be bitter melon. Its taste is bitter, and its action is a violent laxative, causing severe stomach cramps and vomiting. **they cried out and said**: They recognized it by its bitter taste and stopped eating so as not to become poisoned in excess. **bring some flour** = it is the intermediate substance, such as salt, in clearing water. The flour refers to Christ's life on earth, the life he gave us to

correct our lives and revive us. The faith of the sons of the prophets appeared in that they continued eating after adding the flour. (Note the simplicity of the food of the prophets, which is boiled herbs.)

Contemplation:

there is death in the pot = we say this with many things. We say death in smoking, death in alcohol, and death in the food or livelihood that we obtain by cheating. Rather, in every food we eat without thanks, with complaining, and without the Lord's blessing.

(Verses 42-44): **Then a man came from Baal Shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, "Give it to the people, that they may eat." 43 But his servant said, "What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?" He said again, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the Lord: "They shall eat and have some left over." 44 So he set it before them; and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord.**

8. Feeding many with little bread

We say that this miracle also happened during the famine (Chapter 8). **Baal Shalisha** = close to Gilgal. **newly ripened grain** = fine flour. **Give it to the people, that they may eat** = We see here the generosity of the man who fulfills the commandment of the firstfruits and brings this gift to the man of God and the generosity of the prophet who did not keep it for himself. Both showed generosity even more because the time was a time of famine. **they ate and had some left over** = This is a blessing. Let us offer to God, and God will bless.

Chapter 5

(Verses 1-7): **Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper. 2 And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. 3 Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the Prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy." 4 And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who is from the land of Israel." 5 Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. 6 Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy. 7 And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me."**

9. Curing Naaman from Leprosy

This story most likely occurred in the last days of Elisha, and this was most likely during the days of King Jehu (after chapters 6 and 7).

(That is, after the events that took place in it). **the king of Syria** = is most likely Benhadad. **honorable man in the eyes of his master** = the king raised him and honoured him. **by him the Lord had given victory to Syria** = that is a victory in its wars against its enemies. It is not reasonable to say this if the enemy was Israel, so the meaning of the words is another prevailing enemy, which is probably Assyria. **a leper** = According to the law, the Jews isolated lepers from public life, but as for the Syrians, they had no objection to that. **the Prophet who is in Samaria** = Elisha had a well-known house and a place and was famous among the people, not like Elijah. **For he would heal him:** Notice that a captive little girl testified for God. We will now see the king on his throne in shame, with his clothes torn. God can work and make the little ones to be His witnesses. God, who allowed the Syrian invasion of Israel for their sins as a discipline, allowed this innocent girl to fall into their hands as a captive. Still, we find that God protected her and took care of her in the land of captivity, and even used her in the good news. All things work together for good.

This girl's family certainly taught her matters of religion when she was young, which was the cause of great salvation. In (verse 4), **And Naaman went in and told his master** = Naaman entered and told his master, the king, what the girl said. In (verse 5), the king of Aram sent a letter to the king of Israel, indicating friendly relations between them during this period. But it seems that the king of Israel had forgotten Elisha, or he did not believe that he would do a miracle like this, so he thought that the king of Aram was planning to invade Israel and was asking for something difficult, such as the healing of Naaman, so that when he failed to cure him, he would declare war on him, so he tore his clothes. We note that Naaman and the king of Aram did not make a mistake by sending to summon Elisha, but rather, they honoured the Prophet by having Naaman go himself and in an official body. They went to

the king of Israel first, then to the Prophet in his place, and they did not go empty-handed but with gifts. Naaman's healing symbolizes the healing of nations, and this little girl who spread the faith after the people were dispersed to Syria refers to the scattering of Christians from Jerusalem and their spread of Christianity (Acts 8: 4).

(Verses 8-14): **So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."** 9 Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. 10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean." 11 But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.' 12 Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. 13 And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the Prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'" 14 So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

seven times: A perfect and sacred number. **But Naaman became furious** = after he left the king's palace, he went and stood at the Prophet's door and thought this was a significant concession on his part, especially since Elisha did not go out to meet him. However, most likely, Elisha did not go out, not because of pride, but because he wanted to show him that the One who would heal him was God, not Elisha. Naaman waited for magical practices as the priests of his country did. Elisha would put his hand on the site of the illness, but Elisha showed him that God is the source of grace. In addition, Naaman, by virtue of his position, is an arrogant man, and to obtain a blessing from God, he must humble himself and have his pride broken. He actually returned and stood humbly before the Prophet, for he was cured of his pride. **the Abanah** = is the current Barada River, which passes through the middle of Damascus, and **the Pharpar** = most likely the Awaj River that emerges from Mount Hermon, and they are large rivers compared to the Jordan River. Naaman demonstrated obedience in that he responded to Elisha's instructions. From a symbolic standpoint:

Leprosy refers to sin, and washing in the Jordan refers to cleansing from sin in baptism. Naaman was skeptical about healing with this easy method. Thus, baptism is very easy, as immersing the baptized person in the water of baptism cures the leprosy of original and man-made sins. Thus, repentance and confession are called the second baptism. It is free salvation for everyone who wants it. That is why Elisha rejected the gift, and baptism gives a new birth... Notice what Elisha said, "**your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean.**" (verse 10).

The rivers of Damascus, with their greatness, irrigate the land of pagan peoples; the most they can do is cleanse the body, while the Jordan River, which irrigates God's land, heals leprosy. God's command was for Naaman to bathe in it.

(Verses 15-19): **And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant." 16 But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." And he urged him to take it, but he refused. 17 So Naaman said, "Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. 18 Yet in this thing may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing." 19 Then he said to him, "Go in peace." So he departed from him a short distance.**

Here we see Naaman, who was purified not only from leprosy but also from his idolatry:

1. His return to Elisha (verse 15). **Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel.** He believed in God, as washing opened his eyes just as washing in the Pool of Siloam opened the eyes of the man born blind, so he believed in Christ that He is the Son of God. The washing gave him enlightenment (the sacrament of baptism).
2. He returned all the way from the Jordan to Carmel, where Elisha was, to give thanks = **please take a gift from your servant**, meaning take the gift, and I will be blessed. Here, he resembles the one leper who returned from among ten lepers whom Christ healed (Luke 17: 12-19). In the story of Jesus Christ, the one who returned was a Samaritan of a foreign nationality, like Naaman, a foreign national, as he was an Aramaic (i.e., a Syrian). By returning to Christ, this Samaritan was saved. "Your faith has made you well," and the same goes with Naaman.
3. Naaman refused to offer sacrifices to a god other than YHWH, but rather, he would make an altar from the dust of Israel to offer sacrifices to YHWH on it. Therefore, he asks to **be given two mule-loads of earth** because he considers the land of Israel, the land of the Lord, holy land. This person who despised the Jordan now sanctifies the earth of Israel.
4. We find here that Naaman has a weakness in faith (verse 18). He asks for an exception from Elisha that when he returns to Damascus, as the head of the army, he must offer prostration to the gods of Syria in the house of Rimmon and sees that he cannot declare that he will refrain from that. We find Elisha wisely telling him to go in peace, as he left him the freedom to decide when he saw him hesitating. He could not agree with him on pagan worship, after he had declared his faith in God, but he could not force him, as an army commander and a new believer in God, to change suddenly. Rather, Elisha left change to God over time. Do we blame Naaman for this weakness, and do we not blame Israel, which worships God and Baal?

5. Elisha's rejection of the gift teaches this new believer that God's children despise the materialism of the world and shows him that healing comes from the God of Israel and is free.

(Verses 20-27): **But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him." 21 So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?" 22 And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'" 23 So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants; and they carried them on ahead of him. 24 When he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand, and stored them away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. 25 Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where did you go, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant did not go anywhere." 26 Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? 27 Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever." And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.**

Note that Gehazi uses the name of the Lord while he intends to lie and betray = **but as the Lord lives**. In (verse 21), **he got down from the chariot** = Naaman gave him this honour because he was a disciple of Elisha, but this disciple of Elisha deceived him. In (verse 26) **Did not my heart go** = God made Elisha aware of what happened as if he saw and heard what Gehazi did. **Is it time?** Rather, it is time to preach God among the pagan Arameans. This is the difference between the true servant concerned with saving souls and the servant concerned with his material gain first. **to receive money and to receive clothing** = which he took. **olive groves and vineyards**= These are what he intended to buy with two talents of silver. Elisha saw what was in Gehazi's heart. In (verse 27) **leprous** = he desired what Naaman had, so he also took his leprosy. Strangely, Gehazi, Elisha's disciple, was like this instead of being a saint, while Naaman's pagan servants had good advice and were much better than him. Naaman refers to the Gentiles' acceptance of Christ, while Gehazi refers to the Jews who rejected Christ, so their sin stuck to them, as they did not benefit from the possibilities of Christ's blood. The Jews were among Christ's own people, His flesh and bones, and they rejected him, just as Gehazi was Elisha's servant who was attached to him and did not benefit from his holiness. There are many sins of Gehazi:

1. His love of money and the love of money is the root of all evil.
2. He condemned his teacher, the great Prophet, in his heart, and according to him, he thought his teacher made a mistake by rejecting the gift. He considered himself wiser than his teacher.
3. He envied this strange Gentile as he obtained this grace for free.

4. He is a thief when he takes the gift he should give to his master.

5. He distorted the image of his master in front of strangers. He showed his image as someone who regretted his generosity, which was quite enough to make Naaman abandon his faith.

6. He hid what he took and lied to Elisha, and the many sins caused his blindness. He did not realize that Elisha, who knows everything, can reveal his deception. This truth is that Elisha is able to know everything, even his enemies (2 Kings 6:12). This truth was known to the pagans, but Gehazi did not realize it because of his greed. The sins and malicious purposes inside the heart cause the heart to be blinded from realizing what the simplest people would realize. Indeed, even his lie was naive. Would two young men from the sons of the prophets need a talent of silver (3000 shekels, and the price of an enslaved person is 30 shekels?) Because of all this, he was severely punished, as happened with Ananias and Sapphira, who, by lying to the Holy Spirit. He gained two talents of silver, but he lost his health, dignity, reputation, and perhaps the salvation of his soul, and leprosy was attached to him and his house forever, and this is what led some commentators to say that his family quickly perished.

Chapter 6

(Verses 1-7): **And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. 2 Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell." So he answered, "Go." 3 Then one said, "Please consent to go with your servants." And he answered, "I will go." 4 So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. 5 But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron ax head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Alas, master! For it was borrowed." 6 So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And he showed him the place. So he cut off a stick, and threw it in there; and he made the iron float. 7 Therefore he said, "Pick it up for yourself." So he reached out his hand and took it.**

10- Iron float

The number of prophets increased to the point that their place could no longer accommodate them. This was due to Elisha's influence. They were residing in Jericho near the Jordan River, and Elisha used to visit them frequently because he was visiting the rest of the schools. **and let every man take a beam from there** = they were working with their hands because they wanted to build a place that would not cost them anything except their labor. Out of their love for Elisha, they insisted that he accompany them. **For it was borrowed** = that is, it is borrowed, or he asked one of his friends to give it to him, so the word.

Iron was expensive at that time. The stick that Elisha threw into the water corresponds to the flour and salt and lying over the dead boy...etc. It is also similar to the stick Moses threw into Marah's water, and it became sweet. The question is, does a miracle occur because of the iron of an ax? This proves that God cares about every little thing in our lives, as no hair on our heads falls without His permission. This iron refers to our hearts immersed in the mire of this world and refers to the cross with which Christ pulled us out of the water, so we began to care about the heavenly things.

(Verses 8-13): **Now the king of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place." 9 And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there." 10 Then the king of Israel sent someone to the place of which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice. 11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?" 12 And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." 13 So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." And it was told him, saying, "Surely he is in Dothan."**

11. Uncovering the Enemy Conspiracies

The war mentioned was between Benhadad and Jehoram, and it was a type of invasion, so they were lying in wait for the Israelites. **and he consulted with his servants** = that is, he agreed on a location for the ambush with his servants. In (verse 9), we find that Elisha discovers the places where they lie, and God reveals them to him as he accordingly guides the king of Israel = **And the man of God sent to the king of Israel** = despite the king's sins, God had mercy on His people Israel and saved them.

In (verse 10), **Then the king of Israel sent** = This has two interpretations. Either the king of Israel sent spies to the place to which the Prophet directed him to verify the truth of his prophecy, or he sent an armed garrison to fortify the place so that when the enemy came, he found it fortified and was surprised that what he had considered an open place was fortified. We note that the war of God's enemies against God's people is a war that does not cease, but God sends His servants so that we can be careful. We note that the king of Israel listened to Elisha about this, but he did not listen to his call for him to repent of his rejected worship, and if he had listened, he would have saved himself as well.

(Verses 14-23): **Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. 15 And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 18 So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, and said, "Strike this people, I pray, with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. 19 Now Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, nor is this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." But he led them to Samaria. 20 So it was, when they had come to Samaria, that Elisha said, "Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw; and there they were, inside Samaria! 21 Now when the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?" 22 But he answered, "You shall not kill them. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master." 23 Then he prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master. So the bands of Syrian raiders came no more into the land of Israel.**

12. Blinding the enemy's army

In (verse 14) **a great army** = it is not understood from this that the army was in the thousands, but perhaps several dozen armed, so it is a great army for the required mission, i.e. arresting one person, namely Elisha, but note that they are afraid of him. The king of Aram was determined to capture Elisha to prevent Israel from benefiting from him. Perhaps he thought naively to take advantage of Elisha to reveal Israel's movements to him. But these are naive ideas. Whoever discovered the movements of the King of Aram while he was in his house, is he unable to protect himself?! In (verse 17), the disciple saw

horses and chariots: **Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha** = it is a depiction in a human way that the disciple of Elisha could understand, who was disturbed by the enemy's horses and chariots. Perhaps Elisha did not see these horses and chariots, as he believed and was confident that God would protect him. God allows visions for those with weak faith to strengthen their faith: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

God prefers that we walk by faith, not by sight and that we trust in His protection and love without visions or miracles, but if God finds that man in his weakness will only believe in this way, as in the case of Elisha's disciple, God resorts to it. However, on the other hand, if a person's faith increases to the point where it becomes close to seeing, we find that this spiritually high person can see what the ordinary person cannot see. He will have spiritual senses that give him spiritual insight and revelations that the ordinary person cannot see, which is what we used to hear about Great saints. It was normal for them to see angels and saints. Rather, they saw Christ and carried Him like Saint Bishoy. God asks us to walk by faith, "the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11: 1), and He trains us daily so that our faith increases and intensifies because we are saved by faith. But when God finds that our faith has strengthened, He then allows some revelations and visions. Especially since with the growth of faith, this person who is mature in faith will not enter into pride and boasting and perish because of them.

And He struck them with blindness: It is not total blindness but an inability to distinguish what a person sees. It is a state of incompatibility between what a person sees and what he perceives, as they did not know Elisha. The word used by the book indicates this and not complete blindness, and it is the same word that was used in the account of the blindness of Sodom and Gomorrah. **This is not the way, nor is this the city** = the text of Elisha's words may be understood as a lie, but his saying that it is not the way is not a lie, as God wants them to take another path. **Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek** = Isn't their war against Israel directed at the King of Israel? He took them to the man they were searching for, and they declared war against him and his people. He led them to the king of Israel when they thought that Elisha had fallen into their hands. God wanted to give them another lesson. In (verse 21) **My father** = indicates how the king considers him. Afterwards, we find that the king of Israel's treatment of them affected them, and they abstained from war for a while. In his miracles characterized by love, we see that Elisha symbolizes Christ, especially since he came after Elijah. Here, we see his love and tolerance for the enemies, and even their safe return after what happened is the greatest testimony to the Arameans about the greatness of the God of Israel and his men. Notice the power of God as He opens the eyes of Elisha's servant and closes the eyes of his enemies. He is the one who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.

(Verses 24-33): **And it happened after this that Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria. 25 And there was a great famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five shekels of silver. 26 Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!" 27 And he said, "If the Lord does not help you, where**

can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?" 28 Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' 29 So we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son." 30 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he tore his clothes; and as he passed by on the wall, the people looked, and there underneath he had sackcloth on his body. 31 Then he said, "God do so to me and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today!" 32 But Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. And the king sent a man ahead of him, but before the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, "Do you see how this son of a murderer has sent someone to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" 33 And while he was still talking with them, there was the messenger, coming down to him; and then the king said, "Surely this calamity is from the Lord; why should I wait for the Lord any longer?"

And it happened after this: It is said a year after the above, and after they had forgotten the favour of Israel.

a donkey's head = something that has never been eaten; they ate it. **one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings** = 0.568 liters. **dove droppings** are a type of cotton grain that has this name and they eat them. But if it is really dove droppings, it is used as fuel. In (verse 26), **was passing by on the wall** = he was walking by the wall inspecting his army that was fighting. In (verse 27), **If the Lord does not help you** = the meaning of his words: If God will not save you, how can I save you?! In (verse 30), **and there underneath he had sackcloth on his body** = which is a sign of sadness. Perhaps he thought that by doing this he would please the Lord or his god Baal, but he did not show this sackcloth so as not to weaken the people's resolve. In (verse 31), we find him angry with Elisha and wanting to kill him. Elisha probably rebuked him for the rampant paganism, and the famine came so they would wake up. Still, instead of repenting for their idolatry, we find him threatening to kill Elisha. Most likely, he asked Elisha to lift the famine, but Elisha refused until the discipline bore fruit. This type of discipline with painful famines preceded and was prophesied by Moses (Deuteronomy 28: 56-57). Moses warned them by this, and Elisha warned several times, but in his despair, the king threatened Elisha. How easy it is to blame others and how difficult it is to blame ourselves. Here, we find an evil king whose evil is apparent, blaming a saint who is a prophet of God. With his prayers, God may protect the country and the king.

Verses 32, 33: And Elisha was gathered in his house with the elders of Israel at that time, and the king sent a messenger to him to go ahead of him. Before the messenger arrived, Elisha said to the elders, "You see how this son of a murderer has sent a messenger to cut off my head. As soon as the Messenger comes, close the door and leave it locked in his face. His master's footsteps fall, the king is coming behind him. While he was addressing them, the messenger came to him, and the king followed him, who said, "This evil has come upon us from the Lord, so what more can I expect from the Lord?"

God shows His Prophet what the king said. The prophet calls him the son of the murderer, as he is the son of Ahab, the murderer of the prophets and the murderer of Naboth. He closed the door in the Messenger's face so that he would not repeat the words twice, once in front of the Messenger and once in front of the king, who knew that he was coming after his Messenger intending to kill him.

Chapter 7

(Verses 1-2): **Then Elisha said, "Hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord: 'Tomorrow about this time a seah of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.'" 2 So an officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God and said, "Look, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, could this thing be?" And he said, "In fact, you shall see it with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it."**

13. Elisha's prophecy of the end of the famine

Here, we find the rest of Elisha's words to the king and the elders. **on whose hand the king leaned** = This is an expression of the fact that this soldier has an important position, as he is the king's companion, and the king leans on his hand, that is, on his advice, like Naaman with the king of Aram, see (2 Kings 5: 18). He mocked Elisha's words with his lack of faith. Even now, we find those wondering in their lack of faith whether the holy sacraments can provide grace.

(Verses 3-11): **Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, "Why are we sitting here until we die? 4 If we say, 'We will enter the city,' the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore, come, let us surrender to the army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die." 5 And they rose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians; and when they had come to the outskirts of the Syrian camp, to their surprise no one was there. 6 For the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses—the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us!" 7 Therefore they arose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact—their tents, their horses, and their donkeys—and they fled for their lives. 8 And when these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried from it silver and gold and clothing, and went and hid them; then they came back and entered another tent, and carried some from there also, and went and hid it. 9 Then they said to one another, "We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, and we remain silent. If we wait until morning light, some punishment will come upon us. Now therefore, come, let us go and tell the king's household." 10 So they went and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and told them, saying, "We went to the Syrian camp, and surprisingly no one was there, not a human sound—only horses and donkeys tied, and the tents intact." 11 And the gatekeepers called out, and they told it to the king's household inside.**

leprous men: According to the law, these lepers had to remain outside the city walls and could not enter it. The city's people used to throw food to them from the walls, but because of the famine, no one threw anything to them anymore. **let us surrender to the army of the Syrians** = that is, we will take refuge with the Arameans, leave the king of Israel, and side with the Syrians to eat. **the kings of the Egyptians** = Egypt was sometimes divided and ruled by several kings. We find here that God used the deception of the voice just as He had previously used the deception of the eye, and now He has made them terrified

and caused them to make an error. How could Israel agree with distant Egypt or the Hittite kings far away from the other side while besieged? In (verse 9) **some punishment will come upon us** = that is, if the king finds out that we hid the matter, he will harm us. In (verse 10), **called to the gatekeepers of the city** = on the one hand, they are prohibited from entering because of their leprosy; on the other hand, the city is closed because of the war. We notice that those who preach salvation are a despised group of lepers who tasted their fill and went to preach. God chose the poor of the world to preach salvation to the entire earth. Jewish tradition says that the four lepers were Gehazi and his sons.

