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Exodus

Jacob's Family in Egypt

1 Jacob (*Israel*) traveled to Egypt with his sons. Each son had his own family with him. These are the sons of Israel: ²Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, ³Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, ⁴Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher. ⁵There was a total of 70 people who were direct descendants* of Jacob. (Joseph was one of the twelve sons, but he was already in Egypt.)

⁶Later, Joseph, his brothers, and all the people of that generation died. ⁷But the people of Israel had many children, and their number grew and grew. The people of Israel became strong, and the country of Egypt was filled with the Israelites.

Trouble for the People of Israel

⁸Then a new king began to rule Egypt. This king did not know Joseph. ⁹This king said to his people, "Look at the people of Israel. There are too many of them! And they are stronger than we are! ¹⁰We must make plans to stop the Israelites from growing stronger. If there is a war, the people of Israel might join our enemies. Then they might defeat us and escape from us."

¹¹The Egyptian people decided to make life hard for the people of Israel. So the Egyptians put slave masters over the people. These masters forced the Israelites to build the cities of Pithom and Rameses for the king. The king used these cities to store grain and other things.

¹²The Egyptians forced the Israelites to work harder and harder. But the more the people of Israel were forced to work, the more they grew and spread. And the Egyptian people became

more and more afraid of the people of Israel. ¹³So the Egyptians forced the people of Israel to work even harder.

¹⁴The Egyptians made life hard for the Israelites. They forced the Israelites to work very hard making bricks and mortar. They also forced them to work hard in the fields. They forced them to work very hard in everything they did.

The Nurses Who Followed God

¹⁵There were two nurses who helped the Israelite women give birth to children. They were named Shiphrah and Puah. The king of Egypt talked to the nurses. ¹⁶The king said, "You will continue to help the Hebrew* women give birth to their children. If a girl baby is born, then let the baby live. But if the baby is a boy, then you must kill him!"

¹⁷But the nurses trusted* God. So they did not obey the king's command. They let all the boy babies live.

¹⁸The king of Egypt called for the nurses and told them, "Why did you do this? Why did you let the boy babies live?"

¹⁹The nurses said to the king, "The Hebrew* women are much stronger than the Egyptian women. They give birth to their babies before we can go to help them." (²⁰⁻²¹God was happy with the nurses. So God was good to them and allowed them to have their own families. So the Hebrew people continued to have more children, and the people became very strong.)

Hebrew Or, "Israelite." This name might also mean, "descendants of Eber" (Gen.10:25-31) or "people from west of the Euphrates River."

trusted Literally, "feared" or "respected."

descendants A person's children and their future families.

²²So Pharaoh* gave this command to his own people: “Let all the girl babies live. But every time a [Hebrew] boy baby is born, you must throw him into the Nile River.”

Baby Moses

2 There was a man from the family of Levi. He married a woman who was also from the family of Levi. ²The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy. The mother saw how beautiful the baby was, and she hid him for three months. ³The mother was afraid that the baby would be found and killed because he was a boy. After three months, she made a basket and covered it with tar* so that it would float. She put the baby in the basket. Then she put the basket in the river in the tall grass. ⁴The baby’s sister stayed and watched. She wanted to see what would happen to the baby.

⁵Just then, Pharaoh’s daughter went to the river to bathe. She saw the basket in the tall grass. Her servants were walking beside the river. So she told one of them to go get the basket. ⁶The king’s daughter opened the basket and saw a baby boy. The baby was crying and she felt sorry for it. Then she noticed that it was one of the Hebrew* babies.

⁷The baby’s sister [was still hiding. She stood and] asked the king’s daughter, “Do you want me to go find a Hebrew* woman who can nurse the baby and help you care for it?”

⁸The king’s daughter said, “Yes, please.”

So the girl went and brought the baby’s own mother.

⁹The king’s daughter said to the mother, “Take this baby and feed him for me. I’ll pay you to take care of him.”

So the woman took her baby and cared for him. ¹⁰The baby grew, and after some time, the woman gave the baby to the king’s daughter. The king’s daughter accepted the

baby as her own son. She named him Moses* because she had pulled him from the water.

Moses Helps His People

¹¹Moses grew and became a man. He saw that his own people, the Hebrews,* were forced to work very hard. One day Moses saw an Egyptian man beating a Hebrew man. ¹²Moses looked around and saw that no one was watching. Then Moses killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand.

¹³The next day Moses saw two Hebrew* men fighting each other. Moses saw that one man was wrong. Moses said to that man, “Why are you hurting your neighbor?”

¹⁴The man answered, “Did anyone say you could be our ruler and judge? No! Tell me, will you kill me like you killed the Egyptian yesterday*?”

Then Moses was afraid. Moses thought to himself, “Now everyone knows what I did.”

¹⁵Pharaoh heard about what Moses did, so he decided to kill Moses. But Moses ran away from Pharaoh. Moses went to the land of Midian.

Moses in Midian

Moses stopped near a well in Midian. ¹⁶There was a priest in Midian who had seven daughters. Those girls came to that well to get water for their father’s sheep. They were trying to fill the water trough with water. ¹⁷But there were some shepherds there who chased the girls away and would not let them get water. So Moses helped the girls and gave water to their animals.

¹⁸Then they went back to their father, Reuel.* Their father said to them, “You have come home early today!”

¹⁹The girls answered, “Yes, sir. The shepherds tried to chase us away, but an Egyptian man helped us. He got water for us and gave it to our animals.”

Pharaoh A title people used for the king of Egypt. This word means “the Great House.”

tar Or, “pitch,” a thick oil that must be heated to become liquid.

Hebrew Or, “Israelite.”

Moses This name is like a Hebrew word meaning “to pull or draw out.”

yesterday This word is in the ancient Greek translation, but not in the Hebrew text.

Reuel He is also called Jethro.

²⁰So Reuel said to his daughters, “Where is this man? Why did you leave him? Go invite him to eat with us.”

²¹Moses was happy to stay with that man. Reuel let Moses marry his daughter, Zipporah. ²²Zipporah became pregnant and had a son. Moses named him Gershom.* Moses gave his son this name because Moses was a stranger in a land that was not his own.

God Decides to Help Israel

²³A long time passed and that king of Egypt died. But the people of Israel were still forced to work very hard. They cried for help, and God heard them. ²⁴God heard their prayers, and he remembered the agreement he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵God saw the troubles of the people of Israel, and he knew [that he would soon help them].

The Burning Bush

3 Moses’ father-in-law was named Jethro.* Jethro was a priest of Midian. Moses took care of Jethro’s sheep. One day, Moses led the sheep to the west side of the desert. Moses went to a mountain called Horeb (*Sinai*), the mountain of God. ²On that mountain, Moses saw the Angel of the Lord in a burning bush. [This is how it happened.] Moses saw a bush that was burning without being destroyed. ³So Moses decided to go closer to the bush and see how a bush could continue burning without being destroyed.

⁴The Lord saw Moses was coming to look at the bush. So God called to Moses from the bush. God said, “Moses, Moses!”

Moses said, “Yes, Lord.”

⁵Then the Lord said, “Don’t come any closer. Take off your sandals. You are standing on holy ground. ⁶I am the God of your ancestors.* I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

Moses covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷Then the Lord said, “I have seen the troubles my people have suffered in Egypt. And I have heard their cries when the Egyptians hurt them. I know about their pain. ⁸Now I will go down and save my people from the Egyptians. I will take them from that land. And I will lead them to a good land where they can be free from troubles.* It is a land filled with many good things.* Many different people live in that land: the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹I have heard the cries of the people of Israel. I have seen the way the Egyptians have made life hard for them. ¹⁰So now I am sending you to Pharaoh. Go! Lead my people, the people of Israel, out of Egypt!”

¹¹But Moses said to God, “I am not a great man! How can I be the person to go to Pharaoh and lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?”

¹²God said, “You can do it because I will be with you! This will be the proof that I am sending you: After you lead the people out of Egypt, you will come and worship me on this mountain!”

¹³Then Moses said to God, “But if I go to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors* sent me,’ then the people will ask, ‘What is his name?’ What should I tell them?”

¹⁴Then God said to Moses, “[Tell them,] ‘I AM WHO I AM.’* When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, ‘I AM’ sent me to you.”

¹⁵God also said to Moses, “This is what you should tell the people: ‘YAHWEH* is the God of your ancestors,* the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. My name will always be YAHWEH. That is how the people will know me for generations and

land ... troubles Literally, “a spacious land.”

land filled with many good things Literally, “a land flowing with milk and honey.”

I AM WHO I AM The Hebrew words are like the name YAHWEH (“Lord”).

YAHWEH This name, usually translated “Lord,” is like the Hebrew word meaning, “He is” or “He makes things exist.”

Gershom This is like the Hebrew words meaning “a stranger there.”

Jethro He is also called Reuel.

ancestors Literally, “fathers,” meaning a person’s parents, grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

generations to come.’ [Tell the people,] ‘YAHWEH has sent me to you!’”

¹⁶[The Lord also said,] “Go and gather together the elders (*leaders*) of the people and tell them, ‘YAHWEH,* the God of your ancestors,* has appeared to me. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob spoke to me. The Lord says: I have been watching over you and I have seen the things that people did to you in Egypt. ¹⁷And I have decided that I will take you from the troubles you are suffering in Egypt. I will lead you to the land that now belongs to many different people: the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. I will lead you to a land filled with many good things.*’

¹⁸“The elders (*leaders*) will listen to you. And then you and the elders (*leaders*) will go to the king of Egypt. You will tell him that ‘YAHWEH* is the God of the Hebrew* people. Our God came to us and told us to travel three days into the desert. There we must offer sacrifices* to YAHWEH our God.’

¹⁹“But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go. Only a great power will force him to let you go. ²⁰So I will use my great power against Egypt. I will cause amazing things to happen in that land. After I do this, he will let you go. ²¹And I will cause the Egyptian people to be kind to the people of Israel. The Egyptians will give many gifts to your people when they leave Egypt.

²²“All of the Hebrew* women will ask their Egyptian neighbors and the Egyptian women living in their houses for gifts. And those Egyptian women will give them gifts: of silver, gold, and fine clothing. Then you will put those gifts on your children. In this way, you will take away the wealth of the Egyptians.”

YAHWEH This name, usually translated “Lord,” is like the Hebrew word meaning, “He is” or “He makes things exist.”

ancestors Literally, “fathers,” meaning a person’s parents, grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

filled with many good things Literally, “flowing with milk and honey.”

Hebrew Or, “Israelite.”

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

Proof for Moses

⁴Then Moses said to God, “But the people of Israel will not believe me when I tell them that you sent me. They will say, ‘The Lord* did not appear to you.’”

²But God said to Moses, “What is that you have in your hand?”

Moses answered, “It is my walking stick.”

³Then God said, “Throw your walking stick on the ground.”

So Moses threw his walking stick on the ground. The stick became a snake. Moses [was afraid and,] ran from it. ⁴But the Lord said to Moses, “Reach out and grab the snake by its tail.”

So Moses reached out and caught the snake’s tail. When Moses did this, the snake became a walking stick again. ⁵Then God said, “Use your stick in this way and the people will believe that you saw the Lord, the God of your ancestors,* the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

⁶Then the Lord said to Moses, “I will give you another proof. Put your hand under your robe.”

So Moses opened his robe and put his hand inside. Then Moses brought his hand out of the robe and it was changed. His hand was covered with spots that were white like snow.

⁷Then God said, “Now put your hand into your robe again.” So Moses put his hand into his robe again. Then Moses brought his hand out, and his hand was changed. Now his hand was good again, like it was before.

⁸Then God said, “If the people don’t believe you when you use your walking stick, then they will believe you when you show them this sign. ⁹If they still refuse to believe after you show them both of these things, then take some water from the Nile River. Pour the water on the ground, and as soon as it touches the ground, it will become blood.”

¹⁰But Moses said to the Lord, “But Lord, I am telling you the truth, I am not a skilled speaker. I have never been able to speak well. And now, even after talking to you, I am still

Lord Or, “YAHWEH.”

not a good speaker. You know that I talk slowly and don't use the best words.”*

¹¹Then the Lord said to him, “Who made a person's mouth? And who can make a person deaf or not able to speak? Who can make a person blind? Who can make a person able to see? [I am the One who can do all these things—] I am YAHWEH.* ¹²So go. I will be with you when you speak. I will give you the words to say.”

¹³But Moses said, “My Lord, I beg you to send another person—not me.”

¹⁴Then the Lord became angry with Moses and said, “Fine! I'll give you someone to help you. I will use your brother Aaron, from the family of Levi. He is a skilled speaker. Aaron is already coming to see you. He will be happy to see you. ¹⁵He will go with you to Pharaoh. I will tell you what to say. Then you will tell Aaron, and Aaron will choose the right words to speak to Pharaoh. ¹⁶Aaron will also speak to the people for you. You will be like a great king, and he will be your official speaker.* ¹⁷So go. And carry your walking stick with you. Use your stick and the other miracles to show the people that I am with you.”

Moses Returns to Egypt

¹⁸Then Moses went back to Jethro, his father-in-law. Moses said to Jethro, “Please let me go back to Egypt. I want to see if my people are still alive.”

Jethro said to Moses, “Sure! And may you go in peace.”

¹⁹Then, while Moses was still in Midian, God said to him, “It is safe for you to go back to Egypt now. The men who wanted to kill you are now dead.”

²⁰So Moses put his wife and children on the donkey and returned to Egypt. Moses carried his walking stick with him—the walking stick with the power of God.

²¹While Moses was traveling back to Egypt, God spoke to him. God said, “When you talk to Pharaoh remember to show him all

the miracles that I have given you the power to do. But I will cause Pharaoh to be very stubborn. He will not let the people go. ²²Then you should say to Pharaoh: ²³The Lord says, ‘Israel is my firstborn* son. And I am telling you to let my son go and worship me! If you refuse to let Israel go, then I will kill your firstborn son.’”

Moses' Son Circumcised

²⁴On the way to Egypt, Moses stopped at a place to spend the night. The Lord met Moses at that place and tried to kill him.* ²⁵But Zipporah took a flint knife* and circumcised* her son. She took the skin and touched his feet. Then she said [to Moses], “You are a bridegroom of blood to me.” ²⁶Zipporah said this because she had to circumcise her son. So God forgave Moses [and did not kill him].*

Moses and Aaron before God

²⁷The Lord had spoken to Aaron. The Lord had told him, “Go out into the desert and meet Moses.” So Aaron went and met Moses at the Mountain of God.* Aaron saw Moses and kissed him. ²⁸Moses told Aaron why the Lord had sent him. And Moses told Aaron about all the miracles and things he must do to prove that God had sent him. Moses told Aaron everything the Lord had said.

²⁹So Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders (*leaders*) of the people of Israel. ³⁰Then Aaron spoke to the people. He told them all the things that the Lord had told Moses. Then Moses did the proofs for all the people to see. ³¹The people believed that God had sent Moses. The people of Israel knew that God had seen their troubles, and that he had come to help them. So they bowed down and worshiped God.

firstborn The first child born into a family. The firstborn son was very important in ancient times.

tried to kill him Or possibly, “wanted to circumcise him.”

flint knife A sharp knife made from flint rock.

circumcise(d) Cutting off the foreskin. In Israel this was proof that a man had made a special agreement to obey God's laws and teachings.

Verse 26 Or, “And he was healed. She said, ‘You are a bridegroom of blood’ because of the circumcision.”

Mountain of God That is, Mount Horeb (Sinai).

I talk ... words Or, “I stutter and don't speak clearly.”

I am YAHWEH Or, “I am the Lord.”

You will be ... speaker Literally, “He will be your mouth, and you will be his God.”

Moses And Aaron Before Pharaoh

5 After Moses and Aaron talked to the people, they went to Pharaoh. They said, “The Lord* God of Israel says, ‘Let my people go into the desert so they can have a feast to honor me.’”

²But Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord? Why should I obey him? Why should I let Israel go? I don’t even know who this Lord is, so I refuse to let Israel go.”

³Then Aaron and Moses said, “The God of the Hebrew* people has talked with us. So we beg you to let us travel three days into the desert. There we will offer a sacrifice* to the Lord our God. If we don’t do this, he might become angry and destroy us. He might make us die from sickness or war.”

⁴But Pharaoh said to them, “Moses and Aaron, you are bothering the workers. Let them do their work! Go mind your own business! ⁵There are very many workers, and you are keeping them from doing their jobs.”

Pharaoh Punishes the People

⁶That same day, Pharaoh gave a command to make work harder for the people of Israel. Pharaoh said to the slave masters and Hebrew foremen, ⁷“You have always given the people straw and they use it to make bricks. But now, tell them they have to go and find their own straw to make bricks. ⁸But they must still make the same number of bricks as they did before. They have become lazy. That is why they are asking me to let them go. They don’t have enough work to do. That is why they asked me to let them make sacrifices* to their God. ⁹So make these people work harder. Keep them busy. Then they will not have enough time to listen to the lies of Moses.”

¹⁰So the Egyptian slave masters and the Hebrew* foremen went to the people of Israel and said, “Pharaoh has decided that he will not give you straw for your bricks. ¹¹You must go and get the straw for yourselves. So

go and find straw. But you must still make as many bricks as you made before.”

¹²So the people went everywhere in Egypt looking for straw. ¹³The slave masters forced the people to work even harder. They forced the people to make as many bricks as before. ¹⁴The Egyptian slave masters had chosen the Hebrew* foremen and had made them responsible for the work the people did. The Egyptian slave masters beat these foremen and said to them, “Why aren’t you making as many bricks as you made in the past? If you could do it then, you can do it now!”

¹⁵Then the Hebrew* foremen went to Pharaoh. They complained and said, “We are your servants. Why are you treating us like this? ¹⁶You won’t give us any straw, but you tell us to make as many bricks as before. And now our masters are beating us. Your people are wrong for doing this.”

¹⁷Pharaoh answered, “You are lazy. You don’t want to work. That is why you ask me to let you go. And that is why you want to leave here and make sacrifices* to the Lord. ¹⁸Now, go back to work! We will not give you any straw! And you must still make as many bricks as you did before!”

¹⁹The Hebrew* foremen knew they were in trouble. The foremen knew they could not make as many bricks as they made in the past.

²⁰When they were leaving the meeting with Pharaoh, they passed Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron were waiting for them. ²¹So they said to Moses and Aaron, “You really made a mistake when you told Pharaoh to let us go. May the Lord punish you because you caused Pharaoh and his rulers to hate us. You have given them an excuse to kill us.”

Moses Complains to God

²²Then Moses prayed to the Lord and said, “Master, why have you done this terrible thing to your people? Why did you send me here? ²³I went to Pharaoh and said the things you told me to say. But since that time he has been mean to the people. And you have done nothing to help them!”

6 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. I will use my great power against him, and he will

Lord Or, “YAHWEH.”

Hebrew Or, “Israelite.”

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

let my people go. He will be so ready for them to leave that he will force them to go.”

²Then God said to Moses, ³“I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They called me El Shaddai (*God All-Powerful*). They did not know my name, YAHWEH (*Lord*). ⁴I made an agreement with them. I promised to give them the land of Canaan. They lived in that land, but it was not their own land. ⁵Now, I know about the troubles of the people of Israel. I know that they are the slaves of Egypt. And I remember my agreement. ⁶So tell the people of Israel that I say to them, ‘I am the Lord. I will save you. I will make you free. You will not be slaves of the Egyptians. I will use my great power and bring terrible punishment to the Egyptians. Then I will save you. ⁷You will be my people and I will be your God. I am the Lord your God, and you will know that I made you free from Egypt. ⁸I made a great promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I promised to give them a special land. So I will lead you to that land. I will give you that land. It will be yours. I am the Lord.’”

⁹So Moses told this to the people of Israel. But the people would not listen to him. They were working so hard that they were not patient with Moses.

¹⁰Then the Lord said to Moses, ¹¹“Go tell Pharaoh that he must let the people of Israel leave his land.”

¹²But Moses answered, “The people of Israel refuse to listen to me! So surely Pharaoh will also refuse to listen. I am a very bad speaker!”

¹³But the Lord talked with Moses and Aaron. God commanded them to go and talk to the people of Israel. He also commanded them to go and talk to Pharaoh. God commanded them to lead the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Some of the Families of Israel

¹⁴Here are the names of the leaders of the families of Israel: Israel’s first son, Reuben, had four sons. They were Hanoch, Pallu,

Hezron, and Carmi. ¹⁵Simeon’s sons were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul. (Shaul was the son from a Canaanite woman). ¹⁶Levi lived 137 years. Levi’s sons were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹⁷Gershon had two sons, Libni and Shimei. ¹⁸Kohath lived 133 years. Kohath’s sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ¹⁹Merari’s sons were Mahli and Mushi. All these families were from Israel’s son Levi.

²⁰Amram lived 137 years. Amram married his father’s sister, Jochebed. Amram and Jochebed gave birth to Aaron and Moses. ²¹Izhar’s sons were Korah, Nepheg, and Zicri. ²²Uzziel’s sons were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri.

²³Aaron married Elisheba. (Elisheba was the daughter of Amminadab, and the sister of Nahshon.) Aaron and Elisheba gave birth to Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ²⁴The sons of Korah, [the ancestors of] the Korahites, were Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. ²⁵Aaron’s son, Eleazar, married a daughter of Putiel. And she gave birth to Phinehas. All these people were from Israel’s son, Levi.

²⁶Aaron and Moses were from this family group. And they are the men that God spoke to and said, “Lead my people out of Israel in groups.*” ²⁷Aaron and Moses are the men that talked to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. They told Pharaoh to let the people of Israel leave Egypt.

