

# Angels

summaries of scripture

by

Billy Lee Harman

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For  
Yājñavalkya,  
Maitreyi,  
Gargi,  
Maitrī,  
Siddhattha Gotama,  
Lǎo Zǐ,  
Jesus,  
Mary of Magdala,  
etc.

Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh  
and intermeddleth with all wisdom.

Proverbs 18:1

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## Chapter 1

### Messages and Messengers

Angels are messengers. The origin of the word “angels” is a Greek word meaning “messenger” that entered other languages by way of the Greek scriptures of Christianity. This book summarizes the messages of the definitive scriptures of each of the six most popular religions.

Those religions, in order by popularity, are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, and Judaism. At the time of the writing of this book, about 2.2 billion humans called themselves Christians while about 1.7 billion called themselves Muslims. Nearly a billion humans called themselves Hindus while about a half billion called themselves Buddhists. Estimates of the number of Daoists ranged from 24 million to 173 million. And about 14 million humans called themselves Judaic.

But, by reason of the notion that everything to some extent shapes what follows it, the order of the presentation of the summaries of the scriptures of those religions in this book is by historians’ estimates of the dates of composition of the earliest scripture of each religion.

Each scripture is both different from and similar to each other scripture, as each religion is both different from and similar to each other religion, but the principal purpose of this book isn’t to present the differences or similarities. And neither is it to evaluate the religions or to validate their scriptures. And neither is it to compare them.

The principal purpose of this book is to give people who aren’t willing to read all those scriptures a basis to compare them for the purpose of considering whether people’s having killed one another in the name of God since before the founding of any of those six religions is justifiable.

So, considering that the most popular religion is Christianity, let’s consider in this introductory chapter an example of Christians killing one another. These events occurred near the end of what, partly because of wars in the name of God during that time, some people call the Dark Ages, while, because it was the centuries between the peak of the political power of

Christianity and a rebirth of secular reasoning historians call the Renaissance, some call it the Middle Ages. And these events were the climax of what historians call the Hundred Years War, a century of war between two predominantly Christian nations, England and France.

That war was mainly French defense against English effort to make France part of England, and, in the spring of the year 1429, the army of the regents of England controlled approximately a third of France, nearly all of it from the English Channel to the Loire River. And, because the Duke of the French province of Burgundy had allied himself with the regents of England, the Burgundian army was skirmishing south of the Loire, and the king of France had died, and his queen had signed a treaty with the English monarchy, officially relinquishing rule of France to England's seven-year-old king. And most of the private soldiers of France had returned to their shops and farms, leaving France with an Army of officers with nearly no soldiers to follow them.

So the Dauphin, the crown prince of France, had given up hope of winning the war, and so had most of the people of France, and all that was keeping the English army from crossing the Loire and controlling all of France by the end of that year was the city of Orleans.

Orleans was the last French stronghold on the river and controlled the main bridge across it. But it had been under English siege for six months, with English soldiers sitting in a half dozen fortifications around the city, waiting for the people of Orleans to surrender or starve. But not everyone had given up hope.

A sixteen-year-old farm girl in the tiny town of Domremy began the end of all that by asking an uncle of hers for a ride in his wagon to the nearest stronghold of what remained of the French army.

People now call her Joan of Arc, but her name wasn't Joan, and she wasn't from Arc. Joan is an English form of Jeanne, which is a modern French contraction of Jehanne, which was her name. Her father was Jacques d'Arc, and an English translation of that is Jack of Arc, but family patronymics weren't customary in France then, and that Jacques had settled in Domremy before Jehanne's birth. And the reason she didn't ask him for the ride is that he'd made clear that he wouldn't have approved of her reason for going.

He'd said he'd dreamed she was a soldier and that he'd rather her brothers drown her than that the dream come true. And her purpose for going was to ask the captain of the stronghold to give her an escort to the Dauphin for her to ask him to give her command of the army of France. She said that God, speaking to her through Saints Michael, Catherine, and Margaret, had told her to do two things that were necessary and sufficient to win the war for France.