(Verse 12): **So the king arose in the night and said to his servants, "Let me now tell you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we are hungry; therefore they have gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, 'When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.'"**

(Verses 13-20): **And one of his servants answered and said, "Please, let several men take five of the remaining horses which are left in the city. Look, they may either become like all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; or indeed, I say, they may become like all the multitude of Israel left from those who are consumed; so let us send them and see." 14 Therefore they took two chariots with horses; and the king sent them in the direction of the Syrian army, saying, "Go and see." 15 And they went after them to the Jordan; and indeed all the road was full of garments and weapons which the Syrians had thrown away in their haste. So the messengers returned and told the king. 16 Then the people went out and plundered the tents of the Syrians. So a seah of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord. 17 Now the king had appointed the officer on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate. But the people trampled him in the gate, and he died, just as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king came down to him. 18 So it happened just as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, "Two seahs of barley for a shekel, and a seah of fine flour for a shekel, shall be sold tomorrow about this time in the gate of Samaria." 19 Then that officer had answered the man of God, and said, "Now look, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, could such a thing be?" And he had said, "In fact, you shall see it with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it." 20 And so it happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.**

Verse 13: Before the king's confusion: Did the Syrian army really withdraw, or were they in ambush, waiting for us to leave to kill us? This soldier suggested that five volunteer knights go out to investigate the situation. If evil befalls them at the hands of the Arameans, then they will resemble those of the Israelites who died from the famine, or they will resemble the rest who will perish because of the famine, for all would be dead.

Note that they thought about letting five horses go, but they found only two good ones (14), and the rest either died, were eaten, or were unable. And in (15) **to the Jordan** = they had set off east to their

country. In (verse 17), the crowding people who came out to plunder trampled on the soldier who mocked Elisha.

Chapter 8

(Verses 1-6): **Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go, you and your household, and stay wherever you can; for the Lord has called for a famine, and furthermore, it will come upon the land for seven years." 2 So the woman arose and did according to the saying of the man of God, and she went with her household and dwelt in the land of the Philistines seven years. 3 It came to pass, at the end of seven years, that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went to make an appeal to the king for her house and for her land. 4 Then the king talked with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me, please, all the great things Elisha has done." 5 Now it happened, as he was telling the king how he had restored the dead to life, that there was the woman whose son he had restored to life, appealing to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life." 6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed a certain officer for her, saying, "Restore all that was hers, and all the proceeds of the field from the day that she left the land until now."**

This famine came after lifting the siege, as the strikes came successively, but they have not repented yet. It is clear here that the strike is against Israel only and not against the neighbouring land of Palestine. Before the famine, Elisha warned the Shunammite woman to flee. Perhaps Gehazi here was still healthy without leprosy, that is, before the story of Naaman (the events are not in chronological order), and perhaps he became close to the court after his good news about the escape of the Syrians. We notice that God has multiple means of discipline, from siege by enemies to famine, but whoever has a hardened heart refuses to repent (Revelation 9: 20, 21). The Shunammite woman believed Elisha's words, rose up and left all her possessions. In (verse 5), **appealing to the king** = we see God's plan for the woman to reach the king while Gehazi tells her story. **all the proceeds of the field** = So the famine was not complete, but the land yielded some of the crops. However, Elisha asked it to flee because famines are accompanied by a kind of chaos and even the killing of those who possess it, so she was vulnerable to being killed and having her property plundered.

Let us contemplate: What prompted the king to ask Gehazi about Elisha's miracles at the time of the woman's arrival? It is divine providence and God's wondrous planning, and it is not something that comes by chance, but rather God plans everything precisely.

(Verses 7-15): **Then Elisha went to Damascus, and Ben-Hadad king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, "The man of God has come here." 8 And the king said to Hazael, "Take a present in your hand, and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord by him, saying, 'Shall I recover from this disease?'" 9 So Hazael went to meet him and took a present with him, of every good thing of Damascus, forty camel-loads; and he came and stood before him, and said, "Your son Ben-Hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, 'Shall I recover from this disease?'" 10 And Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him, 'You shall certainly recover.' However the Lord has shown me that he will really die." 11 Then he set his countenance in a stare until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept. 12 And**

Hazael said, "Why is my lord weeping?" He answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel: Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword; and you will dash their children, and rip open their women with child." 13 So Hazael said, "But what is your servant—a dog, that he should do this gross thing?" And Elisha answered, "The Lord has shown me that you will become king over Syria." 14 Then he departed from Elisha, and came to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he answered, "He told me you would surely recover." 15 But it happened on the next day that he took a thick cloth and dipped it in water, and spread it over his face so that he died; and Hazael reigned in his place.

Then Elisha went to Damascus: Perhaps he went to visit Naaman and confirm him in his new faith, or he came to fulfill a previous command of Elijah to appoint Hazael a king over Israel. Elisha was well known in Syria. **Take a present in your hand** = perhaps he remembered Naaman being healed of his leprosy. **You shall certainly recover.** **However the Lord has shown me that he will really die** = the meaning of Elisha's statement that his illness can be cured, but he will die from a cause other than his illness. Elisha saw what Hazael would do, who responded to the king with soft words while plotting evil against him. Rather, he saw what Hazael would do to his people, Israel, so he cried. Strangely, the king of Israel went to ask the god of Ekron, Beelzebub, whether he would be healed, and he had Elijah with him. On the other hand, Benhadad does not go to his gods, but rather asks Elisha. Benhadad here does not ask his gods and idols, to which he has always prostrated, and he made Naaman prostrate to them out of harm, but in his illness he returned to asking God. Distresses have great benefits. Rather, Ben-Hadad used the language of Israel, as he addressed the Prophet through the tongue of Hazael, saying, "**Your son Ben-Hadad**" as this is how they address the prophets. In (verse 11), **until he was ashamed** = because he felt that his secret thoughts were evident before the man of God. We must be ashamed before God, who knows everything and searches hearts and souls. In (verse 13) **But what is your servant—a dog** = Who am I that I should become a great king? Note that when he heard what the Prophet prophesized, he judged whoever did this as a dog, meaning bloodthirsty, but like many people, they judge sin as heinous and condemn whoever commits it, but they easily fall into it. **He told me you would surely recover** = and hid the rest of the words from him. The next day, he was plotting against Ben-Hadad, and when the Prophet revealed to him that the king would be cured of his illness, he did not wait, as he was probably hastening his death to inherit the kingdom. When he knew that he would be cured, he killed the king in a way that no one realized at the time, but the Prophet, who knows everything, knew and explained the method and recorded it throughout the ages. He killed his king in a secret way, as **he took a thick cloth and dipped it in water** = and this may have been a cover for the king or spread on the floor like a rug, or as in other translations, a velvet blanket or velvet that a man throws over himself at sleep time and dips it in water to cut off the air from the king who was already weak due to his illness, so he suffocated, and it appeared that he died from His illness.

(Verses 16-24): **Now in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat having been king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign as king of Judah. 17 He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 18 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and**

he did evil in the sight of the Lord. 19 Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah, for the sake of His servant David, as He promised him to give a lamp to him and his sons forever. 20 In his days Edom revolted against Judah's authority, and made a king over themselves. 21 So Joram went to Zair, and all his chariots with him. Then he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots; and the troops fled to their tents. 22 Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah's authority to this day. And Libnah revolted at that time. 23 Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 24 So Joram rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

Jehoram reigned while his father reigned. After the death of his father Jehoshaphat, he rose and killed all his brothers (2 Chronicles 21: 2-4) and reigned for eight years after his father's death (alone in the kingdom) or (8-3) = five years as he was sharing three years with his father. **the daughter of Ahab** = Athaliah. **Zair** = It is probably Seir. In (verse 21), the words are very brief, but what it means is that during the siege of the Edomites, they surrounded him at night, perhaps in his private camp. He was in great danger, but he attacked the group that surrounded him, broke through their leaders and chariots, and escaped. When his army knew what had happened, each one of them fled to his own country. After this incident, Edom became independent until the days of the Maccabees, when John Hyrcanus subjugated them and forced them to convert to Judaism. In the days of Jehoram, the ancient prophecy of Isaac was fulfilled, that Edom would break the yoke of Judah (i.e. Jacob). Also, in the days of this king, a revolution occurred in Libnah, one of the cities of Judah and most likely a city of priests. They rebelled against the king due to his paganism, and perhaps other cities did the same thing and became independent of the king's orders (problems surrounding the evil ones.)

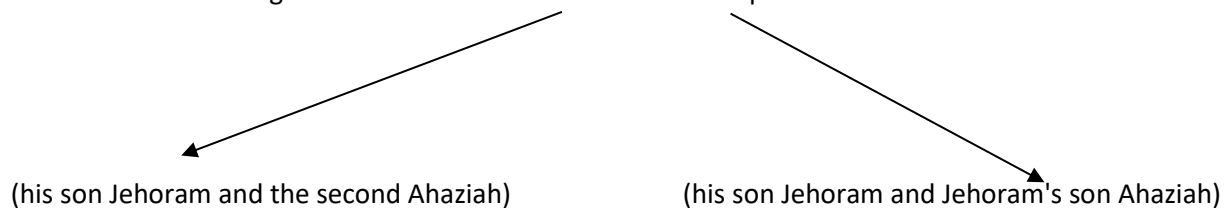
(Verses 25-29): **In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. 26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel. 27 And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab, for he was the son-in-law of the house of Ahab. 28 Now he went with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth Gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. 29 Then King Joram went back to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.**

In the twelfth year: In (2 Kings 9: 29) it says in the eleventh year, and the reason is the different methods of calculation, and perhaps part of a year in the first or in the last was counted as a full year, or that he reigned with his father for a full year (these trivial differences that some claim are evidence of errors are evidence of the authenticity of the Bible, as the author, due to his honesty, conveys the news as it is without subjecting it to his mind. And to those who accuse the Jews of falsifying the Bible, we say to them: Why did the Jews not correct such errors that are always a source of problems for them? The answer is that no one can tamper with the word of God.)

Ahaziah: The name Ahaziah or Jehoahaz has the same meaning: the Lord supports. He was 22 years old when he became king, and in (2 Chronicles 22: 2), it is mentioned that his age was 42 years. The number 42 years is definitely not reasonable, as his father, Jehoram, died at the age of 40 years old. As we said in the introduction, the solution is that the writer attributes age to the rule of Omri, the origin of the house of Ahab, and the house of Ahaziah, as he is the great-grandfather to whom the idolatry of his children is attributed. With their paganism and their kings, they are attributed to the house of Omri. This is the meaning of the rest of the verses. The house of Judah is attributed to Omri on the mother's side, so he said Athaliah, the daughter of Omri, and he did not say Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab. The house of the king of Israel is attributed to Omri on his father's side. Note that Athaliah and Joram are Ahab's sons.

Athaliah = whom YHWH will afflict. **Joram** = God exalts. The names of Ahab's children are attributed to YHWH because he falters between the two groups, as Elijah said. We find here that Ahaziah went to war with Joram, king of Israel, in Ramoth, and it appears that he captured it and returned it to Israel because we find that Jehu was anointed king there (2 Kings 9: 1-15), but he (i.e. Joram) was wounded there in the battle.

And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down: He went down from Jerusalem. He had returned to Jerusalem after the battle in which Joram was wounded. Then he went down from Jerusalem to Jezreel (the resort of the kings of Israel) to visit him during his illness. Notice the political niceties in the exchange of names between Ahab and Jehoshaphat.



Chapter 9

(Verses 1-10): **And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said to him, "Get yourself ready, take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead. 2 Now when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among his associates, and take him to an inner room. 3 Then take the flask of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, 'Thus says the Lord: "I have anointed you king over Israel."' Then open the door and flee, and do not delay." 4 So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. 5 And when he arrived, there were the captains of the army sitting; and he said, "I have a message for you, Commander." Jehu said, "For which one of us?" And he said, "For you, Commander." 6 Then he arose and went into the house. And he poured the oil on his head, and said to him, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'I have anointed you king over the people of the Lord, over Israel. 7 You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel. 8 For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both bond and free. 9 So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. 10 The dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.'" And he opened the door and fled.**

The tools of discipline for Ahab were Hazeal, Jehu, and Elisha, as God said to Elijah. When Ahab repented, this discipline was postponed until his son's days. Therefore, we did not hear that Elijah anointed Jehu or Hazeal but rather that Elisha was the one who anointed them. Elijah may have anointed Elisha to carry out his mission when God assigned him.

Get yourself ready: That is, prepare to travel. He only anointed Jehu, and this anointing was to complete a specific mission: attack the house of Ahab. King Joram was in Jezreel and left the war in Ramoth-Gilead because of his wounds. It seems that these wounds were not worthy of him leaving his soldiers and the leaders of his army, as evidenced by his departure on his chariot to meet Jehu. Joram's failure to fight the war caused the leaders of the Israeli army to complain about him, as they accused him of cowardice and abandonment. **Jehu** = It seems he was reckless and a hot-tempered leader, jealous and courageous, not afraid of anyone but not caring about spiritual matters. **from among his associates** = that is, from among the rest of the army leaders. **to an inner room** = so that Jehu would have freedom of speech and management. Elisha did not go himself; he is known and cannot do anything secretly. Jewish tradition says that the prophet who anointed Jehu was the prophet, Jonah.

In (verse 5) the Prophet asks, **"For which one of us?"** It seems that Jehu understood from a prophet coming to him that behind this was good news or a great honour for him, as there was a prophet coming to him. Therefore, he asked this question so that the rest of the leaders would not say that Jehu imposed himself as an obligation on the Prophet.

It is said that there is a contradiction between these verses and (Hosea 1: 4). In Hosea, Jehu will be punished for the blood of Jezreel, while here, the prophet assigns him to destroy the house of Ahab.

The reason is that Jehu did not strike the house of Ahab for God's glory, but for his own glory, and with terrifying brutality that God would not be pleased with [see (2 Kings 10: 1-9)]. Just as God used Babylon to discipline Jerusalem and then punished it for its brutality, He uses Jehu here, but he cannot agree with what he did, his revenge for himself, and his bloodiness.

(Verses 11-26): **Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and one said to him, "Is all well? Why did this madman come to you?" And he said to them, "You know the man and his babble." 12 And they said, "A lie! Tell us now." So he said, "Thus and thus he spoke to me, saying, 'Thus says the Lord: "I have anointed you king over Israel."'" 13 Then each man hastened to take his garment and put it under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, "Jehu is king!" 14 So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, against Hazael king of Syria. 15 But King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, "If you are so minded, let no one leave or escape from the city to go and tell it in Jezreel." 16 So Jehu rode in a chariot and went to Jezreel, for Joram was laid up there; and Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram. 17 Now a watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came, and said, "I see a company of men." And Joram said, "Get a horseman and send him to meet them, and let him say, 'Is it peace?'" 18 So the horseman went to meet him, and said, "Thus says the king: 'Is it peace?'" And Jehu said, "What have you to do with peace? Turn around and follow me." So the watchman reported, saying, "The messenger went to them, but is not coming back." 19 Then he sent out a second horseman who came to them, and said, "Thus says the king: 'Is it peace?'" And Jehu answered, "What have you to do with peace? Turn around and follow me." 20 So the watchman reported, saying, "He went up to them and is not coming back; and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously!" 21 Then Joram said, "Make ready." And his chariot was made ready. Then Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot; and they went out to meet Jehu, and met him on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. 22 Now it happened, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, "Is it peace, Jehu?" So he answered, "What peace, as long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcraft are so many?" 23 Then Joram turned around and fled, and said to Ahaziah, "Treachery, Ahaziah!" 24 Now Jehu drew his bow with full strength and shot Jehoram between his arms; and the arrow came out at his heart, and he sank down in his chariot. 25 Then Jehu said to Bidkar his captain, "Pick him up, and throw him into the tract of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember, when you and I were riding together behind Ahab his father, that the Lord laid this burden upon him: 26 'Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,' says the Lord, 'and I will repay you in this plot,' says the Lord. Now therefore, take and throw him on the plot of ground, according to the word of the Lord."**

this madman: This indicates that the Prophet entered and left in a hurry; perhaps they did not know he was a Prophet. Or perhaps it is a state of indifference to religion if he was wearing the clothes of the prophets. Perhaps he acted like a madman so no one would know his message. **You know** = it is a test from Jehu to them, as maybe they had a hand in sending the Prophet. **A lie!** = we do not know anything,

so you tell us. They must have noticed the oil on his face. There is a possibility that the meaning of the words is that Jehu, in humility, did not want to tell them about the secret that he had been anointed king, so he said, "You know that the man is mad, so do not care about what he said." After they saw the anointing, they said: This is a lie, as he said something important. But it was clear that they wanted to get rid of the house of Ahab, so they quickly made a throne for Jehu out of their clothes. Note that the entire army was in Ramoth-Gilead, and the king alone was in Jezreel. Therefore, Jehu had a good opportunity to kill him if he hurried and reached Jezreel before the news of the rebellion reached the king. **If you are so minded** = he consults them and does not command them, as he is not yet king. **and let him say, 'Is it peace?'** = because he was concerned about Ramoth-Gilead and was afraid that it would fall into the hands of Aram. **Turn around and follow me** = he was not allowed to return and tell the king.

What have you to do with peace?: That is, you do not care what happens in anything. **Then Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out** = he could not be patient, as the failure of the two messengers to return has a meaning of evil. **and met him on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite** = it was a divine arrangement to fulfill what the prophet had prophesized. **as long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcraft are so many** = clearly spiritual adultery and worship of Baal.

In (verse 25) **Bidkar his captain** = There were three people in each chariot, a driver and two, one of whom was the officer or commander, and therefore perhaps the commanders and officers were called "triads." The triads maybe those with the third rank after the nobles (the king and princes 1st, then the nobles 2nd, then the Triads 3rd of the commanding officers).

this burden: This is the punishment he is in. But the word burden means prophecy, as it probably refers to the prophecy of Elijah regarding the punishment of the house of Ahab, which was fulfilled. In (verse 26), **the blood of his sons** = they probably killed Naboth's sons so that there would be no heirs.

Note: In verse (13), **put it under him on the top of the steps** = the word used here refers to the steps of the sundial, which is a suitable place for Jehu to be inaugurated as king. And putting their clothes under him means all ours is at your command.

(Verses 27-29): **But when Ahaziah king of Judah saw this, he fled by the road to Beth Haggan. So Jehu pursued him, and said, "Shoot him also in the chariot." And they shot him at the Ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. Then he fled to Megiddo, and died there. 28 And his servants carried him in the chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the City of David. 29 In the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah.**

Beth Haggan: One of the properties belonging to the palace. **So Jehu pursued him** = or he ordered his soldiers to chase him. **the Ascent of Gur** = In (2 Chronicles 22: 9) "Then he searched for Ahaziah; and they caught him (he was hiding in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu. When they had killed him." If we compare the two verses, the meaning is that Jehu's soldiers beat Ahaziah at the Ascent of Gur, so he fled to Megiddo, then he moved to Samaria while he was injured and hid there, where Jehu's servants caught him and brought him to Jehu to kill him.

(Verses 30-37): **Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. 31 Then, as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?" 32 And he looked up at the window, and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" So two or three eunuchs looked out at him. 33 Then he said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot. 34 And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, "Go now, see to this accursed woman, and bury her, for she was a king's daughter." 35 So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. 36 Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, "This is the word of the Lord, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; 37 and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, "Here lies Jezebel."'"**

she put paint on her eyes: This cruel heart is strange, as she beautifies herself instead of crying for her children or her fate. Perhaps she intended to seduce Jehu with her beauty, or she knew that he would kill her, so she preferred to die in all her adornment as a queen, and her age was not less than 55 years. Her grandson, Ahaziah, who was her daughter's son, was 23 years old when he was killed. **Is it peace, Zimri** = She reminds Jehu that when Zimri killed his king, he was killed seven days later, and she says this to scare him that he will have the same fate as Zimri if he kills her. **Who is on my side?** = He calls on everyone to disobey Jezebel and obey his orders. **and he trampled her underfoot** = Jehu trampled her, a sign of his contempt for her. Jezebel left behind a name that will be hated forever (Revelation 2: 20), so her name was given to the false prophetess.