God Repeats His Call to Moses

²⁸In the land of Egypt God spoke to Moses. ²⁹He said, “I am the Lord. Tell the king of Egypt everything that I tell you.”

³⁰But Moses answered, “I am a very bad speaker. The king will not listen to me.”

7 The Lord said to Moses, “I will be with you. You will be like a great king* to Pharaoh. And Aaron will be your official speaker.* ²Tell Aaron everything that I command you. Then he will tell the king the things I say. And Pharaoh will let the people

groups Or, “divisions.” This is a military term that shows Israel was organized like an army.

a great king Or, “God.”

official speaker Or, “prophet.”

I am a very bad speaker Or, “I sound like a foreigner.”
Literally, “I have uncircumcised lips.”

of Israel leave this country. ³But I will make Pharaoh stubborn. [He will not obey the things you tell him.] Then I will do many miracles in Egypt to prove who I am. But he will still refuse to listen. ⁴So then I will punish Egypt very much. And I will lead my people out of that land. ⁵Then the people of Egypt will know that I am the Lord. I will be against them, and they will know that I am the Lord. Then I will lead my people out of their country.”

⁶Moses and Aaron obeyed these things the Lord told them. ⁷Moses was 80 years old at the time, and Aaron was 83.

Moses' Walking Stick Becomes a Snake

⁸The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, ⁹“Pharaoh will ask you to prove your power. He will ask you to do a miracle. Tell Aaron to throw his walking stick on the ground. While Pharaoh is watching, the stick will become a snake.”

¹⁰So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and obeyed the Lord. Aaron threw his walking stick down. While Pharaoh and his officers watched, the stick became a snake.

¹¹So the king called for his wise men and magicians. These men used their tricks and they were able to do the same thing as Aaron. ¹²They threw their walking sticks on the ground, and their sticks became snakes. But then Aaron's walking stick ate theirs. ¹³Pharaoh still refused to let the people go. This happened just like the Lord said it would. The king refused to listen to Moses and Aaron.

The Water Becomes Blood

¹⁴Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh is being stubborn. Pharaoh refuses to let the people go. ¹⁵In the morning, Pharaoh will go out to the river. Go to him by the edge of the Nile River. Take the walking stick that became a snake. ¹⁶Tell him this: ‘The Lord, the God of the Hebrew people, sent me to you. The Lord told me to tell you to let his people go worship him in the desert. Until now you have not listened to the Lord. ¹⁷So the Lord says that he will do something to show you that he is the Lord. I will hit the water of the Nile River with this walking stick in my hand,

and the river will change into blood. ¹⁸The fish in the river will die, and the river will begin to stink. Then the Egyptians will not be able to drink the water from the river.’”

¹⁹The Lord said to Moses: “Tell Aaron to hold the walking stick in his hand over the rivers, canals, lakes and every place where they store water. When he does this, all the water will change into blood. All of the water, even the water stored in wood and stone jars, will change into blood.”

²⁰So Moses and Aaron did what the Lord commanded. Aaron raised the walking stick and hit the water in the Nile River. He did this in front of Pharaoh and his officials. So all the water in the river changed into blood. ²¹The fish in the river died, and the river began to stink. So the Egyptians could not drink water from the river. The blood was everywhere in Egypt.

²²The magicians used their tricks and did the same thing. So Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses and Aaron. This happened just like the Lord said. ²³Pharaoh ignored what Moses and Aaron had done. Pharaoh just turned and went into his house.

²⁴The Egyptians could not drink the water from the river. So they dug wells around the river for water to drink.

The Frogs

²⁵Seven days passed after the Lord changed the Nile River.

O Then the Lord told Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and tell him that the Lord says, ‘Let my people go to worship me! ²If you refuse to let my people go, then I will fill Egypt with frogs. ³The Nile River will be filled with frogs. They will come from the river and enter your houses. They will be in your bedrooms, and in your beds. The frogs will be in the houses of your officials and in your ovens and in your jars of water. ⁴The frogs will be all over you, your people, and your officials.’”

⁵Then the Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron to hold the walking stick in his hand over the canals, rivers, and lakes. Then the frogs will come out onto the land of Egypt.”

⁶So Aaron raised his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs began coming out of the water and covered the land of Egypt.

⁷The magicians used their tricks to do the same thing—so even more frogs came out onto the land in Egypt!

⁸Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh said, “Ask the Lord to remove the frogs from me and my people. I will let the people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord.”

⁹Moses said to Pharaoh, “Tell me when you want the frogs to go away. I will pray for you, your people, and your officials. Then the frogs will leave you and your houses. The frogs will remain only in the river. [When do you want the frogs to leave?]

¹⁰Pharaoh said, “Tomorrow.”

Moses said, “It will happen as you say. In this way, you will know that there is no god like the Lord our God. ¹¹The frogs will leave you, your house, your officials, and your people. The frogs will remain only in the river.”

¹²Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh. Moses prayed to the Lord about the frogs he had sent against Pharaoh. ¹³And the Lord did what Moses asked. The frogs died in the houses, in the yards, and in the fields. ¹⁴They began to rot, and the whole country began to stink. ¹⁵Pharaoh saw that they were free of the frogs, and he again became stubborn. Pharaoh did not do what Moses and Aaron had asked him to do. This happened just like the Lord had said.

The Lice

¹⁶Then the Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron to raise his stick and hit the dust on the ground, and everywhere in Egypt dust will become lice.”

¹⁷They did this. Aaron raised the stick in his hand and hit the dust on the ground, and everywhere in Egypt the dust became lice. The lice got on the animals and the people.

¹⁸The magicians used their tricks and tried to do the same thing. But the magicians could not make lice come from the dust. The lice remained on the animals and the people. ¹⁹So the magicians told Pharaoh that the power of God did this. But Pharaoh refused to listen to them. This happened just like the Lord had said.

The Flies

²⁰The Lord said to Moses, “Get up in the morning and go to Pharaoh. Pharaoh will go

out to the river. Tell him that the Lord says, ‘Let my people go and worship me! ²¹If you don’t let my people go, then flies will come into your houses. The flies will be on you and your officials. The houses of Egypt will be full of flies. The flies will be all over the ground too! ²²But I will not treat the people of Israel the same as the Egyptian people. There will not be any flies in Goshen, where my people live. In this way you will know that I, the Lord, am in this land. ²³So tomorrow I will treat my people differently from your people. That will be my proof.”

²⁴So the Lord did just what he said. Many, many flies came into Egypt. The flies were in Pharaoh’s house, and they were in all his officials’ houses. The flies were all over Egypt. The flies were ruining the country. ²⁵So Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh told them, “Offer sacrifices* to your God here in this country.”

²⁶But Moses said, “It would not be right to do that. The Egyptians think that it is a terrible thing to [kill animals as] sacrifices* for the Lord our God. If we do this here, then the Egyptians will see us, and they will throw stones at us and kill us. ²⁷Let us go three days into the desert and offer sacrifices to the Lord our God. This is what the Lord told us to do.”

²⁸So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go and offer sacrifices* to the Lord your God in the desert. But, you must not go very far! Now, go and pray for me.”

²⁹Moses said, “Look, I will leave and ask the Lord to remove the flies from you, your people, and your officials tomorrow. But you must not stop the people from offering sacrifices* to the Lord.”

³⁰So Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord. ³¹And the Lord did what Moses asked. The Lord removed the flies from Pharaoh, his officials, and his people. None of the flies remained. ³²But Pharaoh again became stubborn and did not let the people go.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

The Disease of the Farm Animals

9 Then the Lord told Moses to go to Pharaoh and tell him: “The Lord, the God of the Hebrew people, says, ‘Let my people go to worship me!’ ²If you continue to hold them and refuse to let them go, ³then the Lord will use his power against your animals in the fields. The Lord will cause all of your horses, donkeys, camels, cattle, and sheep to become sick with a terrible disease. ⁴The Lord will treat Israel’s animals differently from the animals of Egypt. None of the animals that belong to the people of Israel will die. ⁵The Lord has set the time for this to happen. Tomorrow the Lord will cause this to happen in this country.”

⁶The next morning, all the farm animals in Egypt died. But none of the animals that belonged to the people of Israel died. ⁷Pharaoh sent people to see if any of the animals of Israel died. And not one of the animals of Israel died. Pharaoh remained stubborn. He did not let the people go.

The Boils

⁸The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Fill your hands with the ashes from an oven. Moses, throw the ashes into the air in front of Pharaoh. ⁹This will become dust that will go throughout the land of Egypt. Whenever the dust touches a person or an animal in Egypt, boils (*sores*) will break out on the skin.”

¹⁰So Moses and Aaron took ashes from a furnace. Then they went and stood before Pharaoh. They threw the ashes into the air, and boils began breaking out on people and animals. ¹¹The magicians could not stop Moses from doing this, because even the magicians had the boils. This happened everywhere in Egypt. ¹²But the Lord made Pharaoh stubborn. So Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses and Aaron. This happened just like the Lord had said.

The Hail

¹³Then the Lord said to Moses, “Get up in the morning and go to Pharaoh. Tell him that the Lord, the God of the Hebrew people says, ‘Let my people go to worship me! ¹⁴If you don’t do this, then I will use my full power

against you, your officials, and your people. Then you will know that there is no god in the world like me. ¹⁵I could use my power and cause a disease that would wipe you and your people off the earth. ¹⁶But I have put you here for a reason. I have put you here so that I could show you my power. Then people all over the world will learn about me! ¹⁷You are still against my people. You are not letting them go free. ¹⁸So, at this time tomorrow, I will cause a very bad hailstorm. There has never been a hailstorm like this in Egypt, not since Egypt became a nation. ¹⁹Now, you must put your animals in a safe place. Everything you own that is now in the fields must be put in a safe place. Why? Because any person or animal that remains in the fields will be killed. The hail will fall on everything that is not gathered into your houses.”

²⁰Some of Pharaoh’s officials paid attention to the Lord’s message. Those men quickly put all of their animals and slaves into houses. ²¹But other people ignored the Lord’s message. Those people lost all their slaves and animals that were in the fields.

²²The Lord told Moses, “Raise your arms into the air and the hail will start falling all over Egypt. The hail will fall on all the people, animals, and plants in all the fields of Egypt.”

²³So Moses raised his walking stick into the air, and the Lord caused thunder, lightning, and hail to fall to earth. The hail fell all over Egypt. ²⁴The hail was falling. And there was lightning flashing all through it. It was the worst hailstorm that had ever hit Egypt since it had been a nation. ²⁵The storm destroyed everything in the fields in Egypt. The hail destroyed people, animals, and plants. The hail also broke all the trees in the fields. ²⁶The only place that did not get hail was the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel lived.

²⁷Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh told them, “This time I have sinned. The Lord is right, and I and my people are wrong. ²⁸The hail and thunder from God are too much! Ask God to stop the storm and I will let you go. You don’t have to stay here.”

²⁹Moses told Pharaoh, “When I leave the city, I will lift my arms in prayer to the Lord.

And the thunder and hail will stop. Then you will know that the Lord is in this land. ³⁰But I know that you and your officials don't really fear and respect the Lord yet."

³¹The flax had already developed its seeds. And the barley was already blooming. So these plants were destroyed. ³²But the wheat and spelt ripen later than the other grains, so these plants were not destroyed.

³³Moses left Pharaoh and went outside the city. He lifted his arms in prayer to the Lord. And the thunder and hail stopped, and then even the rain stopped.

³⁴When Pharaoh saw that the rain, hail, and thunder had stopped, he again did wrong. He and his officials became stubborn again. ³⁵Pharaoh refused to let the people of Israel go free. This happened just like the Lord had said through Moses.

The Locusts

10 The Lord said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh. I have made him and his officials stubborn. I did this so I could show them my powerful miracles. ²I also did this so you could tell your children and your grandchildren about the miracles and other wonderful things that I have done in Egypt. Then all of you will know that I am the Lord."

³So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh. They told him, "The Lord, the God of the Hebrew people, says, 'How long will you refuse to obey me? Let my people go to worship me! ⁴If you refuse to let my people go, then tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country. ⁵The locusts will cover the land. There will be so many locusts that you won't be able to see the ground. Anything that was left from the hailstorm will be eaten by the locusts. The locusts will eat all the leaves from every tree in the field. ⁶The locusts will fill all your houses, and all your officials' houses, and all the houses in Egypt. There will be more locusts than your fathers or your grandfathers ever saw. There will be more locusts than there have ever been since people began living in Egypt.'" Then Moses turned and left Pharaoh.

⁷Then the officials asked Pharaoh, "How long will we be trapped by these people. Let

the men go to worship the Lord their God. If you don't let them go, then before you know it, Egypt will be destroyed!"

⁸So Pharaoh told his officials to bring Moses and Aaron back to him. Pharaoh said to them, "Go and worship the Lord your God. But tell me, exactly who is going?"

⁹Moses answered, "All of our people, young and old, will go. And we will take our sons and daughters, and our sheep and cattle with us. We will all go because the Lord's feast is for all of us."

¹⁰Pharaoh said to them, "The Lord really will have to be with you before I let you and all of your children leave Egypt. Look, you are planning something bad. ¹¹The men can go worship the Lord. That is what you asked for in the beginning. But all of your people can't go." Then Pharaoh sent Moses and Aaron away.

¹²The Lord told Moses, "Raise your arm over the land of Egypt and the locusts will come! The locusts will spread all over the land of Egypt. The locusts will eat all the plants that the hail did not destroy."

¹³So Moses raised his walking stick over the land of Egypt, and the Lord caused a strong wind to blow from the east. The wind blew all that day and night. When morning came, the wind had brought the locusts to the land of Egypt. ¹⁴The locusts flew into the country of Egypt and landed on the ground. There were more locusts than there had ever been in Egypt. And there will never again be that many locusts there. ¹⁵The locusts covered the ground, and the whole country became dark. The locusts ate every plant on the ground and all of the fruit in the trees that the hail had not destroyed. There weren't any leaves left on any of the trees or plants anywhere in Egypt.

¹⁶Pharaoh quickly called for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh said, "I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you. ¹⁷Now, forgive me for my sins this time. Ask the Lord to remove this 'death' (*locusts*) from me."

¹⁸Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord. ¹⁹So the Lord changed the wind. The Lord made a very strong wind blow from the west, and it blew the locusts out of Egypt and

into the Red Sea. Not one locust was left in Egypt! ²⁰But the Lord caused Pharaoh to be stubborn again. And Pharaoh did not let the people of Israel go.

The Darkness

²¹Then the Lord told Moses, “Raise your arm into the air and darkness will cover Egypt. It will be so dark you can feel it!”

²²So Moses raised his arm into the air and a cloud of darkness covered Egypt. The darkness stayed in Egypt for three days. ²³None of the people could see each other. And no one got up to go any place for three days. But there was light in all the places where the people of Israel lived.

²⁴Again Pharaoh called for Moses. Pharaoh said, “Go and worship the Lord! You can take your children with you. But you must leave your sheep and cattle here.”

²⁵Moses said, “Not only will we take our sheep and cattle with us, but when we leave, even you will give us offerings and sacrifices* for us to use in worshiping the Lord our God! ²⁶Yes, we will take our animals with us to worship the Lord. Not one hoof* will be left behind. We don’t know yet exactly what we will need to worship the Lord. We will learn that only when we get to the place we are going. So we must take all of these things with us.”

²⁷The Lord made Pharaoh stubborn again. So Pharaoh refused to let them go. ²⁸Then Pharaoh told Moses, “Get out of here! I don’t want you to come here again! The next time you come to see me, you will die!”

²⁹Then Moses told Pharaoh, “You are right about one thing. I won’t come to see you again!”

The Death of the Firstborn

11 Then the Lord told Moses, “I have one more disaster to bring against Pharaoh and Egypt. After this, he will send you out of Egypt. In fact, he will force you to leave this country. ²You must give this message to the people of Israel: ‘Men and women, you must

ask your neighbors to give you things made of silver and gold. ³The Lord will cause the Egyptians to be kind to you. The Egyptian people, even Pharaoh’s own officials, already consider Moses to be a great man.’”

⁴Moses said to the people, “The Lord says, ‘At midnight tonight, I will go through Egypt, ⁵and every firstborn* son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, to the firstborn son of the slave girl grinding grain. Even the firstborn animals will die. ⁶The crying in Egypt will be worse than at any time in the past. And it will be worse than it will ever be in the future. ⁷But none of the people of Israel will be hurt—not even a dog will bark at them. None of the people of Israel or any of their animals will be hurt. In this way, you will know that I have treated Israel differently from Egypt. ⁸Then all of these slaves of yours (*the Egyptians*) will bow down and worship me. They will say, ‘Leave and take all your people with you.’ Then in anger, I will leave Pharaoh.’”

⁹Then the Lord told Moses, “Pharaoh has not listened to you. Why? So that I could show my great power in Egypt.” ¹⁰That is why Moses and Aaron did all these great miracles in front of Pharaoh. And that is why the Lord made Pharaoh so stubborn that he would not let the people of Israel leave his country.

Passover

12 While Moses and Aaron were still in Egypt, the Lord spoke to them. The Lord said, ²“This month* will be the first month of the year for you. ³This command is for the whole community of Israel: On the tenth day of this month each person must get one lamb for the people in his house. ⁴If there are not enough people in his house to eat a whole lamb, then he should invite some of his neighbors to share the meal. There must be enough lamb for everyone to eat. ⁵The lamb must be a one-year-old male, and it must be completely healthy. This animal can be either

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

hoof The hard part of the foot of certain animals.

firstborn The first child born into a family. The firstborn son was very important in ancient times.

month That is, the month of Abib (Nisan). This was about the middle of March to the middle of April.

a young sheep or a young goat. ⁶You should watch over the animal until the 14th day of the month. On that day, all the people of the community of Israel must kill these animals at twilight.* ⁷You must collect the blood from these animals. Put the blood on the top and sides of the door frames of the houses where the people eat this meal.

⁸“On this night, you must roast the lamb and eat all of the meat. You must also eat bitter herbs and bread made without yeast. ⁹You must not boil the lamb in water. You must roast the whole lamb over a fire. The lamb must still have its head, legs, and inner parts. ¹⁰You must eat all of the meat that night. If any of the meat is left until morning, then you must burn that meat in the fire.

¹¹“When you eat the meal, you must be fully dressed like you are going on a journey. You must have your shoes on your feet and your walking stick in your hand. You must eat in a hurry. Why? Because this is the Lord’s Passover*—the time when the Lord protected his people and led them quickly out of Egypt.

¹²“Tonight I will go through Egypt and kill every firstborn* man and animal in Egypt. In this way, I will judge all the gods of Egypt. I will show that I am the Lord. ¹³But the blood on your houses will be a special sign. When I see the blood, I will pass over* your house. I will cause bad things to happen to the people of Egypt. But none of those bad diseases will hurt you.

¹⁴“So you will always remember tonight—it will be a special holiday for you. Your descendants* will honor the Lord with this holiday forever. ¹⁵On this holiday, you will eat bread made without yeast for seven days. On the first day of this holiday, you will remove all the yeast from your houses. No one should eat any yeast for the full seven

days of this holiday. If anyone eats yeast, then you must separate that person from the rest of Israel. ¹⁶There will be holy assemblies on the first day and the last day of the holiday. You must not do any work on these days. The only work you can do on these days is prepare the food for your meals. ¹⁷You must remember the Festival of Unleavened Bread.* Why? Because on this day I took all of your people out of Egypt in groups.* So, all of your descendants* must remember this day. This is a law that will last forever. ¹⁸So, on the evening of the 14th day of the first month (*Nisan*) you will begin eating bread without yeast. You will eat this bread until the evening of the 21st day of the same month. ¹⁹For seven days there must not be any yeast in your houses. Any person, either a citizen of Israel or a foreigner, who eats yeast at this time must be separated from the rest of Israel. ²⁰On this holiday, you must not eat any yeast. You must eat bread without yeast wherever you live.”

²¹So Moses called all the elders (*leaders*) together. Moses told them, “Get the lambs for your families. Kill the lambs for the Passover. ²²Take bunches of hyssop* and dip them in the bowls filled with blood. Paint the blood on the sides and tops of the door frames. No one must leave his house until morning. ²³At the time the Lord goes through Egypt to kill the firstborn, the Lord will see the blood on the sides and tops of the door frames. Then the Lord will protect* that house. The Lord will not let the Destroyer come into your houses and hurt you. ²⁴You must remember this command. This law is for you and your descendants* forever. ²⁵You must remember to do this even when you go to the land the Lord is giving you. ²⁶When your children ask you, ‘Why are we doing this ceremony?’ ²⁷you will say, ‘This Passover is to honor the Lord. Why? Because when we were in Egypt,

twilight The time after the sun goes down, but before dark.

Passover The Hebrew word means “to skip, pass over” or “to protect.”

firstborn The first child born into a family. The firstborn son was very important in ancient times.

pass over Or, “protect.”

descendants A person’s children and their future families.

Unleavened Bread Bread made without yeast.

groups Or, “divisions.” This is a military term that shows Israel was organized like an army.

hyssop A plant with stems about 3 feet long. The leaves and branches are like hair, so they could be used like a brush.

protect Or, “pass over.”

the Lord passed over* the houses of Israel. The Lord killed the Egyptians, but he saved the people in our houses. So now the people bow down and worship the Lord.”

²⁸The Lord had given this command to Moses and Aaron. So the people of Israel did what the Lord commanded.

²⁹At midnight, the Lord killed all the firstborn sons in Egypt, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh (who ruled Egypt) to the firstborn son of the prisoner sitting in jail. Also all the firstborn animals died. ³⁰That night someone died in every house in Egypt. Pharaoh, his officials, and all the people of Egypt began crying very loudly.