That was her message, and Christian scripture says Michael was an angel, and Christians interpret that scripture to say Michael won for God a war between angels. They interpret it to say he led one faction of the angels, that the angel Lucifer led the other faction, and that Michael pitched Lucifer into hell. And, while Catherine's and Margaret's having been martyrs by beheading gave Jehanne's message no credibility, other circumstances did.

A story then circulating through France said France would be lost by a woman and won by a woman, and the people of France had decided their dead king's queen was the woman who'd lose France. And another story then circulating said the woman who'd win France would be a maid from obscure origins, and Domremy was about as obscure as any town in France. And Jehanne of Domremy was a maid.

The commander of the command post laughed when, standing before him in a red dress that probably was her most elegant clothing, she conveyed to him her message. But another officer in the room told him the Dauphin might find her amusing. And her story charmed the people of the town.

They gave her a horse for the ride, and they also gave her some men's clothing, to make her inconspicuous through those three hundred miles of enemy territory. Jehanne had never ridden a horse, but she learned quickly enough to make the ride, and she convinced the Dauphin. And, less than two months later, she was successfully leading cavalry charges.

And she was correct in saying that what she said God told her to do was necessary and sufficient to turn the tide of the war inevitably against England. The first deed was militarily necessary, and the second was politically necessary, and neither was sufficient in itself. They were to raise the siege from Orleans and escort the Dauphin to Reims for his coronation.

Raising the siege kept the English army north of the Loire long enough for France to have its own king. And, for reasons both political and religious, crowning the Dauphin at Reims gave him legitimacy in the minds and hearts of the French people. And the reason for that also involved a woman.

Clovis I was a pagan king of the Franks about a century before Muhammad founded Islam. His queen's name was Clotilde, and she was a Christian and tried to convert him to Christianity, but he refused until he was going into a battle he didn't think he could win. Then, asking her to pray for his victory, he promised to convert if he won.

She prayed, and he won, and he converted to Christianity, with fifteen thousand of his knights, at Reims on Christmas day 496. And, from then on, every king of France was Christian and received his crown at Reims, and Clotilde also designed the symbol of France, the *fleur de lis*. It refers to the

reference to the lilies of the field in what Christians call Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and now the Roman Catholic Church calls Clotilde Saint Clotilde.

But this account of Jehanne is more verifiable than that account of Clotilde. It's evident in the official transcripts of two trials, one to prove Jehanne was a heretic, and one to prove she wasn't. The English monarchy arranged the first, and Jehanne's mother instigated the second a quarter of a century later, and notaries certified each page of each transcript.

But, because the Dauphin testified at neither trial, no one certified his reasons for his response to Jehanne's message. He responded to it by taking her to Poitiers for a sort of trial by Christian scholars who'd fled there from the University of Paris because the English and Burgundian armies had taken Paris and staffed the university with scholars loyal to them, and those scholar priests' interrogation decided Jehanne wasn't a heretic, and some nuns' examination decided she was a maid, a virgin. And the Dauphin responded to that by giving her command of the army he didn't have, and she solved that problem by calling herself the maid, but she didn't say God told her to do that.

And she didn't say she was the maid of the story. But word spread through France that the maid had appeared, and countless private soldiers who'd left the army to return to their shops and farms came swarming back, and so she had her army. And, because their returning to follow her made the Dauphin's official decision only incidental, the army was genuinely hers. And she proved her army and herself in her first battle.

When she and her army arrived at Orleans, their first step was to deliver food to the people starving there, and witnesses at the trial her mother instigated said a problem in that was that the wind on the river was against the barges delivering the food. They said the generals decided to wait for the wind to change but that Jehanne rejected their decision, and they said that, when she told the generals that, the wind reversed direction. But the testimony also makes clear that still they thought she wasn't a soldier.

They knew she inspired the army, but they didn't know she could lead it in battle. So, when they rode out of the city to take the first of the half dozen fortifications, they left before dawn and left Jehanne sleeping. But, when she awoke, she called for her armor, her horse, and the banner she'd designed with the names of Jesus and Mary in its center and *fleur de lis* in its corners. And she rode to the battle.