Chapter 10

(Verses 1-14): **Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote and sent letters to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to those who reared Ahab's sons, saying: 2 Now as soon as this letter comes to you, since your master's sons are with you, and you have chariots and horses, a fortified city also, and weapons, 3 choose the best qualified of your master's sons, set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house. 4 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, "Look, two kings could not stand up to him; how then can we stand?" 5 And he who was in charge of the house, and he who was in charge of the city, the elders also, and those who reared the sons, sent to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants, we will do all you tell us; but we will not make anyone king. Do what is good in your sight." 6 Then he wrote a second letter to them, saying: If you are for me and will obey my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow. Now the king's sons, seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, who were rearing them. 7 So it was, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons and slaughtered seventy persons, put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel. 8 Then a messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." And he said, "Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning." 9 So it was, in the morning, that he went out and stood, and said to all the people, "You are righteous. Indeed I conspired against my master and killed him; but who killed all these? 10 Know now that nothing shall fall to the earth of the word of the Lord which the Lord spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the Lord has done what He spoke by His servant Elijah." 11 So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his close acquaintances and his priests, until he left him none remaining. 12 And he arose and departed and went to Samaria. On the way, at Beth Eked of the Shepherds, 13 Jehu met with the brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, "Who are you?" So they answered, "We are the brothers of Ahaziah; we have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother." 14 And he said, "Take them alive!" So they took them alive, and killed them at the well of Beth Eked, forty-two men; and he left none of them.**

seventy sons: Of Ahab's children and grandchildren. **to the rulers of Jezreel** = Perhaps the leaders of Jezreel had fled to Samaria from Jehu and fortified themselves there. **who reared Ahab's sons** = those who raised his children and grandchildren. Let us note that Jehu carried out God's orders, but he acted brutally and killed the innocent along with the guilty. Those who reared Ahab's sons are definitely traitors to their masters, but how do the honourable people rally around sinners, and how do the righteous, honest and pious rally around a king like Ahab, an idolater? We notice Jehu's brutality in putting the heads in baskets and leaving them in two heaps till the morning. God sent Jehu, but he definitely does not approve of these brutal actions. Jehu is not justified in his actions, but God is justified in his judgments.

In verse (2), He is mocking them because they have fortified themselves with Samaria's walls, and his words mean: You have the king's sons, and you have chariots, so let us fight, but he knew that they could not. And when he said in (verse 6) **tomorrow**, he did not give them time to contemplate and review. But if they had some honesty and loyalty to their king, they would not have done what they did

so quickly, and by doing so, they certainly became followers of Jehu and his partners in killing the king and his sons. Jehu intended this so that they would be partners, so that no one would come in the future and say to him, "You are a murderer." This is the meaning of his statement in verse (9): **but who killed all these?**

In (verse 7), **and sent them to him** = they sent them and did not go, perhaps out of fear of Jehu or ashamed of their ugly act. Jehu's brutal behaviour after that may have been intended to strike terror into the hearts of the people so that they would fear him. In (verse 12), **at Beth Eked of the Shepherds** = the place where the shepherds used to shear their sheep because they used to tie up the sheep before shearing them. **the brothers of Ahaziah** = they are his brothers' children because his brothers had been killed (2 Chronicles 21: 17 + 22: 8).

(Verses 15-17): **Now when he departed from there, he met Jehonadab the son of Rechab, coming to meet him; and he greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart right, as my heart is toward your heart?" And Jehonadab answered, "It is." Jehu said, "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave him his hand, and he took him up to him into the chariot. 16 Then he said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." So they had him ride in his chariot. 17 And when he came to Samaria, he killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed them, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke to Elijah.**

Jehonadab: The leader of the Kenite tribe (Jeremiah 35: 6-9), who was famous for his holiness, love, and faithfulness to God. Jehu saw that by uniting with this man, who was considered holy, he would attract the entire tribe and everyone who worshiped the Lord to him. **It is** = His answer indicates zeal, heartfelt agreement, and hope that the new king will eliminate idolatry. **give me your hand** = a sign of the treaty, and he went into his chariot, so this will show the people that they are united. **my zeal for the Lord** = the intention of worshiping the Lord in the manner of Jeroboam. And this Jonadab's children were 300 years later in the days of Jeremiah, adhering to what their father Jonadab had commanded them.

(Verses 18-24): **Then Jehu gathered all the people together, and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu will serve him much. 19 Now therefore, call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests. Let no one be missing, for I have a great sacrifice for Baal. Whoever is missing shall not live." But Jehu acted deceptively, with the intent of destroying the worshipers of Baal. 20 And Jehu said, "Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal." So they proclaimed it. 21 Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel; and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. So they came into the temple of Baal, and the temple of Baal was full from one end to the other. 22 And he said to the one in charge of the wardrobe, "Bring out vestments for all the worshipers of Baal." So he brought out vestments for them. 23 Then Jehu and Jehonadab the son of Rechab went into the temple of Baal, and said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and see that no servants of the Lord are here with you, but only the worshipers of Baal." 24 So they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had appointed for himself eighty men on the outside, and**

had said, "If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, whoever lets him escape, it shall be his life for the life of the other."

Ahab served Baal a little: He was faltering between the two groups. He built a temple for Baal and named his children after YHWH. **a solemn assembly** = a day of idleness for religious service (Leviticus 23: 36). **the temple of Baal** = the one built by Ahab. Distributed clothes to the priests of Baal: **ring out vestments for all the worshipers of Baal**= so that they would be distinguished to be killed.

(Verses 25-28): **Now it happened, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, "Go in and kill them; let no one come out!" And they killed them with the edge of the sword; then the guards and the officers threw them out, and went into the inner room of the temple of Baal. 26 And they brought the sacred pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them. 27 Then they broke down the sacred pillar of Baal, and tore down the temple of Baal and made it a refuse dump to this day. 28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel.**

the temple of Baal: Buildings dedicated to the worship of Baal. And they burned the images: **And they brought the sacred pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them** = those made of wood. **a refuse dump** = a sign of contempt.

(Verses 29-31): **However Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, that is, from the golden calves that were at Bethel and Dan. 30 And the Lord said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." 31 But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.**

the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat: Using the calf in worship and leaving Jerusalem. God rewarded Jehu for what he had done well and punished him for his sins. His children sat on his throne until the fourth generation, and he reigned for 28 years. His family lasted 120 years, while Ahab's family lasted only until the third generation (Joram and Ahaziah, his brother) and continued for 45 years. God rewards those who work for Him, but this does not mean He approved of everything he did. God rewarded Nebuchadnezzar for his destruction of Tiro by giving him Egypt. God rewards some people with an earthly reward so that they do not remain in debt to anyone. As for eternal salvation as a reward, this is another topic. We find that Jehu did not take any precautions to follow the law of the Lord.

(Verses 32-36): **In those days the Lord began to cut off parts of Israel; and Hazael conquered them in all the territory of Israel 33 from the Jordan eastward: all the land of Gilead—Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh—from Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan. 34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of**

the kings of Israel? 35 So Jehu rested with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Jehoahaz his son reigned in his place. 36 And the period that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

In those days: Jehu did not hesitate, and as a result, the Lord began to cut off Israel. God handed him over to his enemies. Hazael was a tool in the hand of God, like scissors with which the Lord cut everything that was east of the Jordan from the Kingdom of Israel, which was a very fertile land, and Elisha's prophecy to Hazael was fulfilled. Jehu was enthusiastic, but he was not religious. His desire was to be king, but he did not follow the path of God, so we understood that God used him as a tool.

Chapter 11

(Verses 1-3): **When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs. 2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being murdered; and they hid him and his nurse in the bedroom, from Athaliah, so that he was not killed. 3 So he was hidden with her in the house of the Lord for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.**

Athaliah is the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. She is the widow of Jehoram, king of Judah. She introduced the worship of Baal to Judah and resembled her mother in her evil and power. Her brutality was evident in her lust for power in killing all the royal lineage, and perhaps she wanted to exterminate the entire family of David. She ruled over her husband (2 Kings 8: 18, 27 + 2 Chronicles 21: 6) and over her son (2 Chronicles 22: 2-4). Among what Jehoram did was he killed all his brothers (2 Chronicles 21: 4). The Philistines and Arabs had killed the children of Jehoram (2 Chronicles 22: 1). Jehu had killed Ahaziah's brothers, that is, his brothers' children (2 Kings 10: 13, 14). Those whom Athaliah destroyed were Ahaziah's children, except for Joash, whom God preserved because of His promise to David.

Jhosheba = She is the daughter of Jehoram by a woman other than Athaliah. She was the wife of the priest Jehoiada (2 Chronicles 22: 11) and hid the child in the rooms of the House of the Lord. Athaliah did not dare to lay her hands on the priests of the Lord, but the worship of the Lord was neglected, and the worship of Baal spread. There is a reflection:

Just as Joash hid in the house of the Lord, so all of us must take refuge in the church, waiting for the end of our period of sojourn on earth to reveal the glory that is ours. Note that Joash spent six years in hiding to be glorified on the throne at the age of seven, meaning perfection.

(Verses 4-16): **In the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of hundreds—of the bodyguards and the escorts—and brought them into the house of the Lord to him. And he made a covenant with them and took an oath from them in the house of the Lord, and showed them the king's son. 5 Then he commanded them, saying, "This is what you shall do: One-third of you who come on duty on the Sabbath shall be keeping watch over the king's house, 6 one-third shall be at the gate of Sur, and one-third at the gate behind the escorts. You shall keep the watch of the house, lest it be broken down. 7 The two contingents of you who go off duty on the Sabbath shall keep the watch of the house of the Lord for the king. 8 But you shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes within range, let him be put to death. You are to be with the king as he goes out and as he comes in." 9 So the captains of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each of them took his men who were to be on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going off duty on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. 10 And the priest gave the captains of hundreds the spears and shields which had belonged to King David, that were in the temple of the Lord. 11 Then the escorts stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, all around the king, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, by the altar and the house. 12 And he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and gave him the Testimony; they**

made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, “Long live the king!” 13 Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the escorts and the people, she came to the people in the temple of the Lord. 14 When she looked, there was the king standing by a pillar according to custom; and the leaders and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. So Athaliah tore her clothes and cried out, “Treason! Treason!” 15 And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the army, and said to them, “Take her outside under guard, and slay with the sword whoever follows her.” For the priest had said, “Do not let her be killed in the house of the Lord.” 16 So they seized her; and she went by way of the horses’ entrance into the king’s house, and there she was killed.

Jehoiada was probably the high priest. He called the leaders and the guards from the Levites, and everyone was eager to be saved from the rule of Athaliah. Jehoiada chose the Sabbath as the day for the people to gather and the day for changing the guard. David had divided the priests and Levites into 24 groups, each group serving for a week, then going to rest, and the new group coming to begin the service, so the two sections or groups were present together on the Sabbath. He divided the guards as usual so that Athaliah would not notice that there was a conspiracy, but he focused on guarding King Joash. **the gate of Sur** = It is the main gate (the gate of the foundation). This is how it is called in (2 Chronicles 5: 23). In (verse 7) **who go off duty on the Sabbath** = those who have completed their service period and are preparing to leave. They were not to leave and go around the king to guard him. And in (verse 9) **Each of them took his men who were to be on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going off duty on the Sabbath** = those whose turn has come to serve. So the meaning is that the number has doubled. In (verse 12), **and gave him the Testimony** = in fulfillment of Moses’ commandment (Deuteronomy 17: 18-20). In (verse 10) **the captains of hundreds the spears and shields which had belonged to King David** = these were for decoration only, but here they were given to the Levites (2 Chronicles 23: 9). As for the guards, they had their weapons with them.

Contemplation:

As everyone saluted King Joash after the expulsion of Athaliah, we must praise Christ when he reigns over our hearts after we expel Satan and the love of sins from our hearts. Rather, this is what will happen on the last day when Satan and his soldiers are thrown into the lake burning with fire, but the righteous will have their praise.

(Verse 17): **Then Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord, the king, and the people, that they should be the Lord’s people, and also between the king and the people.**

Jehoiada made three covenants:

1. Between God and the people. The people will always worship God.
2. Between the king and the people, to serve his people.

3. And the people and the king to love him.

(Verses 18-21): **And all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal, and tore it down. They thoroughly broke in pieces its altars and images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the Lord. 19 Then he took the captains of hundreds, the bodyguards, the escorts, and all the people of the land; and they brought the king down from the house of the Lord, and went by way of the gate of the escorts to the king's house. Then he sat on the throne of the kings. 20 So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they had slain Athaliah with the sword in the king's house. 21 Jehoash was seven years old when he became king.**

Chapter 12

(Verses 1-3): **In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. 2 Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him. 3 But the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.**

The mention of the mother by her name indicates that she had a kind of respect and authority, and it is clear here that Jehoiada was faithful in teaching King Joash. The influence of Jehoiada on him is evident in that after Jehoiada died, he listened to the leaders of Judah and worshiped the wooden images and the idols (2 Chronicles 24: 17-19). However, the verse in the Chronicles does not indicate that he himself was the one who worshiped the idols, but rather that he allowed the leaders of Judah to do so. However, it is his responsibility, as he is the king. **the high places** = the people were accustomed to this, and it was against the law, but it was not a terrible sin like bowing down to Baal.

(Verses 4-8): **And Jehoash said to the priests, "All the money of the dedicated gifts that are brought into the house of the Lord—each man's census money, each man's assessment money—and all the money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the Lord, 5 let the priests take it themselves, each from his constituency; and let them repair the damages of the temple, wherever any dilapidation is found." 6 Now it was so, by the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, that the priests had not repaired the damages of the temple. 7 So King Jehoash called Jehoiada the priest and the other priests, and said to them, "Why have you not repaired the damages of the temple? Now therefore, do not take more money from your constituency, but deliver it for repairing the damages of the temple." 8 And the priests agreed that they would neither receive more money from the people, nor repair the damages of the temple.**

Athaliah and her followers had attacked the temple and destroyed it, and they had made its dedicated things of the house of the Lord to the Baals (2 Chronicles 24: 7). So Joash wanted to restore the temple and made a provision for the priests that they would take all the silver that entered the temple and use it for restoration. The sources of the silver were:

1- **census money**: The price of the offerings that their owners wanted to redeem in silver (Leviticus 27: 11-12).

2- **assessment money** = souls' silver, which is 1/2 shekel per soul.

3- Donations. But this method did not succeed because the priests cared more about their own interests. Therefore, after a long time, there was no progress in restoring the temple, and therefore, the king prevented the priests from taking silver from the people.

(Verses 9-16): **Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of the Lord; and the priests who kept the door put there all the money brought into the house of the Lord. 10 So it was, whenever they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high priest came up and put it in bags, and counted the money that was found in the house of the Lord. 11 Then they gave the money, which had been apportioned, into the hands of those who did the work, who had the oversight of the house of the Lord; and they paid it out to the carpenters and builders who worked on the house of the Lord, 12 and to masons and stonecutters, and for buying timber and hewn stone, to repair the damage of the house of the Lord, and for all that was paid out to repair the temple. 13 However there were not made for the house of the Lord basins of silver, trimmers, sprinkling-bowls, trumpets, any articles of gold or articles of silver, from the money brought into the house of the Lord. 14 But they gave that to the workmen, and they repaired the house of the Lord with it. 15 Moreover they did not require an account from the men into whose hand they delivered the money to be paid to workmen, for they dealt faithfully. 16 The money from the trespass offerings and the money from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the Lord. It belonged to the priests.**

The king used the perforated box system to collect silver where the high priest and the king's scribe had the authority to open this box, but this method caused some loss to the priests. **and set it beside the altar** = the altar of burnt offering so that all those entering could see it.

Compare verses (13, 14) with (2 Chronicles 24: 14) and you will find that they did not make vessels for the House of the Lord until they completed the temple restoration. After completing the repair, they brought the remaining silver and made it into vessels for the House of the Lord. The House was empty because the kings had taken its vessels and given them to their enemies (1 Kings 14: 26 + 15: 18).

(Verses 17-21): **Hazael king of Syria went up and fought against Gath, and took it; then Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. 18 And Jehoash king of Judah took all the sacred things that his fathers, Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred things, and all the gold found in the treasuries of the house of the Lord and in the king's house, and sent them to Hazael king of Syria. Then he went away from Jerusalem. 19 Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20 And his servants arose and formed a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of the Millo, which goes down to Silla. 21 For Jozachar the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, struck him. So he died, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Amaziah his son reigned in his place.**

As usual, the author of the Book of Chronicles searches for the sin that was the cause of the strike directed at the Lord's people. We note that the author of the Chronicles mentions that after the death of the priest Jehoiada, Joash was persuaded by the leaders of Judah to worship idols (2 Chronicles 24: 15-21). God did not leave him without warning, so he sent Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, to warn against the consequences of worshiping idols. The king then ordered that Zechariah be stoned, so

they stoned him in the court of the House of the Lord (perhaps this is the incident that Jesus Christ referred to (Matthew 23: 35). Therefore, we find that God allowed Hazael to ascend against Judah because Hazael had taken control of all The land of Gilead-Bashan was part of Israel, and there was no longer a barrier between Aram and Judah, and the prophecy of Elisha was fulfilled (2 Kings 8: 12). **and fought against Gath:** Gath was sometimes subject to Judah and at other times subject to the Philistines, and we cannot know who it was subject to at that time (1 Samuel 5: 8 + 2 Chronicles 11: 8 + 26: 6), except that Hazael captured it and then turned from it to go up to Jerusalem. (2 Chronicles 24: 23-24) We find that the Lord delivered the leaders of Judah into the hand of Hazael and the entire army into his hand. Joash was forced to resort to a shameful situation and surrender. Then Joash gave him everything in the treasures of the House of the Lord. Perhaps Hazael went up to Jerusalem twice, the first of which is mentioned in the Book of Kings, in which Joash gave Hazael everything in the House of the Lord, and the second time, he struck the army and the leaders and left Joash in a great illness. This second time was a year after the first, and it is mentioned in the Book of Chronicles. The reason for this interpretation is his saying... So it happened in the spring of the year (2 Chronicles 24: 23). The shameful surrender and handing over of the vessels of the House of the Lord to Hazael that encouraged him to go up again to Jerusalem. In (2 Chronicles 24: 25), we find that after the rise of the Syrians, Joash fell ill with many diseases, so he remained in bed, and his servants took advantage of this opportunity and killed him. The reasons for the strife were not explained, and it may be that Joash did not follow the policies of these people. However, the clear reason is that God would abandon him as long as he ordered the stoning of the innocent high priest, whose entire sin was that he warned him of the danger of idolatry. **the house of the Millo** = the one built by Solomon and in which Joash took refuge in times of danger. **Silla** = most likely the way to the house of the Millo. Note that he was not buried in the tombs of the kings, but rather in the City of David, evidence of the lack of customary honour for kings.

Chapter 13

(Verses 1-2): **In the twenty-third year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not depart from them.**

Jehoahaz began his reign at the beginning of the twenty-third year of Joash and ruled for 17 years, including 14 years alone and 3 years with his son Joash, and the fourteenth year was just beginning.

(Verse 3): **Then the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael, all their days.**

all their days: That is, in the days of Jehoahaz. Ben-hadad did not reign during Jehoahaz's time (verse 22); perhaps he was a commander in his father's army. After the death of Jehoahaz and Hazael, Ben-hadad became king in Syria and Joash in Israel, and Joash struck Ben-hadad 3 times.