Israel Leaves Egypt

³¹So that night, Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh said to them, “Get up and leave my people. You and your people can do as you say. Go and worship the Lord! ³²Take all of your sheep and cattle with you, just like you said you would. Go! And say a blessing for me too!” ³³The people of Egypt also asked them to hurry and leave. Why? Because they said, “If you don’t leave, we will all die!”

³⁴The people of Israel did not have time to put the yeast in their bread. They just wrapped the bowls of dough with cloth and carried them on their shoulders. ³⁵Then the people of Israel did what Moses asked them to do. They went to their Egyptian neighbors and asked for clothing and things made from silver and gold. ³⁶The Lord caused the Egyptians to be kind to the people of Israel. So the Egyptians gave their riches to the people of Israel.

³⁷The people of Israel traveled from Rameses to Succoth. There were about 600,000 men. This does not include the children. ³⁸There were many, many sheep, cattle and other things. There were also many different kinds of people traveling with them. These people were not Israelites, but they left Egypt with the people of Israel. ³⁹The people did not have time to put yeast in their bread. And they did not make any special food for their journey. So they had to bake their bread without yeast.

passed over Or, “protected.”

⁴⁰The people of Israel had lived in Egypt* for 430 years. ⁴¹After 430 years, to the very day, all the armies of the Lord* left Egypt. ⁴²So that is a very special night when the people remember what the Lord did. All the people of Israel will remember that night forever.

⁴³The Lord told Moses and Aaron, “Here are the rules for Passover: No foreigner is to eat the Passover. ⁴⁴But if a person buys a slave, and if he circumcises* him, then the slave can eat the Passover. ⁴⁵But if a person just lives in your country, or if a person is only hired to work for you, then that person must not eat the Passover. [Passover is for the people of Israel.]

⁴⁶“[Each family must] eat the meal in one house. None of the food is to be taken outside the house. Don’t break any of the lamb’s bones. ⁴⁷The whole community of Israel must do this ceremony. ⁴⁸If a non-Israelite lives with you, and if he wants to share in the Lord’s Passover, then he must be circumcised.* Then he will be the same as any other citizen of Israel, so he can share in the meal. But if a man is not circumcised, then he cannot eat the Passover meal. ⁴⁹The same rules are for everyone. It does not matter if a person is a citizen or a non-Israelite living in your country—the same rules are for everyone.”

⁵⁰So all the people of Israel obeyed the commands that the Lord gave to Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹So on that same day, the Lord led all the people of Israel out of the country of Egypt. The people left in groups.*

13 Then the Lord said to Moses, ²“You must give me every male in Israel that is its mother’s first child. That means that every firstborn baby [boy] and every firstborn [male] animal will be mine.”

Egypt The ancient Greek and Samaritan translations say, “Egypt and Canaan.” This would mean they counted the years from about Abraham’s time, not from Joseph’s. See Gen. 15:12-16 and Gal. 3:17.

armies of the Lord The people of Israel.

circumcise(d) To have the foreskin cut off. This was done to every Jewish male to show he shared in the agreement God made with Israel. See Gen. 17:9-14.

groups Or, “divisions.” This is a military term, and it shows the people were organized as the “army of the Lord.”

³Moses said to the people, “Remember this day. You were slaves in Egypt. But on this day the Lord used his great power and made you free. You must not eat bread with yeast. ⁴Today, in the month of Abib,* you are leaving [Egypt]. ⁵The Lord made a special promise to your ancestors.* The Lord promised to give you the land of the Canaanite people, the Hittite people, the Amorite people, the Hivite people, and the Jebusite people. After the Lord leads you to the land filled with many good things,* then you must remember this day. You must have a special day of worship on this day during the first month of every year.

⁶“For seven days you must eat only bread that has no yeast. On the seventh day there will be a great feast. This feast will show honor to the Lord. ⁷So for seven days you must not eat any bread made with yeast. There must be no bread with yeast any place in your land. ⁸On this day, you should tell your children, ‘We are having this feast because the Lord took me out of Egypt.’

⁹“This holiday will help you remember—it will be like a string tied on your hand. It will be like a sign before your eyes.* This holiday will help you remember the Lord’s teachings. It will help you remember that the Lord used his great power to take you out of Egypt. ¹⁰So remember this holiday every year at the right time.

¹¹“The Lord will lead you into the land he promised to give you. The Canaanite people now live there. But God promised your ancestors* that he would give you this land. After God gives you this land, ¹²you must remember to give him every firstborn boy. And every male animal that is the firstborn must be given to the Lord. ¹³Every firstborn donkey can be bought back from the Lord.

Abib Or, “spring.” This is Nisan, the first month of the ancient Jewish year.

ancestors Literally, “fathers.” This means a person’s parents, grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

filled with many good things Literally, “flowing with milk and honey.”

string ... eyes Literally, “a mark on your hands and a reminder between your eyes.” This might refer to the special things a Jewish man ties to his arm and forehead to help him remember God’s laws for him.

You can offer a lamb and keep the donkey. If you don’t want to buy the donkey from the Lord, then kill it. It will be a sacrifice*—you must break its neck. But every firstborn baby boy* must be bought back from the Lord.

¹⁴“In the future, your children will ask why you do this. They will say, ‘What does all this mean?’ And you will answer, ‘The Lord used his great power to save us from Egypt. We were slaves in that place. But the Lord led us out and brought us here. ¹⁵In Egypt, Pharaoh was stubborn. He refused to let us leave. So the Lord killed every firstborn* in all the land. (The Lord killed the firstborn animals and the firstborn sons.*) That is why I give every firstborn male animal to the Lord. And that is why I buy back each of my firstborn sons from the Lord.’ ¹⁶This is like a string tied on your hand. And it is like a sign in front of your eyes.* It helps you remember that the Lord brought us out of Egypt with his great power.”

The Trip out of Egypt

¹⁷Pharaoh made the people leave Egypt. The Lord did not let the people take the road leading to the land of the Philistines. That road [by the sea] is the shortest way, but the Lord said, “[If the people go that way] they will have to fight. Then they might change their minds and go back to Egypt.” ¹⁸So the Lord led them another way. He led them through the desert by the Red Sea.* The people of Israel were dressed for war when they left Egypt.

Joseph Goes Home

¹⁹Moses carried the bones of Joseph with him. Before Joseph died, he made the sons of Israel promise to do this for him. Joseph said, “When God saves you, remember to carry my bones with you out of Egypt.”

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

baby boy Or, “baby.”

firstborn The first child born into a family. The firstborn son was very important in ancient times.

sons Or, “children.”

Red Sea Or, “Reed Sea.” But see 1 Kings 9:26.

The Lord Leads His People

²⁰The people of Israel left Succoth and camped at Etham. Etham was near the desert. ²¹The Lord led the way. During the day, the Lord used a tall cloud to lead the people. And during the night, the Lord used a tall column of fire to lead the way. This fire gave them light so they could also travel at night. ²²The tall cloud was always with them during the day, and the column of fire was always with them at night.

14 Then the Lord said to Moses, ²“Tell the people to go back to Pi Hahiroth. Tell them to spend the night between Migdol and the [Red] Sea, near Baal Zephon. ³Pharaoh will think that the people of Israel are lost in the desert. And he will think that the people will have no place to go. ⁴I will make Pharaoh brave, and he will chase you. But I will defeat Pharaoh and his army. This will bring honor to me. Then the people of Egypt will know that I am the Lord.” The people of Israel obeyed God—they did what he told them.

Pharaoh Chases the Israelites

⁵Pharaoh received a report that the people of Israel had escaped. When he heard this, he and his officials changed their minds about what they had done. Pharaoh said, “Why did we let the people of Israel leave? Why did we let them run away? Now we have lost our slaves!”

⁶So Pharaoh prepared his chariot* and took his men with him. ⁷Pharaoh took 600 of his best men and all of his chariots. There was an officer in each chariot. ⁸The people of Israel were leaving with their arms raised in victory. But the Lord caused Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to become brave. And Pharaoh chased the people of Israel.

⁹The Egyptian army had many horse soldiers and chariots. They chased the people of Israel and caught up with them while they were camped near the Red Sea* at Pi Hahiroth, east of Baal Zephon.

¹⁰The people of Israel saw Pharaoh and his army coming toward them. The people were very scared. They cried to the Lord for help.

¹¹They said to Moses, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Why did you bring us out here in the desert to die? We could have died peacefully in Egypt—there were plenty of graves in Egypt. ¹²We told you this would happen! In Egypt we said, ‘Please don’t bother us. Let us stay and serve the Egyptians.’ It would have been better for us to stay and be slaves than to come out here and die in the desert.”

¹³But Moses answered, “Don’t be afraid! Stand where you are and watch the Lord save you today. You will never see these Egyptians again! ¹⁴You won’t have to do anything but stay calm. The Lord will do the fighting for you.”

¹⁵Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why are you still crying to me! Tell the people of Israel to start moving. ¹⁶Raise the walking stick in your hand over the Red Sea,* and the sea will split. Then the people can go across on dry land. ¹⁷I have made the Egyptians brave, so they will chase you. But I will show you that I am more powerful than Pharaoh and all of his horses and chariots. ¹⁸Then Egypt will know that I am the Lord. They will honor me when I defeat Pharaoh and his horse soldiers and chariots.”

The Lord Defeats the Egyptian Army

¹⁹Then the angel of the Lord moved to the back of the people. (The angel of the Lord was usually at the front of the people, leading them.) So the tall cloud moved from in front of the people and went to the back of the people. ²⁰In this way the cloud stood between the Egyptians and the people of Israel. There was light for the people of Israel. But there was darkness for the Egyptians. So the Egyptians did not come any closer to the people of Israel that night.

²¹Moses raised his arm over the Red Sea,* and the Lord caused a strong wind to blow from the east. The wind blew all night long. The sea split, and the wind made the ground dry. ²²The people of Israel went through the sea on dry land. The water was like a wall on their right and on their left. ²³Then all of Pharaoh’s chariots and horse soldiers followed them into the sea. ²⁴Early that morning, the

chariot(s) A small wagon used in war.

Red Sea Or, “Reed Sea.” But see 1 Kings 9:26.

Lord looked down from the tall cloud and column of fire at the Egyptian army. Then the Lord attacked and defeated them all.

²⁵The wheels of the chariots became stuck. It was very hard to control the chariots. The Egyptians shouted, “Let’s get out of here! The Lord is fighting against us. The Lord is fighting for the people of Israel.”

²⁶Then the Lord told Moses, “Raise your hand over the sea to make the water fall and cover the Egyptian chariots and horse soldiers.”

²⁷So, just before daylight, Moses raised his hand over the sea. And the water rushed back to its proper level. The Egyptians were running as fast as they could from the water, but the Lord swept them away with the sea.

²⁸The water returned to its proper level and covered the chariots and horse soldiers. Pharaoh’s army had been chasing the people of Israel, but that army was destroyed. None of them survived!

²⁹But the people of Israel crossed the sea on dry land. The water was like a wall on their right and on their left. ³⁰So that day, the Lord saved the people of Israel from the Egyptians. And later the people of Israel saw the dead bodies of the Egyptians on the shore of the Red Sea.* ³¹The people of Israel saw the great power of the Lord when he defeated the Egyptians. So the people feared and respected the Lord. They began to trust the Lord and his servant Moses.

The Song of Moses

15 Then Moses and the people of Israel began singing this song to the Lord:

“I will sing to the Lord!

He has done great things.

He threw horse and rider into the sea.

² The Lord is my strength.

He saves me,

and I sing songs of praise to him.*

The Lord is my God,

and I praise him.

The Lord is the God of my ancestors,*
and I honor him.

³ The Lord is a great soldier.

The Lord is his name.

⁴ He threw Pharaoh’s chariots and soldiers
into the sea.

Pharaoh’s very best soldiers
drowned in the Red Sea.*

⁵ The deep water covered them.

And they sank to the bottom like rocks.

⁶ “Your right arm is amazingly strong.

Lord, your right arm shattered the enemy.

⁷ In your great majesty you destroyed
the men who stood against you.

Your anger destroyed them,
like fire burning straw.

⁸ The wind you sent in anger
piled the water high.

The flowing water became a solid wall.

The sea became solid to its deepest parts.

⁹ “The enemy said,

‘I’ll chase them and catch them.

I’ll take all their riches.

I’ll take it all with my sword.

I’ll take everything for myself.’

¹⁰ But you blew on them

and covered them with the sea.

They sank like lead into the deep sea.

¹¹ “Are there any gods like the Lord?

No! There are no gods like you—

You are wonderfully holy!

You are amazingly powerful!

You do great miracles!

¹² You could raise your right hand
and destroy the world!

¹³ But with your kindness

you lead the people you saved.

And with your strength

you lead them to your holy and

pleasant land.

¹⁴ “The other nations will hear this story,

and they will be frightened.

The people Philistia will shake with fear.

Red Sea Or, “Reed Sea.” But see 1 Kings 9:26.

The Lord ... him Literally, “Yah is my strength and praise.
He became my salvation.”

ancestors Literally, “fathers,” meaning a person’s parents,
grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

- 15 The commanders of Edom will shake
with fear.
The leaders of Moab will be afraid.
The people of Canaan will lose courage.
- 16 Those people will be filled with fear
when they see your strength.
They will be as still as a rock
until the Lord's people pass by,
until the people you have made pass by.
- 17 Lord, you will lead your people
to your mountain.
You will let them live near the place
you prepared for your throne.
Master, you will build your temple!
- 18 The Lord will rule forever and ever!"

¹⁹Yes, it really happened! Pharaoh's horses and riders and chariots went into the sea. And the Lord brought all the water of the sea down on top of them. But the people of Israel walked through that sea on dry land.

²⁰Then Aaron's sister, the woman prophet Miriam, took a tambourine. Miriam and the women began singing and dancing. Miriam repeated the words,

- 21 "Sing to the Lord!
He has done great things.
He threw horse and rider into the sea..."

²²Moses led the people of Israel away from the Red Sea* and into the Shur desert. They traveled for three days in the desert. The people could not find any water. ²³After three days, the people came to Marah.* There was water at Marah, but it was too bitter to drink. (That is why the place was named Marah.)

²⁴The people began complaining to Moses. The people said, "Now what will we drink?"

²⁵Moses called to the Lord. So the Lord showed him a tree. Moses put the tree in the water. When he did this, the water became good to drink.

In that place, the Lord judged the people and gave them a law. The Lord also tested the faith of the people. ²⁶The Lord said, "You must obey the Lord, your God. You must do the things he says are right. If you obey all the

Lord's commands and laws, then you will not be sick like the Egyptians. I, the Lord, will not give you any of the sicknesses I gave the Egyptians. I am the Lord. I am the one who makes you well."

²⁷Then the people traveled to Elim. At Elim there were twelve springs of water and 70 palm trees. So the people made their camp there near that water.

16 Then the people left Elim and came to the Sinai desert, between Elim and Sinai. They arrived at that place on the 15th day of the second month* after leaving Egypt. ²Then the people of Israel began complaining again. They complained to Moses and Aaron in the desert. ³The people said, "It would have been better if the Lord had just killed us in the land of Egypt. At least there we had plenty to eat. We had all the food we needed. But now you have brought us out here into this desert. So he can make us die from hunger."

⁴Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will cause food to fall from the sky. This food will be for you to eat. Every day the people should go out and gather the food they need that day. I will do this to see if the people will do what I tell them. ⁵Every day the people will gather only enough food for one day. But on Friday, when the people prepare their food [for Saturday], they will see that they have enough food for two days.*

⁶So Moses and Aaron said to the people of Israel, "Tonight you will see the power of the Lord. You will know that he is the One who brought you out of Egypt. ⁷You complained to the Lord, and he heard you. So tomorrow morning you will see the Glory of the Lord.* You have been complaining and complaining to us. Maybe now we can have a little rest."

⁸And Moses said, "You have been complaining, and the Lord has heard your complaints. So tonight the Lord will give you meat. And in the morning you will have all the bread you need. You have been

15th day of the second month That is, the 15th of Iyyar. The people of Israel had been traveling for a month.

Friday, ... two days This happened so that the people would not have to work on the Sabbath (Saturday), the day of rest.

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.

Red Sea Or, "Reed Sea." But see 1 Kings 9:26.

Marah This name means "bitter."

complaining to Aaron and me. But now, maybe we will have a little rest. Remember, you are not complaining against Aaron and me. You are complaining against the Lord.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Speak to all the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘Come together before the Lord, because he has heard your complaints.’”

¹⁰Aaron spoke to all the people of Israel. They were all gathered together in one place. While Aaron was talking, all the people turned and looked into the desert. And they saw the Glory of the Lord* appear in a cloud.

¹¹The Lord said to Moses, ¹²“I have heard the complaints of the people of Israel. So tell them, ‘Tonight you will eat meat. And in the morning you will have all the bread you want. Then you will know you can trust the Lord, your God.’”

¹³That night, quails (*birds*) came all around the camp. [The people caught these birds for meat.] And in the morning dew lay on the ground near the camp. ¹⁴After the dew was gone, something like thin flakes of frost was on the ground. ¹⁵The people of Israel saw it and asked each other, “What is that?”* They asked this question because they did not know what it was. So Moses told them, “This is the food the Lord is giving you to eat. ¹⁶The Lord says, ‘Each person should gather what he needs. Each of you should gather a basket* for every person in your family.’”

¹⁷So the people of Israel did this. Each person gathered this food. Some people gathered more than others. ¹⁸The people gave the food to everyone in their family. After the food was measured, there was always enough for every person, but there was never too much. Each person gathered just enough for himself and his family to eat.

¹⁹Moses told them, “Don’t save that food to eat the next day.” ²⁰But some of the people did not obey Moses. Those people saved their food for the next day. But worms got into the

food and it began to stink. Moses was angry with the people who did this.

²¹Every morning the people gathered the food. Each person gathered as much as he could eat. But by noon* the food melted and was gone.

²²On Friday, the people gathered twice as much food. They gathered 2 baskets* for every person. So all the leaders of the people came and told this to Moses.

²³Moses told them, “This is what the Lord said would happen. It happened because tomorrow is the Sabbath, the special day of rest to honor the Lord. You can cook all the food you need to cook for today. But save the rest of this food for tomorrow morning.”

²⁴So the people saved the rest of the food for the next day. And none of the food spoiled. And worms did not get into any of it.

²⁵On Saturday, Moses told the people, “Today is the Sabbath, the special day of rest to honor the Lord. So none of you should be out in the fields. Eat the food you gathered yesterday. ²⁶You should gather the food for six days. But the seventh day [of the week] is a day of rest—so there will not be any of the special food on the ground.”

²⁷On Saturday, some of the people went out to gather some of the food, but they could not find any. ²⁸Then the Lord said to Moses, “How long will you people refuse to obey my commands and teachings? ²⁹Look, the Lord has made the Sabbath a day of rest for you. So, on Friday the Lord will give you enough food for two days. Then, on the Sabbath, each of you should sit down and relax! Stay where you are.” ³⁰So the people rested on the Sabbath.

³¹The people began calling the special food “manna.*” The manna was like small white coriander seeds, and it tasted like thin cakes made with honey. ³²Moses said, “The Lord said: ‘Save a basket* of this food for your descendants.*’ Then they can see the food that

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.

What is that? In Hebrew this is like the word “manna.”

basket Literally, “1 omer” (2.21).

noon Literally, “the heat of the day.”

2 baskets Literally, “2 omers” (4.41).

manna This is like the Hebrew words meaning “What is that?”

descendants A person’s children and their future families.

I gave to you in the desert when I took you out of Egypt.”

³³So Moses told Aaron, “Take a jar and fill it with a full basket* of manna. Save this manna to put before the Lord. Save it for our descendants.*” ³⁴(Aaron [later] did what the Lord had commanded Moses. Aaron put the jar of manna in front of the Agreement.*) ³⁵The people ate the manna for 40 years. They ate the manna until they came to the land of rest, that is until they came to the edge of the land of Canaan. (³⁶The measure they used for the manna was an omer.] An omer was about 8 cups.*)

17 All the people of Israel traveled together from the desert of Sin. They traveled from place to place as the Lord commanded. The people traveled to Rephidim and camped there. There was no water there for the people to drink. ²So the people turned against Moses and started arguing with him. The people said, “Give us water to drink.”

Moses said to them, “Why have you turned against me? Why are you testing the Lord? [Do you think the Lord is not with us?]”

³But the people were very thirsty for water. So they continued complaining to Moses. The people said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out here so that we, our children, and our cattle will all die without water?”

⁴So Moses cried to the Lord, “What can I do with these people? They are ready to kill me.”

⁵The Lord said to Moses, “Go before the people of Israel. Take some of the elders (*leaders*) of the people with you. Carry your walking stick with you. This is the stick that you used when you hit the Nile River. ⁶I will stand before you on a rock at Horeb (*Mount Sinai*). Hit that rock with the walking stick and water will come out of it. Then the people can drink.”

basket Literally, “1 omer” (2.2l).

descendants A person’s children and their future families.

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them were proof of the Agreement between God and Israel.

about 8 cups Literally, “1/10 of an Ephah.”

Moses did these things and the elders (*leaders*) of Israel saw it. ⁷Moses named that place Meribah* and Massah,* because this was the place that the people of Israel turned against him and tested the Lord. The people wanted to know if the Lord was with them or not.

⁸At Rephidim the Amalekite people came and fought against the people of Israel. ⁹So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some men and go and fight the Amalekites tomorrow. I will stand on the top of the hill and watch you. I will be holding the walking stick God gave me.”

¹⁰Joshua obeyed Moses and went to fight the Amalekite people the next day. At the same time, Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of the hill. ¹¹Any time Moses held his hands in the air, the men of Israel would win the fight. But when Moses put his hands down, the men of Israel began to lose the fight.