Because the generals had decided to quit for that day, perhaps to try again the next, she found her army retreating, but, also rejecting that decision of the generals', she rode through her army, rallying them back to the fight, and she was the first of them on a siege ladder, a ladder medieval soldiers used to scale walls of fortifications.



An English arrow hit her, and she fell to the ground, and the fall knocked her unconscious, and some of her soldiers carried her back to the city, and, after removing the arrow and dressing the wound, they left her sleeping again. But, when she awoke again, she called for her armor, her horse, and her banner again, rode to the front again, found her army retreating again, and rallied it again, and she and her army took the fortification that day. And her generals never again left her sleeping.

And, in the next ten days, she and her army took the other five fortifications, and the last they took was the one guarding the bridge to the main entrance to the city. Her food delivery, because the people of the city hadn't been able to use its main gate since the English army began the siege the previous October, was through another gate. So imagine the cheers when Jehanne rode into the city through the bridge gate.

But she never killed anyone. The English general commanding the siege fell from the bridge and drowned, and she mentioned having swords during the trial to prove she was a heretic, but she also said she preferred her banner to her sword a hundred times. And testimony at the trial her mother instigated suggests that her first sword was a gift from Saint Catherine.

While Jehanne was in Poitier to prove she wasn't a heretic and was a maid, she said Catherine told her a sword was in the ground beneath the altar of a church for St. Catherine, and she asked that the sword be brought to her. The sword was where she said it was, and witnesses said it wasn't deep in the ground and that the rust easily fell from it, but the only use of a sword witnesses attested to Jehanne was to slap a camp follower. Camp followers were prostitutes who followed armies.

So, besides giving her army faith, she gave it discipline. But she didn't much need discipline from it while she was escorting the Dauphin to Reims. The march was through enemy territory, past towns the English army had taken, but her reputation preceded her. The soldiers occupying those towns had heard of what she'd done at Orleans. So most of them surrendered with no fight.

And, contrary to norms of medieval battle, Jehanne let them surrender. She didn't let her soldiers kill either those who survived the fighting at Orleans or those who surrendered in the cities they liberated on their way to Reims, and neither did she take them captive, if they made her one promise. If they promised to return to England and never return to France, she let them keep their horses, their weapons, and provisions for their trip, and she let them go.

And then her work was done. She'd forestalled the invasion long enough to give France a king the people of France generally agreed was indisputably legitimate. So then she asked the king who owed her his crown for permission to return to tending her father's sheep.

But, asking her what she desired in return for her past and future service to him, he told her he needed her further. She told him she desired no reward, but he persisted in his request until she acceded and asked him to make Domremy exempt from taxes, and Domremy was exempt from taxes from then until the French Revolution ended the French monarchy more than three centuries later. But, continuing the reticence he'd demonstrated while he was Dauphin, he was a stumbling block to her further efforts for him and France.

She could have liberated Paris, but he signed a treaty with the English regents, promising to let them keep Paris if they'd take no more French cities. So, after another arrow hit her while she was laying fagots in the moat around Paris to help her army cross it, she withdrew her army by order of the king. And, a year after she raised the siege from Orleans, while she was trying to raise a siege from another French city, the Burgundian army captured her.

Her army's reconnaissance had told her most of the Burgundian army was far from the city. And that gave her reason to believe that defeating the contingency besieging the city would be relatively easy. But, as she rode from the city to attack the contingency, the main Burgundian army rode over a hill and separated her from the city.

She'd never ordered a retreat by her own will. And, because she was at the front of every attack, she was in the rear of that retreat. So, while her soldiers rode ahead of her in their effort to make their way through the Burgundians to reenter the city, a Burgundian soldier pulled her from her horse.

And the way in which the Burgundian soldier pulled her from her horse is the only event in official records that puts her character in question. The transcript of the trial people now call her trial of rehabilitation says a witness said the soldier used her gold cape to pull her from her horse. And it also says the witness said she refused to surrender to anyone not a knight.