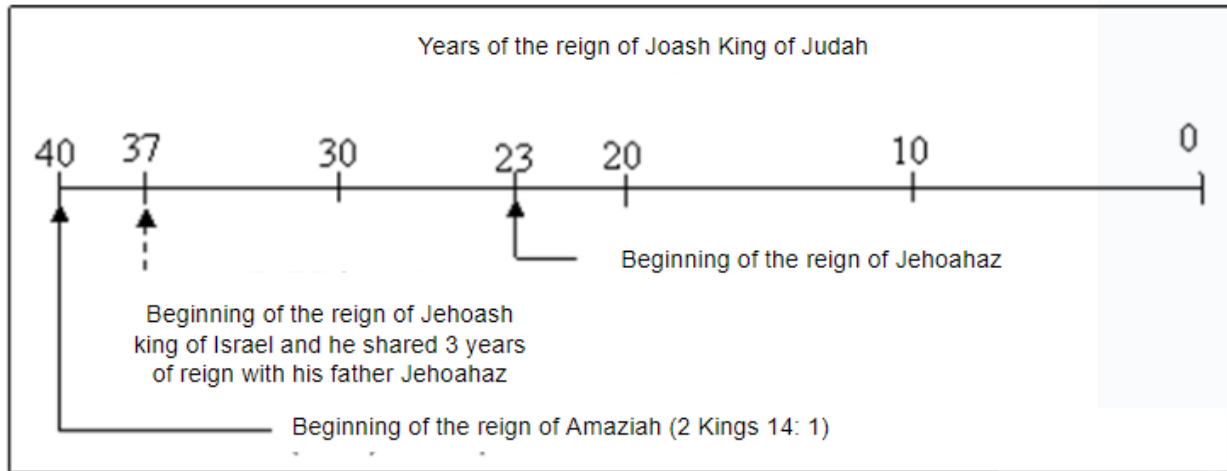
(Verses 4-9): **So Jehoahaz pleaded with the Lord, and the Lord listened to him; for He saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. 5 Then the Lord gave Israel a deliverer, so that they escaped from under the hand of the Syrians; and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents as before. 6 Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin, but walked in them; and the wooden image also remained in Samaria. 7 For He left of the army of Jehoahaz only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers; for the king of Syria had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. 8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 9 So Jehoahaz rested with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Joash his son reigned in his place.**

pleaded: God responds to everyone who calls on Him, even if it is the sinful king. **a deliverer** = What is meant is that the delivered is Assyria, which weakened Aram's authority. This happened in the days of his son Joash and his grandson, Jeroboam II. In their days, the children of Israel resided in their tents, that is, in comfort without war. But in the days of Jehoahaz, they declined utterly. **the wooden image also remained** = these wooden statues were a sign and testimony of Israel's betrayal of the Lord. As a result of sin, look at the state of decadence that Israel has reached. All the soldiers they were able to recruit were 10,000 + 50 horsemen + 10 chariots, and compare with the days of Solomon.

(Verses 10-13): **In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years. 11 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, but walked in them. 12 Now the rest of the acts of Joash, all that he did, and his might with which he fought against**

Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 13 So Joash rested with his fathers. Then Jeroboam sat on his throne. And Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Compare verses 1 and 10. Joash ruled for 16 years, including the period he shared with his father.



(Verses 14-19): **Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and said, "O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!" 15 And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and some arrows." So he took himself a bow and some arrows. 16 Then he said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow." So he put his hand on it, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. 17 And he said, "Open the east window"; and he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot"; and he shot. And he said, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at Aphek till you have destroyed them." 18 Then he said, "Take the arrows"; so he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground"; so he struck three times, and stopped. 19 And the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed it! But now you will strike Syria only three times."**

The revelation leaves the news of the kings to record for us the news of the departure of the great prophet, for he is a man of God. Elisha was approximately 80 years old, and the king's coming to him is evidence of his regard for this great prophet. **and wept over his face** = his tears fell on Elisha's face. **the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!** = The king cried because he knew that Elisha was stronger than all the chariots of Israel through his prayers and intercession that protect Israel. **And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and some arrows."** = In ancient wars, the attacking army would besiege the city, and the attacking leader would come carrying his bow and arrow, and he would throw an arrow into the city and declare the reason for the war and demand either war or surrender. Therefore, Elisha asked him to hold his bow and arrows as a sign that he would fight the Syrians. **and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands:** War is for the king, and this is his job that he is required to do, but there is help from the Lord.

Elisha is now his representative. The meaning of this is that Elisha is saying, "Even if I were to die, God would support you, so fight with strength, for you are only a tool in the hand of God" (He teaches my hands to make war, Psalm 18: 34 + 144: 1). He shot toward the east because Aram, the enemy of Israel, is toward the east. **Shoot** = The intention behind this work is a prophecy of Israel's salvation with the Lord's help. **Aphék** = where the armies of the Syrians gather (1 Kings 20: 26). The lesson has now become clear to the king of Israel. He must fight and even declare war on the Syrians in Aphék, and God will save him and grant him victory. This was the first lesson. Elisha moved on to the second lesson, which was to hit the arrows as much as he could into the ground, and each arrow indicated a battle in which he would defeat them (according to the custom of those days). He certainly understood the meaning, but it was most likely because of a political reason he refused to strike the Syrians more than three times and preferred not to eradicate them, perhaps because he was afraid of Assyria (and leaving them here is the same mistake as Ahab when he released the king of Aram).

Therefore, the Prophet became angry. Let us note that the work of the Lord is according to man's faith. Whoever asks for a lot will receive a lot, and whoever asks for a little will receive a little. Joash's action was evidence of the weakness of his faith, and the prophet's anger was due to the weakness of his faith and not the number of shots. Certainly, Elisha had the transparency that made him see what would happen to the king, his armies and his people in the future.

(Verses 20-25): **Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. 21 So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet. 22 And Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. 23 But the Lord was gracious to them, had compassion on them, and regarded them, because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence. 24 Now Hazael king of Syria died. Then Ben-Hadad his son reigned in his place. 25 And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz recaptured from the hand of Ben-Hadad, the son of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times Joash defeated him and recaptured the cities of Israel.**

The entry of the invaders of Moab is evidence of the decline of the state of Israel. The purpose of the revival of the dead was for people to remember the teachings of God that this great prophet was teaching them. It was also an honour for the one who honoured God with his life and his testimony to Him. "for those who honor Me I will honor." And just as God honoured Elijah upon his transition, God honoured Elisha after his transition, etc. This event was a lesson that death is not the end of a person. Elisha had power after his death, which is evidence of the intercession of the saints, whose prayers we trust have power after their death. Their death will not prevent the power of their prayers. Elisha was a symbol of Christ, who, through His death, gave life to those who died.

Then, we find the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy that Israel will strike Aram 3 times. What is surprising is that the king, who was afraid of Aram and Assyria, the strike came to him from Moab, as the attack may come from weak places that we do not expect.

Chapter 14

(Verses 1-7): **In the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, became king. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. 3 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like his father David; he did everything as his father Joash had done. 4 However the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. 5 Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established in his hand, that he executed his servants who had murdered his father the king. 6 But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the Lord commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin." 7 He killed ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt, and took Sela by war, and called its name Joktheel to this day.**

In the second year: He shared the rule with his father for a period of time (including a fraction of a year), after which he began his sole rule (see the drawing in the previous chapter). Among the sins of Amaziah were his worship of the gods of Edom, his rejection of the warning of the man of God, and his pride (2 Chronicles 25: 14-16, 19).

he did everything as his father: He started well and ended his life in sin, so he was defeated by his enemies and handed over the treasures of the house of the Lord. Then, his servants killed him like his father. The Edomites rebelled against Judah in the days of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat. **But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the Lord commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin."** = perhaps his counsellors advised of this, but he adhered to the law.

(Verses 8-16): **Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us face one another in battle." 9 And Jehoash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son as wife'; and a wild beast that was in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. 10 You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Glory in that, and stay at home; for why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall—you and Judah with you?" 11 But Amaziah would not heed. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went out; so he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. 12 And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent. 13 Then Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh; and he went to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate—four hundred cubits. 14 And he took all the gold and silver, all the articles that were found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria. 15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did—his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah—are they not**

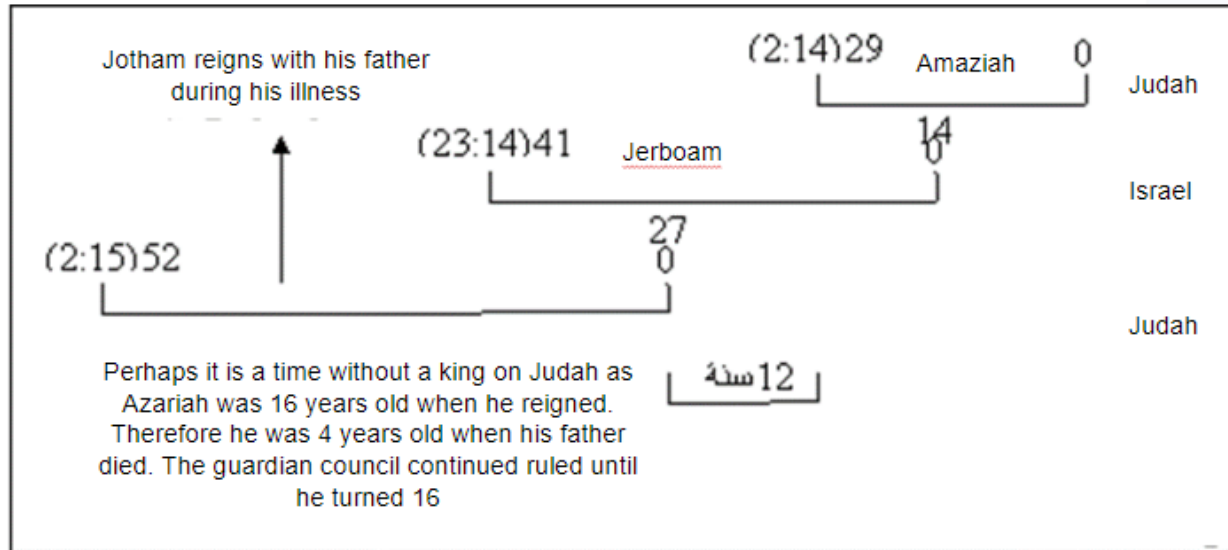
written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 16 So Jehoash rested with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Then Jeroboam his son reigned in his place.

Returning to the Book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 25: 13), we find that Israel raided several cities, and it seems that Amaziah wanted to recover them, but the king of Israel refused. Then, the king of Judah, Amaziah, called for war. Both the king of Judah and the king of Israel were proud, for one had struck Edom beforehand, and the other had struck Syria beforehand. The words of the king of Israel mean that **The thistle** = the lowest of the trees (and by this, he means the king of Judah). **the cedar** = the greatest of trees (meaning himself). The thistle asked to give the daughter of the cedar to his son in marriage (meaning Amaziah's request to recover his cities). His recovery of his cities will be through war. Therefore, the king of Israel will send his mighty army (**wild beast**) to trample the thistle (Amaziah and his army). How beautiful is humility. What if the king of Assyria heard this conversation, and he is the truly mighty king with his armies and power, and he can actually be likened to Cedar due to his greatness, as he was the greatest king at that time!! Both of them would certainly be the subject of ridicule by the king of Assyria.

As usual, the Book of Kings is interested in the news of the kingdom and what happens to it in terms of victories and defeats. However, the author of the Book of Chronicles spiritually interprets political events and explains that defeat is caused by sin. He explains that the stubbornness of the king of Judah and his insistence on war was from God because God wanted to discipline them for worshipping the gods of Edom. Then the king of Israel demolished part of the wall to make it impossible to defend Jerusalem, and Amaziah, king of Judah, was captured. It seems that he set a condition for his release that he would capture a number of the great men of Judah and take them hostage so that he would kill them if Judah and the king of Judah thought to declare war on Israel again, and these great men are called the **hostages** here in verse (14).

(Verses 17-22): **Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. 18 Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 19 And they formed a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. 20 Then they brought him on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the City of David. 21 And all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. 22 He built Elath and restored it to Judah, after the king rested with his fathers.**

Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived: He did not say that he reigned because for the rest of his life after the defeat, he lived without dignity or significant work, and perhaps some kind of regency took place on the throne. **Elath** = Elath, which is on the Gulf of Aqaba. It was Edomite, so Azariah recovered it because it is an important coastal commercial center on the Red Sea.



(Verses 23-29): **In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years. 24 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 25 He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hopher. 26 For the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter; and whether bond or free, there was no helper for Israel. 27 And the Lord did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. 28 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did—his might, how he made war, and how he recaptured for Israel, from Damascus and Hamath, what had belonged to Judah—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 29 So Jeroboam rested with his fathers, the kings of Israel. Then Zechariah his son reigned in his place.**

Jeroboam, the son of Joash (Jeroboam II), was the greatest king of Israel, and his reign lasted longer than others. His days were days of temporal success, building houses of hewn stones and delicious vines. However, his time was a time of spiritual decadence, drunkenness, fornication, and idolatry, and this is understood from the prophets (Hosea / Joel / Amos). The surrounding kings were afraid to fight Israel because of its alliance with the powerful Assyria, and this was a temporary policy of Assyria in addition to the power of Jeroboam. **the Sea of the Arabah** = the Sea of Lot.

In (verse 27), **And the Lord did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel** = because their sin had not yet been completed, and because of His mercy and long-suffering, He was still patient with them. In this way, God gives Israel a final opportunity to repent, as success and prosperity may lead them to where famines, wars, distress, and defeats lead them. However, it appears from the books of the prophets that this did not work for them either; rather, prosperity led them to social corruption. In

(verse 28) **Hamath, what had belonged to Judah** = in Israel (the northern kingdom after the separation), they attribute David to Judah, "We have no share in the son of Jesse."

David had subjugated Hamath, and it was paying him tribute. We understand from this text that Jeroboam made them pay him tribute again, as they had paid it in the days of David.

Chapter 15

(Verses 1-7): **In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, became king. 2 He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jeholiah of Jerusalem. 3 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done, 4 except that the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. 5 Then the Lord struck the king, so that he was a leper until the day of his death; so he dwelt in an isolated house. And Jotham the king's son was over the royal house, judging the people of the land. 6 Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 7 So Azariah rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Jotham his son reigned in his place.**

Azariah succeeded in his wars, organizing his army, inventing war machines, fortifying Jerusalem, and improving agriculture. However, pride entered him, and he transgressed against the priesthood (2 Chronicles 26), so the Lord struck him with leprosy. **so he dwelt in an isolated house:** Perhaps he was isolated in a special house because he was a king, and they did not leave him outside the walls of Jerusalem. He did not mingle with the people, and that was in the 37th year of his reign. That is, he remained ill for 15 years, and Jotham reigned for 16 years, meaning that he reigned alone for one year after his father's death. After Jotham, Ahaz reigned; he was an evil king, and he gave the king of Assyria the treasuries that his grandfather had collected, and he became enslaved to the king of Assyria. An earthquake occurred in Uzziah's days, perhaps during his transgression on the priesthood (Amos 1: 1 + Zechariah 14: 5).

(Verses 8-12): **In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. 9 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 10 Then Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck and killed him in front of the people; and he reigned in his place. 11 Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. 12 This was the word of the Lord which He spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." And so it was.**

With the death of Zechariah, Jehu's family ended according to the prophecy of the prophet who prophesied that his children would reign until the fourth generation (Jehu / Jehoahaz / Joash / Jeroboam / Zechariah). Most scholars place a period between 11-22 years between Jeroboam and Zechariah, during which the throne was empty (Hosea 10: 3). Without a king, this period was a period of crises and civil wars that ended with Zechariah sitting on the throne for six months and then being assassinated.

(Verses 13-16): **Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria. 14 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, came to Samaria, and struck Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him; and he reigned in his place. 15 Now the rest of the acts of Shallum, and the conspiracy which he led, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. 16 Then from Tirzah, Menahem attacked Tiphshah, all who were there, and its territory. Because they did not surrender, therefore he attacked it. All the women there who were with child he ripped open.**

a full month: That is, an entire month of 30 days. Perhaps this is what Hosea meant (Hosea 5: 7).

It seems there were two conflicting parties in Israel: the party of Shallum (a king in Samaria) and the party of Menahem (a king in Tirzah). **Tirzah** = the ancient capital. When Shallum killed Zechariah, he reigned in his place in Samaria for a month. Menahem became strong **and struck Shallum** and reigned in his place. It seems that the city called **Tiphshah** had supported Shallum, so Menahem struck it and its pregnant women in retaliation against them. Note the large quantity of strife and conspiracies in Israel and civil wars. As for the Kingdom of Judah, it remained subject to the throne of David until the end. The many assassinations in the Kingdom of Israel and the instability were a prelude to the end of this state.

(Verses 17-22): **In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi became king over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria. 18 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 19 Pul king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to strengthen the kingdom under his control. 20 And Menahem exacted the money from Israel, from all the very wealthy, from each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land. 21 Now the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 22 So Menahem rested with his fathers. Then Pekahiah his son reigned in his place.**

Assyria appeared on the stage of history with tremendous power in 744 BC. Under the rule of Tiglath-Pileser III, one of its greatest kings. **Pul king of Assyria came** = There are opinions regarding the king of Assyria, "Pul," that after he assumed the throne, he called himself Tiglath-Pileser III. There are those who said that the Assyrian writings said that Tiglath-Pileser's original name was Pul. There is another opinion that Pul is the father of the famous king Sardinha Pul, who ruled in the days of Jonah. Tiglath-Pileser is the one who came after Sardinha-Pul, and see (1 Chronicles 5: 26). It appears that there were two kings, Pul and Tiglath-Pileser, so we prefer the second opinion. **to strengthen the kingdom under his control** = to protect him from the harassment of opponents from within and without. This was in exchange for paying tribute, meaning that Menahem had become a slave to the king of Assyria.

(Verses 23-26): **In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years. 24 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 25 Then Pekah the son of Remaliah, an officer of his, conspired against him and killed him in Samaria, in the citadel of the**

king's house, along with Argob and Arieih; and with him were fifty men of Gilead. He killed him and reigned in his place. 26 Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Pekah the son of Remaliah: He was probably the supporting and loyal force for Menahem and Pekahiah. Indeed, he may have been the actual ruler and the driver of events. Commentators say that his reign was 20 years, verse 27, calculated from the period of his appearance as a driving force for events. But he had an opinion that was different from Pekahiah and Menahem. While they accepted submission to Assyria and payment of tribute, his opinion was to achieve independence from Assyria, so we find him making an alliance with Aram and trying to annex Ahaz, king of Judah, but Ahaz sought help from the king of Assyria. **Argob and Arieih** = They are not known now, but at the time, they were among the well-known, and they participated in the conspiracy with 50 men.

(Verses 27-31): **In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years. 28 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel Beth Maachah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria. 30 Then Hoshea the son of Elah led a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and struck and killed him; so he reigned in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. 31 Now the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.**

Because of Israel's union with Syria and its king Rezin, Tiglath-Pileser came and attacked Israel. Still, before that, Rezin and Pekah attacked Judah to depose Ahaz and make the son of Tabiel king. They killed 120,000 from Judah in one day, captured 200,000, and plundered a great plunder. However, according to the orders of the prophet Oded, they returned the captives (2 Chronicles 28: 5-15 + Isaiah 1: 7-9) After that, Ahaz, king of Judah, sought help from Assyria, who came and struck Israel **and he carried them captive to Assyria** = Assyria invented this method, and the Babylonians implemented it after them, which was to evacuate the peoples subject to them from their homelands to other places, then replace them with new peoples to kill their national feelings. We note that the king of Assyria took the calves of Dan with him (Hosea 8: 5). **Then Hoshea the son of Elah led a conspiracy** = According to the Assyrian writings, Hoshea was subject to the king of Assyria, who helped him to kill King Pekah. **in the twentieth year of Jotham** = See verse (33), where we find that Jotham reigned for only 16 years. There is a perception of the solution that Jotham began to rule with his father four years before his illness, so the twentieth year of Jotham's rule would be the 16th year of his rule alone after his father's isolation in the home of sickness. The author of the book of Kings here wanted to complete the story of Pekah before he mentioned Jotham (or he attributed the period to Jotham and not to Ahaz due to the evils of Ahaz).

(Verses 32-38): **In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, began to reign. 33 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. 34 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord; he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done. 35 However the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. He built the Upper Gate of the house of the Lord. 36 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 37 In those days the Lord began to send Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah against Judah. 38 So Jotham rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Ahaz his son reigned in his place.**

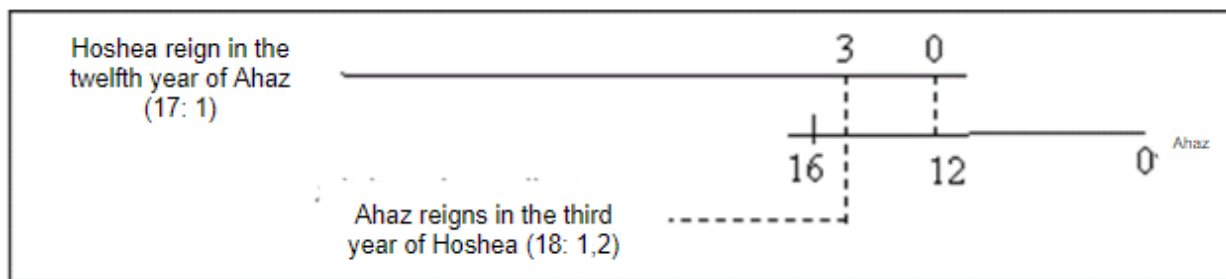
Jotham reigned jointly with his father for 15 years after his illness (and he may have jointly done that before).