¹²After some time, Moses’ arms became tired. [The men with Moses wanted to find a way to keep Moses’ hands in the air.] So they put a large rock under Moses for him to sit on. Then Aaron and Hur held Moses’ hands in the air. Aaron was on one side of Moses and Hur was on the other side. They held his hands up like this until the sun went down. ¹³So Joshua [and his men] defeated the Amalekites in this battle.

¹⁴Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write about this battle. Write these things in a book so people will remember what happened here. And be sure to tell Joshua that I will completely destroy the Amalekite people from the earth.”

¹⁵Then Moses built an altar.* Moses named the altar, “The Lord is my flag.” ¹⁶Moses said, “I lifted my hands toward the Lord’s throne. So the Lord fought against the Amalekites, like he always has.”

Advice from Moses’ Father-in-Law

18 Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, was a priest in Midian. Jethro heard about the many ways that God helped Moses and the people of Israel. Jethro heard about the Lord

Meribah This name means “rebellion.”

Massah This name means “trial,” “temptation,” or “test.”

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

leading the people of Israel out of Egypt. ²So Jethro went to Moses while Moses was camped near the mountain of God.* Jethro brought Moses' wife, Zipporah, with him. (Zipporah was not with Moses, because Moses had sent her home.) ³Jethro also brought Moses' two sons with him. The first son was named Gershom,* because when he was born, Moses said, "I am a stranger in a foreign country." ⁴The other son was named Eliezer,* because when he was born, Moses said, "The God of my father helped me and saved me from the king of Egypt." ⁵So Jethro went to Moses while Moses was camped in the desert near the mountain of God (*Mount Sinai*). Moses' wife and his two sons were with Jethro.

⁶Jethro sent a message to Moses. Jethro said, "This is your father-in-law Jethro. I am bringing your wife and her two sons to you."

⁷So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. Moses bowed down before him and kissed him. The two men asked about each other's health. Then they went into Moses' tent to talk more. ⁸Moses told Jethro everything the Lord had done for the people of Israel. Moses told about the things the Lord did to Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. Moses told about all the problems they had along the way. And Moses told his father-in-law how the Lord saved the people of Israel every time there was trouble.

⁹Jethro was happy when he heard all the good things the Lord had done for Israel. He was glad that the Lord had freed the people of Israel from the Egyptians. ¹⁰Jethro said,

"Praise the Lord!
He freed you from the power of Egypt.
The Lord saved you from Pharaoh.

¹¹ Now I know the Lord
is greater than all the gods.
They thought they were in control,
but look what God did!

mountain of God That is, "Mount Horeb," also called "Mount Sinai."

Gershom This name is like the Hebrew words meaning "a stranger there."

Eliezer This name means "My God helps."

¹²Jethro got some sacrifices* and offerings to honor God. Then Aaron and all the elders (*leaders*) of Israel came to eat with Moses' father-in-law Jethro. They all ate together there with God.

¹³The next day, Moses had the special job of judging the people. [There were very many people,] so the people had to stand before Moses all day.

¹⁴Jethro saw Moses judging the people. He asked, "Why are you doing this? Why are you the only judge? And why do people come to you all day?"

¹⁵Then Moses said to his father-in-law, "The people come to me and ask me to ask for God's decision to their problem. ¹⁶If people have an argument, they come to me. I decide which person is right. In this way, I teach the people God's laws and teachings."

¹⁷But Moses' father-in-law said to him, "This isn't the right way to do this. ¹⁸It is too much work for you to do alone. You can't do this job by yourself. It wears you out. And it makes the people tired too! ¹⁹Now, listen to me. Let me give you some advice. And I pray God will be with you. You should continue listening to the problems of the people. And you should continue to speak to God about these things. ²⁰You should teach God's laws and teachings to the people. Warn them not to break the laws. Tell them the right way to live. Tell them what they should do. ²¹But you should also choose some of the people to be judges and leaders.

"Choose good men you can trust—men who respect God. Choose men who will not change their decisions for money. And make these men rulers over the people. There should be rulers over 1,000 people, 100 people, 50 people, and even over ten people. ²²Let these rulers judge the people. If there is a very important case, then they can come to you and let you decide what to do. But they can decide the other cases themselves. In this way, these men will share your work with you and it will be easier for you to lead the people. ²³If you do these things, Lord willing, then

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

you will be still able to do your job. And at the same time, the people can go home with their problems solved.”

²⁴So Moses did what Jethro told him.

²⁵Moses chose good men from among the people of Israel. Moses made them leaders over the people. There were rulers over 1,000 people, 100 people, 50 people, and ten people.

²⁶These rulers were judges for the people. The people could always bring their arguments to these rulers. And Moses had to decide only the most important cases.

²⁷After a short time, Moses said goodbye to his father-in-law Jethro. And Jethro went back to his own home.

God's Agreement with Israel

19 The people of Israel reached the Sinai desert in the third month of their trip from Egypt. ²They had traveled from Rephidim to the Sinai desert. The people of Israel camped in the desert near the mountain (*Mount Horeb*). ³Then Moses climbed up the mountain to meet with God. God spoke to him on the mountain and said, “Tell these things to the people of Israel, the great family of Jacob: ⁴You people have seen what I can do to my enemies. You saw what I did to the people of Egypt. You saw that I carried you out of Egypt like an eagle and brought you here to me. ⁵So now I tell you to obey my commands. Keep my Agreement. If you do this, then you will be my own special people. The whole world belongs to me. But I am choosing you to be my own special people. ⁶You will be a special nation—a kingdom of priests.’ Moses, you must tell the people of Israel what I have said.”

⁷So Moses climbed down the mountain and called the elders (*rulers*) of the people together. Moses told the elders everything the Lord had commanded him to tell them. ⁸All the people spoke at the same time and said, “We will obey everything the Lord says.”

Then Moses went back to God on the mountain. Moses told God that the people would obey him. ⁹And the Lord said to Moses, “I will come to you in the thick cloud. I will speak to you. All of the people will hear me

talking to you. I will do this so that the people will always believe the things you tell them.”

Then Moses told God all the things the people had said.

¹⁰And the Lord said to Moses, “Today and tomorrow you must prepare the people for a special meeting. The people must wash their clothes ¹¹and be ready for me on the third day. On the third day the Lord will come down to Mount Sinai. And all the people will see me. ^{12–13}But you must tell the people to stay away from the mountain. Make a line and don’t let the people cross that line. Any person or animal that touches the mountain must be killed. He must be killed with rocks or shot with arrows. But don’t let anyone touch him. The people must wait until the trumpet blows. Only then can they go up the mountain.”

¹⁴So Moses climbed down the mountain and went to the people. Moses got them ready for the special meeting and they washed their clothes.

¹⁵Then Moses said to the people, “Be ready for the meeting with God in three days. Until that time, the men must not touch the women.”

¹⁶On the morning of the third day, a thick cloud came down onto the mountain. There was thunder and lightning and a very loud sound from a trumpet. All the people in the camp were frightened. ¹⁷Then Moses led the people out of the camp to a place near the mountain to meet God. ¹⁸Mount Sinai was covered with smoke. Smoke rose off the mountain like smoke from a furnace. This happened because the Lord came down to the mountain in fire. Also, the whole mountain began to shake. ¹⁹The noise from the trumpet became louder and louder. Every time Moses spoke to God, God answered him with a voice like thunder.

²⁰So the Lord came down to Mount Sinai. The Lord came from heaven to the top of the mountain. Then the Lord called Moses to come up to the top of the mountain with him. So Moses went up the mountain.

²¹The Lord said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people not to come near me and look at me. If they do this, then many people will die. ²²Also tell the priests who will come near

me that they must prepare themselves for this special meeting. If they don't do this, then I will punish them."

²³Moses told the Lord, "But the people cannot come up the mountain. You yourself told us to make a line and not allow the people to cross the line to holy ground."

²⁴The Lord said to him, "Go down to the people. Get Aaron and bring him back with you. But don't let the priests or the people come near me. I will punish them if they come too close."

²⁵So Moses went down to the people and told them these things.

The Ten Commandments

20 Then God said, ²"I am the Lord* your God. I led you out of the land of Egypt where you were slaves. ³So you must obey these commands:]"

³"You must not worship any other gods except me.

⁴"You must not make any idols.* Don't make any statues or pictures of anything up in the sky or of anything on the earth or of anything down in the water. ⁵Don't worship or serve idols of any kind. Why? Because I, the Lord, am your God. I hate my people worshiping other gods.* People who sin against me become my enemies. And I will punish those people. And I will punish their children, their grandchildren, and even their great-grandchildren. ⁶But I will be very kind to people who love me and obey my commands. I will be kind to their families for thousands of generations!*

⁷"You must not use the name of the Lord your God in a wrong way. If a person uses the Lord's name in a wrong way, then that person is guilty. And the Lord will not make him innocent.

⁸"You must remember to keep the Sabbath* a special day. ⁹Work at your job six days a week. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a day of rest in honor of the Lord your God. So on that day no person should work—not you, your sons and daughters, or your men and women slaves. Even your animals and the foreigners living in your cities must not work! ¹¹Why? Because the Lord worked six days and made the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. And on the seventh day, God rested. In this way, the Lord blessed the Sabbath—the day of rest. The Lord made that a very special day.

¹²"You must honor (*respect*) your father and your mother. Do this so you will have a full life in the land that the Lord your God gives you.

¹³"You must not murder anyone.

¹⁴"You must not do the sin of adultery.*

¹⁵"You must not steal anything.

¹⁶"You must not tell lies about other people.*

¹⁷"You must not want to take your neighbor's house. You must not want his wife. And you must not want his men and women servants, or his cattle, or his donkeys. You must not want to take anything that belongs to another person!"

The People Are Afraid of God

¹⁸During all this time, the people in the valley heard the thundering and saw the lightning on the mountain. They saw smoke rising from the mountain. The people were afraid, and they shook with fear. They stood away from the mountain and watched. ¹⁹Then the people said to Moses, "If you want to speak to us, then we will listen. But please don't let God speak to us. If this happens, we will die."

²⁰Then Moses said to the people, "Don't be afraid! The Lord has come to prove that he

Lord Or, "YAHWEH."

idols Statues of false gods that people worshiped.

I hate ... gods Or, "I am El Kanah—the Jealous God."

But I will be ... generations Or, "But I will show mercy to thousands of people that love me and obey my commands."

Sabbath Saturday, a special day of rest and worship for Jews.

adultery Breaking the marriage promise by doing sexual sin.

You ... other people Or, "You must not be a false witness against your neighbor."

loves you. He wants you to respect him so that you will not sin.”

²¹The people stood away from the mountain while Moses went to the dark cloud where God was. ²²Then the Lord told Moses to say these things to the people of Israel: “You people have seen that I talked with you from heaven. ²³So you must not make idols using gold or silver to compete with me. You must not make these false gods.

²⁴“Make a special altar* for me. Use dirt to make this altar. Offer burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on this altar as a sacrifice* to me. Use your sheep and your cattle to do this. Do this in every place where I tell you to remember me. Then I will come and bless you. ²⁵If you use stones to make an altar, then don’t use stones that were cut with an iron tool.* If you do that, it will make the altar not acceptable. ²⁶And you must not make steps leading up to the altar. If there are steps, then when people look up to the altar, they will be able to see under your clothes.”

Other Laws and Commands

21 [Then God said to Moses,] “These are the other laws that you will give to the people:

²“If you buy a Hebrew* slave, then that slave will serve for only six years. After six years he will become free. He will have to pay nothing. ³If the person is not married when he becomes your slave, then when he becomes free, he will leave without a wife. But if the man is married when he becomes your slave, then he will keep his wife at the time he is made free. ⁴If the slave is not married, the master can give him a wife. If that wife gives birth to sons or daughters, then she and her children will belong to the master. After the slave is finished with his years of service, then he will be made free.

⁵“But maybe the slave will decide that he wants to stay with the master. Then he must

say, ‘I love my master. I love my wife and my children. I will not become free—I will stay.’

⁶If this happens, then the master will bring the slave before God. The master will take the slave to a door or the wooden frame around the door. And the master will make a hole through the slave’s ear using a sharp tool. Then the slave will serve that master for all his life.

⁷“A man might decide to sell his daughter as a slave. If this happens, the rules for making her free are not the same as the rules for making the men slaves free. ⁸If the master is not pleased with the woman, then he can sell the woman back to her father. If the master promised [to marry the woman], then he loses the right to sell the woman to other people. ⁹If the master promised to let the slave woman marry his son, then she must not be treated like a slave. She must be treated like a daughter.

¹⁰“If the master marries another woman, then he must not give less food or clothing to the first wife. And he must continue to give her the things she has a right to have in marriage. ¹¹The man must do these three things for her. If he does not, then the woman is made free, and it will cost her nothing. She owes no money to the man.

¹²“If a person hits someone and kills him, then that person must be killed too. ¹³But if an accident happens, and a person kills someone without planning it, then God allowed that thing to happen. I will choose some special places where people can run for safety. So that person can run to one of those places. ¹⁴But if a person planned to kill another person because he is angry or hates him, then that killer must be punished. Take him away from my altar* and kill him.

¹⁵“Any person who hits his father or his mother must be killed.

¹⁶“If a person steals someone to sell him as a slave or to keep him for his own slave, then that person must be killed.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

sacrifice A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

iron tool Literally, “sword.”

Hebrew Or, “Israelite.”

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices. It was one of the special places an innocent person could run for safety.

¹⁷“Any person who curses* his father or his mother must be killed.

¹⁸“Two men might argue and one might hit the other with a rock or with his fist. [How should you punish that man?] If the man who was hurt is not killed, then the man who hurt him should not be killed. ¹⁹If the man was hurt and must stay in bed for some time, then the man who hurt him must support him. The man who hurt him must pay for the loss of his time. The man must support him until he is completely healed.

²⁰“Sometimes people beat their men or women slaves. If the slave dies after he is beaten, then the killer must be punished. ²¹But if the slave does not die and after a few days the slave becomes well, then that person will not be punished.* Why? Because the master paid his money for the slave, and the slave belongs to him.

²²“Two men might be fighting and they might hurt a pregnant woman. This might make the woman give birth to her babies [before their time]. If the woman was not hurt badly,* then the man who hurt her must pay a fine. The woman’s husband will decide how much the man must pay. The judges will help the man decide how much the fine will be. ²³But if the woman was hurt badly,* then the man who hurt her must be punished. [If a person is killed, then the person who caused it must be killed.] You must trade one life for another life. ²⁴You must trade an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, ²⁵a burn for a burn, a bruise for a bruise, a cut for a cut.

²⁶“If a man hits a slave in the eye, and the slave is blinded in that eye, then the slave will be allowed to go free. His eye is the payment for his freedom. This is the same for a man or a woman slave. ²⁷If a master hits his slave in the mouth, and the slave loses a tooth, then the slave will be allowed to go free. The slave’s tooth is payment for the slave’s freedom. This is the same for a man or a woman slave.

²⁸“If a man’s bull kills a man or woman, then you should use rocks and kill that bull. You should not eat the bull. But the owner of the bull is not guilty. ²⁹But if the bull had hurt people in the past, and if the owner was warned, then the owner is guilty. Why? Because he did not keep the bull tied or locked in its place. So if the bull is allowed to be free and kills someone, then that owner is guilty. You should kill the bull with rocks and also kill the owner. ³⁰But the family of the dead man may accept money. If they accept money, then the man who owned the bull should not be killed. But he must pay as much money as the judge decides.

³¹“This same law must be followed if the bull kills a person’s son or daughter. ³²But if the bull kills a slave, then the owner of the animal must pay the master 30 pieces of silver.* And the bull must also be killed with rocks. This law will be the same for men and women slaves.

³³“A man might take a cover off a well or he might dig a hole and not cover it. If another man’s animal comes and falls into that hole, then the man who owns the hole is guilty. ³⁴The man who owns the hole must pay for the animal. But after he pays for the animal, then he will be allowed to keep the body of that animal.

³⁵“If one man’s bull kills another man’s bull, then they should sell the bull that is alive. Both men will get half of the money that comes from selling the bull, and both men will also get half of the bull that was killed. ³⁶But if a man’s bull has hurt other animals in the past, then that owner is responsible for his bull. If his bull kills another bull, then he is guilty because he allowed the bull to be free. That man must pay bull for bull. He must trade his bull for the bull that was killed.

22 “How should you punish a man who steals a bull or a sheep? If the man kills the animal or sells it, then he can’t give it back. So he must pay five bulls for the one he stole. Or, he must pay four sheep for the one he stole.

curse To ask for bad things to happen to someone.

punished Or, “punished for murder.”

hurt badly Or, “killed.”

30 pieces of silver The price for a new slave.

He must pay for stealing. ²⁻⁴If he owns nothing, then he will be sold as a slave. But if the man still has the animal and you find it, then that man must give the owner two animals for every animal he stole. It doesn't matter if the animal was a bull or a donkey or a sheep.

"If a thief is killed while trying to break into a house [at night], then no one will be guilty for killing him. But if this happens during the day, then the person who killed him will be guilty [of murder].

⁵"A man might start a fire in his field or vineyard. If he lets the fire spread and it burns his neighbor's field or vineyard, then he must use his best crops to pay his neighbor for his loss.*

⁶"A man might start a fire to burn thorn bushes on his field. But if the fire grows and burns his neighbor's crops or the grain growing on the neighbor's field, then the man that started the fire must pay for the things he burned.

⁷"A man might ask a neighbor to keep some money or other things for him in his neighbor's house. What should you do if that money or those things are stolen from the neighbor's house? You should try to find the thief. If you find the thief, then he must pay twice as much as the things are worth. ⁸But if you can't find the thief, then God will judge if the owner of the house is guilty. The owner of the house must go before God, and God will decide if the person stole something.

⁹"What should you do if two men disagree about a bull or a donkey or sheep or clothing or something that is lost. One man says, 'This is mine,' and the other says, 'No, it is mine.' Both men should go before God. God will decide who is guilty. The person who was wrong must pay the other man twice as much as the thing is worth.

¹⁰"A person might ask his neighbor to take care of an animal for a short time. It might be a donkey or a bull or a sheep. But what should you do if that animal is hurt or dies or

someone takes the animal while no one is looking? ¹¹That neighbor must explain that he did not steal the animal. If this is true, then the neighbor will promise to the Lord that he did not steal it. The owner of the animal must accept this promise. The neighbor does not have to pay the owner for the animal. ¹²But if the neighbor stole the animal, then he must pay the owner for the animal. ¹³If wild animals killed the animal, then the neighbor should bring the body as proof. The neighbor will not have to pay the owner for the animal that was killed.

¹⁴"If a man borrows anything from his neighbor, he is responsible for that thing. If an animal is hurt, or if the animal dies, then the neighbor must pay the owner for the animal. The neighbor is responsible, because the owner was not there himself. ¹⁵But if the owner was there with the animal, then the neighbor does not have to pay. Or, if the neighbor was paying money to use the animal for work, then he will not have to pay if the animal dies or is hurt. The money he paid to use the animal will be enough payment.

¹⁶"If a man has sexual relations with a pure young woman who is not married,* then he must marry her. And he must pay her father the full dowry.* ¹⁷If the father refuses to allow his daughter to marry him, then the man must still pay the money. He must pay the full amount for her.

¹⁸"You must not allow any woman to do evil magic. If she does magic, then you must not let her live.

¹⁹"You must not allow any person to have sexual relations with an animal. If this happens, then that person must be killed.

²⁰"If any person makes a sacrifice* to a false god, then that person should be destroyed. The Lord God is the only one you should make sacrifices to.

A man ... loss Or, "5A man might let his animal graze in his field or vineyard. If the animal wanders into another person's field or vineyard, then the owner must pay. The payment must come from the best of his crop."

married Or, "engaged." In ancient Israel, many of the rules concerning an engaged woman were the same as the rules for a married woman.

dowry The money a man gave the father of the bride so the man could marry the woman.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

²¹“Remember, in the past you were foreigners in the land of Egypt. So you should not cheat or hurt any person who is a foreigner in your land.

²²“You must never do anything bad to women whose husbands are dead or to children without parents. ²³If you do anything wrong to those widows or orphans, then I will know it. I will hear about their suffering. ²⁴And I will be very angry. I will kill you with a sword. Then your wives will become widows. And your children will become orphans.

²⁵“If one of my people is poor, and you lend him money, then you must not charge him for that money. And you must not force him to pay you quickly. ²⁶Someone might give you his coat as a promise that he will pay you the money he owes you. But you must give that coat back to him before the sun goes down. ²⁷If that person doesn’t have his coat, then he will have nothing to cover his body. He will get cold in his sleep. And if he cries to me, I will hear him. I will listen, because I am kind.

²⁸“You must not curse* God or the leaders of your people.

²⁹“At harvest time you should give me the first grain and the first juice from your fruit. Don’t wait until late in the year.

“Give me your firstborn* sons. ³⁰Also, give me your firstborn cattle and sheep. Let the firstborn stay with its mother for seven days. Then on the eighth day, give him to me.

³¹“You are my special people. So don’t eat the meat from something that was killed by wild animals. Let the dogs eat that dead animal.

23“Don’t tell lies against other people. If you are a witness in court, then don’t agree to help a bad person tell lies.

²“Don’t do something just because everyone else is doing it. If a group of people are doing wrong, don’t join them. You must not let those people persuade you to do wrong things—you must do what is right and fair.

curse To say bad things about someone or to ask for bad things to him.

firstborn The first child born in a family. The firstborn son was very important in ancient times.

³“If a poor man is being judged, sometimes people will support him because they feel sorry for him. You must not do that. [Support him only if he is right.]