But soon she proved her character again. The Burgundians locked her in the top of a fifty-foot tower, and, in keeping with the duty of every loyal soldier who's a prisoner of war, she leaped from a window to escape. But, as the fall from the siege ladder had knocked her unconscious, so did the leap from the tower, and that free spirit slept in chains for the remainder of her captivity.

And that king who owed her his crown violated a general rule of medieval war. He made no offer to ransom her, either from the Burgundians or from the English after they ransomed her from the Burgundians. So, for most of the next year, she answered to a court of a Bishop presiding over about fifty French clergy.

And the Bishop's name was Cauchon, and Cauchon rhymes with "*cochon*", French for "pig". And, besides being obese, he showed his character by refusing to provide legal counsel to her and by browbeating the court into

supporting his other breaches of legal protocol, and he charged her with heresy but never convicted her of anything. The trial ended with his sending her to burn at the stake, but he did it by breaches of legal protocol he followed with the crime of forgery.

And, to bring it to that, he showed her a rack, a medieval torture device, and he threatened to use it on her. She told him that, if it caused her to call herself a heretic, she'd later say she'd confessed only to stop the pain. But he succeeded by showing her the preparations for the fire that would burn her.

Perhaps thinking of Catherine and Margaret, Jehanne occasionally had spoken of beheading, but, wavering at the fire, she acceded to Cauchon's demand that she stop wearing the men's clothing she'd worn for practicality in battle since the people of Vaucouleurs gave her some for the ride to Chinon.

During the trial to prove her a heretic, Cauchon had tried to use against her the Bible's proscription against women dressing in men's clothing, and, after she acceded, because the only word she could read or write was her name, he ostensibly read to her two pages he said were that promise, and she signed the second of those two pages.

But she didn't say in court that she was a heretic. And, whether or not the two pages said she was a heretic, Cauchon didn't read them aloud in any hearing. But, to induce her to sign the pages, he promised aloud to transfer her to an ecclesiastical prison where women would be her caretakers.

And he broke that promise. He returned her to the cell where she'd slept during the trial. And, as she slept that night, her male guards took the dress she'd promised to wear, leaving her only the men's clothing in which she'd signed that second page. So Cauchon used rules of ecclesiastical law to send her to the stake for recanting on her promise.

And, violating legal protocol both ecclesiastical and secular, he passed her directly from the ecclesiastical court to the secular executioner. The protocol required him to pass her to the sheriff for the sheriff to pass her to the executioner. But the trial was in Rouen, the capital of Normandy.

The Norman conquest of England had taken the English monarchy from the English four centuries earlier, and the people of Rouen were screaming to see Jehanne burn. And the ecclesiastical and secular authorities, by not burning her when Cauchon showed her the preparation for the fire, had disappointed them. So, with no protest from the sheriff, the executioner burned her to death.

And, as she stood in the fire, Jehanne's last word was Jesus' name. She cried it several times before the flames did what Cauchon had promised the English, the Burgundians, the Normans, and the Church his court would do. And next, before the flames entirely consumed her body but after they

consumed her men's clothing, he ordered the executioner to rake back the kindling.

Witnesses said Cauchon did that to show the private parts proving she was a woman. And witnesses also said that, when she cried the name of Jesus, nearly all there wept with pity. And next was Cauchon's forgery.

After he showed Jehanne the two pages, he inserted between them pages saying she was a heretic, and that became apparent at the trial of rehabilitation when one of the notaries testified that he and the other notaries had signed every page of evidence. The notaries' initials were on the first page and the page with her signature. But no initials were on any page between.

And Cauchon violated ecclesiastical law in at least two other ways. Excepting one occasion, he denied her the right to the sacrament of confession during the entire trial. And, on that occasion, hoping to gather evidence against her, he sent one of his lackies to eavesdrop on the confession. So Cauchon made of himself a model of how hypocrisy can pervert a religion.

Incidentally, historians say Cauchon's motive for murdering Jehanne was that he hoped England would win the war and make him an archbishop. But he died an obese bishop before the trial Jehanne's mother instigated called him a murderer. So, other than murdering Jehanne, he failed in every way.