He reigned alone for one year, and this man was holy. It seems that God had decided to punish the people of Judah with a strike they deserved. God wanted Jotham to join his fathers in peace, and this was better than seeing his people stricken (120,000 dead + 200,000 prisoners). In general, the people of Judah in this period did not deserve this saintly king.

Chapter 16

(Verses 1-4): **In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord his God, as his father David had done. 3 But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel; indeed he made his son pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel. 4 And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.**

Ahaz: His name was Jehoahaz, and the author of the book deprived him of the name YHWH, as he did not deserve it. We notice in verse 2 that Ahaz was 20 years old when he reigned, and he reigned for 16 years, so he was 36 years old when he died. His son Hezekiah was 25 years old when he reigned, and it is not unlikely that Ahaz gave birth to Hezekiah when he was 11 years old. Still, by placing the verses in the following chapters and comparing them, it appears that Ahaz gave birth to Hezekiah at an older age than that (about 14 years old).



It is clear from this that Hezekiah reigned during his father's life, Ahaz, for two years or more. This means that Hezekiah reigned when he was 22-23 years old, so the age of Ahaz in the year of Hezekiah's birth would be $36 - 22 = 14$ years. This is not unlikely, given he was the son of a king who was raised in luxury and in the East.

This Ahaz was an evil king and made statues of Baals (2 Chronicles 28: 2), and: **he made his son pass through the fire** = and in the Book of Chronicles, it is mentioned that he burned his sons (i.e. more than one) to please the pagan gods.

And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places = his ancestors did not remove the high places, but they did not go to sacrifice there, but he went and burned incense there.

(Verses 5-6): **Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to make war; and they besieged Ahaz but could not overcome him. 6 At that time Rezin king of Syria captured Elath for Syria, and drove the men of Judah from Elath. Then the Edomites went to Elath, and dwell there to this day.**

The alliance between Rezin and Pekah was due to their fear of Assyria and their attack on Ahaz because he preferred to side with Assyria. And it came to pass that the Syrians and Israel together struck Judah with a great strike (2 Chronicles 28: 5-15).

They even took Elath by the sea (Eilat) and returned it to the Arameans, expelled the Jews from it, and went up to Jerusalem but were unable to enter it, perhaps because of Assyria's intervention.

(Verses 7-9): **So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who rise up against me." 8 And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent it as a present to the king of Assyria. 9 So the king of Assyria heeded him; for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and took it, carried its people captive to Kir, and killed Rezin.**

Judah's alliance with Assyria was wrong in God's eyes because God can support His people. It was a mistake for Judah to ally with Israel, Aram, Assyria, or Egypt. This is what happened when Judah allied with Assyria. Assyria swallowed Judah, and the king of Judah became enslaved to Assyria.

(Verses 10-16): **Now King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus; and King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the design of the altar and its pattern, according to all its workmanship. 11 Then Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. So Urijah the priest made it before King Ahaz came back from Damascus. 12 And when the king came back from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and the king approached the altar and made offerings on it. 13 So he burned his burnt offering and his grain offering; and he poured his drink offering and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings on the altar. 14 He also brought the bronze altar which was before the Lord, from the front of the temple—from between the new altar and the house of the Lord—and put it on the north side of the new altar. 15 Then King Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, "On the great new altar burn the morning burnt offering, the evening grain offering, the king's burnt sacrifice, and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering and all the blood of the sacrifice. And the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire by." 16 Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that King Ahaz commanded.**

Ahaz modified the temple to bring it closer to the Assyrian temples of his masters. **Now King Ahaz went** = this was one of his duties after he was subjugated to the King of Assyria to congratulate him on the victory. The altar that Ahaz saw in Damascus was brought by the king of Assyria from his country. It is an Assyrian altar, not an Aramaic one. This was the policy of the Assyrian king, for those subject to him to implement his religious policy and to use an Assyrian altar in which there is recognition of the power of the Assyrian gods and that they are stronger than YHWH. Ahaz took the drawings of this Assyrian altar and sent them to his high priest in Jerusalem to make a similar one in honour of the king of Assyria (see

2 Chronicles 28: 23). We find that Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of his enemies, the Syrians. The strange thing is that he sacrificed to the gods of Aram, and Aram was defeated by Assyria. In (verse 12), after Ahaz returned to Jerusalem, we find him presenting himself to burn fire on the altar, as he also usurped the priesthood. Strangely, the high priest submitted to this matter and accepted that his rights as a priest would be taken away from him, and he allowed the king to offer a sacrifice. It is also strange that he accepted the removal of the altar of God to place an Assyrian altar and to offer sacrifices to the Assyrian gods on it. It is strange that Naaman, the Syrian, takes dust from Israel to make an altar to the Lord in Damascus, and in Ahaz, the Jew brings an altar from Syria to offer sacrifices to pagan gods.

We note that God did not punish Ahaz for transgressing into the priesthood as he did with Uzziah, so why?

1. For whom the Lord loves He corrects. God disciplined Uzziah because he was a good king, and there is hope that he will repent for his sin and God will accept it. For He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner but he should turn from his ways and live (Ezekiel 18: 23). As for the one who sold himself to the devil, it is enough for him that he fell into the hands of the devil and he lives without God's protection. See the interpretation of (Hosea 4: 13, 14)

2. Ahaz offered his sacrifices to pagan gods and not to God, and he offered his burnt offering on the Assyrian altar.

3. It is a complete dissolution time, and individual discipline is useless. Rather, it is a time that requires collective discipline and a collective punishment, and this is what the Prophet Isaiah said (Isaiah 1: 4-6).

In (verse 15) **the great new altar** = is the new Assyrian altar.

the bronze altar = placed negligently at the side of the temple.

shall be for me to inquire by = so I think about it, that is, it is put in carelessly until Ahaz finds a solution and thinks of a way to get rid of it.

(Verses 17-21): **And King Ahaz cut off the panels of the carts, and removed the lavers from them; and he took down the Sea from the bronze oxen that were under it, and put it on a pavement of stones. 18 Also he removed the Sabbath pavilion which they had built in the temple, and he removed the king's outer entrance from the house of the Lord, on account of the king of Assyria. 19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20 So Ahaz rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.**

He cut off the panels of the carts, and removed the lavers from them. This king greatly insulted the House of the Lord, changed its statutes, and honoured the gods of Assyria and Aram. In (2 Chronicles 28: 24), he gathered the articles of the house of God, cut in pieces the articles of the house of God, shut up the doors of the house of the Lord. Therefore, they did not bury him with the kings of Judah. In (verse

18), **the Sabbath pavilion** = Most likely this porch was for the people to gather on the holy Sabbath for prayer, but Ahaz removed it because he did not sanctify the Sabbath. Ahaz died, leaving Hezekiah, the saintly king, his son, who made him pass in fire while he burned the rest burned in the fire. He made him pass in fire to dedicate him to Molech, but God chose him to correct what his father had corrupted. Let us note that the greatest prophets were found with the most evil kings. With Ahab, Elijah was found; with Ahaz, Isaiah was found; and with the kings of the last period of Judah, Jeremiah was found in Judah and Ezekiel in captivity. God does not leave Himself without a witness.

Chapter 17

(Verses 1-6): **In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned nine years. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him. 3 Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him; and Hoshea became his vassal, and paid him tribute money. 4 And the king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison. 5 Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. 6 In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.**

There is a possibility for commentators that Hoshea assassinated Pekah in the fourth year of Ahaz, but he began ruling in the twelfth year of Ahaz (Hosea 10: 3). Hoshea was evil, but he was better than those who preceded him, but his people had completed their sin. **Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him** = he was allied with Tiglath-Pileser, and with his help, he killed Pekah. Hoshea remained subject to Assyria for the duration of Tiglath-Pileser's life, and after his death, he disobeyed his successor, Shalmaneser. So he went up to him and disciplined him, so he submitted to him. Then he took advantage of Shalmaneser's preoccupation with other wars and rebelled against him again. He wanted to ally himself with Sawa, king of Egypt, against Assyria. The Prophet Hosea forbade this alliance (Hosea 7: 11 + 12: 1). During this period, Shalmaneser ascended and besieged Samaria for a long period, during which Shalmaneser died, and Sargon followed him. Sargon was the one who overthrew Samaria after a 3-year siege.

In verse (4), **Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison** = most likely, he arrested him before the fall of Samaria, and therefore the city was besieged without a leader. The nine years are calculated till Samaria's fall and not till his imprisonment date. In the Assyrian writings, he captured 27,290 Israelites + 50 chariots.

(Verses 7-18): **For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods, 8 and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. 9 Also the children of Israel secretly did against the Lord their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city. 10 They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. 11 There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the Lord had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger, 12 for they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this thing." 13 Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My**

servants the prophets." 14 Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God. 15 And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. 16 So they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. 17 And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. 18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.

Because the Holy Spirit inspired the author of the Book of Kings, we see him here not attributing the fall of Israel to political, military, or economic reasons, as history books write. Rather, he attributes it to spiritual reasons, as it is not a historical book. God is the One who moves history, and He is the One who brought Israel to this land to preserve it as a holy land for Him, and now, because of their sins, He is the One who expels them from it. Assyria is nothing but a tool in the hands of God. Therefore, the author here reviews Israel's betrayals, which were the reason for their captivity after the Lord had disciplined them for a long time to no avail. Of course, what increased the horror of their sins was that the Lord had loved them, chosen them, brought them out of the land of Egypt, and sent them His law and the prophets. And in (verse 8) **and of the kings of Israel, which they had made** = the kings of Israel, that is, Jeroboam son of Nebat, and all the kings who came after him who were independent of Judah. It was the people who urged them to this separation, so the people became responsible, along with their kings, for the plight of dividing God's people. In (verse 9) **from watchtower** = the lowly farm **to fortified city** = the large cities. In (verse 13) **the Lord testified against** = the prophets did not cease to carry God's messages to this people, and the messages were all warnings and calls for repentance so that God would not reject them and the prophets were of different types:

1. Those who did not write or record anything, but rather his works were (miracles / oral discipline) Elijah / Elisha.
2. Those who wrote their sayings to record them for history and for us as well, like Isaiah and Jeremiah.
3. Those who did not write anything, but their life story symbolized Jesus Christ like Jonah the Prophet.

In (verse 14), **who did not believe in the Lord their God** = they did not believe his promises and went after other gods. In (verse 15), **and went after** = whoever prostrates to vanity will become vanity. In (verse 17), **practiced witchcraft** = it is prostration to other gods to know the future **and soothsaying** = it includes optimism and pessimism = they linked the future to some signs. **and sold themselves to do evil** = the thing sold, the seller loses all authority over it, and all authority goes to whoever bought it. For all these reasons, God handed them over to captivity, so they went to a strange land, expelled from the land that God had given them. **there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone** = and with Judah were

Benjamin, Simeon, Levi, and everyone who refused to worship Baal. Judah remained for 135 years after the fall of Israel, then went into captivity to Babylon as well.

(Verses 19-23): **Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. 20 And the Lord rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His sight. 21 For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them commit a great sin. 22 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, 23 until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.**

Even Judah followed pagan worship, but they had some good kings, which postponed their downfall. In verse 19, he mentioned that Judah was also a sinner so that the people of Judah would not think that they were saints. Then he returned to the tribe of Israel again, starting from the verse (21) **Jeroboam the son of Nebat** = He came with permission from God, as God let the people work according to their will, disciplining them for their sins. They forsook the Lord, and the Lord forsook them (Romans 1: 28).

(Verses 24-26): **Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. 25 And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they did not fear the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them. 26 So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations whom you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the rituals of the God of the land; therefore He has sent lions among them, and indeed, they are killing them because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land."**

Then the king of Assyria brought: Perhaps a number of Assyrian kings, and every Assyrian king who comes brings some of the inhabitants of Israel to Assyria and then brings others. **Cuthah** = on the Euphrates. **Sepharvaim** = on a branch of the Euphrates. This policy weakened their national feelings and made them submit to the king of Assyria. **therefore the Lord sent lions among them** = This was so that the new inhabitants of God's land would know that God, the owner of the land, has His laws and they respect them, and that He can make lions devour them if they disobey. God was here disciplining them in a way that they understood. Perhaps the lions had a frightening meaning for them, from which they understood that the God of the earth was angry. The concept of **the God of the land** is a pagan concept. They believe that there is a god for every land. As for the people of God, they understand that the whole earth belongs to God. In this way, the new people understood that they were here with God's permission and not against His will, so they asked for someone to teach them God's law. Strangely, these Assyrians asked to know the law of the Lord, which the Israelites did not accept, and refused to learn and walk in it. But we find this new people worshipping the gods they love while following the law of the Lord whom they feared so that the lions would not prey on them. What these pagans understood

was that the plagues were a result of God's wrath. This was not understood by the Jews, the people of God.

(Verses 27-41): **Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Send there one of the priests whom you brought from there; let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the rituals of the God of the land." 28 Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the Lord. 29 However every nation continued to make gods of its own, and put them in the shrines on the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities where they dwelt. 30 The men of Babylon made Succoth Benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, 31 and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. 32 So they feared the Lord, and from every class they appointed for themselves priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines of the high places. 33 They feared the Lord, yet served their own gods—according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away. 34 To this day they continue practicing the former rituals; they do not fear the Lord, nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances, or the law and commandment which the Lord had commanded the children of Jacob, whom He named Israel, 35 with whom the Lord had made a covenant and charged them, saying: "You shall not fear other gods, nor bow down to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them; 36 but the Lord, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and an outstretched arm, Him you shall fear, Him you shall worship, and to Him you shall offer sacrifice. 37 And the statutes, the ordinances, the law, and the commandment which He wrote for you, you shall be careful to observe forever; you shall not fear other gods. 38 And the covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, nor shall you fear other gods. 39 But the Lord your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies." 40 However they did not obey, but they followed their former rituals. 41 So these nations feared the Lord, yet served their carved images; also their children and their children's children have continued doing as their fathers did, even to this day.**

one of the priests: The priests of the **two calves**

, to teach them the judgment of the God of the earth, as Jeroboam imposed it. **the shrines on the high places** = the new peoples found existing temples, so they used them and placed their gods in them (verse 29). **the Samaritans** = This is the first mention of the Samaritans, and they are mentioned often in the New Testament. The origin of their religion was a mixture of several religions. They no longer worship the true God as worship should be, nor is their worship purely pagan. Therefore, the Jews despised them until the days of Christ (John 4: 9). The Samaritans were of 3 types:

1. Those who bow down to the calves, as Jeroboam imposed, and these are few.
2. The Israelis who added some pagan worship to the calves.
3. The pagans who added to their worship of idols some of what they took from the Israelites.

In (verse 32), **So they feared the Lord** = that is, external practices in their way that mixed the true worship of the Lord with the worship of idols. Therefore, he returned and said in (verse 34) **they do not fear the Lord** = they do not worship God with their hearts and as He wants. The whole issue is that they were apparently trying to follow the rituals of the Lord's religion for fear of wild lions, and their situation continued like this until the days of Alexander, when Manasseh, the brother of Iados, the high priest of Jerusalem, married the daughter of Sanballat, the ruler of Samaria. He went to them with permission from Alexander and built a temple in Gerizim that attracted many Jews to it. He sought to expel the idols from among the Samaritans, and they worshiped only God. Despite this, some deep-rooted pagan customs continued among them, so Christ said to them: You worship what you do not know: "You worship what you do not know" (John 4: 22). As for the Israelites who went to the diaspora, some of them preserved what they received from their fathers, and these returned after returning from the Babylonian captivity in the days of Cyrus, king of Persia, and the rest were lost entirely. Let us note the names of some of the pagan gods mentioned here. In (verse 30) **Succoth Benoth** = the tabernacles of the daughters. They are the tents of girls dedicated to adultery in pagan temples, and the symbol of this worship is a hen with her chicks. It is the same as the worship of Venus. We notice that the word Venus and the word Benoth are one word by alternating the letters (B and V), and **Nergal** = sun worship, and its symbol is the rooster, as it crows at dawn. **Ashima** = he is the god of fire. And **Nibhaz** = half a dog and half a human. **Adrammelech** = god of the sun. **Anammelech** = the god of the moon, and their symbols are a mule and a horse.

An opinion directed at those who say that the Jews distorted the Torah:

If the Jews wanted to distort the Torah, would they not have deleted this chapter and similar chapters that attack the Jews?! Would they not have deleted this particular chapter in which God condemns 10 tribes to destruction for their betrayal of God?! Whoever wants to falsify history does so to hide his scandals and announce glories that are not his. But we find the Jews here innocent of this charge, as they kept the word of God as it was, even if it condemned them.

Chapter 18

Please refer to what concerns King Hezekiah in the Second Book of Chronicles and the Book of Isaiah. The story is repeated in the three books. There are notes included in the three interpretations, please refer to them to complete the picture.

(Verses 1-8): **Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. 3 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done. 4 He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan. 5 He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. 6 For he held fast to the Lord; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses. 7 The Lord was with him; he prospered wherever he went. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. 8 He subdued the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.**

according to all that his father David had done: As was said about King Asa (1 Kings 15: 11) and King Josiah (2 Kings 22: 2), it was only said about these three. Strangely, each of these three kings was the son of an evil king, and Isaiah was a counsellor to Ahaz and Hezekiah. **He removed the high places** = In (2 Chronicles 29) it was stated that in the first year of his reign, he opened the doors of the House of the Lord and purified the priests of the House of the Lord, and they offered sacrifices. Hezekiah made the Levites sing praises, and they celebrated the Passover to the Lord. He had called for this to the tribes of Israel, and when he had done this, all of Israel went out to the cities of Judah and broke the pillars, cut down the shrines, and demolished the high places. He is credited with his courage, as he did not fear the popular revolution after these reforms, nor did he fear the King of Assyria. **Nehushtan:** It is derived either from Nahshat, meaning copper, or from Nahsh, meaning snake. **so that after him was none like him** = It was said about Josiah, and there was no king like him (2 Kings 23: 25). They are both holy kings and perhaps each of them was distinguished from the other in something. For example, his reliance on the Lord distinguished Hezekiah and was unparalleled, and Josiah was distinguished by his zeal for the pure worship of the Lord; he had no equal in that. But the phrase: neither before him nor after him is a general phrase that indicates distinction and privilege, and we still use it as a compliment to this day. **And he rebelled against the king of Assyria** = because of his reliance on the Lord, and perhaps he rebelled at the beginning of his reign. But the king of Assyria did not fight him since, because he was busy in other wars with Samaria, with Tere, and with Egypt. **He subdued the Philistines** = Sennacherib had given a portion of Judah to the king of Gaza. Perhaps this war was to recover what the Palestinians took from them.

from watchtower to fortified city: From the humble farm to the big cities, that is, the whole land. It seems clear that Hezekiah was a holy king, but the people did not rise to that level. Therefore, the reforms were outwardly, but the people continued their love for their idols inside their hearts. Consequently, we did not find Isaiah happy or expressing joy at Hezekiah's work. Isaiah felt that the king was in one side and the people were on another, so he continued his reprimands and warnings to the people. We did not hear that Isaiah agreed to disobey the king of Assyria. Perhaps this was with God's permission to discipline these people and to glorify the king of Assyria and his army before their eyes. What prompted Hezekiah to make these reforms was the lesson of the collapse of Israel before him because of its idols, and he benefited from the lesson.

We know from history that the king of Assyria, before he besieged Jerusalem, burned 46 cities of Judah, and this was to discipline the people for their deviation towards paganism. God disciplined the deviants and demonstrated His power in destroying the mighty Assyrian army so these people would understand to whom worship should be offered.

(Verses 9-12): **Now it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. 10 And at the end of three years they took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is, the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. 11 Then the king of Assyria carried Israel away captive to Assyria, and put them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 12 because they did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed His covenant and all that Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded; and they would neither hear nor do them.**

This passage is to show the holiness of Hezekiah in comparison to Israel. With the fall of Israel, there was no longer any separation between Judah and Assyria; rather, it became directly vulnerable to their attacks. Then Judah rested after Sennacherib's death and his army's destruction. We notice an apparent contradiction between verse 10 (Isaiah 7: 8). Here, the book says that Samaria fell after three years. As for Isaiah, it mentions a period of 65 years after which Samaria falls and is broken until it does not rise up as a people. The solution to this problem is that Iglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, fought the king of Israel and killed and took many captives. This is considered the first captivity, and it was a year or two after the prophecy of Isaiah. Then 20 years after Isaiah pronounced his prophecy, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, came and took away the king of Israel and his men (2 Kings 17: 1-6 + 18: 9-12). This is the second captivity, but the fulfillment of the 65-year prophecy of Isaiah was the days of the third captivity in the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who completely eliminated the kingdom of Israel from existence and brought foreigners to Samaria and completely colonized it. He took Manasseh, king of Judah, captive in the 21st year of his reign, and that was 65 years after Isaiah uttered his prophecy (Ezra 4: 2,3,10 + 2 Kings 17: 24 + 2 Chronicles 33: 11).