⁴“If you see a lost bull or donkey, then you must return it to its owner. You must do this even if the owner is your enemy.

⁵“If you see an animal that can’t walk because it has too much to carry, you must stop and help that animal. You must help that animal even if it belongs to one of your enemies.

⁶“You must not let people be unfair to a poor man. He must be judged the same as any other person.

⁷“Be very careful if you say that a person is guilty of something. Don’t make false charges against a person. Never allow an innocent person to be killed as punishment for something he did not do. Any person who kills an innocent man is evil, and I will not pardon (*forgive*) that person.

⁸“If a person tries to pay you to agree with him when he is wrong, don’t accept that payment. A payment like that can blind judges so that they can’t see the truth. And a payment like that can make good people tell lies.

⁹“You must never do wrong things to a foreigner. Remember, at one time you were also foreigners when you lived in the land of Egypt.

The Special Holidays

¹⁰“Plant seeds, harvest your crops, and work the ground for six years. ¹¹But the seventh year, don’t use your land. [The seventh year must be a special time of rest for the land.] Don’t plant anything in your fields. If any crops grow there, then allow the poor people to have it. And allow the wild animals to eat the food that is left. You should do the same with your vineyards and with your fields of olive trees.

¹²“Work for six days. Then on the seventh day, rest! This will allow your slaves and other workers a time for rest and relaxation. And your bulls and donkeys will also have a time of rest.

¹³“Be sure that you obey all these laws. Don’t worship false gods. You should not even speak their names!

¹⁴“You will have three special holidays each year. On these holidays, you will come to my special place to worship me. ¹⁵The first holiday will be the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This is like I commanded you. At this time you will eat bread that is made without yeast. This will continue for seven days. You will do this during the month of Abib,* because this is the time when you came out of Egypt. Every person must bring a sacrifice to me at that time.

¹⁶“The second holiday will be the Festival of Pentecost. This holiday will be during the early summer time, when you begin harvesting the crops you planted in your fields.

“The third holiday will be the Festival of Shelters.* This will be in the fall* when you gather all the crops from your fields.

¹⁷“So three times each year all the men will come to the special place to be with the Lord your Master.

¹⁸“When you kill an animal and offer its blood as a sacrifice,* you must not offer bread that has yeast in it. And when you eat the meat from this sacrifice, you must eat all of the meat in one day. Don’t save any of the meat for the next day.

¹⁹“When you gather your crops at harvest time, you should bring the first of everything you harvest to the house* of the Lord your God.

“You must not eat the meat from a young goat that is boiled in its mother’s milk.”

God Will Help Israel Take Their Land

²⁰[God said,] “I am sending an angel before you. This angel will lead you to the place that I have prepared for you. The angel will protect you. ²¹Obey the angel and follow him. Don’t rebel against him. The angel will not

forgive the wrong things you do to him. He has my power in him. ²²You must obey everything he says. You must do everything that I tell you. If you do this, then I will be with you. I will be against all of your enemies. And I will be an enemy to every person who is against you.”

²³[God said,] “My angel will lead you through the land. He will lead you against many different people—the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I will defeat all of those people.

²⁴“Don’t worship the gods of those people. Don’t ever bow down to those gods. You must never live the way those people live. You must destroy their idols.* And you must break the stones that help them remember their gods.* ²⁵You must serve the Lord your God. If you do this, I will bless you with plenty of bread and water. I will take away all sickness from you. ²⁶Your women will all be able to have babies. None of their babies will die at birth. And I will allow you to live long lives.

²⁷“When you fight against your enemies, I will send my great power before you.* I will help you defeat all your enemies. The people that are against you will become confused in battle and run away. ²⁸I will send the hornet* in front of you. He will force your enemies to leave. The Hivite people, the Canaanite people, and the Hittite people will leave your country. ²⁹But I will not force all those people out of your land quickly. I will not do this in only one year. The land will be empty if I force the people out too fast. Then all the wild animals would increase and control the land. And they would be much trouble for you. ³⁰So I will force those people out of your land very slowly. You will continue to move across the land. And wherever you go I will force the other people to leave.

month of Abib Or, “the spring month,” that is, Nisan. This is about March-April.

Festival of Shelters Also called “Succoth” and “Feast of Tabernacles.” At this time, the people lived in tents or shelters for seven days to help them remember the time in the Sinai desert.

in the fall Literally, “at the end of the year.” This means the end of the growing season.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

house The “Holy Tent” where the people went to meet with God. See Ex. 25:8,9.

idols Statues of false gods that people worshiped.

stones that help them remember their gods Or, “memorials.” Here, these were stone markers that people used in worshipping their gods.

When you fight ... you Or, “News of my power will go before you, and your enemies will be frightened.”

hornet A stinging insect like a wasp or bee. This might be a real hornet or it might mean God’s angel or his great power.

³¹“I will give you all the land from the Red Sea to the Euphrates River. The western border will be the Philistine Sea (*Mediterranean Sea*), and the eastern border will be the Arabian Desert. I will let you defeat the people living there. And you will force all those people to leave.

³²“You must not make any agreements with any of those people or their gods. ³³Don’t let them stay in your country. If you let them stay, they will be like a trap to you—they will cause you to sin against me. And you will begin worshipping their gods.”

God and Israel Make Their Agreement

24 God told Moses, “You, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the 70 elders (*leaders*) of Israel must come up the mountain and worship me from a distance. ²Then Moses will come close to the Lord by himself. The other men must not come close to the Lord, and the rest of the people must not even come up the mountain.”

³Moses told the people all the rules and commands from the Lord. Then all the people said, “We will obey all the commands that the Lord has spoken.”

⁴So Moses wrote all of the commands of the Lord on a scroll. The next morning, Moses got up and built an altar* near the bottom of the mountain. And he set up twelve stones—one for each of the twelve family groups of Israel. ⁵Then Moses sent young men of Israel to offer sacrifices.* These men offered bulls to the Lord as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.

⁶Moses saved the blood from these animals. Moses put half of the blood in bowls. And he poured the other half of the blood on the altar.*

⁷Moses read the scroll with the special Agreement written on it. Moses read the Agreement so all the people could hear him.

And the people said, “We have heard the laws that the Lord has given us. And we agree to obey them.”

⁸Then Moses held the bowls full of the blood from the sacrifices.* Moses threw that blood on the people. He said, “This blood shows that the Lord has made a special Agreement with you. The laws God gave you explain the Agreement.”

⁹Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the 70 elders (*leaders*) of Israel went up the mountain. ¹⁰On the mountain, these men saw the God of Israel. God was standing on something that looked like blue sapphires, as clear as the sky! ¹¹All the leaders of Israel saw God, but God did not destroy them.* They all ate and drank together.

Moses Goes to Get God’s Law

¹²The Lord said to Moses, “Come to me on the mountain. I have written my teachings and laws on two flat stones. These teachings and laws are for the people. I will give these flat stones to you.”

¹³So Moses and his helper, Joshua, went up the mountain of God. ¹⁴Moses said to the elders (*leaders*), “Wait here for us, we will come back to you. While I am gone, Aaron and Hur will rule over you. Go to those men if anyone has a problem.”

Moses Meets with God

¹⁵Then Moses went up the mountain. And the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶The Glory of the Lord* came down on Mount Sinai. The cloud covered the mountain for six days. On the seventh day, the Lord spoke to Moses from the cloud. ¹⁷The people of Israel could see the Glory of the Lord. It was like a fire burning on top of the mountain.

¹⁸Then Moses went higher up the mountain into the cloud. Moses was on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

Moses saved the blood ... altar The blood was used to seal the Agreement between God and the people. It was poured on the altar to show that God shared in the Agreement.

saw God ... destroy them The Bible says that people cannot see God. But God wanted these leaders to know what he was like, so he let them see him in some special way.

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright, shining light.

Gifts for the Holy Things

25 The Lord said to Moses, ²“Tell the people of Israel to bring me gifts. Each person must decide in his heart what he wants to give me. Accept these gifts for me. ³Here is the list of the things that you should accept from the people: gold, silver, and bronze*; ⁴blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen; goat hair, ⁵ram skins dyed red, and fine leather*; acacia wood; ⁶oil for the lamps; spices for the anointing oil* and spices for the sweet-smelling incense.* ⁷Also accept onyx stones and other jewels to be put on the Ephod* and the Judgment Pouch.*”

The Holy Tent

⁸God also said, ⁹“The people will build a holy place for me. Then I can live among them. ⁹I will show you what the Holy Tent* and everything in it should look like. Build everything exactly like I show you.

The Box of the Agreement

¹⁰“Use acacia wood and build a special box. This Holy Box must be 2 1/2 cubits* long, 1 1/2 cubits* wide, and 1 1/2 cubits high. ¹¹Use pure gold to cover the Box inside and out. Put gold trim around the edges of the Box. ¹²Make four gold rings for carrying the Box. Put the gold rings on the four corners, two rings on each side. ¹³Then make poles for carrying the Box. These poles should be made from acacia wood and covered with gold. ¹⁴Put the poles through the rings on the corners of the Box. Use these poles to carry

the Box. ¹⁵These poles should always stay in the rings of the Box. Don’t take the poles out.

¹⁶God said, ¹⁷“I will give you the Agreement.* Put the Agreement into this Box. ¹⁷Then make a cover.* Make it from pure gold. Make it 2 1/2 cubits* long and 1 1/2 cubits* wide. ¹⁸“Then make two Cherub angels* and put them on each end of the cover. Hammer gold to make these angels. ¹⁹Put one angel on one end of the cover, and put the other angel on the other end. Join the angels together with the cover to make one piece. ²⁰The wings of these angels should spread up toward the sky. The angels should cover the Box with their wings. The angels should face each other, looking toward the cover.

²¹“I will give you the Agreement.* Put that Agreement in the Box, and put the cover* on the Box. ²²When I meet with you, I will speak from between the Cherub angels* on the cover that is on the Box of the Agreement.* From that place I will give all my commands to the people of Israel.

The Table

²³“Make a table from acacia wood. The table must be 2 cubits* long, 1 cubit* wide, and 1 1/2 cubits* high. ²⁴Cover the table with pure gold and put gold trim around it. ²⁵Then make a frame 1 handbreadth* wide around the table. And put gold trim on the frame. ²⁶Then make four gold rings and put them on the four corners of the table, where the four legs are. ²⁷Put the rings close to the frame [around the

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

fine leather A special kind of leather made from the skin of an animal like a seal or sea cow.

anointing oil Fine olive oil that was poured on people or things to show they were chosen for a special work or purpose.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

Ephod A special coat worn by the priests. See Ex. 28:6-14.

Judgment Pouch A piece of clothing like a bib or an apron that covered the priest’s chest.

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people. It was often called the “Meeting Tent.”

2 1/2 cubits 4’ 3 5/8” (1.31m.)

1 1/2 cubits 2’ 7” (78.75cm.)

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

cover Also called “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover,” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

Cherub angels Special angels from God. Statues of these angels were on top of the Box of the Agreement.

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

Box of the Agreement Or, “ark of the Covenant.” The box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

2 cubits 3’ 5 5/16” (105cm.)

1 cubit 1’ 8 5/8” (52.5cm)

1 handbreadth The width of 4 fingers, about 3” (7.7cm)

top of the table_J. These rings will hold the poles used to carry the table. ²⁸Use acacia wood to make the poles, and cover them with gold. The poles are for carrying the table. ²⁹Make the plates, the spoons, the pitchers, and the bowls from pure gold. The pitchers and bowls will be used for pouring _Jthe drink offerings_J. ³⁰Put the special bread* before me on the table. It must always be there in front of me.

The Lampstand

³¹“Then you must make a lampstand. Use pure gold and hammer it to make the base and the shaft.* Make flowers, buds, and petals from pure gold. Join all these things together into one piece.

³²“The lampstand must have six branches—three branches on one side, and three branches on the other. ³³Each branch must have three flowers. Make these flowers like almond flowers with buds and petals. ³⁴Make four more flowers for the lampstand. These flowers must be made like almond flowers with buds and petals. ³⁵There will be six branches on the lampstand—three branches coming out from each side of the shaft. Make a flower with buds and petals below each of the three places where the branches join the shaft. ³⁶The whole lampstand with the flowers and branches must be made from pure gold. All this gold must be hammered and joined together into one piece. ³⁷Then make seven lamps* to go on the lampstand. These lamps will give light to the area in front of the lampstand. ³⁸Use pure gold to make the wick trimmers* and the trays. ³⁹Use 75 pounds* of pure gold to make the lampstand and the things to be used with it. ⁴⁰Be very careful to make everything exactly the way I showed you on the mountain.”

special bread Also called “bread of the Presence.” Every day this bread was put before God on the special table in the Holy Place.

base and the shaft Or, “flared base.”

lamps These lamps were small bowls filled with oil. A wick was put in the bowl and lit to produce light.

wick trimmers Tools used to extinguish the lamps.

75 pounds Literally, “a kikar.”

The Holy Tent

26_JThe Lord said to Moses,_J “The Holy Tent* should be made from ten curtains. These curtains must be made from fine linen* and blue, purple, and red yarn. A skilled worker should sew pictures of Cherub angels* with wings into the curtains. ²Make each curtain the same size. Each curtain should be 28 cubits* long and 4 cubits* wide. ³Join the curtains together into two groups. Join five curtains together to make one group, and join five curtains together to make the other group. ⁴Use blue cloth to make loops along the edge of the end curtain in one group. Do the same on the end curtain in the other group. ⁵There must be 50 loops on the end curtain of the first group. And there must be 50 loops on the end curtain of the other group. ⁶Then make 50 gold rings to join the curtains together. This will join the Holy Tent together into one piece.

⁷“Make another tent that will cover the Holy Tent.* Use eleven curtains to make this tent. Make these curtains from goat hair. ⁸All these curtains must be the same size. They must be 30 cubits* long and 4 cubits* wide. ⁹Join five of the curtains together into one group. Then join the other six curtains together into another group. Fold back half of the sixth curtain at the front of the Tent. ¹⁰Make 50 loops down the edge of the end curtain of one group. Do the same for the end curtain of the other group. ¹¹Then make 50 bronze* rings to join the curtains together. This will join the tent together into one piece. ¹²Half of the end curtain of this tent will hang down below the back edge of the Holy Tent. ¹³On the sides, the curtains of this tent will

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

Cherub angels Special angels from God. Statues of these angels were on top of the Box of the Agreement.

28 cubits 48' 2 3/4" (14.7m).

4 cubits 6' 10 13/16" (2.1m).

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

30 cubits 51' 8 1/16" (15.75m)

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

hang down 1 cubit* below the bottom edges of the Holy Tent. So this tent will completely cover the Holy Tent. ¹⁴Make two coverings to go over the outer tent. One covering should be made from ram skins dyed red. The other covering should be made from fine leather.*

¹⁵“Use acacia wood to make frames to support the Holy Tent.* ¹⁶The frames should be 10 cubits* high and 1 1/2 cubits* wide. ¹⁷Two side poles should be joined together with cross pieces to make each frame. All the frames for the Holy Tent must be the same. ¹⁸Make 20 frames for the south side of the Holy Tent. ¹⁹And make 40 silver bases for the frames. Each frame should have two silver bases to go under it—one base for each side pole. ²⁰Make 20 more frames for the other side (*the north side*) of the Holy Tent. ²¹And make 40 silver bases for these frames—two bases under each frame. ²²Make six more frames for the back (*the west side*) of the Holy Tent. ²³Make two frames for the corners at the back of the Holy Tent. ²⁴The frames at the corners should be joined together at the bottom. At the top, a ring will hold the frames together. Do the same for both corners. ²⁵There will be a total of eight frames for the west end of the Tent. And there will be 16 silver bases—two bases under each frame.

²⁶“Use acacia wood and make braces for the frames of the Holy Tent.* There should be five braces for the first side of the Holy Tent. ²⁷And there should be five braces for the frames on the other side of the Holy Tent. And there should be five braces for the frames at the back (*the west side*) of the Holy Tent. ²⁸The middle brace should pass through the frames from one end to the other.

²⁹“Cover the frames with gold. And make rings for the frames to hold the braces. Make these rings from gold. Also, cover the braces with gold. ³⁰Build the Holy Tent* the way I showed you on the mountain.

1 cubit 1' 8 5/8" (52.5cm)

fine leather Leather made from the skin of an animal like a seal or a sea cow.

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

10 cubits 17' 2 11/16" (5.25m).

1 1/2 cubits 2' 7" (78.75cm.)

Inside the Holy Tent

³¹“Use fine linen* and make a special curtain to divide the inside of the Holy Tent. Use blue, purple, and red yarn and sew pictures of Cherub angels into the curtain. ³²Make four posts from acacia wood, and cover the posts with gold. Put hooks made from gold on the four posts. Put four silver bases under the posts. Then hang the curtain on the gold hooks. ³³Put the curtain under the gold rings.* Then put the Box of the Agreement* behind the curtain. This curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. ³⁴Put the cover* on the Box of the Agreement in the Most Holy Place.

³⁵“In the Holy Place, on the other side of the curtain put the special table you made. The table should be on the north side of the Holy Tent.* Then put the lampstand on the south side. This will be across from the table.

The Door of the Holy Tent

³⁶“Then make a curtain to cover the entrance to the [Holy] Tent.* Use blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen to make this curtain. And weave pictures into it. ³⁷Make gold hooks for this curtain. And make five posts using acacia wood covered with gold. And make five bronze* bases for the five posts.”

The Altar for Burning Offerings

27 [The Lord said to Moses,] “Use acacia wood and build an altar.* The altar should be square. It must be 5 cubits* long, 5 cubits* wide, and 3 cubits* high. ²Make a horn for each of the four corners of the altar.

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

under the gold rings The 50 gold rings that joined together the two parts of the Holy Tent. See Ex. 26:6.

Box of the Agreement Or, “ark of the Covenant.” The box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and the other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

cover Also called “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

5 cubits 8' 7 5/16" (2.625m).

3 cubits 5' 2" (1.575m).

Join each horn to its corner so that everything is one piece. Then cover the altar with bronze.*

³“Use bronze* to make all the tools and dishes that will be used on the altar.* Make pots, shovels, bowls, forks, and pans. These will be used for cleaning ashes from the altar. ⁴Make a grating for the altar. This grating will be shaped like a net. And make a bronze ring at each of the four corners of the grating. ⁵Put the grating under the ledge at the bottom of the altar. The grating will go halfway up into the altar from below.

⁶“Use acacia wood to make poles for the altar,* and cover them with bronze.* ⁷Put the poles through the rings on both sides of the altar. Use these poles for carrying the altar. ⁸Make the altar like an empty box with the sides made from boards. Make the altar just like I showed you on the mountain.

The Courtyard Around the Holy Tent

⁹“Make a courtyard for the Holy Tent.* The south side should have a wall of curtains 100 cubits* long. These curtains must be made from fine linen.* ¹⁰Use 20 posts and 20 bronze* bases under the posts. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods* should be made from silver. ¹¹The north side must also have a wall of curtains 100 cubits long. It must have 20 posts, and 20 bronze bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods must be made from silver.

¹²“On the west side of the courtyard there must be a wall of curtains 50 cubits* long. There must be ten posts and ten bases. ¹³The east side of the courtyard must also be 50 cubits long. ¹⁴[This east side is the entrance to the courtyard.] One side of the entrance must have curtains 15 cubits* long. There must be

three posts and three bases on this side. ¹⁵The other side must also have curtains 15 cubits long. There must be three posts and three bases on that side.

¹⁶Make a curtain 20 cubits* long to cover the entrance to the courtyard. Make that curtain from fine linen* and blue, purple, and red yarn. Weave designs into that curtain. There must be four posts and four bases for that curtain. ¹⁷All the posts around the courtyard must be joined with silver [curtain rods]. The hooks on the posts must be made from silver, and the bases for the posts must be bronze.* ¹⁸The courtyard should be 100 cubits* long and 50 cubits* wide. The wall of curtains around the courtyard should be 5 cubits* high. The curtains must be made from fine linen. The bases under the posts must be bronze. ¹⁹All the tools, tent pegs, and other things used in the Holy Tent* must be made from bronze. And all the pegs [for the curtains around the courtyard] must be made from bronze.

Oil for the Lamp

²⁰“Command the people of Israel to bring the best olive oil. Use this oil for the lamp that must be lit each evening. ²¹Aaron and his sons will have the job of caring for the lamp. They will go into [the first room of] the Meeting Tent.* This is outside [the room with] the Agreement* that is behind the curtain [that separates the two rooms]. In this place they will make sure the lamp continues burning before the Lord from evening till morning. The people of Israel and their descendants* must obey this law forever.”

Clothes for the Priests

28 [The Lord said to Moses,] “Tell your brother Aaron and his sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, to come to you

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people. It is often called the “Meeting Tent.”

100 cubits 172' 3" (52.5m).

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

curtain rods These were either rods that joined the posts together or grommets (rings) sewn into the curtains.

50 cubits 86' 1 1/2" (26.25m).

15 cubits 25' 10" (7.875m).

20 cubits 34' 5 3/8" (10.5m)

5 cubits 8' 7 5/16" (2.625m).

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

descendants A person’s children and their future families.

from the people of Israel. These men will serve me as priests.

²“Make special clothes for your brother Aaron. These clothes will give him honor and respect. ³There are skilled men among the people who can make these clothes. I have given these men special wisdom. Tell those men to make the clothes for Aaron. These clothes will show that he serves me in a special way. Then he can serve me as a priest. ⁴These are the clothes the men should make: the Judgment Pouch,* the Ephod,* a blue robe, a white woven robe, a turban* and a sash (*belt*). The men must make these special clothes for your brother Aaron and his sons. Then Aaron and his sons can serve me as priests. ⁵Tell the men to use gold threads, fine linen,* and blue, purple and red yarn.