Jehanne had told his court that let him send her to the stake that it would see her justification within seven years, and, six years later, despite the weakness of the king she'd crowned, her army retook Paris.

The war continued in Normandy through more than another decade, but a reason her mother was able to instigate the trial that decided Jehanne wasn't a heretic was that her army eventually finished all the work she'd begun, making Normandy French again and making the transcript of what people call the trial of condemnation evidence for what they call her trial of rehabilitation.

But, perhaps more pertinent to the purpose of this book, another piece of evidence at that trial was the testimony of her closest associate in the fighting. The king, when he was Dauphin, appointed the Duke of Alençon to be close to Jehanne and advise and support her, and at the trial of rehabilitation Alençon told of two events that together may support her assertion that God told her to do the two deeds she said he told her to do, and one of the events preceded both of those deeds. Alençon said that, upon his departure from home to fight beside Jehanne, his wife asked Jehanne to send him back to her alive and that Jehanne promised she would.

And the other of the two events was crucial to that promise and perhaps not ordinarily explicable. Also perhaps extraordinary is that Alençon also said she'd proven herself expert at offensively deploying artillery, and the perhaps less ordinarily explicable of those two event was while she was observing an

English fortification to demonstrate that expertise. Alençon said she pointed to a gun on the wall of the fortification, called him her handsome duke, and told him that, because a ball from that gun would soon land where he was standing, he should step aside.

By then he'd learned to heed whatever she said. So he stepped aside, and another soldier stepped into the place he left, and a ball from that gun killed that other soldier. So, in the context of this book, the primary question of all that is what religious message it sends to any or all of us.

We often use the word "faith" as though it's a synonym for "religion". But faith is simply belief, and a question every religion raises is how that religion's belief is more valid than belief other religions express, and pertinent to that question is the question of whether Jehanne or Cauchon or neither was Christian. And pertinent to those questions are the questions of whether our religion should determine whether we believe Alençon's testimony and what religion is ours. And pertinent to any question is the question of how anything is relevant to anything.

"I had a daughter, born in lawful wedlock," said Isabelle Romée. That's how she began her deposition for the trial people say rehabilitated her daughter Jehanne to the good grace of Christianity. And the king who owed Jehanne his crown and his kingdom "ennobled" Isabelle and Jacques and all their children.

And the people of Orleans supported Isabelle the rest of her life. And now, when people aren't calling Jehanne Joan of Arc, they're calling her the maid of Orleans. And now, after what remained of her physical heart sank into the Seine by direction of the court, after much of her physical body went up in smoke, she's a patron saint of France. But the Roman Catholic Church didn't decide to call her a saint until nearly five centuries after the trial of rehabilitation. So part of the question of how Christian Jehanne or her mother were or weren't is in why the Roman Catholic Church waited so long.

Jehanne's parish priest said at her trial of rehabilitation that she sometimes walked the half mile from her home in Domremy to the parish church in Greux for confession and to otherwise talk with him and that he told her she didn't need to confess so often. And childhood friends of Jehanne's testified at that trial that they sometimes made fun of her for being too pious. But all said they loved her.

So another question is how Christian is love or being loveable. And that question leads to the question of how Christian is war, and that raises the question of how Christian were the Crusades of the three centuries of the Dark or Middle Ages leading to the Hundred Years War, and another question is how relevant to that question is that most of the bellicosity in Christian scripture is in

the exclusively Judaic part of it. And then a question is what's the relationship between what people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century call the war on terror and the fact that scripture both Islamic and Christian says it validates Judaic scripture.

And, while we're asking, might we not also consider the relationship between all of that and the fact that nearly no bellicosity is in the definitive scriptures of Hinduism, Buddhism, or Daoism and ask what makes a religion popular and whether the answer to that question is in the answer to the question of how much we remember or forget at any given moment.

And pertinent to that question may be the question of how anti-Semitic would be pointing out that both Hebrews and Arabs are Semitic.