(Verses 13-16): And in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. 14 Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; turn away from me; whatever you impose on me I will pay." And the king of Assyria assessed Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 15 So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house. 16 At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

Hezekiah tried to entreat Sennacherib, but he betrayed him. After taking the ransom, he turned to attack Jerusalem and demanded that Jerusalem be handed over to him. This was a downfall for Hezekiah, a moment of weakness in which Hezekiah sent the gift taken from the temple to Sennacherib. Certainly, he did not consult Isaiah about this, and to pay the tribute, he had to remove the gold from the temple. After Sennacherib's betrayal, he realized the mistake of concluding a treaty with a traitor. We notice that one of these verses [(2 Kings 18:13) - end of chapter 20] is repeated in the Book of Isaiah, which indicates that its source is Isaiah here and there.

(Verses 17-37): Then the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh from Lachish, with a great army against Jerusalem, to King Hezekiah. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they had come up, they went and stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool, which was on the highway to the Fuller's Field. 18 And when they had called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to them. 19 Then the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: "What confidence is this in which you trust? 20 You speak of having plans and power for war; but they are mere words. And in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? 21 Now look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. 22 But if you say to me, 'We trust in the Lord our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?'" 23 Now therefore, I urge you, give a pledge to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses—if you are able on your part to put riders on them! 24 How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen? 25 Have I now come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'" 26 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people who are on the wall." 27 But the Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?" 28 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Hebrew, and spoke, saying, "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! 29 Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he shall not be able to deliver you from his hand; 30 nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, "The Lord will surely deliver us; this city shall not

be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'" 31 Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make peace with me by a present and come out to me; and every one of you eat from his own vine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you drink the waters of his own cistern; 32 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive groves and honey, that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, "The Lord will deliver us." 33 Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? 34 Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim and Hena and Ivah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? 35 Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'" 36 But the people held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him." 37 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

the Tartan: Tartan is the commander-in-chief, and this is an adjective or function, not a noun. Thus, **the Rabsaris** = a high rank in the army. **the Rabshakeh** = he is the first cupbearer. Therefore, it is preceded by "the" for definition. Their official spokesman was the Rabshakeh due to his proficiency in the Hebrew language. Strangely, this Rabshakeh is trying to make an agreement when he has already broken his previous agreement, but who can guarantee any agreement with Satan? **from Lachish** = a Palestinian city on the road to Egypt. It seems that his purpose was to conquer Egypt, and on the way he intended to destroy Jerusalem, the fortified city, for its rebellion. The upper pond canal is an underground canal to bring water from outside Jerusalem into the interior (Isaiah 7: 3). The meaning of verses (19-21) is that the Rabshakeh thought that Hezekiah had concluded a treaty with Egypt, as the king of Israel had done. But this did not happen because Isaiah forbade them from doing so. In (verse 22), he says to them, "If you have trusted in God, it is in vain because Hezekiah destroyed the altars of God." As a pagan, he thought that the high places that Hezekiah had removed were altars to God. The rest of what is said in verses 23 and 24 is apparent sarcasm. This is Satan's way of mocking and casting doubt on every good work we do. Here, the Rabshakeh ridicules and casts doubt on the demolition of the high places, and ridicules their power, their reliance on God, and their reliance on any other power, such as Egypt, until he pushes them to complete despair. In verse (31), we find him here inviting the people to leave Jerusalem and go outside, where he will take them to a beautiful land, but this is deceit and deception because he was going to enslave them (and thus Satan invites us to leave the bosom of the Father and leave the church and go after him, and he will give us some of the pleasures of the world, but he will enslave us if we accept this from his hand = " All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." In (verse 33), he is clearly making them doubt that God can save them, and in (verse 36) **Do not answer him** = this is how we should not enter into a dialogue with Satan. **their clothes torn** = a Jewish custom if they hear blasphemy. Let us note that these peoples believed Wars are between the gods, so the Rabshakeh doubted the power of God before his gods, and they attributed their victory to their gods. Therefore, he warns whether the gods of other nations saved their people.

Chapter 19

(Verses 1-7): **And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. 2 Then he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. 3 And they said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but there is no strength to bring them forth. 4 It may be that the Lord your God will hear all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the Lord your God has heard. Therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.'" 5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the Lord: "Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. 7 Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."'"**

Any king who receives a threat like this must gather a war council to decide what to do, but Hezekiah has a God to turn to and a prophet to pray for him, so he sent for the prophet. Here, we find Hezekiah affected by the insult inflicted on the name of God, so he tore his clothes. Note that the king did not respond to Rabshakeh but let God respond to him. So what should we do in the face of our strong, arrogant enemies except to resort to God, who can deal with them? The messengers that the king sent to Isaiah were of the highest rank in the palace, indicating the king's regard for Isaiah. They were the ones who heard the words of the Rabshakeh and were able to convey a clear picture of Isaiah. We notice that the messengers wore sackcloth like their king (**covered with sackcloth**) = **This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth** = this means that our souls are filled with pain for being insulted by the enemy's pride, and we have suffered a severe blow because of insulting our God, and our situation is very deteriorating. We do not see a solution to our problem even though our issue is just and our people are believers. But they are stronger than us, and we are in distress. However here, we find an advanced spiritual concept. They understood that this suffering is discipline, for God does not allow His children to suffer unless it is to discipline them (Hebrews 12: 6). Now is an appropriate moment for us to get rid of pain. After every pain God allows, there is certainly joy behind it (John 16: 21) (the example of a mother who gives birth). Now is the right time; as long as God allows pain, He is preparing us for great good as we await this birth (a new nation that has been purified). **but there is no strength to bring them forth** = we are tired of the trial. Pray for us so that God will help us pass these painful hours. Therefore, the picture that the king portrays for his nation is of a mother whose birth was difficult, and the pains of childbirth are the most difficult. He asks for prayers of help so that these days will pass and a new, prosperous nation will be born in peace. Isaiah's response was reassuring: **Do not be afraid** = Rabshakeh speaks and blasphemes and fills the world with words, but when God intervenes, he terrifies all the arrogant. And here we will hear the state of terror that gripped them from the death of 185,000. Then, they will hear the news that Tirhakah will attack Assyria itself, and they will be terrified. Then the king of Assyria returns to his land, and his son kills him.

It is strange for any human being to be arrogant before God. Hezekiah humbled himself before God, so God was glorified, and he succeeded. As for Sennacherib, he was arrogant and was defeated, and his army was destroyed. He died by the hand of his son for the sake of **the remnant that is left** = Judah, as Israel (10 tribes) went into captivity and were lost, and Samaria was burned. They asked for the intercession of the Prophet, and it is important that we ask for intercession, but without our prayers, it has no meaning. They asked for the prayers of the Prophet, but we find the king praying, and the king's prayer certainly pulled the hearts of his people to pray.

Note:

Tirhakah ruled over Egypt and was an Ethiopian king. He often went out at this time to fight Assyria.

(Verses 8-19): **Then the Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish. 9 And the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, "Look, he has come out to make war with you." So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10 "Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." 11 Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them; and shall you be delivered? 12 Have the gods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezepth, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?" 14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. 15 Then Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: "O Lord God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 16 Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear; open Your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17 Truly, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, 18 and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands—wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, O Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God, You alone."**

Rabshakeh left his message to Jerusalem and did not receive an answer, so he left his army in front of Jerusalem and went to his king, Sennacherib, and found him fighting Libnah (Libnah and Lachish are close to each other and on the mountains of Judah).

This is Libnah, who had previously rebelled against Judah. Sennacherib was previously at Lachish, and then he travelled to Libnah. We do not know the reason, perhaps because it was not worthy. Still, he heard about the departure of Tirhakah to confront their army, and this made him hasten to overthrow Jerusalem to devote himself to meeting Tirhakah. So he repeated his threats to Hezekiah, knowing that he was a person who could surrender when he threatened him, as he had done before (2 Kings 18: 4).

We notice that Rabshaki is lying, as he portrays that he is the strongest and unparalleled, while he is afraid of the news of Tirhakah. Thus, Satan is a liar, and the father of lies, and he always exaggerates his own power.

(Verses 20-34): **Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.' 21 This is the word which the Lord has spoken concerning him: 'The virgin, the daughter of Zion, Has despised you, laughed you to scorn; The daughter of Jerusalem Has shaken her head behind your back! 22 'Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice, And lifted up your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel. 23 By your messengers you have reproached the Lord, And said: "By the multitude of my chariots I have come up to the height of the mountains, To the limits of Lebanon; I will cut down its tall cedars And its choice cypress trees; I will enter the extremity of its borders, To its fruitful forest. 24 I have dug and drunk strange water, And with the soles of my feet I have dried up All the brooks of defense." 25 'Did you not hear long ago How I made it, From ancient times that I formed it? Now I have brought it to pass, That you should be For crushing fortified cities into heaps of ruins. 26 Therefore their inhabitants had little power; They were dismayed and confounded; They were as the grass of the field And the green herb, As the grass on the housetops And grain blighted before it is grown. 27 'But I know your dwelling place, Your going out and your coming in, And your rage against Me. 28 Because your rage against Me and your tumult Have come up to My ears, Therefore I will put My hook in your nose And My bridle in your lips, And I will turn you back By the way which you came. 29 'This shall be a sign to you: 'You shall eat this year such as grows of itself, And in the second year what springs from the same; Also in the third year sow and reap, Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. 30 And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, And bear fruit upward. 31 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, And those who escape from Mount Zion. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.' 32 "Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: 'He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor build a siege mound against it. 33 By the way that he came, By the same shall he return; And he shall not come into this city,' Says the Lord. 34 'For I will defend this city, to save it For My own sake and for My servant David's sake.'"**

In (20), **I have heard** = "Ask, and it will be given to you," as God must answer prayer. Therefore, Sennacherib will find nothing but shame, confusion, humiliation, and brokenness. He will be the mockery of Jerusalem = **The virgin, the daughter of Zion, Has despised you, laughed you to scorn**. He thought himself a terror to the daughter of Zion, and with his terror, he will make her surrender. But she will despise and mock him. Everyone who makes enmity with God becomes miserable, and this message must have reached Sennacherib in some way, as it was directed to him. In (verses 23, 24) an echo of the words of pride that Sennacherib used to repeat. **I will cut down its tall cedars** = Kings used to break down trees so that their war chariots could pass, and the Assyrian kings were famous for this and even boasted of their ability to do it. However, the phrase "**tall cedars**" is usually used for kings, meaning no king could resist him. Sennacherib's words and message, which Rabshakeh repeated, did not contain what was mentioned in verses 23 and 24. Perhaps he said them, and they were not written, and perhaps

they are in his heart. God here reveals what is in the hearts, for He alone can do that. He holds countable on the perceptions of the heart, and here God reveals Sennacherib's arrogant mind and that he imagines himself capable of overcoming any difficulties. If a mountain meets him, he ascends it; if he meets a river, he dries it up. **I have dug and drunk strange water** = I defeated a strange country that I entered with armies and reaped its wealth. **And with the soles of my feet I have dried up All the brooks of defense** = mighty, numerous, and powerful armies that are able to drink the water of all the rivers in the countries that I besiege and fight. Verse (23) is directed to the kings of the countries, and verse (24) is directed to the peoples of the countries whose wealth they plunder. No one can stand before him or withstand his tyranny. In verses (25-28), God responded to his perceptions and the meaning of the words is that everything you did, O Sennacherib, you did with My advice and eternal plans, and without My permission, you could not do anything. In verse 11, Rabshakeh was frightening Hezekiah, saying, "Did you not hear what the kings of Assyria did?" And here God is saying to him, "Rather, listen to what I did. For I am the one who actually dried up the sea before my people, and this is what happened from Me, and it is not an illusion like yours. This was to bring my people and settle them in Canaan after they had passed many difficulties, so what did you do compared to what I did? As for the devastation you did in the land of Judah, you were nothing but a tool in the hands of God = **Now I have brought it to pass** (verse 25).

Rather, everything I did was in my imagination, will, and planning from the beginning. **From ancient times that I formed it** = and now you are carrying out my counsels. I eternally plan all things. This was to punish this rebellious people, Israel and Judah, for their wickedness. Those whom you see now (verse 26) **Therefore their inhabitants had little power; They were dismayed and confounded; They were as the grass of the field And the green herb, As the grass on the housetops And grain blighted before it is grown** - they are my children - and I discipline them through you, for you are merely an instrument of discipline in my hand. Does the staff boast over the one who handles it, or the axe over the one who handles it (Isaiah 10: 13,14,15)? And their little power, that is, their weakness, which you see as a result of their sins, when I abandoned them, so they became with little power, that is, without strength in front of your army, and their shame and terror is an indication that the discipline bore good results and their pride and stubbornness were broken.

In (verse 27), I know everything you do. Your anger against me has risen to my ears, but you are under my control with all your might, and **Therefore I will put My hook in your nose** = that is, I am in complete control of you. Putting the hook in the nose is an Assyrian way of treating prisoners, as if the king of Assyria was a prisoner in the hands of the Lord, doing His will. In (verse 25) he says, **"Did you not hear"**: Have you not heard about the prophecies that My prophets prophesy against you, and have you not heard what I have done with My people over the years?

Starting from (verse 29) the words of the Lord turn to Hezekiah. **'This shall be a sign to you** = a sign that God has reconciled with His people so that they can be reassured that God has reconciled with them. Note that the Assyrian army devoured the produce of the land. And God is here as a compassionate Father, who will not only remove the Assyrian army and leave them hungry but will provide them with food. Therefore, it is a sign of His love and reconciliation with them.

You shall eat this year such as grows of itself: Whatever grows on its own, and God will bless it, and it will suffice for all of them. If the Assyrians ate what you planted, you will eat what you did not. The year after that will be a sabbatical year, and from it, the land will rest, so they will not plant or prosper, but the wondrous God will give them in this year also the harvest of what they did not sow = **And in the second year what springs from the same** = and in the second year they will remember that God is the one who first made the land grow since there was no one to cultivate it (Genesis 1: 11) In the third year, they return to agriculture, and agriculture returns to normal.

In verse (verse 30), **Shall again take root downward** = After this war, families were dispersed, but God will return them to their places of residence. The Prophet likens them to a plant that has firm roots in the earth and has fruits, meaning that they will remain established and then flourish and have beneficial fruits for others. Every believer has roots in his faith in Christ and then bears fruits. These are the blessings of their suffering, and this is the new birth that King Hezekiah spoke about.

For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant: Those who were confined within the walls would come out and have freedom, and nothing would frighten them any more. There was great devastation, but there was a remnant that survived.

But these verses look at the remnant that will escape from Israel in the last days (Romans 9: 27,28) and enter the glory of the children of God, indicating that salvation will emerge from Zion.

The remnant expression refers to:

1. The few Jews who believed in Christ at His first coming, such as the disciples and apostles.
2. The few who will believe in Christ at the end of the days before the Second Coming (Romans 11: 15).

(Verses 35-37): **And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home, and remained at Nineveh. 37 Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.**

Sometimes, the fulfillment of prophecies is delayed, but this prophecy was fulfilled that night. Sennacherib rebelled against his creator, so it was fair for his son to revolt against him and destroy his army. Egyptian records say that the army of the Assyrian king was destroyed by an epidemic on the borders of Egypt, but they attributed this to their gods.

Chapter 20

(Verses 1-11): **In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, "Thus says the Lord: 'Set your house in order, for you shall die, and not live.'" 2 Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the Lord, saying, 3 "Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. 4 And it happened, before Isaiah had gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 5 "Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. 6 And I will add to your days fifteen years. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake, and for the sake of My servant David."'" 7 Then Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs." So they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. 8 And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What is the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the Lord the third day?" 9 Then Isaiah said, "This is the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing which He has spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees or go backward ten degrees?" 10 And Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees; no, but let the shadow go backward ten degrees." 11 So Isaiah the prophet cried out to the Lord, and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz.**

In the previous chapter, we saw Sennacherib, who blasphemed God and died at the hands of his two sons. In this chapter, we find the saint Hezekiah escaping death. The first, God shortened his days, and the second, God lengthened his days.

Set your house in order, for you shall die = It is a commandment for each of us to arrange his life through repentance to prepare for this moment. **Then he turned his face toward the wall** = prayer was a private life with God, and this was the best he could do while he was on his sick bed. Some believe that he turned his face towards the temple, longing to see it again. In (verse 6), **I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake** = By reference to the (verse 1) **In those days** = from the two verses, some see that this incident occurred before the Assyrian siege and through it. The important thing is that God promised Hezekiah his salvation from the Assyrian enemy and that He is the one who would defend this city.

Hezekiah's disease was called **the boil**, and the word used means an inflamed patch, an ulcer, or something like a pimple. It can be understood as a large infection, and with the lack of antibiotics at that time, it was certainly a fatal disease. We note that Isaiah's treatment was something very simple and very cheap; it was **a lump of figs** (this is like flour and salt and Naaman the Syrian descending into the waters of the Jordan). Note that Hezekiah was asking for a sign to return to the house of the Lord. Thus, our salvation requires a very simple thing: abstaining from our sins, praying, and finding help from the Holy Spirit. Rather, we find that the struggle against sin is very easy: "let us lay aside every weight, and

the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12: 1). The ease is because "the Spirit also helps" (Romans 8: 26).

a lump of figs: Figs are a fruit that has many seeds and a sweet taste. It refers to the people gathered in love and with one soul, and the Holy Spirit is poured out on them (Psalm 133). If love is found among the people of God, it makes God happy, just as we rejoice and are satisfied with the sweet taste of figs. The first fruit of the Holy Spirit is love (Galatians 5: 22), and the Holy Spirit is the life-giving Spirit. The body of Hezekiah, who was sick and about to die, refers to the church that was dead and then revived by Christ through His resurrection and the life by which we live now and the coming of the Holy Spirit who confirms us in Christ and who unites the church in love. We note that the first fruits of sin were hatred and murder, when Cain killed his brother Abel, and hatred is a deadly sin for a person; it is a sin that leads to death. The lump of figs placed on the boil, so Hezekiah was healed and lived and did not die, refers here to the church, the Body of Christ, which came together in love when it was healed. The sign of the life of the body is love. "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death." (1 John 3: 14) + "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3: 15).

(Verse 9) **shall the shadow go forward ten degrees or go backward ten degrees?** It was going forward before noon, and so Hezekiah told him to stretch out and asked to go back, i.e. the opposite of the natural thing, to confirm the miracle. It happened that the shadow returned everywhere on earth, not only in Jerusalem, but it returned even in Babylon (2 Chronicles 32: 31). Note that the Babylonians worshiped the sun, and they were amazed and looked at Hezekiah with awe for because of him their god returned. Perhaps the return of the sun is an indication that Hezekiah will return to the days of his youth, meaning that his life will be prolonged. But if we understand that the sun refers to Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, then the return of the sun is an indication that the righteousness of Christ will include the fathers of the Old Testament, and then the sun's continuation of moving forward indicates the righteousness that is in Christ for his people who believe in him after salvation. Hezekiah reigned for 29 years (2 Kings 18: 2). He reigned for 14 years before the Sennacherib War (2 Kings 18:13) and 15 years after his illness. Let us note that God does not change His mind and increase anyone's lifespan; rather, He knows from His foreknowledge how humble Hezekiah will be, so He grants him to increase his lifespan. Importantly, He gave him defence of the city and saved him from the hand of the king of Assyria. But this story has a symbolic meaning, as God does not increase anyone's life as a reward for him unless this is a symbol of something serious that God wants to draw people's attention to. Let us compare with (Psalm 61: 6) "You will prolong the king's life, His years as many generations." and (Psalm 21: 4) " He asked life from You, and You gave it to him—Length of days forever and ever." And in (Isaiah 9: 6, 7) " And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." So, who are these psalms talking about except Christ, who, after He died, rose again, His days were increased, and He received life for the length of days and forever and ever? To be certain that the words are a prophecy about Christ, we see in verse (5): **surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord**, and the healing and ascension to the house of the Lord occurred on the third day, and Christ rose on the third day. Also, the increase in age was 15 years, and this is an indication that Christ will rise with the power of his

divinity, for he is YHWH, and the number 15 in Hebrew takes the letters (YH), which is the abbreviation of the name of YHWH. Review all of Hezekiah's symbols of Christ at the end of this chapter.