The Ephod and the Sash

⁶“Use gold threads, fine linen,* and blue, purple, and red yarn to make the Ephod.* This must be the work of a very skilled person. ⁷At each shoulder of the Ephod there should be a shoulder piece. These shoulder pieces should be tied to the two corners of the Ephod.

⁸“The men will very carefully weave a sash (*belt*) for the Ephod. This sash must be made the same way as the Ephod—use gold threads, fine linen,* and blue, purple, and red yarn.

⁹“Take two onyx stones. Write the names of the twelve sons of Israel (*Jacob*) on these jewels. ¹⁰Write six names on one jewel and six names on the other jewel. Write the names in order, from the oldest son to the youngest. ¹¹Cut the names of the sons of Israel on these stones. Do this the way a worker makes a seal.* Put the jewels in gold settings. ¹²Then put these two jewels on the shoulder pieces of the Ephod. Aaron will wear this special coat when he stands before the Lord. And the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel

will be on the Ephod. These jewels will cause God to remember the people of Israel. ¹³Use fine gold to hold the stones on the Ephod. ¹⁴Twist chains of pure gold together like a rope. Make two of these gold chains and fasten them to the gold settings.

The Judgment Pouch

¹⁵“Make the Judgment Pouch* for the high priest. Skilled workers should make this pouch like they made the Ephod.* They must use gold threads, fine linen,* and blue, purple, and red yarn. ¹⁶The Judgment Pouch should be folded double to make a square pocket. It should be 1 span* long and 1 span wide. ¹⁷Put four rows of beautiful jewels on the Judgment Pouch. The first row of jewels should have a ruby, a topaz, and a beryl. ¹⁸The second row should have a turquoise, a sapphire, and an emerald. ¹⁹The third row should have a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. ²⁰The fourth row should have a chrysolite, an onyx, and a jasper. Set all these jewels in gold. ²¹There will be twelve jewels on the Judgment Pouch—one jewel for each of the sons of Israel (*Jacob*). Write the name of one of the sons of Israel on each of the stones. Cut these names into each stone like a worker makes a seal.*

²²“Make chains of pure gold for Judgment Pouch.* These chains must be braided like a rope. ²³Make two gold rings and put them on two corners of the Judgment Pouch. ²⁴Put the two golden chains through the two rings at the corners of the Judgment Pouch. ²⁵Fasten the other ends of the gold chains to the two settings. This will fasten them to the two shoulder pieces of the Ephod* on the front. ²⁶Make two more gold rings and put them on the other two corners of the Judgment Pouch. This will be on the inside edge of the Judgment Pouch next to the Ephod. ²⁷Make two more gold rings and put them on the bottom of the shoulder pieces on the front of the Ephod. Put the gold rings above the sash (*belt*) of the Ephod. ²⁸Use blue ribbon to tie the rings of the Judgment Pouch to the rings

Judgment Pouch A piece of clothing like a bib or an apron that covered the high priest’s chest.

Ephod A special coat worn by the priests.

turban Head covering made by wrapping a long piece of cloth around the head or around a cap worn on the head.

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

seal Small stones with designs cut into them. Pressed into wet clay or hot wax, they made a special mark.

1 span About 9” (23cm). This is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger.

of the Ephod. In this way the Judgment Pouch will rest close to the sash and will be held against the Ephod.

²⁹“When Aaron enters the Holy Place,* he must wear the Judgment Pouch.* In this way he will wear the names of the twelve sons of Israel over his heart. And the Lord will always be reminded of them. ³⁰Put the Urim and Thummim* inside the Judgment Pouch. They will be over Aaron’s heart when he goes before the Lord. So Aaron will always carry with him a way of judging the people of Israel when he is before the Lord.

Other Clothes for the Priests

³¹“Make a blue robe for the Ephod.* ³²Make a hole in the center for the head. And sew a piece of cloth around the edge of this hole. This cloth will [be like a collar that] keeps the hole from tearing. ³³Use blue, purple, and red yarn to make cloth pomegranates.* Hang these pomegranates around the bottom edge of the robe. And hang gold bells between the pomegranates. ³⁴So around the bottom edge of the robe there should be bells and pomegranates. There should be a bell between each pomegranate. ³⁵Aaron will wear this robe when he serves as a priest. The bells will ring as Aaron goes into the Holy Place* to stand before the Lord. And the bells will ring as he leaves the Holy Place. This way Aaron will not die.

³⁶“Make a strip of pure gold and carve words into the gold the way people make a seal.* Write these words: HOLY TO THE LORD. ³⁷Fasten the gold strip to a blue ribbon. Tie the blue ribbon around the turban.* The gold strip should be on the front of the turban. ³⁸Aaron will wear this on his

head. In this way he will remove the guilt if anything is wrong with the gifts of the people of Israel.* These are the gifts the people give to the Lord. Aaron will always wear this on his head so that the Lord will accept the gifts of the people.

³⁹“Use fine linen to make the white woven robe. And use fine linen to make the turban.* The sash (*belt*) should have designs sewn into it. ⁴⁰Also make coats, belts, and turbans for Aaron’s sons. This will give them honor and respect. ⁴¹Put the clothes on your brother Aaron and his sons. Then pour the special oil on them to make them priests. This will make them holy, and they will serve me as priests.

⁴²“Use linen* to make underclothes for the priests. These underclothes will cover them from the waist to the thighs. ⁴³Aaron and his sons must wear these clothes anytime they enter the Meeting Tent.* They must wear these clothes when they come near to the altar to serve as priests in the Holy Place. If they don’t wear these clothes, then they will be guilty of wrong, and they will have to die. All this should be a law that continues forever for Aaron and all his family after him.”

The Ceremony for Appointing the Priests

29 [Then the Lord said to Moses,] “Now I will tell you what you must do to show that Aaron and his sons serve me in a special way as priests. Find one young bull and two young goats that have nothing wrong with them. ²Then use fine wheat flour without yeast to make bread. And use the same things to make cakes mixed with olive oil. And make small thin cakes spread with oil. ³Put this bread and the cakes in a basket. Then give the basket to Aaron and his sons. At the same time give them the bull and the two rams.

⁴“Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Meeting Tent.* Wash them with water. ⁵Put the special clothes on Aaron. Put on him the white woven robe and the blue

Holy Place One of the two rooms in the Holy Tent.

Judgment Pouch A piece of clothing like a bib or an apron that covered the high priest’s chest.

Urim and Thummim Used by the priest to learn God’s answer to questions. They were probably like lots—stones, sticks, or bones that were thrown like dice.

Ephod A special coat worn by the priests.

pomegranates A red fruit about the size of an orange.

seal Small stones with designs cut into them. Pressed into wet clay or hot wax, they made a special mark.

turban Head covering made by wrapping a long piece of cloth around the head or around a cap worn on the head.

In this way ... Israel Literally, “It will keep him holy when he bears the guilt from the gifts of the people of Israel.”

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle) where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

robe that is worn with the Ephod.* Put the Ephod and the Judgment Pouch* on him. Then tie the beautiful sash (*belt*) on him. ⁶Put the turban* on his head. And put the special crown around the turban. ⁷Take the anointing oil* and pour it on Aaron's head. This will show that Aaron is chosen for this work.

⁸“Then bring Aaron's sons to that place. Put the white woven robes on them. ⁹Then tie sashes (*belts*) around their waists. Give them the special hats to wear. At that time they will begin to be priests. They will be priests because of the special law that will continue forever. This is the way you will make Aaron and his sons priests.

¹⁰“Then bring the bull to that place at the front of the Meeting Tent.* Aaron and his sons must put their hands on the bull's head. ¹¹Then kill that bull there at the entrance to the Meeting Tent. The Lord will see this. ¹²Then take some of the bull's blood and go to the altar.* Use your finger to put some blood on the horns of the altar. Pour all the blood that is left at the bottom of the altar. ¹³Then take all the fat from inside the bull, the fatty part of the liver, both kidneys, and the fat around them. Burn this fat on the altar. ¹⁴Then take the bull's meat, his skin, and his other parts and go outside your camp. Burn these things there outside the camp. This is an offering to take away the sins of the priests.

¹⁵“Then tell Aaron and his sons to put their hands on the head of one of the rams. ¹⁶Kill that ram and save the blood. Throw the blood against the altar* on all four sides. ¹⁷Then cut the ram into several pieces. Wash all the parts from inside the ram and the legs. Put these things with the head and the other pieces of the ram. ¹⁸Then burn everything on the altar.

It is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire to the Lord. Its smell will please the Lord.

¹⁹“Tell Aaron and his sons to put their hands on the other ram. ²⁰Kill that ram and save some of its blood. Put that blood on the right earlobes of Aaron and his sons. Also put some of the blood on the thumbs of their right hands. And put some of the blood on the big toes of their right feet. Then throw blood against all four sides of the altar. ²¹Then take some of the blood from the altar. Mix it with the special oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and his clothes. And sprinkle it on their sons and their clothes. This will show that Aaron and his sons serve me in a special way. And it will show that their clothes are used only at special times.

²²“Then take the fat from the ram. (This is the ram that will be used in the ceremony to make Aaron the high priest.) Take the fat from around the tail and the fat that covers the organs inside the body. Then take the fat that covers the liver, both kidneys and the fat on them, and the right leg. ²³Then take the basket of bread that you made without yeast. This is the basket you put before the Lord. Take these things out of the basket: one loaf of bread, one cake made with oil, and one small thin cake. ²⁴Give these things to Aaron and his sons. Tell them to hold these things in their hands before the Lord. This will be a special offering to the Lord. ²⁵Then take these things from Aaron and his sons and put them on the altar* with the ram. Then burn everything on the altar. It is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire to the Lord. Its smell will please the Lord.

²⁶“Then take the breast from the ram.* (This is the ram that will be used in the ceremony to make Aaron the high priest.) Hold the breast of the ram before the Lord as a special offering. Then take it back and keep it. This part of the animal will be for you. ²⁷Take the breast and the leg of the ram that was used to make Aaron the high priest and make those parts holy (*special*). Then give those special parts to Aaron and his sons. ²⁸The people of Israel will always give Aaron

Ephod A special coat worn by the priests.

Judgment Pouch A piece of clothing like a bib or an apron that covered the high priest's chest.

turban Head covering made by wrapping a long piece of cloth around the head or around a cap worn on the head.

anointing oil Fine olive oil that was poured on things or people to show they were chosen for a special work or purpose.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

ram(s) A male sheep.

and his sons these parts. Those parts will always belong to the priests when the people of Israel make an offering to the Lord. When they give these parts to the priest, it will be the same as giving them to the Lord.

²⁹“Save those special clothes that were made for Aaron. Those clothes will belong to all his people who live after him. They will wear those clothes when they are chosen to be priests. ³⁰Aaron’s son will become the next high priest after him. That son will wear those clothes seven days when he comes to the Meeting Tent* to serve in the Holy Place.*

³¹“Cook the meat from the ram* that was used to make Aaron the high priest. Cook that meat in a holy place. ³²Then Aaron and his sons must eat the meat at the front door of the Meeting Tent.* And they must also eat the bread that is in the basket. ³³These offerings were used to take away their sins when they were made priests. Now they should eat those offerings. ³⁴If any of the meat from that ram or any of the bread is left the next morning, then it must be burned. You must not eat that bread or the meat because it should be eaten only in a special way at a special time.

³⁵“You must do all these things for Aaron and his sons. You must do them exactly as I told you. The ceremony for appointing them to be priests must continue for seven days. ³⁶You must kill one bull every day for seven days. This will be an offering for the sins of Aaron and his sons. You will use these sacrifices* to make the altar* pure. And pour olive oil on the altar to make it holy. ³⁷You will make the altar pure and holy for seven days. At that time the altar will become most holy. Anything that touches the altar will also be holy.

³⁸“Every day you must make an offering on the altar.* You must kill two lambs that are one year old. ³⁹Offer one lamb in the morning and the other in the evening. ^{40–41}When you

kill the first lamb, also offer 8 cups* of fine wheat flour. Mix that flour with 1 quart* of wine as an offering. When you kill the second lamb in the evening, also offer the 8 cups of fine flour. And offer 1 quart* of wine. This is the same as you did in the morning. This will be a food offering for the Lord. When you burn this offering, the Lord will smell it, and it will please him.

⁴²“You must burn these things as an offering to the Lord every day. Do this at the entrance of the Meeting Tent* before the Lord. Continue to do this for all time. When you make the offering, I the Lord will meet you there and speak to you. ⁴³I will meet with the people of Israel at that place. And my Glory* will make that place holy.

⁴⁴“So I will make the Meeting Tent* holy. And I will make the altar* holy. And I will make Aaron and his sons holy so that they can serve me as priests. ⁴⁵I will live with the people of Israel. I will be their God. ⁴⁶The people will know that I am the Lord, their God. They will know that I am the One who led them out of Egypt so I could live with them. I am the Lord, their God.”

The Altar for Burning Incense

30 God said to Moses,¹ “Make an altar* from acacia wood. You will use this altar for burning incense.* ²You must make the altar square—1 cubit* long and 1 cubit wide. It must be 2 cubits* high. There will be horns at the four corners. These horns must be made as one piece with the altar. ³Cover the top and all the sides of the altar with pure gold. And put gold trim all around the altar. ⁴Below this trim there should be two gold rings. There should be two gold rings on opposite sides of the altar. These gold rings will be used with poles to carry the altar.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

Holy Place One of the rooms in the Holy Tent.

ram(s) A male sheep.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

8 cups Literally, “1/10 of a measure.”

1 quart Literally, “1/4 hin.”

Glory The Glory of the Lord. One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

1 cubit 1’ 8 5/8” (52.5cm)

2 cubits 3’ 5 5/16” (105cm).

⁵Make the poles from acacia wood also. Cover the poles with gold. ⁶Put the altar in front of the special curtain. The Box of the Agreement* is behind that curtain. The altar will be in front of the cover* that is above the Agreement.* This is the place where I will meet with you.

⁷“Aaron must burn sweet smelling incense* on the altar* every morning. He will do this when he comes to care for the lamps. ⁸He must burn incense again in the evening. This is the time when he checks the lamps in the evenings. So that incense will be burned before the Lord every day forever. ⁹Don’t use this altar for offering any other kind of incense or burnt offering. Don’t use this altar to offer any kind of grain offering or drink offering.

¹⁰“Once a year Aaron must make a special sacrifice* to the Lord. Aaron will use the blood of the sin offering to erase the sins of the people. Aaron will do this at the horns of this altar.* This day will be called the Day of Atonement. This will be a very special day for the Lord.”

The Temple Tax

¹¹The Lord said to Moses, ¹²“Count the people of Israel so that you will know how many people there are. Every time this is done, every person must make a payment for himself to the Lord. If each person does this, then no terrible thing will happen to the people. ¹³Every person who is counted must pay 1/2 shekel. (That is 1/2 shekel by the official measure.* This shekel weighs 20

gerahs.*) This half shekel is an offering to the Lord. ¹⁴Every person who is at least 20 years old will be counted. And every person counted must give the Lord this offering. ¹⁵Rich people must not give more than 1/2 shekel. And poor people must not give less than 1/2 shekel. All people will make the same offering to the Lord. This will be a payment for your life. ¹⁶Gather this money from the people of Israel. Use the money for the service in the Meeting Tent.* This payment will be a way for the Lord to remember his people. They will be paying for their own lives.”

The Washing Bowl

¹⁷The Lord said to Moses, ¹⁸“Make a bronze* bowl and put it on a bronze base. You will use this for washing. Put the bowl between the Meeting Tent* and the altar.* Fill the bowl with water. ¹⁹Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet with the water from this bowl. ²⁰Every time they enter the Meeting Tent or come near the altar they must wash with water. This way they will not die. ²¹And they must wash their hands and their feet so they won’t die. This will be a law that continues forever for Aaron and his people. This law will continue for all Aaron’s people who will live in the future.”

The Anointing Oil

²²Then the Lord said to Moses, ²³“Find the finest spices. Get 12 pounds* of liquid myrrh, half that amount (that is, 6 pounds*) of sweet smelling cinnamon, and 12 pounds of sweet smelling cane, ²⁴and 12 pounds of cassia. Use the official measure* to measure all these things. Also get 1 gallon* of olive oil.

Box of the Agreement Or, “ark of the Covenant.” The box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

cover Also called “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

official measure Literally, “holy shekel,” the standard of measure used by the priests in the tabernacle or temple.

gerah(s) 1/50 of an ounce.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

12 pounds Literally, “500 measures.”

6 pounds Literally, “250 measures.”

1 gallon Literally, “a hin.”

²⁵“Mix all these things to make a special sweet-smelling anointing oil.* ²⁶Pour this oil on the Meeting Tent* and on the Box of the Agreement.* This will show that these things have a special purpose. ²⁷Pour the oil on the table and on all the dishes on the table. And pour this oil on the lamp and on all its tools. Pour the oil on the incense* altar. ²⁸Also, pour the oil on the altar for burning offerings to God. Pour this oil on everything on that altar. Pour this oil on the bowl and on the base under the bowl. ²⁹You will make all these things holy. They will be very special to the Lord. Anything that touches these things will also become holy.

³⁰“Pour the oil on Aaron and his sons. This will show that they serve me in a special way. Then they can serve me as priests. ³¹Tell the people of Israel that the anointing oil* is holy—it must always be used only for me. ³²No one should use this oil like an ordinary perfume. Don’t make perfume the same way you make this special oil. This oil is holy, and it should be very special to you. ³³If anyone makes a perfume like this holy oil, and if he gives it to a foreigner, then that person must be separated from his people.”

The Incense

³⁴Then the Lord said to Moses, “Get these sweet-smelling spices: resin, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense. Be sure that you have equal amounts of these spices. ³⁵Mix the spices together to make a sweet-smelling incense.* Do this the same as a perfume maker would do it. Also mix salt with this incense. This will make it pure and special. ³⁶Grind some of the incense until it becomes a fine powder. Put the powder

in front of the Agreement* in the Meeting Tent.* This is the place where I meet with you. You must use this incense powder only for its very special purpose. ³⁷You must use this incense only in this special way for the Lord. You will make this incense in a special way. Don’t make any other incense in this special way. ³⁸A person might want to make some of this incense for himself, so he can enjoy the smell. But if he does this, then he must be separated from his people.”

Bezalel and Oholiab

31 Then the Lord said to Moses, ²“I have chosen a man from the family group of Judah to do some special work for me. His name is Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur. ³I have filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God—I have given him the skill and knowledge to do all kinds of things. ⁴Bezalel is a very good designer. And he can make things from gold, silver, and bronze. ⁵Bezalel can cut and set beautiful jewels. And he can work with wood. Bezalel can do all kinds of work. ⁶I have also chosen Oholiab to work with him. Oholiab is the son of Ahisamach from the family group of Dan. And I have given skills to all the other workers so they can make all the things that I have commanded you:

- ⁷ the Meeting Tent,*
the Box of the Agreement,*
the cover* for the Box,
- ⁸ the table and everything on it,
the altar* for burning incense,*
- ⁹ the altar for burning offerings
and the things used at the altar,
the bowl and the base under it,
- ¹⁰ the special clothes for Aaron the priest,
the special clothes for Aaron’s sons
when they serve as priests,
- ¹¹ the sweet-smelling anointing oil,*
the sweet-smelling incense for the
Holy Place.*

anointing oil Olive oil that was poured on things or people to show that they were chosen for a special work or purpose.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

Box of the Agreement Or, “ark of the Covenant.” The box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

cover Also called “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

These workers must make all these things the way that I have commanded you.”

The Sabbath

¹²Then the Lord said to Moses, ¹³“Tell the people of Israel this: ‘You must follow the rules about my special days of rest. You must do this because they will be a sign between you and me for all generations. This will show you that I, the Lord, have made you my special people.

¹⁴“‘Make the Sabbath* a special day. If a person treats the Sabbath like any other day, then that person must be killed. Any person who works on the Sabbath day must be cut off (*separated*) from his people. ¹⁵There are six other days in the week for working. But the seventh day is a very special day of rest. That is the special day to honor the Lord. Any person who works during the Sabbath must be killed. ¹⁶The people of Israel must remember the Sabbath and make it a special day. They must continue to do this forever. It is an agreement between them and me that will continue forever. ¹⁷The Sabbath will be a sign between me and the people of Israel forever. The Lord worked six days and made heaven and earth. And on the seventh day he rested and relaxed.”

¹⁸So the Lord finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai. Then the Lord gave him the two flat stones with the Agreement* on them. God used his finger and wrote on the stones.

The Golden Calf

32 The people saw that a long time had passed and Moses had not come down from the mountain. So the people gathered around Aaron. They said to him, “Look, Moses led us out of the land of Egypt. But we don’t know what has happened to him. So make us some gods to go before us and lead us.”

²Aaron said to the people, “Bring me the gold earrings that belong to your wives, sons, and daughters.”

³So all the people gathered their gold earrings and brought them to Aaron. ⁴Aaron took the gold from the people. Then he used it to make a statue of a calf. Aaron used a chisel to carve the statue, and then he covered it with gold.

Then the people said, “Israel, here are your gods! These are the gods that brought you out of the land of Egypt!”

⁵Aaron saw all these things. So he built an altar* in front of the calf. Then Aaron made an announcement. He said, “Tomorrow will be a special feast to honor the Lord.”

⁶The people woke up very early the next morning. They killed animals and offered them as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. The people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up and had a wild party.