But more directly pertinent to this book may be the question of how it's so brief in comparison to the scripture it summarizes. And my answer is that, while trying to omit nothing pertinent to doctrine and trying to limit my commentary to questions and factual observations of relationships, I've tried to omit most of the repetition that's much of most of the scriptures. That's what people call being concise and objective.

But in logic isn't the question how much analysis validates synthesis?

And in life isn't the question how decency can be common?

Is sorting truth what makes us free?

## Chapter 2

### Hinduism

Like India, Hinduism derived its name from the Indus, a river in the country we now call Pakistan. More than four millennia ago, an urban civilization anthropologists call the Indus Valley Civilization developed in the Indus Valley, but that civilization ended in the middle of the next millennium. And, while postulating no reason for that demise, anthropologists say the next civilization to develop there was largely a result of what they call the Indo-Aryan migration.

They theorize that a people calling itself the *Arya* spread both east and west from the Caucasus in what's now southeastern Russia, as far west as the English Channel and as far east as the Indus River, and later migrated further east into the Ganges Valley. "*Arya*" came to mean "noble" in Sanskrit, the oldest remaining language of the family of languages linguists now call Indo-European, and the Aryans used their skill in agriculture to make themselves the rulers of the people indigenous to the Indus and Ganges valleys. And, in that process, they established the caste system that continues to influence social interaction in India.

Sanskrit is the language of the Hindu scriptures. And, in that social structure, the Aryans dominated the military and priestly castes and relegated the indigenous people mostly to the artisan and servant castes, but originally the Aryans were primarily cattle herders and welcomed the architectural and metallurgy and pottery and textile skills of the people they led, and the caste system wasn't rigid. And the Hindu scriptures that developed during later centuries indicate no memory of any separate Aryan culture. Instead they say the caste system was a development of division of primal unity.

The primary scriptures of Hinduism are the *Vedas*. They're four collections of stories, chants, theological discussions, and instructions for rituals that began developing more than three millennia ago. The four collections are the *Rgveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Samaveda*, and the *Atharvaveda*. And Hindus say the *rishis* composed the Vedas.

"*Rishi*" is a Sanskrit word meaning "knower", and "*veda*" is a Sanskrit word meaning "knowledge". And "*rg*", "*yajur*", "*sama*", and "*arthava*" are

Sanskrit words meaning “praise”, “songs”, “worship”, and perhaps the name of a priest who developed prayers to fire. But the theologically definitive parts of the *Vedas* are what Hindus call *Vedanta*.

“*Vedanta*”, indicating that *Vedanta* is the end or purpose of the *Vedas*, is a Sanskrit word meaning “end of the *Vedas*”. And the *Upanishads* are the original *Vedanta*, and “*upanishad*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “sitting at the foot”, but many Hindus also call the *Bhagavad Gita*, a poem that isn’t in the *Vedas*, *Vedanta*. “*Bhagavad gita*” is a Sanskrit phrase meaning “fortunate person song”.

Hindus categorize their scriptures into *Sruti* and *Smrti*. “*Sruti*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “heard”, while “*Smrti*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “remembered”, and Hindus call the *Vedas Sruti* while they call the *Bhagavad Gita Smrti*. But more people in India and all around Earth have read the *Bhagavad Gita* than have read the *Upanishads*. And far more have read the *Upanishads* than have read the other parts of the *Vedas*.

And Hindus read the thirteen *Upanishads* this book summarizes more than they read the many others. So those thirteen *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita* define Hinduism for most of the people calling themselves Hindus. But, in all the Hindu scriptures, whether Hindus call them *Sruti* or primary or call them *Smrti* or secondary, the fundamental premise is that the *atman* is *Brahman*.

“*Atman*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “self”, and in Hindu scripture it refers to body, mind, or soul, any entity one thinks identifies one as an individual living being, and “*Brahman*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “expansive” that Hindu scripture uses to designate the universal self, everything and everyone.