The Lord promised to defend this city (it is the church that God is defending) **for the sake of My servant David** (for the sake of Christ, our intercessor before the Father). **I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria** = compare with (Psalm 22: 20-21), for God did not leave Christ in the hand of Satan. The angel of death, and he will not leave the church nor a single soul of his to be destroyed by Satan. "Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition" (John 17: 12).

(Verses 12-21): **At that time Berodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13 And Hezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all his armory—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them. 14 Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?" So Hezekiah said, "They came from a far country, from Babylon." 15 And he said, "What have they seen in your house?" So Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them." 16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord: 17 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the Lord. 18 'And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" 19 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the Lord which you have spoken is good!" For he said, "Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?" 20 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah—all his might, and how he made a pool and a tunnel and brought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21 So Hezekiah rested with his fathers. Then Manasseh his son reigned in his place.**

The Babylonian mission came to Hezekiah to congratulate him on his recovery. At that time, Babylon was still subject to Assyria, but its star was beginning to rise. We note that the Babylonians came astonished by Hezekiah, whom the sun honoured by its return. The sun is their god, and in honour of the one whose prayers the heaven destroyed the mighty army of Assyria. Hezekiah was supposed to honour his guests, considering that they were pagans. But Hezekiah was interested in politics and saw that they were strong allies for the future, so he preferred to ally with them and gave them everything they came for. This was an opportunity for Hezekiah to bear witness to his God, who commanded the sun, their god, to return, but he did not do so. His heart was arrogant, and he passed through a moment of human weakness. He succeeded in the test of Assyria, published the letters of Sennacherib, and prayed, but he failed in the right strike and did not consult the Lord. Because the letters glorified him and brought gifts, and in fact, he said, **"They came from a far country"** = which meant he was happy that he deserved this due to his greatness, that these great men from Babylon the Great had to travel so far for him. The question directed to Hezekiah was: What dignity would these pagans give him after God honored him

before the world? What protection can they provide for him so that he can pledge and ally with them if God protects him and he sees the hand of God? Hezekiah showed them all what he owns, so that they would report to their king about Hezekiah's strength, and they would agree to ally with him. He showed his personal glory instead of bearing witness to the glory of God, who saved him, so he wasted an opportunity for bearing witness to God. Hezekiah's most valuable treasure was the Prophet Isaiah, who, through his prayers and intercession, was the chariot and horsemen of Israel. Still, it did not occur to Hezekiah to take these messengers to him. But Isaiah came to rebuke him for what he had done. If Hezekiah had gone to Isaiah from the first day, he would have prevented him from doing this, and that would have been more beneficial for him. But let us note that Isaiah's prophecy about the loss of all this glory and wealth to Babylon was not a punishment for Hezekiah for his mistake, but rather it was a punishment for his son Manasseh for his idolatry and deviation. For Hezekiah, this was a reprimand so that he would be ashamed of his actions and repent. The meaning is that the person you tried to ally with does not love you and will not support you; rather, he will do so and so to your children. Note that for all those in love with Babylon, Babylon will be their ruin, and thus is the relationship between the world and the children of God who are in love with the world. Therefore, the wise are those who flee from Babylon, that is, the world's evils, sins, and sinful pleasures (Revelation 18: 4).

However, we see Hezekiah's piety in his submission to God's judgments, which is undoubtedly credited to him, and the true repentant does not complain about God's judgments. Rather, he submits to them, thinking that God is good, and all His works are good.

Note:

The Assyrian army represents many apparent sins in our lives (and Hezekiah knew how to conquer these). As for Babylon, it represents the sins of pride and arrogance, and Hezekiah fell into these sins. It was as if he began declaring his virtues and goodness in front of others. I wish we could hide all the goodness that the Lord gave us within ourselves so that the enemy of goodness would not steal all what we have, just as Babylon stole all the treasures of Jerusalem, which Hezekiah showed to the messengers of Babylon.

King Hezekiah's symbols of Christ

1. He is the **son of David**, and Christ is the son of King David.
2. Hezekiah is king over God's people, Israel, and Christ is king over the hearts of His people through His cross. "And the government will be upon His shoulder." (Isaiah 9: 6). Notice that God sends Isaiah and says, "Return and tell **Hezekiah the leader of My people**" (2 Kings 20: 5). **A leader** is used in the sense of a king, as the word refers to Christ the King.
3. He was destined to die due to **the boil** and he was cured to live 15 years. Christ was condemned to death and rose again.

4. **Fifteen years** is a symbol because Christ rose with the power of His divinity, as the number 15 in Hebrew is written as YH, which is the abbreviation of God's name, YHWH.
5. Hezekiah's body, which was condemned to death, refers to the church as Adam's body, which was condemned to death. Christ, the Son of God, is the resurrection and the life, and God is love. **The lump of figs** symbolizes love. Love returned to the church, and it became the body of Christ, and life returned to it. Because Christ is life. Refer to the verses (John 11: 25; 1 John 3: 14, 15).
6. **The return of the sun by ten degrees** indicates that the righteousness of Christ included the Fathers of the Old Testament (Romans 3: 25), and **the return of the sun to its natural path** indicates that the righteousness of Christ includes those who believe in Him after His coming (Romans 3: 26). Note that the **number 10** refers to legislative perfection, as the number of commandments is **10**. The meaning is that in Christ, we are considered perfect, righteous, and blameless (Ephesians 1: 4; Colossians 1:28).
7. The name of Hezekiah's wife is **Hephzibah**, and the meaning of the name is **my delight in her**: "It will no longer be said to you, 'Desolate, nor will your land be called desolate anymore. Rather, you will be called Hephzibah, and your land will be called Baulah. For the Lord will be pleased with you, and your land will be filled with Baal'" (see 2 Kings 21:1 + Isaiah 62:4) This is a reference to the Church, the bride of Christ, with whom He was pleased.
8. The Prophet's saying to Hezekiah, "**Set your house in order, for you shall die**" = Christ's commandment to us is what the Lord Christ gave in terms of teachings and commandments to His church during the three years before he went to the cross, and this is what the Father commanded us to do: "Hear Him" (Matthew 17: 5). Thus, our mother, the Virgin Mary, said, "Whatever He says to you, do it." (John 2: 5).
9. "**surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord.**" (2 Kings 20:5) = Christ rose from the dead on the third day.

"I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. 6 And I will add to your days fifteen years. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake, and for the sake of My servant David." (2 Kings 20:5, 6). The direct meaning of these verses is that Hezekiah was saved from death, and the deliverance of Jerusalem from the king of Assyria. But let us put before us the words of the Apostle Paul about the Lord Christ during the sufferings of his crucifixion, "who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him," (Hebrews 5: 7-9). Therefore, God's saying, "**I have heard your prayer**" is as if it were directed to Christ, who, through his atoning intercession and the suffering of his crucifixion, responded to God and saved the church, defended it, and became her protector. His saying, "**I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria**" means that death has no power over Christ, for Satan has no power. He is the king of death. Indeed, death has no authority over believers; that is, the church = the city of Jerusalem, which God will protect.

Chapter 21

(Verses 1-9): **Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. 3 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he raised up altars for Baal, and made a wooden image, as Ahab king of Israel had done; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. 4 He also built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My name." 5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. 6 Also he made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. 7 He even set a carved image of Asherah that he had made, in the house of which the Lord had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; 8 and I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers—only if they are careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them." 9 But they paid no attention, and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.**

Hezekiah refused death and asked for healing to live, so what happened during the 15 years:

1. Three years after his recovery, he gave birth to his son, Manasseh, the most evil king of Israel. He may have named his son Manasseh, just as Joseph named his son Manasseh, meaning God made me forget all my pain. He had recovered from his illness and fatigue.
2. He fell in the matter of the Messenger of Babylon and its ambassadors. What benefit did he gain by increasing his lifespan?! How beautiful it is to surrender completely to God. We notice that the people responded to King Manasseh in the evil, and this indicates that Hezekiah's reforms were superficial, while the people's heart turned far away and tended to love idols. It is no excuse for Manasseh that he was a king when he was 12 years old and that others melted his heart, for Josiah was a king when he was 8 years old. The phrase "**the host of heaven**" in verse (5) means the worship of the heavenly bodies, including astrologers who claim to know the future by observing the heavenly bodies. Solomon had set up altars to the pagan gods in places outside the temple, but Manasseh set up these altars inside the temple.

do more evil than the nations: But the ugliest thing they did, and what increased the ugliness of what they did, was that the temple of God was in their midst. In fact, they defiled the temple of God itself.

Also he made his son pass through the fire (verse 6) = perhaps as a kind of dedicating the children to Molech.

(Verses 10-18): **And the Lord spoke by His servants the prophets, saying, 11 “Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols), 12 therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle. 13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. 14 So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, 15 because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.’ ” 16 Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the Lord. 17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh—all that he did, and the sin that he committed—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 18 So Manasseh rested with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. Then his son Amon reigned in his place.**

His servants the prophets: He was contemporary with Isaiah (the Jewish tradition says that Manasseh slain him (Hebrews 11: 37), and Hosea, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah were contemporary with him. For where sin abounded, grace abounded much more (Romans 5: 20). The prophets taught, and if the people continued in their sin, they rebuked them. If they continued in their sin, they were prophesying against them the destruction that would happen. Here, the prophets turned into judges who judged the people. **the Amorites** = perhaps the worst of the Canaanite peoples. In (verse 12), **his ears will tingle** = this is what happens to the ear after hearing a loud, annoying sound. **the measuring line of Samaria** = the line of destruction. **as one wipes a dish** = That is, nothing of its glory or riches, or even its people, will remain in Jerusalem. The dish is a wonderful example. He did not say to break the dish but rather to wipe it. For what God is now doing in Judah is a process of washing the plate and not rejecting it, that is, purifying Jerusalem and not rejecting it forever. (In verse 14) **So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance** = because the Lord’s inheritance was the 12 tribes, and He had previously rejected 10 tribes. Details of verse (15): We find the evils talked about explained in detail in the prophecies, which are that they established pagan worship in the streets of Jerusalem, made cakes for the gods of heaven, offered their children as sacrifices, and set up homes for the evildoers at the house of the Lord. The leaders turned into fierce, predatory lions against the people. Judges were bribed and distorted the judiciary, and sin, injustice, and rape spread. Manasseh shed innocent blood and killed everyone who continued to worship the Lord—the rest of what Manasseh did are in (2 Chronicles 33: 11-19).

We find that the king of Assyria took him to Babylon, where he repented, and the Lord returned him to his kingdom, so he removed the worship of idols and restored the altars of the Lord. Let us note that the path of repentance is still open even to those who are in evil, and it is open to all of us, no matter how evil we are. We see God allowing the trial (king Manasseh was captured in Babylon) to lead him to repentance.

(Verses 19-26): **Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. 20 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done. 21 So he walked in all the ways that his father had walked; and he served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. 22 He forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the Lord. 23 Then the servants of Amon conspired against him, and killed the king in his own house. 24 But the people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place. 25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 26 And he was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza. Then Josiah his son reigned in his place.**

Perhaps they killed him for his paganism and because they refused to return to paganism and brought his son Josiah to worship the Lord.

Chapter 22

(Verses 1-7): **Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. 2 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. 3 Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the Lord, saying: 4 "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been brought into the house of the Lord, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. 5 And let them deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the Lord; let them give it to those who are in the house of the Lord doing the work, to repair the damages of the house— 6 to carpenters and builders and masons—and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. 7 However there need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully."**

and walked in all the ways of his father David: He was a saintly king like Hezekiah and Asa. We note that man creates circumstances, and circumstances do not create man. Josiah, his father and grandfather, were evil, and indeed all his people were evil, but he was religious and even improved the condition of his people. He began his religiosity in the eighth year of his reign (see 2 Chronicles 34: 3). **in the eighteenth year:** when his resurgence intensified, he began to cleanse Judah and Jerusalem of the high places and the wooden images. Rather, his religious reforms extended to the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali. At the same time, Jeremiah began to prophesy (Jeremiah 1: 2), and he was undoubtedly helpful and active to the king in his mentioned work. **Shaphan** = He is the father of Ahikam, who saved Jeremiah from those who sought to kill him (Jeremiah 26: 24). Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, was the one in charge of the people whom Nebuchadnezzar kept after the captivity. **he may count the money** = The king's order was for the priests to count the money in preparation for the temple's restoration, as Jehoash did (2 Kings 12: 4-14). The temple had been neglected during the days of Manasseh and Amon. The money account was to be paid to the workers.

However there need be no accounting made: The leaders supervising the work were Levites, and they did not hold the workers accountable; that is, they were confident in their honesty, zeal, and seriousness. So, whoever says, "I did such and such," they will give him his wages. However, the author of Kings did not talk about the glories of Josiah's era because his reforms were also apparent. As for the hearts of the people, they were significantly distorted. And in (verse 5) **to repair the damages of the house** = noticeable gaps. Assyria fell in the twelfth year of Josiah.

(Verses 8-13): **Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. 9 So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee**

the house of the Lord." 10 Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. 11 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes. 12 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, 13 "Go, inquire of the Lord for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

the Book of the Law: The Book of Deuteronomy or the Five Books of Moses. There were very few copies of the Book of the Law. In the time of evil kings, they neglected it, and no one asked about it. Probably, since there was no Book of the Law before they discovered it, everyone followed the instructions of the priests. Despite all these circumstances, a good king, **Josiah**, emerged, which is definitely an act of God's grace. Let us note that when they found it, they read it and did not keep it as a blessing. They read it and benefited. This is the effect and importance of the Holy Bible, that we meditate on the law of God, for the word of God is living and powerful. (Hebrews 4: 12). In verse (9) **Your servants have gathered the money** = that is, they have emptied the box (2 Kings 12: 9) in which the silver was placed. In (verse 10), we see rampant ignorance!! **Hilkiah the priest has given me a book** = a book, but he did not say the Book of the Law, as he did not know what this book was. **he tore his clothes** = he believed the words of the terrifying threat (Deuteronomy 28, Leviticus 26), and he realized his and the people's sins by neglecting the Book of the Law. **Go, inquire of the Lord for me** = that is, search for a prophet and ask him what we should do so that God will remove His wrath from us.

Notes:

1. God gave them a gift and a good reward for their repair of the temple, which is the Holy Scripture, the greatest reward.
2. The tearing of clothes was a sign of sadness over the fate that awaited this people.
3. Some believed that what they found was the original version written by Moses.

(Verses 14-20): **So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her. 15 Then she said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to Me, 16 "Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read— 17 because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.'"** 18 But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the

Lord, in this manner you shall speak to him, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: "Concerning the words which you have heard— 19 because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you," says the Lord. 20 "Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place."'" So they brought back word to the king.

Huldah the prophetess: Also, among the prophetesses were Miriam (Exodus 15: 20), Deborah (Judges 4: 4), and Anna (Luke 2: 36). Therefore, God did not limit prophecy to men. **keeper of the wardrobe** = probably the service garments worn by priests in the house of the Lord. **in the Second Quarter** = that is, the new section of the city outside the old city of David (2 Chronicles 33: 14 + Zephaniah 1: 10). Josiah will not see these sufferings on his people, for God will remove him from this world in the middle of his days to rest and relieve him from seeing these plagues. **I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace** = This does not talk about the way he died, as he died in war, but rather it talks about the time in which he died before Babylon invades Judah. The peace in which he dies is peace with God, for he is a saint. There was peace in his country and no wars. The war in which he died was between Egypt and Assyria, and he inserted himself into it unnecessarily. Perhaps the meaning was that he lost the promise of dying in peace because of his wrong decision to enter the war. But God let him make the wrong decision to spare him from the chastisement that would come to Jerusalem.

Chapter 23

(Verses 1-3): **Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. 2 The king went up to the house of the Lord with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord. 3 Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to follow the Lord and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant.**

all the men of Judah: What is meant is the representatives of the people and their chiefs. Although the response he received from the prophetess was not encouraging, he worked hard and did not give up. He does what he has to do, i.e. his duty, and God does what He wants. Note that Josiah was the one who read, as he considered it an honour for him to read the book, and he did not ask anyone to read to him. **And all the people took a stand for the covenant** = that is, they declared their satisfaction, obedience, and commitment, and what will come from Josiah's reforms shows the extent to which corruption has spread in Judah.

(Verses 4-9): **And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. 5 Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven. 6 And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the Lord, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground it to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. 7 Then he tore down the ritual booths of the perverted persons that were in the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image. 8 And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which were at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were to the left of the city gate. 9 Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren.**

the priests of the second order: In (2 Kings 25: 18) the second priest was mentioned, and it seems that the high priest had deputies, and the deputies were the second group. **and he burned them outside Jerusalem** = so that he would not desecrate Jerusalem with its ashes. The Kidron fields had a cemetery for the common people. They were located east of Jerusalem, and next to them were the Valley of the Son of Hinnom and Tophet. The Valley of the Son Hinnom and Topheth were areas of parks, idolatry, sacrifices to Molech, and crossing the children through the fire. Josiah defiled them by throwing ashes

from vessels of idolatrous worship into them. From the time of Josiah onwards, it became a dunghill into which the savages of Jerusalem were thrown and burned, and the country's wastes were poured into it. These places of rubbish are all worms and fire, and this fire is the one in which they burn this rubbish. This region became and has the name of Gehenna = (which means the valley of the Son of Hinnom) as a metaphor for the place of eternal punishment (Matthew 5: 22) [Ge = land, Hinnom = he is the original owner of the land or the original owners of the land]. **to Bethel** = to a place outside all of Judah, and because Bethel was the place of worship of the two calves established by Jeroboam, son of Nebat, he wanted to pollute and defile this worship. **Then he removed:** He expelled them so they would not practice their pagan worship. **the constellations = There is worship of the planets that they call the constellations because they claim** that the gods descended and resided in them (they dwelt in these planets and zodiac signs). **And he brought out the wooden image** = that is, the statue of Astaroth that Manasseh had erected (2 Kings 21: 7 + 2 Chronicles 33: 15). **hangings for the wooden image** = they are houses of fornication. The women used to weave tents in which these ugly acts took place and put statues of the wooden images in the tents. **And he brought all the priests** to Jerusalem so that they would no longer burn fire in the high places, but in Jerusalem, the one place of worship. **from Geba to Beersheba** = from the northernmost point of Judah to the southernmost point. **the high places at the gates** = they used to burn fires on the roofs of the houses, and there were towers at the city gates, which were transformed into pagan temples, so they were called high places because they were in high at the city gates. It seems that this was at a gate called the Joshua Gate. **Nevertheless the priests** = did not exercise the priesthood service because they were previously priests of high places. But they ate from the offerings because they were from the sons of Aaron, so they were like the priests who had defects (Leviticus 21: 21-23). The bread of the offering was **unleavened bread** (Leviticus 6: 16-18).

Note:

Two Hebrew words mean priests:

1. Kohanim = priests who serve the Lord.
2. Kemarim = they are the priests of idols (it is derived from the black color that they wore in their worship). These are the ones whom Josiah removed, verse (5).

(Verses 10-14): **And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. 11 Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who was in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. 12 The altars that were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, the king broke down and pulverized there, and threw their dust into the Brook Kidron. 13 Then the king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, which were on the south of the Mount of Corruption, which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of**

Ammon. 14 And he broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men.

And he defiled Topheth: Tophet is a hearth or place of burning because in it they burned sacrifices. There was a hollow copper statue of Molech, the god of the Ammonites, and they used to light its interior with a hot fire that made it red. Then they presented their sacrifices at the hands of this statue, and there were two ways:

1. They cross the child between the hands of the statue, and they call it "crossing their children through the fire." This is a sign of consecrating or dedicating the child to the god Molech; they consider this a blessing for them and their children.
2. They offered the child himself as a sacrifice by placing him on the hand of the hot burning statue and burning him alive. It was called Tophet from toph, meaning a drum, because they beat the drums hard so that no one would hear the children's screams. Tophet is in the southeastern part of the Valley of the Son of Hinnom or the Valley of Hinnom. They are a tribe of the Canaanites (Isaiah 30: 33).

he removed the horses: The Greeks and Romans likened the sun to a rider in a chariot, and in their religious ceremonies, they used chariots of the sun, a chariot being a horse-drawn vehicle. Sun worshipers imagined that their chariots would go out every morning to meet the sun, and so they used horses, due to their speed and agility, as a symbol of the sun. Sun worshipers rode these horses in honour of the sun. Josiah came and burned the chariots of the sun and destroyed the horses; that is, he refrained from giving them to the chariots of the sun like his predecessors among the kings of Judah, or he executed these horses, which had sacred meanings to the sun. **Nathan-Melech** may have been the eunuch to whom the horses were entrusted, and the horse's place was in his chamber at the entrance to the house of the Lord.

the upper chamber of Ahaz: This means that Ahaz built it on one of the temple buildings, and on its roof, they made altars to worship the heavenly hosts, and the house of the Lord's house overlooked the Kidron Valley. **Mount of Corruption** = opposite Jerusalem, which is the southern part of the Mount of Olives. It was called this way because it was the location of the idolatrous temples that Solomon built in his old age for the sake of his wives. **the bones of men**, the bones of the dead represent impurity and a sign of death and corruption. The worshipers of the aforementioned gods claimed that it was the source of life, fertility, and abundant births.