⁷At the same time, the Lord said to Moses, “Go down from this mountain. Your people, the people you brought out of the land of Egypt, have done a terrible sin. ⁸They have very quickly turned away from the things I commanded them to do. They made a calf from melted gold for themselves. They are worshiping that calf and making sacrifices* to it. The people have said, ‘Israel, these are the gods that led you out of Egypt.’”

⁹The Lord said to Moses, “I have seen these people. I know that they are very stubborn people. They will always turn against me. ¹⁰So now let me destroy them in anger. Then I will make a great nation from you.”

¹¹But Moses begged the Lord his God, “Lord, don’t let your anger destroy your people. You brought these people out of Egypt with your great power and strength.

¹²[But if you destroy your people,] then the Egyptians can say, ‘The Lord planned to do bad things to his people. That is why he led them out of Egypt. He wanted to kill them in the mountains. He wanted to wipe them off the earth.’ So don’t be angry at your people. Please change your mind! Don’t destroy your people. ¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (*Jacob*). Those men served you. And

Sabbath Saturday, a special day of rest and worship for Jews.

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The two flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

you used your name to make a promise to them. You said: ‘I will make your people as many as the stars in the sky. I will give your people all this land like I promised. This land will be theirs forever.’”

¹⁴So the Lord felt sorry [for the people]. The Lord did not do the thing that he said he might do—he did not destroy the people.

¹⁵Then Moses went down the mountain. Moses had the two flat stones with the Agreement* on them. Those commandments were written on both sides of the stone, front and back. ¹⁶God himself had made those stones. And God himself wrote the commandments on those stones.

¹⁷[While going down the mountain, Joshua heard the noise from the party in camp. Joshua said to Moses, “It sounds like war down in the camp!”]

¹⁸Moses answered, “It is not the noise of an army shouting for victory. And it is not the noise of an army crying from defeat. The noise I hear is the sound of music.*”

¹⁹Moses came near the camp. He saw the golden calf, and he saw the people dancing. Moses became very angry, and he threw the flat stones on the ground. The stones broke into several pieces at the bottom of the mountain. ²⁰Then Moses destroyed the calf that the people had made. He melted it in the fire. Then he ground the gold until it became dust. And he threw the dust in the water. He forced the people of Israel to drink that water.

²¹Moses said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you? Why did you lead them to do such a bad sin?”

²²Aaron answered, “Don’t be angry, sir. You know that these people are always ready to do wrong. ²³The people said to me, ‘Moses led us out of Egypt. But we don’t know what has happened to him. So make us some gods to lead us.’ ²⁴So I told the people, ‘If you have any gold rings, then give them to me.’ The people gave me their gold. I threw the gold into the fire, and out of the fire came this calf!”

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

music Or, “singing.”

²⁵Moses saw that Aaron had let the people lose control. The people were being wild, and all their enemies could see them acting like fools.

²⁶So Moses stood at the entrance to the camp. Moses said, “Any person who wants to follow the Lord should come to me.” And all the people from the family of Levi ran to Moses.

²⁷Then Moses said to them, “I will tell you what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Every man must get his sword and go from one end of the camp to the other. [You must punish these people, even if] each man must kill his brother, friends, and neighbors.’”

²⁸The people from the family of Levi obeyed Moses. That day about 3,000 of the people of Israel died. ²⁹Then Moses said, “The Lord has chosen you today to be the people who will bless your sons and brothers.”

³⁰The next morning Moses told the people, “You have done a terrible sin! But now I will go up to the Lord, and maybe I can do something so he will forgive you for your sin.” ³¹So Moses went back to the Lord and said, “Please listen! These people did a very bad sin and made a god from gold. ³²Now, forgive them of this sin! If you will not forgive them, then erase my name from the book* you have written.”

³³But the Lord said to Moses, “The only people that I erase from my book are the people who sin against me. ³⁴So now, go down and lead the people where I tell you. My angel will go before you and lead you. When the time comes to punish the people who sinned, then they will be punished.” ³⁵So the Lord caused a terrible sickness to come to the people. He did this because they told Aaron to make the golden calf.

“I Will Not Go with You”

33 Then the Lord said to Moses, “You and the people you brought out of Egypt must leave this place. Go to the land that I promised to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I promised them that I would give that land to their descendants. ²So I will send an angel to go

the book This is the “Book of Life,” a book with all the names of God’s people written in it.

before you. And I will defeat the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites the Hivites, and the Jebusites. I will force those people to leave your land. ³So go to the land filled with many good things.* But I will not go with you. You people are very stubborn, and you make me very angry. If I go with you, I might destroy you along the way.”

⁴The people heard this bad news and became very sad. And the people stopped wearing jewelry. ⁵Why? Because the Lord said to Moses, “Tell the people of Israel, ‘You are a stubborn people. I might destroy you even if I travel with you only a short time. So take off all your jewelry while I decide* what to do with you.’” ⁶So the people of Israel stopped wearing their jewelry at Mount Horeb (*Sinai*).

The Temporary Meeting Tent

⁷Moses used to take a tent a short way outside the camp. Moses called it “the meeting tent.*” Any person who wanted to ask something from the Lord would go to the meeting tent outside the camp. ⁸Any time Moses went out to the tent, all the people watched him. The people stood at the entrance of their tents and watched Moses until he entered the meeting tent. ⁹Whenever Moses went into the tent, the tall cloud would come down and stay at the entrance to the tent. And the Lord would speak with Moses. ¹⁰So when the people saw the cloud at the entrance of the tent, they would go to the entrance of their own tents and bow down to worship God.

¹¹In this way the Lord spoke to Moses face to face. The Lord spoke to Moses like a man speaks with his friend. After speaking with the Lord, Moses would go back to the camp. But his helper always stayed in the tent. This helper was Joshua son of Nun.

filled ... good things Literally, “flowing with milk and honey.”

jewelry ... decide This is a word play in Hebrew, but people often wore jewelry to remind them of their false gods.

meeting tent This is probably a tent that Moses used only until the real Meeting Tent was built.

Moses Sees the Glory of the Lord

¹²Moses said to the Lord, “You told me to lead these people. But you did not say who you would send with me. You said to me, ‘I know you very well, and I am pleased with you.’” ¹³If I have truly pleased you, then teach me your ways. I want to know you. Then I can continue to please you. Remember that all these are your people.”

¹⁴The Lord answered, “I myself will go with you. I will lead you.*”

¹⁵Then Moses said to the Lord, “If you don’t go with us, then don’t send us away from this place. ¹⁶Also, how will we know if you are pleased with me and these people? If you go with us, then we will know for sure! If you don’t go with us, then I and these people will be no different than any other people on the earth.”

¹⁷Then the Lord said to Moses, “I will do what you ask. I will do this because I am pleased with you and because I know you very well.*”

¹⁸Then Moses said, “Now, please show me your Glory.*”

¹⁹Then the Lord answered, “I will cause my perfect Goodness to go before you. I am the Lord and I will announce my name so that you can hear it. Why? Because I can show my kindness and love to any person I choose. ²⁰But you can’t see my face. No person can see me and continue to live.

²¹“There is a rock at a place near me. You can stand on that rock. ²²My Glory* will pass by that place. I will put you in a large crack in that rock, and I will cover you with my hand while I pass. ²³Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back. But you will not see my face.”

The New Stone Tablets

34 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make two more flat stones like the first two that were broken. I will write the same words on these stones that were written on the first

lead you Or, “give you rest.”

I know you very well Literally, “I know you by name.”

Glory The Glory of the Lord. One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.

two stones. ²Be ready tomorrow morning and come up on Mount Sinai. Stand before me there on the top of the mountain. ³No person will be allowed to come with you. No person should even be seen any place on the mountain. Even your herds of animals or flocks of sheep will not be allowed to eat grass at the bottom of the mountain.”

⁴So Moses made two more flat stones like the first ones. Then early the next morning he went up Mount Sinai. Moses did everything like the Lord had commanded him. Moses carried the two flat stones with him. ⁵After Moses was on the mountain, the Lord came down to him in a cloud. The Lord stood there with Moses, and Moses called the Lord’s name.*

⁶The Lord passed in front of Moses and said, “YAHWEH,* the Lord, is the kind and merciful God. The Lord is slow to become angry. The Lord is full of great love. The Lord can be trusted. ⁷The Lord shows his kindness to thousands [of generations]. The Lord forgives* people for the wrong things they do. But the Lord does not forget to punish guilty people. The Lord will punish not only the guilty people, but their children, their grandchildren, and their great-grandchildren will suffer for the bad things those people do.*”

⁸Then Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshiped [the Lord]. Moses said, ⁹“Lord, if you are pleased with me, then please go with us. I know that these are stubborn people. But forgive us for the bad things we did! Accept us as your people.”

¹⁰Then the Lord said, “I am making this agreement with all of your people. I will do amazing things that have never before been done for any other nation on earth. The people with you will see that I, the Lord, am very great. The people will see the wonderful

things that I will do for you. ¹¹Obey the things I command you today, and I will force your enemies to leave your land. I will force out the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ¹²Be careful! Don’t make any agreement with the people who live in the land where you are going. If you make an agreement with those people, then it will bring you trouble. ¹³So destroy their altars.* Break the stones they worship. Cut down their idols.* ¹⁴Don’t worship any other god. I am YAHWEH KANAH—the jealous Lord. That is my name. I am EL KANAH—the jealous God.

¹⁵“Be careful not to make any agreements with the people who live in that land. If you do this, then you might join them when they worship their gods. Those people will invite you to join them, and you will eat their sacrifices.* ¹⁶You might choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons. Those daughters serve false gods. They might lead your sons to do the same thing.

¹⁷“Don’t make idols.*

¹⁸“Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread. For seven days eat that bread made without yeast like I commanded you before. Do this during the month I have chosen, the month of Abib.* Why? Because that is the month you came out of Egypt.

¹⁹“A woman’s first baby always belongs to me. Even the first animals that are born from your cattle or sheep belong to me. ²⁰If you want to keep a donkey that is the first born, then you can buy it with a lamb. But if you don’t buy that donkey with a lamb, then you must break the donkey’s neck. You must buy back all of your firstborn* sons from me. No person should come before me without a gift.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

stones ... idols Literally, “memorials ... Asherah poles.” These were stone markers and wood poles that the people set up to help them remember and honor false gods.

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

idols Statues of false gods that people worshiped.

Abib Or, “spring.” This is Nisan, the first month of the ancient Jewish year.

firstborn The first child born into a family. The firstborn son was very important in ancient times.

Moses called the Lord’s name Literally, “He called on the name of the Lord.” This might mean Moses worshiped the Lord, or it might mean the Lord spoke his name to Moses.

YAHWEH This name, usually translated “Lord,” is like the Hebrew word meaning, “He is” or “He makes things exist.”

forgives Or, “spares.”

The Lord ... people do Or, “The Lord credits the guilt of the fathers to their children and grandchildren, to the third and fourth generation.”

²¹“You will work for six days. But on the seventh day you must rest. You must rest even during the times of planting and harvesting.

²²“Celebrate the Festival of Weeks.* Use the first grain from the wheat harvest for this festival. And in the fall* celebrate the Festival of Harvest.*

²³“Three times each year all your men must go to be with the Master, the Lord, the God of Israel.

²⁴“When you go into your land, I will force your enemies out of that land. I will expand your borders—you will get more and more land. You will go before the Lord your God three times each year. At that time, no one will try to take your land from you.

²⁵“Whenever you offer blood from a sacrifice* to me, don’t offer yeast at the same time.

“Don’t leave any of the meat from the Passover* meal until the next morning.

²⁶“Give the Lord the very first crops that you harvest. Bring those things to the house* of the Lord your God.

“Never cook a young goat in its mother’s milk.”

²⁷Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write all the things that I have told you. Those things are the Agreement that I made with you and the people of Israel.”

²⁸Moses stayed there with the Lord for 40 days and 40 nights. Moses did not eat any food or drink any water. And he (*the Lord*) wrote the words of the Agreement (the Ten Commandments) on the two flat stones.

Moses’ Shining Face

²⁹Then Moses came down from Mount Sinai. He carried the two flat stones with the

Festival of Weeks Also called “Pentecost” or “Shavuoth.”

fall Literally, “at the changing of the year.”

Festival of Harvest Also called “Feast of Ingathering” or “Succoth.”

sacrifice(s) A gift to God. Usually, it was a special animal that was killed and burned on an altar.

Passover An important Jewish holy day. They ate a special meal on this day every spring to remember that God freed them from slavery in Egypt.

house The Holy Tent (tabernacle) or temple, where God came to live among his people.

Agreement* on them. Moses’ face was shining because he had talked with the Lord. But Moses did not know this. ³⁰Aaron and all the people of Israel saw that Moses’ face was shining bright. So they were afraid to go near him. ³¹But Moses called to them. So Aaron and all the leaders of the people went to Moses. Moses talked with them. ³²After that, all the people of Israel came near Moses. And Moses gave them the commands that the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai.

³³When Moses finished speaking to the people, he put a covering over his face. ³⁴Any time Moses went before the Lord to speak with him, Moses took off the covering. Then Moses would come out and tell the people of Israel the things the Lord commanded. ³⁵The people would see that Moses’ face was shining bright, so Moses would cover his face again. Moses kept his face covered until the next time he went in to speak with the Lord.

Rules About the Sabbath

35 Moses gathered all the people of Israel together. Moses said to them, “I will tell you the things the Lord has commanded you to do:

²“There are six days for working. But the seventh day will be a very special day of rest for you. You will honor the Lord by resting on that special day. Any person who works on the seventh day must be killed. ³On the Sabbath* you should not even light a fire in any of the places where you live.”

Things for the Holy Tent

⁴Moses said to all the people of Israel, “This is what the Lord commanded: ⁵Gather special gifts for the Lord. Each of you should decide in your heart what you will give. And then you should bring that gift to the Lord. Bring gold, silver, and bronze*; ⁶blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen*; goat hair; ⁷ram skins dyed red

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

Sabbath Saturday, a special day of rest and worship for Jews.

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

and fine leather*; acacia wood; ⁸oil for the lamps; spices for the anointing oil* and spices for the sweet-smelling incense.* ⁹Also, bring onyx stones and other jewels to be put on the Ephod* and the Judgment Pouch.*

¹⁰All of you people who are skilled workers should make all of the things the Lord commanded: ¹¹the Holy Tent,* its outer tent, and its covering; the hooks, boards, braces, posts, and bases; ¹²the Holy Box,* its poles, the cover,* and the curtain that covers the area where the Box stays; ¹³the table and its poles, all the things on the table, and the special bread on the table; ¹⁴the lampstand that is used for light and the things used with the lampstand, the lamps, and oil for the light; ¹⁵the altar* for burning incense* and its poles; the anointing oil* and the sweet-smelling incense; the curtain that covers the door at the entrance to the Holy Tent; ¹⁶the altar for burning offerings and its bronze* grating, the poles, and all the things used at the altar; the bronze bowl and its base; ¹⁷the curtains around the yard, their posts and bases, and the curtain that covers the entrance to the yard; ¹⁸the pegs used to support the Tent and [the wall of curtains around] the courtyard, and the ropes that tie to the pegs; ¹⁹and the special woven clothes for the priest to wear in the Holy Place.* These are the special clothes for Aaron the priest and his

sons to wear. They will wear these clothes when they serve as priests.”

The Great Offering from the People

²⁰Then all the people of Israel went away from Moses. ²¹All the people who wanted to give came and brought a gift to the Lord. These gifts were used for making the Meeting Tent,* all the things in the Tent, and the special clothes. ²²All the men and women who wanted to give brought gold jewelry of all kinds. They brought pins,* earrings, rings, and other jewelry. They all gave their jewelry to the Lord. This was a special offering to the Lord.

²³Every person who had fine linen* and blue, purple, and red yarn brought it to the Lord. Any person who had goat hair or ram skins dyed red or fine leather* brought it to the Lord. ²⁴Every person who wanted to give silver or bronze* brought that as a gift to the Lord. Every person who had acacia wood came and gave it to the Lord. ²⁵Every skilled woman made fine linen and blue, purple, and red yarn. ²⁶And all the women who were skilled and wanted to help made cloth from the goat hair.

²⁷The leaders brought onyx stones and other jewels. These stones and jewels were put on the Ephod* and Judgment Pouch* of the priest. ²⁸The people also brought spices and olive oil. These things were used for the sweet-smelling incense,* the anointing oil,* and the oil for the lamps.

²⁹All the people of Israel that wanted to help brought gifts to the Lord. The people gave these gifts freely, because they wanted to. These gifts were used to make all the things the Lord had commanded Moses and the people to make.

Bezalel and Oholiab

³⁰Then Moses said to the people of Israel, “Look, the Lord has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, from the family group of Judah. (Uri was the

fine leather A special kind of leather made from the skin of an animal like a seal or sea cow.

anointing oil Fine olive oil that was poured on things or people to show they were chosen for a special work or purpose.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

Ephod A special coat worn by the priests.

Judgment Pouch A piece of clothing like a bib or an apron that covered the high priest’s chest. See Ex. 28:15-30.

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

Holy Box The Box of the Agreement, the box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

cover Also called “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

Holy Place One of the rooms in the Holy Tent.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

pins Or, “hooks.” These were like safety pins and were used like buttons to fasten their robes.

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

son of Hur.) ³¹The Lord filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God—he gave Bezalel special skill and knowledge to do all kinds of things. ³²He can design and make things with gold, silver, and bronze*. ³³He can cut and set stones and jewels. Bezalel can work with wood and make all kinds of things. ³⁴The Lord has given Bezalel and Oholiab special skills to teach other people. (Oholiab was the son of Ahisamach from the family group of Dan.) ³⁵The Lord has given both of these men special skill to do all kinds of work. They are able to do the work of carpenters and metal workers. They can weave cloth with designs in it from the blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen.* And they are able to weave things with wool.

36 “So, Bezalel, Oholiab and all the other skilled men must do the work the Lord has commanded. The Lord has given these men the wisdom and understanding to do all the skilled work needed to build this holy place.”

²Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and all the other skilled people that the Lord had given special skills to. And these people came because they wanted to help with the work. ³Moses gave these people all the things the people of Israel had brought as gifts. And they used these things to build [God’s] holy place. The people continued to bring gifts each morning. ⁴Finally, all the skilled workers left the work they were doing on the holy place, and they went to speak to Moses. They said, ⁵“The people have brought too much! We have more than we need to finish the work on the Tent!”

⁶Then Moses sent this message throughout the camp: “No man or woman should make anything else as a gift for the holy place.” So the people were forced to stop giving more. ⁷The people had brought more than enough things to finish the work [of building God’s holy place].

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

The Holy Tent

⁸Then the skilled workers began making the Holy Tent.* They made the ten curtains from fine linen and blue, purple, and red yarn. And they sewed pictures of Cherub angels* with wings into the curtains. ⁹Each curtain was the same size—28 cubits* long and 4 cubits* wide. ¹⁰The workers joined the curtains together into two groups of curtains. They joined five curtains together to make one group and five curtains together to make the other group. ¹¹Then they used blue cloth to make loops along the edge of the end curtain of one group. And they did the same on the end curtain in the other group. ¹²There were 50 loops on the end curtain in one group, and 50 loops on the end curtain in the other group. The loops were opposite each other. ¹³Then they made 50 gold rings to join the two curtains together. So the Holy Tent was joined together into one piece.

¹⁴Then the workers made another tent to cover the Holy Tent.* They used goat hair to make eleven curtains. ¹⁵All the curtains were the same size—30 cubits* long and 4 cubits* wide. ¹⁶The workers joined five curtains together into one group and six curtains together into another group. ¹⁷They put 50 loops along the edge of the end curtain of one group. And they did the same on the end curtain of the other group. ¹⁸The workers made 50 bronze* rings to join the two groups of curtains together to form one tent. ¹⁹Then they made two more coverings for the Holy Tent. One covering was made from ram skins dyed red. The other covering was made from fine leather.*

²⁰Then the workers made frames from acacia wood to support the Holy Tent.* ²¹Each frame was 10 cubits* long and

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

Cherub angels Special angels from God. Statues of these angels were on top of the Box of the Agreement.

28 cubits 48’ 2 3/4” (14.7m).

4 cubits 6’ 10 13/16” (2.1m).

30 cubits 51’ 8 1/16” (15.75m).

fine leather A special kind of leather made from the skin of an animal like a seal or a sea cow.

10 cubits 17’ 2 11/16” (5.25m).

1 1/2 cubits* wide. ²²There were two side poles joined together with cross pieces to make each frame. Every frame for the Holy Tent was made the same. ²³They made 20 frames for the south side of the Holy Tent. ²⁴Then they made 40 silver bases for the frames. There were two bases for each frame—one base for each side pole. ²⁵They also made 20 frames for the other side (the north side) of the Holy Tent. ²⁶They made 40 silver bases for the frames—two bases for each frame. ²⁷They made six more frames for the back (the west side) of the Holy Tent. ²⁸They also made two frames for the corners at the back of the Holy Tent. ²⁹These frames were joined together at the bottom. And at the top a ring held the corner frames together. They did the same for both corners. ³⁰There was a total of eight frames for the west side of the Holy Tent. And there were 16 silver bases—two bases for each frame.

³¹Then the workers used Acacia wood to make the braces for the frames—five braces for the first side of the Holy Tent,* ³²five braces for the other side, and five braces for the back of the Holy Tent (that is, the west side). ³³They made the middle brace so that it passed through the frames from one end to the other. ³⁴They covered these frames with gold. Then they used gold to make the rings to hold the braces. And they covered the braces with gold.