But why did he place people's bones to defile the high places? If he had not done this, people would have built it again, as demolishing it, in their view, would not make it lose its sanctity. Placing bones on these altars to defile them is like setting fire to the remnants of paganism and throwing them into Bethel to defile Bethel so that it can no longer be used as a temple for the Lord. And he placed the bones on the broken altars and the broken gods that he had crushed. It is mixing dead gods with dead bones, so they are both the same. They considered that placing the bones of a dead person on something was the greatest and utmost impurity for that thing.

(Verses 15-20): **Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and crushed it to powder, and burned the wooden image. 16 As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that were there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. 17 Then he said, "What gravestone is this that I see?" So the men of the city told him, "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel." 18 And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria. 19 Now Josiah also took away all the shrines of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger; and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel. 20 He executed all the priests of the [p]high places who were there, on the altars, and burned men's bones on them; and he returned to Jerusalem.**

The fact that Josiah arrives in Bethel means that Assyria's authority over the land had weakened, so he came and reformed without any objection from the Assyrian rulers. Historically, during the period of Josiah, the Kingdom of Assyria was about to fall, and the king of Assyria was busy with his wars in the north, which gave Josiah temporary control over the Land of Israel. **burned the high place** = he burned what was wood and crushed the stones and burned them on the sacrifices = he burned the bones before demolishing the altar to defile it. **the man of God proclaimed** = (1 Kings 13: 2). It seems that Josiah did not know the prophecy until after he fulfilled it. **the prophet who came from Samaria** = The Prophet was from Bethel, which is one of the cities of Samaria (1 Kings 13: 11). Josiah honoured this prophet because of his prophecy. He honored the prophet who took refuge in him, and did not tamper with his grave out of respect for the prophet who took refuge in him.

(Verses 21-23): **Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." 22 Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. 23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the Lord in Jerusalem.**

the Passover to the Lord: The abundance of sacrifices distinguishes Josiah's Passover (2 Chronicles 35: 1-19). **in the eighteenth year** = that is, in the same year in which the temple was restored, the Book of the Law was found, the covenant was renewed, and pagan worship was destroyed in Judah and Samaria. In a comparison between Josiah and Jehu, we find that Jehu destroyed the temple of Baal, and so did Josiah. However, after Josiah destroyed idol worship, he established the Passover to obey the law. This is true repentance, removing and abstaining from negatives and practicing positive virtues.

(Verses 24-25): **Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he**

might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. 25 Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.

the household gods: The household gods that they place as a blessing in homes, and this is a type of paganism.

(Verses 26-27): **Nevertheless the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. 27 And the Lord said, "I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, 'My name shall be there.'"**

Manasseh's sins made the people sin, so they loved these pagan worships, and while Manasseh repented, the people continued their love of sin. Josiah's reforms were reforms from above, and the people remained as they were.

(Verses 28-30): **Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 29 In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went to the aid of the king of Assyria, to the River Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. And Pharaoh Necho killed him at Megiddo when he confronted him. 30 Then his servants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.**

The book did not mention anything about the last 13 years of Josiah's rule, but they were mostly in peace, during which the Kingdom of Assyria fell, and the Kingdom of Babylon rose. **Pharaoh Necho** = This Pharaoh found that the chance of the fall of Assyria and the rise of Babylon, the new state, was a good opportunity to invade Syria and Mesopotamia. **King Josiah went** = perhaps Josiah understood that if he did not resist the king of Egypt, his kingdom would fall into the hands of the king of Egypt. However, we find that Necho told Josiah that he did not want war with him but rather wanted the king of Assyria, but we find that Josiah did not believe him (2 Chronicles 35: 20-27). Necho's words were true, except that Josiah did not know, and this was with the permission of God, who preferred to end His life because He was going to begin to discipline Jerusalem. Politically, Necho wanted to seize what Assyria owned before Babylon's reign became more robust so that it would take all of Assyria's inheritance. Josiah had seized much of Israel's lands and annexed them to him, and his kingdom was stable, and he feared losing his independence. We find that Josiah made a mistake in not consulting God, the prophets, or the Urim. Still, God allowed this, and in verse (29) **And Pharaoh Necho killed him at Megiddo** = the original word for his killing here was mortally wounded. He was carried to Jerusalem and died there (2

Chronicles 35: 24). After Josiah, Jerusalem did not see a good day. Still, calamities came one after another until it was destroyed after 22 years.

(Verses 31-37): **Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done. 33 Now Pharaoh Necho put him in prison at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34 Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Pharaoh took Jehoahaz and went to Egypt, and he died there. 35 So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give money according to the command of Pharaoh; he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Necho. 36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. 37 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done.**

Jehoahaz was the third of Josiah's sons, the eldest **Eliakim** (Jehoiakim) and the eldest Johanan (1 Chronicles 3: 15). Perhaps they chose the youngest, as they thought he was the most efficient. Jehoahaz has another name, Shalom. The fourth was Mattaniah or Zedekiah. **three months** = while Pharaoh Necho went to Carchemish and returned. He left his army and returned to Egypt, then went again to Carchemish and met Nebuchadnezzar. He was defeated in the war, and Nebuchadnezzar seized everything that Egypt had from the Euphrates River to the River of Egypt (2 Kings 24: 7). We find that Pharaoh deposed Jehoahaz as a kind of demonstration of authority over Judah, as the people of Judah had made him king without consulting him. The strange thing is that the Bible records that during this short period, Jehoahaz did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and this is evidence that Josiah's reforms were from above, to the point that his children were evil. The people responded to the evil of Jehoahaz. In (verse 35), **he taxed the land** = that is, each individual pays his share according to the amount of land he owns. Jehoiakim took the silver from the people of the land, and Jehoiakim was evil and unjust (Jeremiah 22: 13-19 + 26: 20 -23 + 36: 20-32). For the first time, the brother inherits the throne from the throne of David. Pharaoh did not intend to attack Judah, but after his victory over Josiah, why wouldn't he impose a tax on them and control them? If Josiah's children had become like their father, they would have been treated with honour by Pharaoh, but because of their evil, God allowed them to be humiliated. One of them was taken captive to Egypt, and the other became subject to humiliation and paid tribute. Let us see the consequence of sin. The children of Israel previously plundered the Egyptians. Now, because of sin, we find the Egyptians robbing the children of Israel and causing them poverty. **Jehoiakim** = YHWH resides. **Eliakim** = God establishes. Pharaoh changed the name to Jehoiakim as a kind of demonstration of authority. Still, there is merit for Necho, as he changed the name to a religious name, and this was under the guidance of the men of Israel. And this is the opposite of what they did in Babylon, as they changed the names to pagan names (Daniel and the three Sainly Youth).

Note:

Solomon: He is the builder of the temple, a symbol of Christ, the builder of the church.

Hezekiah: He lived for 15 years, symbolizing Christ, who rose from the dead and extended his lifespan.

Josiah: He died outside Jerusalem in his war with the enemies, a symbol of Christ who died outside Jerusalem.

They all symbolize Christ in that they are kings over the people of God, and they are the sons of David.

Chapter 24

(Verses 1-7): **In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. 2 And the Lord sent against him raiding bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord which He had spoken by His servants the prophets. 3 Surely at the commandment of the Lord this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the Lord would not pardon. 5 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 6 So Jehoiakim rested with his fathers. Then Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place. 7 And the king of Egypt did not come out of his land anymore, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the River Euphrates.**

In his days: The days of Jehoiakim. In (Jeremiah 25: 1 + 46: 2) we understand that in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar was in his first year. Nebuchadnezzar defeated the King of Egypt during his first year at the Battle of Carchemish. **the king of Babylon** = The father of Nebuchadnezzar was alive, and Nebuchadnezzar was the commander of the army and deputy of the king, and he was called the king of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jehoiakim to subject him to Babylon (he took everything that Egypt had from the Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt, and Jehoiakim was at that time subject to Egypt, so Nebuchadnezzar subjected him). It seems that Jehoiakim returned and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar after three years. **And the Lord sent** 3 years after Nebuchadnezzar had subjugated Jehoiakim. God allowed him to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, and this was against Jeremiah's advice because the Lord wanted to discipline him and his people. Nebuchadnezzar and all the enemy armies are nothing but tools in the hands of God. He sends them whenever He wants and prevents them whenever He wants. It seems that because Nebuchadnezzar was busy in his wars far away, he sent against Jehoiakim an army of Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites, as he knew their hostility to Judah, and the Chaldean invaders led them. The Chaldeans are from southern Mesopotamia. In this battle, they took 3,023 captives to Babylon (Jeremiah 52: 28). God has always protected His people from these invaders and even granted them victory over them repeatedly. But why would He protect them now when they seek pagan gods? **because of the sins of Manasseh** = for the sins that Manasseh taught them. But if they had repented, God would certainly accept them. But God's longsuffering does not mean that He accepts sin. After this invasion, Jehoiakim returned and rebelled again. Hence, Nebuchadnezzar went up to him, took him, and tied him with copper chains to take him to Babylon, but he changed his mind and perhaps killed him in the middle of the road, or he died of his own accord, and his body was thrown to the ground like the carcass of a donkey (Jeremiah 22: 19).

(Verses 8-20): **Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. 9 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done. 10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11 And**

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, as his servants were besieging it. 12 Then Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers went out to the king of Babylon; and the king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign, took him prisoner. 13 And he carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and he cut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. 14 Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land. 15 And he carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. 16 All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all who were strong and fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. 17 Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah. 18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19 He also did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. 20 For because of the anger of the Lord this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all who were strong and fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. Mattaniah, his uncle, reigned in his place and changed his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did what was evil in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. Because of the Lord's wrath against Jerusalem and Judah, until He cast them out from before Him, Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

eighteen years old = And in (2 Chronicles 36: 9), it says he was eight years old, but we find in verse (15) that he had wives. There are two solutions to this problem, the basis of which is that the correct age for him is 18 years, not 8 years, because he had wives:

1. He sat with his father on the throne and reigned with him for eight years, as is the custom of kings of this time.
2. The period of 8 years is calculated from the first captivity period or Nebuchadnezzar's accession to the throne. This opinion is supported by the words of the Bible in verse 12, **and the king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign, took him prisoner**. Primarily since the word as it appears in the Book of Chronicles refers to the meaning of the eighth (strong's dictionary).

the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up: They rose first to besiege the city, then Nebuchadnezzar himself came (verse 11), and he was most likely coming from Tiro, which he was besieging at the same time. Jehoiachin surrendered himself to protect the city from demolition. In (verse 12) **in the eighth year of his reign** = the reign of the King of Babylon. In (versr13), **and he cut in pieces** = Probably in his first attack, he took the light vessels, and in this attack, he broke the large

vessels and the altars (the altar of incense and the tables) to take the gold that was in them, because Belshazzar drank from the vessels of the temple. **as the Lord had said** = as Isaiah mentioned to King Hezekiah. **all the captains** = to humiliate Jerusalem, he left only the poor and took the pillars (here we find a benefit for poverty).

We find in verse (14) that: **Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths.**

And in verse 16 **All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all who were strong and fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.**

$7000 + 1000 = 8000$

Therefore, the captains are $(10000 - 8000 = 2000)$

Smiths: Blacksmiths.

Mattaniah = Jehoahaz's brother, and in verse 17, is Jehoiachin's uncle.

In verse (2 Chronicles 36: 10) the king of Babylon deposed Jehoiachin, and his brother Zedekiah became king, and in (1 Chronicles 3: 15-16) Zedekiah was the son of Jehoiakim.

Mattaniah is actually Jehoiachin's uncle, and among the Hebrews, relatives are called brothers. Abraham was called Lot's brother, and he was his uncle. Jehoiakim has a son named Zedekiah, but he is not King Zedekiah.

Note:

Nebuchadnezzar attacked the temple 3 times:

1. He took the vessels and placed them in the temple of his god, and Cyrus brought them back with Ezra upon his return from captivity.
2. When he broke the large vessel and carried it with him.
3. When he demolished the temple and took all the brass.

Chapter 25

(Verses 1-7): **Now it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and they built a siege wall against it all around. 2 So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 3 By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 4 Then the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war fled at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were still encamped all around against the city. And the king went by way of the plain. 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. 6 So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they pronounced judgment on him. 7 Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.**

in the ninth year: Zedekiah was king of Judah, and his rebellion was probably caused by his trying to ally with Egypt, Tyre, Sidon, and Moab against Babylon. **and all his army** = (Jeremiah 34:1) explains that all the kingdoms of the earth that submitted to the authority of Nebuchadnezzar and their peoples were fighting against Jerusalem. **a siege wall** = They set up barricades, that is, mounds of dirt in front of the wall, then built towers on them to attack Jerusalem with arrows, catapults, and spears for all the people and army of Jerusalem are trapped inside. The king fled at night without the Chaldeans seeing him. When they found out, they followed him and carried out two prophecies about him (Jeremiah 32: 4 + Ezekiel 12: 13). **Riblah** = was a war center for the king of Babylon because at the same time he was besieging Jerusalem, he was besieging Tyre. Riblah was in the middle of the two, so he made it his center. **bronze fetters** = one for his hands and the other for his feet. Strangely, none of the four kings learned from what happened with his predecessor, and they continued their evil acts. Rather, Zedekiah completed the measure of sin when he broke the oath he swore to Nebuchadnezzar. We notice that sin corrupts the wisdom of the wicked. Zedekiah's decision to rebel against the king of Babylon after what happened to Jehoiakim is a decision that can only be described as stupidity.

(Verses 8-21): **And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month (which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 9 He burned the house of the Lord and the king's house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, he burned with fire. 10 And all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls of Jerusalem all around. 11 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive the rest of the people who remained in the city and the defectors who had deserted to the king of Babylon, with the rest of the multitude. 12 But the captain of the guard left some of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers. 13 The bronze pillars that were in the house of the Lord, and the carts and the bronze Sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried their bronze to Babylon.**

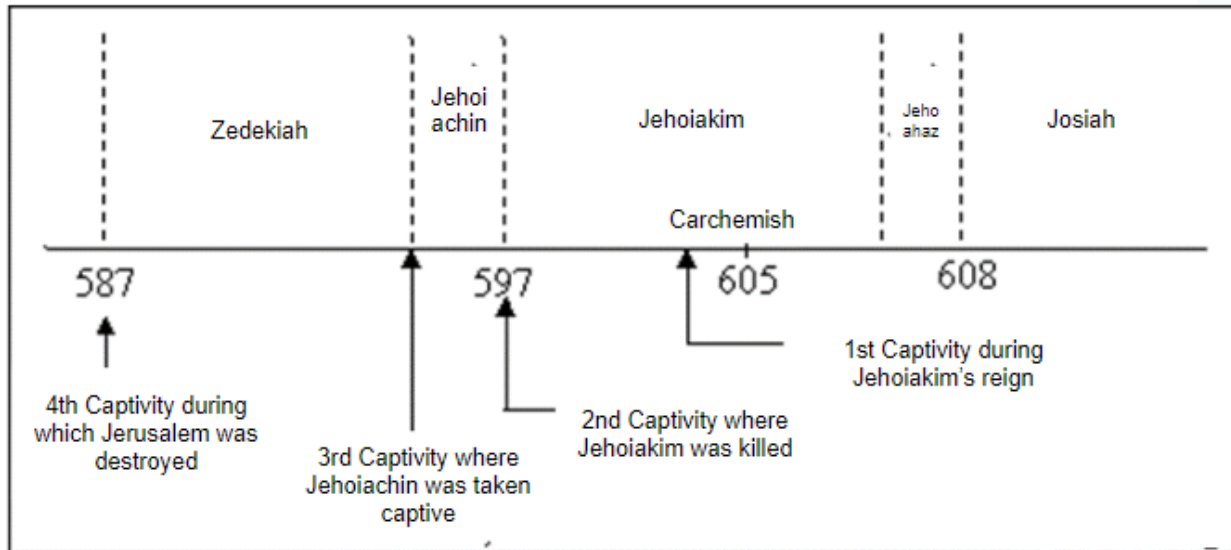
14 They also took away the pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered. **15** The firepans and the basins, the things of solid gold and solid silver, the captain of the guard took away. **16** The two pillars, one Sea, and the carts, which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these articles was beyond measure. **17** The height of one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the capital on it was of bronze. The height of the capital was three cubits, and the network and pomegranates all around the capital were all of bronze. The second pillar was the same, with a network. **18** And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. **19** He also took out of the city an officer who had charge of the men of war, five men of the king's close associates who were found in the city, the chief recruiting officer of the army, who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city. **20** So Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. **21** Then the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land.

who had deserted to the king of Babylon: They had fled during the siege and sought refuge with the Babylonians.

The bronze pillars: Because of their huge size, they broke it, and their beauty was removed. Therefore, the author sadly records the specifications of the pillars. **Zephaniah the second priest** = the deputy high priest. He performed the high priest's duty when any ritual impediments prevented the high priest. **the king's close associates** = are his ministers, those close to him, and his counsellors (they are the ones who advised of the rebellion). **the chief recruiting officer of the army** = he had to prepare the army and inform them of the commander's orders. **and sixty men** = they were chiefs.

Thus Judah was carried away captive: The captivity was in 4 stages, but it seemed more than that. The number of exiles varies between (2 Kings 24) and (Jeremiah 52), but we find the accompanying dates.

It also differs, as it seems that between the captivity and the next captivity, the Babylonian army would rise to take some of the captives to Babylon to use them there, as well as the four famous stages of captivity according to the drawing.



The differences in numbers of exiles and dates of exile may be due to:

1. Each writer attributes dates to something different.
2. The numbers that one person writes may include the number of those who actually arrived in Babylon, and the other writes those who were taken from Jerusalem where some went missing and died on the way.
3. There are other stages of captivity besides the four major ones, and we see that God found that the best treatment for Judah's sins was captivity.

(Verses 22-26): **Then he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, governor over the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left. 23 Now when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Careah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. 24 And Gedaliah took an oath before them and their men, and said to them, "Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you." 25 But it happened in the seventh month that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men and struck and killed Gedaliah, the Jews, as well as the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. 26 And all the people, small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose and went to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.**

Gedaliah: He was not of royal lineage, but he was zealous for the country. **the captains of the armies** = they had fled with Zedekiah and later separated from him after his arrest. **Ishmael** = He was of royal lineage and resistant to the Babylonians, and perhaps he hoped to return to power. **and went to Egypt** = they thought that the king of Babylon would inevitably take revenge for the killing of Gedaliah and the

Babylonians who were with him. He will not distinguish between Ishmael and his followers and the rest in his revenge. Jeremiah had told Johanan and those with him of the Lord's decision not to go to Egypt. They did not listen to the word of the Lord but rather went and took Jeremiah with them, and the prophecy of Moses was fulfilled (Deuteronomy 28: 26). They returned willingly to the land of slavery. What they did here is similar to what many people do when God allows them some trials, so they leave the church and return to the land of slavery, that is, their old sins, and they claim that it consoles them and that they forget their pain and find protection from their sorrows in it.

(Verses 27-30): **Now it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. 28 He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon. 29 So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. 30 And as for his provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.**

We find a glimpse of hope at the end of the book by releasing Jehoiachin. It is a mercy from God and not from the king of Babylon so that the people know that God has not abandoned them completely, so they would have hope for salvation and return. Most likely, the king of Babylon did this under the influence of Daniel and the three Sainly Youth.

Notes:

* It was not possible for a human being or an army, regardless of its strength, to destroy the temple if God was present in it. But we note that God had left the temple before that. See Ezekiel chapters 8, 9, 10, and 11.

* If Babylon symbolizes Satan in its captivity, enslavement, and killing of God's people, then here we see a picture of what Satan did to man by causing him to fall into sin. Here, we notice the beauty of the temple and the beauty of the pillars. Babylon destroyed all of this, demolished it, and ruined it, just as man lost the beautiful image that God created him in before he fell and began to die.