³⁵They used fine linen* and blue, purple, and red yarn to make the special curtain [for the entrance to the Most Holy Place]. And they sewed pictures of Cherub angels* into the curtain. ³⁶They made four posts using acacia wood, and they covered the posts with gold. Then they made gold hooks for the posts. And they made four silver bases for the posts. ³⁷Then they made the curtain to cover the entrance to the Tent. They used blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen to make this curtain. And they wove pictures into it. ³⁸Then they made the five posts and the hooks

[for this curtain over the entrance]. They covered the tops of the posts and the curtain rods* with gold. And they made the five bronze* bases for the posts.

The Box of the Agreement

37 Bezalel made the Holy Box* from acacia wood. The Box was 2 1/2 cubits* long, 1 1/2 cubits* wide, and 1 1/2 cubits high. ²He covered the inside and outside of the Box with pure gold. Then he put gold trim around the Box. ³He made four rings of gold and put them on the four corners. These rings were used for carrying the Box. There were two rings on each side. ⁴Then he made the poles for carrying the Box. He used acacia wood and covered the poles with pure gold. ⁵He put the poles through the rings on each side of the Box. ⁶Then he made the cover* from pure gold. It was 2 1/2 cubits long and 1 1/2 cubits wide. ⁷Then Bezalel hammered gold to make two Cherub angels. He put the Cherub angels* on each end of the cover. ⁸He put one angel on one end of the cover, and he put the other angel on the other end. The angels were joined together with the cover to make one piece. ⁹The wings of the angels were spread up toward the sky. The angels covered the Box with their wings. The angels faced each other, looking toward the cover.

The Special Table

¹⁰Then he made the table from acacia wood. The table was 2 cubits* long, 1 cubit* wide, and 1 1/2 cubits* high. ¹¹He covered the table with pure gold. He put gold trim around the table. ¹²Then he made a frame 1 handbreadth* wide around the table. He put

curtain rods Or, “fasteners.”

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

Holy Box The Box of the Agreement—the box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

2 1/2 cubits 4' 3 5/8" (131.25cm).

cover Also called, “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

2 cubits 3' 5 5/16" (105cm).

1 cubit 1' 8 5/8" (52.5cm).

1 handbreadth The width of 4 fingers, about 3" (7.7cm).

1 1/2 cubits 2' 7" (78.75cm.).

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

Cherub angels Special angels from God. Statues of these angels were on top of the Box of the Agreement.

gold trim on the frame. ¹³Then he made four gold rings and put them at the four corners of the table, where the four legs were. ¹⁴He put the rings close to the frame [around the top of the table]. The rings were to hold the poles used to carry the table. ¹⁵Then he used acacia wood to make the poles for carrying the table. He covered the poles with pure gold. ¹⁶Then he made all the things that were used on the table. He made the plates, the spoons, the bowls, and the pitchers from pure gold. The bowls and pitchers are used for pouring [the drink offerings].

The Lampstand

¹⁷Then he made the lampstand. He used pure gold and hammered it to make the base and the shaft.* Then he made flowers, buds, and petals. He joined all these things together into one piece. ¹⁸The lampstand had six branches—three branches on one side and three branches on the other side. ¹⁹Each branch had three flowers on it. These flowers were made like almond flowers with buds and petals. ²⁰The shaft of the lampstand had four more flowers. They were also made like almond flowers with buds and petals. ²¹There were six branches—three branches coming out from each side of the shaft. And there was a flower with buds and petals below each of the three places where the branches joined the shaft. ²²The whole lampstand, with the flowers and branches, was made from pure gold. All this gold was hammered and joined together into one piece. ²³He made seven lamps for this lampstand. Then he made wick trimmers and trays from pure gold. ²⁴He used 75 pounds* of pure gold to make the lampstand and the things used with it.

The Altar for Burning Incense

²⁵He made the altar* for burning incense.* He made this from acacia wood. The altar was

square. It was 1 cubit* long, 1 cubit wide, and 2 cubits* high. There were four horns on the altar. There was one horn on each corner. These horns were joined together with the altar to make one piece. ²⁶He covered the top and all the sides and the horns with pure gold. Then he put gold trim around the altar. ²⁷He made two gold rings for the altar. He put the gold rings below the trim on each side of the altar. These gold rings held the poles for carrying the altar. ²⁸He made the poles from acacia wood and covered them with gold.

²⁹Then he made the holy anointing oil.* He also made the pure, sweet-smelling incense.* These things were made the same way that a perfume maker would make them.

The Altar for Burning Offerings

38 Then Bezalel used acacia wood to build the altar. This was the altar used for burning offerings. The altar was square. It was 5 cubits* long, 5 cubits wide, and 3 cubits* high. ²He made a horn for each of the four corners of the altar. He joined each horn to its corner so that everything was one piece. He covered the altar with bronze.* ³Then he used bronze to make all the tools to be used on the altar. He made the pots, shovels, bowls, forks, and pans. ⁴Then he made a bronze grating for the altar. This grating was shaped like a net. The grating was put under the ledge at the bottom of the altar. It went halfway up into the altar from below. ⁵Then he made bronze rings. These rings were used to hold the poles for carrying the altar. He put the rings at the four corners of the grating. ⁶Then he used acacia wood to make the poles and covered them with bronze. ⁷He put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar. The poles were used for carrying the altar. He used boards to make the sides of the altar. It was hollow, [like an empty box].

1 cubit 1' 8 5/8" (52.5cm).

2 cubits 3' 5 5/16" (105cm).

anointing oil Fine olive oil that was poured on things or people to show they were chosen for a special work or purpose.

5 cubits 8' 7 5/16" (2.625m).

3 cubits 5' 2" (1.575m).

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean "copper," "bronze," or "brass."

base and the shaft Or, "flared base."

75 pounds Literally, "1 kikar."

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

⁸He made the bowl and its base with bronze.* He used the bronze mirrors that the women gave. These were the women that served at the entrance to the Meeting Tent.*

The Courtyard Around the Holy Tent

⁹Then he made [a wall of curtains around] the courtyard. On the south side he made a wall of curtains 100 cubits* long. The curtains were made from fine linen.* ¹⁰The curtains on the south side were supported by 20 posts. The posts were on 20 bronze* bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods* were made from silver. ¹¹The north side of the courtyard also had a wall of curtains 100 cubits long. There were 20 posts with 20 bronze bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods were made from silver.

¹²On the west side of the courtyard the wall of curtains was 50 cubits* long. There were 10 posts and 10 bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods* were made from silver.

¹³The east side of the courtyard was 50 cubits* wide. The entrance to the courtyard was on this side. ¹⁴On one side of the entrance the wall of curtains was 15 cubits* long. There were three posts and three bases on this side. ¹⁵The wall of curtains on the other side of the entrance was also 15 cubits long. There were three posts and three bases on that side. ¹⁶All the curtains around the courtyard were made from fine linen.* ¹⁷The bases for the posts were made from bronze*. The hooks and the curtain rods* were made from silver. The tops of the posts were covered with silver also. All the posts in the courtyard had silver curtain rods.

¹⁸The curtain for the entrance of the courtyard was made from fine linen* and blue, purple, and red yarn. Designs were woven into that curtain. The curtain was 20 cubits* long

and 5 cubits* high. It was the same height as the curtains around the courtyard. ¹⁹The curtain was supported by four posts and four bronze* bases. The hooks on the posts were made from silver. The tops on the posts were covered with silver, and the curtain rods* were also made from silver. ²⁰All the tent pegs for the Holy Tent* and for the curtains around the courtyard were made from bronze.

²¹Moses commanded the Levite people to write down all the things that were used to make the Holy Tent,* that is, the Tent of the Agreement.* Ithamar son of Aaron, was in charge of keeping the list.

²²Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, from the family group of Judah, made everything the Lord commanded Moses. ²³Also Oholiab son of Ahisamach, from the family group of Dan, helped him. Oholiab was a skilled worker and designer. He was skilled at weaving fine linen* and blue, purple, and red yarn.

²⁴More than 2 tons* of gold was given as an offering to the Lord for his holy place. (This was weighed using the official measure.*)

²⁵The total number of men that were counted gave more than 3 3/4 tons* of silver. (This was weighed using the official measure.*) ²⁶All the men 20 years old or older were counted. There were 603,550 men, and each man had to pay a tax of 1 beqa* of silver. (Using the official measure, a beqa is 1/2 shekel.*) ²⁷They used 3 3/4 tons of that silver to make the 100 bases for the [Lord's] holy place and for the curtain. They used 75 pounds* of silver for each base. ²⁸The other 50 pounds* of silver was used to make

5 cubits 8' 7 5/16" (2.625m).

Holy Tent Or, "tabernacle," the tent where God came to live among his people.

Agreement Literally, "Proof." The two flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

2 tons Literally, "29 kikars and 730 shekels."

official measure Literally, "holy shekel," the official standard of measure used in the tabernacle or temple.

3 3/4 tons Literally, "100 kikars and 1,775 shekels."

1 beqa Or, "1/5 of an ounce."

shekel Or, "2/5 of an ounce."

75 pounds Literally, "1 kikar."

50 pounds Literally, "1,775 shekels."

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean "copper," "bronze," or "brass."

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

100 cubits 172' 3" (52.5m).

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

curtain rods Or, "fasteners."

50 cubits 86' 1 1/2" (26.25m).

15 cubits 25' 10" (7.875m).

20 cubits 34' 5 3/8" (10.5m).

the hooks, the curtain rods,* and the silver covering for the posts.

²⁹More than 26 1/2 tons* of bronze* was given to the Lord. ³⁰That bronze was used to make the bases at the entrance of the Meeting Tent.* They also used the bronze to make the altar* and the bronze grating. And the bronze was used to make all the tools and dishes for the altar. ³¹It was also used to make the bases for the curtains around the courtyard and the bases for the curtains at the entrance. And the bronze was used to make the tent pegs for the Holy Tent* and for the curtains around the courtyard.

The Priests' Special Clothes

39 The workers used the blue, purple, and red yarn to make special clothes for the priest to wear when they served in the [Lord's] holy place. They also made the special clothes for Aaron like the Lord had commanded Moses.

The Ephod

²They made the Ephod* from gold thread, fine linen,* and blue, purple, and red yarn. ³(They hammered the gold into thin strips. Then they cut the gold into long threads. And they wove the gold into the blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen. This was the work of a very skilled person.) ⁴They made the shoulder pieces for the Ephod. They tied these shoulder pieces to the two corners of the Ephod. ⁵They wove the sash (*belt*) and fastened it to the Ephod. It was made the same way as the Ephod—they used gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple, and red yarn, just like the Lord commanded Moses.

⁶The workers put the onyx stones [for the Ephod] in gold settings. They wrote the names

of the sons of Israel on these stones. ⁷Then they put these jewels on the shoulder pieces of the Ephod.* These jewels were to help God to remember the people of Israel. This was done like the Lord commanded Moses.

The Judgment Pouch

⁸Then they made the Judgment Pouch.* It was the work of a skilled person, just like the Ephod.* It was made from gold threads, fine linen,* and blue, purple, and red yarn. ⁹The Judgment Pouch was folded in half to make a square [pocket]. It was 1 span* long and 1 span wide. ¹⁰Then the workers put four rows of beautiful jewels on the Judgment Pouch. The first row had a ruby, a topaz, and a beryl. ¹¹The second row had a turquoise, a sapphire, and an emerald. ¹²The third row had a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. ¹³The fourth row had a chrysolite, an onyx, and a jasper. All these jewels were set in gold. ¹⁴There were twelve jewels on the Judgment Pouch—one jewel for each of the sons of Israel (*Jacob*). Each stone had the name of one of the sons of Israel carved onto it, like a seal.*

¹⁵The workers made two chains from pure gold for the Judgment Pouch.* The chains were braided like a rope. ¹⁶The workers made two gold rings and fastened them to two corners of the Judgment Pouch. And they made two gold settings [for the shoulder pieces]. ¹⁷They fastened the gold chains to the rings at the corners of the Judgment Pouch. ¹⁸They fastened the other ends of the gold chains to the settings on the shoulder pieces. They fastened these to the front of the Ephod.* ¹⁹Then they made two more gold rings and put them on the other two corners of the Judgment Pouch. This was on the inside edge of the Judgment Pouch next to the Ephod. ²⁰They also put two gold rings on the bottom of the shoulder pieces on the front of the Ephod. These rings were near the fastener, just above

curtain rods Or, “fasteners.”

26 1/2 tons Literally, “70 kikars and 2,400 shekels.”

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

Ephod A special coat worn by the priests.

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

Judgment Pouch A piece of clothing like a bib or an apron that covered the high priest's chest. See Ex. 28:15-30.

1 span About 9” (23cm). This is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger.

seal(s) Small stones with designs cut into them. Pressed into wet clay or hot wax, they made a special mark.

the sash (*belt*). ²¹Then they used a blue ribbon and tied the rings of the Judgment Pouch to the rings of the Ephod. In this way the Judgment Pouch would rest close to the sash and would be held tight against the Ephod. They did everything just like the Lord commanded.

Other Clothes for the Priests

²²Then they made the robe for the Ephod.* They made it from blue cloth. It was woven by a skilled worker. ²³They made a hole in the center of the robe and sewed a piece of cloth around the edge of this hole. This cloth kept the hole from tearing.

²⁴Then they used fine linen* and blue, purple, and red yarn to make the [cloth] pomegranates.* They hung these pomegranates around the bottom edge of the robe. ²⁵Then they made bells from pure gold. They hung these bells around the bottom edge of the robe between the pomegranates. ²⁶Around the bottom edge of the robe there were bells and pomegranates. There was a bell between each pomegranate. This robe was for the priest to wear when he served the Lord, just like the Lord commanded Moses.

²⁷Skilled workers wove shirts for Aaron and his sons. These shirts were made from fine linen.* ²⁸And the workers made a turban* from fine linen. They also used fine linen to make head bands and underclothes. ²⁹Then they made the sash (*belt*) from fine linen and blue, purple, and red yarn. Designs were sewn into the cloth. These things were made like the Lord had commanded Moses.

³⁰Then they made the strip of gold for the holy crown. They made it from pure gold. They wrote words into the gold. They wrote these words: HOLY TO THE LORD. ³¹They fastened the gold strip to a blue ribbon. Then they tied the blue ribbon around the turban* like the Lord had commanded Moses.

Ephod A special coat worn by the priests.

linen Thread or cloth made from the fibers of the flax plant.

pomegranates A red fruit about the size of an orange.

turban Head covering made by wrapping a long piece of cloth around the head or around a cap worn on the head.

Moses Inspects the Holy Tent

³²So all the work on the Holy Tent,* that is, the Meeting Tent was finished. The people of Israel did everything exactly like the Lord had commanded Moses. ³³Then they showed the Holy Tent to Moses. They showed him the Tent and all the things in it. They showed him the rings, the frames, the braces, the posts, and the bases. ³⁴They showed him the covering of the Tent that was made from ram skins dyed red. And they showed him the covering that was made from fine leather.* And they showed him the curtain that covered [the entrance to the Most Holy Place].

³⁵They showed Moses the Box of the Agreement.* They showed him the poles used for carrying the Box and they showed him the cover* for the Box. ³⁶They showed him the table with everything on it and the special bread.* ³⁷They showed him the pure gold lampstand and the lamps on it. And they showed him the oil and all the other things that were used with the lamps. ³⁸They showed Moses the gold altar,* the anointing oil,* the sweet-smelling incense,* and the curtain that covered the entrance to the Tent. ³⁹They showed him the bronze* altar and the bronze screen. They showed him the poles used for carrying the altar. And they showed him all the things that were used on the altar. They showed him the bowl and the base under the bowl.

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people.

fine leather A special kind of leather made from the skin of an animal like a seal or sea cow.

Box of the Agreement Or, “ark of the Covenant.” The box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

cover Also called “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover,” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

special bread Also called “Bread of the Presence.” Every day this bread was put before God on the special table in the Holy Place.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

anointing oil Fine olive oil that was poured on things or people to show that they were chosen for a special work or purpose.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

bronze A metal. The Hebrew word can mean “copper,” “bronze,” or “brass.”

⁴⁰They showed Moses the wall of curtains around the courtyard with the posts and bases. They showed him the curtain that covered the entrance to the courtyard. They showed him the ropes and the tent pegs. They showed him all the things in the Holy Tent,* that is, the Meeting Tent.

⁴¹Then they showed Moses the clothes that were made for the priests serving in the holy area. They showed him the special clothes for Aaron the priest and his sons. These were clothes for them to wear when they served as priests.

⁴²The people of Israel did all this work exactly like the Lord had commanded Moses. ⁴³Moses looked closely at all the work. Moses saw that the work was done exactly like the Lord had commanded. So Moses blessed them.

Moses Sets Up the Holy Tent

40 Then the Lord said to Moses, ²“On the first day of the first month, set up the Holy Tent,* that is, the Meeting Tent. ³Put the Box of the Agreement* in the Holy Tent. Cover the Box with the curtain. ⁴Then bring in the table. Put the things on the table that should be there. Then put the lampstand in the Tent. Put the lamps on the lampstand in the right places. ⁵Put the gold altar* for offering incense* in the Tent. Put the altar in front of the Box of the Agreement. Then put the curtain at the entrance to the Holy Tent.

⁶“Put the altar* for burning offerings in front of the entrance of the Holy Tent,* that is, the Meeting Tent. ⁷Put the bowl between the Meeting Tent and the altar. Put water in the bowl. ⁸Set up the wall of curtains around the courtyard. Then put the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard.

⁹“Use the anointing oil and anoint* the Holy Tent* and everything in it. When you put the oil on these things, you will make them holy.* ¹⁰Anoint the altar for burning offerings. Anoint everything on the altar. You will make the altar holy. It will be very holy. ¹¹Then anoint the bowl and the base under it. Do this to make those things holy.

¹²“Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Meeting Tent.* Wash them with water. ¹³Then put the special clothes on Aaron. Anoint* him with the oil and make him holy.* Then he can serve me as a priest. ¹⁴Then put the clothes on his sons. ¹⁵Anoint the sons in the same way that you anointed their father. Then they can also serve me as priests. When you anoint them, they will become priests. That family will continue to be priests for all time to come.” ¹⁶Moses obeyed the Lord. He did everything that the Lord commanded him.

¹⁷So the Holy Tent* was set up at the right time. It was the first day of the first month during the second year [from the time they left Egypt]. ¹⁸Moses set up the Holy Tent like the Lord had said. He put the bases down first. Then he put the frames on the bases. Then he put the braces on and set up the posts. ¹⁹After that, Moses put the outer tent over the Holy Tent. Then he put the covering over the outer tent. He did these things like the Lord had commanded.

²⁰Moses took the Agreement* and put it in the Holy Box. Moses put the poles on the Box. Then he put the cover* on the Box. ²¹Then Moses put the Holy Box into the Holy Tent.* He hung the curtain in the right place to protect it. In this way, he protected the Box of the Agreement* [behind the curtain] like the Lord had commanded him. ²²Then Moses put the table in the Meeting Tent. He put it on

Holy Tent Or, “tabernacle,” the tent where God came to live among his people. It is often called the “Meeting Tent.”

Box of the Agreement Or, “ark of the Covenant.” The box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

altar A table or raised area used for offering sacrifices.

incense Special dried tree sap. Burned to make a sweet-smelling smoke, it was offered as a gift to God.

anoint To pour olive oil on things or people to show they are chosen by God for a special work or purpose.

holy Set aside or chosen for a special purpose.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

Agreement Literally, “Proof.” The two flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them. These were proof of the Agreement between God and the people of Israel.

cover Also called “mercy seat.” The Hebrew word can mean “lid,” “cover” or “the place where sins are forgiven.”

the north side of the Holy Tent. He put it in the Holy Place, in front of the curtain. ²³Then he put the bread on the table before the Lord. He did this like the Lord had commanded him. ²⁴Then Moses put the lampstand in the Meeting Tent. He put the lampstand on the south side of the Tent, across from the table. ²⁵Then Moses put the lamps on the lampstand before the Lord. He did this like the Lord had commanded him.

²⁶Then Moses put the gold altar in the Meeting Tent.* He put the altar in front of the curtain. ²⁷Then he burned sweet-smelling incense on the altar. He did this like the Lord had commanded him. ²⁸Then Moses put the curtain at the entrance to the Holy Tent.*

²⁹Moses put the altar for burning offerings at the entrance to the Holy Tent,* that is, the Meeting Tent. Then Moses offered a burnt offering on that altar. He also offered grain offerings to the Lord. He did these things like the Lord had commanded him.

³⁰Then Moses put the bowl between the Meeting Tent* and the altar. Moses put water in the bowl for washing. ³¹Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons used this bowl to wash their hands and feet. ³²They washed themselves every time they entered the Meeting Tent.

They also washed themselves every time they went near the altar. They did these things like the Lord commanded Moses.

³³Then Moses set up the curtains around the courtyard of the Holy Tent.* Moses put the altar in the courtyard. Then he put the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. So Moses finished all the work that the Lord had given him to do.

The Glory of the Lord

³⁴Then the cloud covered the Meeting Tent* and the Glory of the Lord* filled the Holy Tent.* ³⁵Moses could not go into the Meeting Tent because the cloud had settled on it, and the Glory of the Lord had filled the Holy Tent.

³⁶[This was the cloud that showed the people when to move.] When the cloud rose from the Holy Tent*, the people of Israel would begin to travel. ³⁷But when the cloud stayed on the Holy Tent, the people did not try to move. They stayed in that place until the cloud rose. ³⁸So the cloud of the Lord was over the Holy Tent during the day. And at night, there was a fire in the cloud. So all the people of Israel could see the cloud while they traveled.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle), where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

Holy Tent Or, "tabernacle," the tent where God came to live among his people.

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.