Many people say Hinduism is polytheistic, but Hindu scripture indicates that it’s monotheistic by being monistic, that Hindus worship any separate entity as deific because they think anything is the only deity because the only deity is everything. And “*yoga*”, a Sanskrit word meaning “union” or “yoking”, refers in Hindu scriptures to realizing that universal unity. To Hindus all differences are illusion.

But they designate different approaches to *yoga*. One, *hatha yoga*, is the origin of what English-speaking people generally call *yoga*. “*Hatha*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “force”, and *hatha yoga* is an effort to realize the unity of the universe by forcing oneself to pay attention to one’s breath and posture to recognize that the air and space inside one’s separate physical self intermingles with all air and space and that thus all is the same. But three other approaches to *yoga* are more specific to Hindu scripture.

“*Bhakti*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “worship”, and *bhakti yoga* is narrowing one’s attention and appreciation to a particular deific personification,



eventually eliminating all consciousness of separateness from it. “*Karma*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “action”, and *karma yoga* is performing rituals and other action the Vedas prescribe, with the hope of eventually realizing their metaphorical meaning. And “*jnana*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “understanding”, and *jnana yoga* is studying the Vedas to understand their meaning, how everything relates to everything.

And, essentially to refer to worshiping, enacting, and understanding any approach to yoga, Hindus also use the term “*raja yoga*”. “*Raja*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “ruler”, and “*dhyana*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “meditation”, and *raja yogis* use meditation to determine what approach to use, and they also use the term “*dhyana*” to refer to achieving yoga directly by meditating on no differences. And some Hindus use the term “*dhyana yoga*” to refer to that approach.

But, effectually, all Hindu scripture is but one complex metaphor for all differences being only the imaginings of the one deific totality.

The *Upanishads* vary in length, and, as are the *Vedas* of which they’re parts, some of them are compilations. And, as one might expect of compilations of compositions by different persons in different places in different times, some parts of the *Upanishads* are in more than one *Upanishad*. And such overlap also occurs among the *Vedas* and makes the chronological order of most of the Hindu scriptures questionable.

Hindus divide most of the *Upanishads* into chapters, subdivide most of the chapters, and number the chapters and subdivisions. Different *Upanishads* use different words to identify those chapter divisions, but none of the thirteen principal *Upanishads* assigns any designation to its chapters’ subdivisions, excepting by numbering them. In this book, the word “chapter” designates each chapter of each *Upanishad*, and the word “section” designates each subdivision.

And, while the *Bhagavad Gita* probably is one work by one writer at a time later than the writing of any part of any of the *Upanishads*, its structuring is also in chapters. And further division of both the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita* is into what English-speaking people often call verses. And Hindus number those also.

## Chapter 3 Brhadaranyaka Upanishad

The *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* is the longest of the thirteen principal *Upanishads* and may contain parts older than any part of the other twelve. It's part of the *Yajurveda*, and “*brhadaranyaka*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “great *aranyaka*”, and “*aranyaka*” is a Sanskrit word referring to forests and to what pertains to forests. So the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* is of a category of literature that Hindu priests have ordinarily read in forests and not among the general populous.

The first section of the first chapter of the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* refers to a ritual horse and says its various parts are speech, the sky, the sea, the year, and other entities. It refers to ritual cups and their ritual placement relative to the horse, and it says the horse became a racer and carried the *devas*, became a charger and carried the *gandharvas*, became a courser and carried the *asuras*, and became a horse and carried the humans. “*Deva*” is a designation for good metaphorical deific personifications, essentially imaginary indications of unity, while “*asura*” is a designation for bad metaphorical deific personifications, essentially imaginary indications of disparity. And the *gandharvas* are metaphorical personifications whose behavior is sometimes somewhat like that of *devas* and sometimes somewhat like that of *asuras*.

But the *gandharvas*, like other metaphorical personifications the *Upanishads* designate, have different characteristics and different purposes in different metaphorical situations, as the horse does in this section, and, using death as the first section uses the horse, the second section of this chapter is a similarly metaphorical creation story.

In the story, in the beginning, nothing is here. Then death covers the nothing, and, because hunger is only death, hunger covers death. Then death decides to equip himself with an *atman* and, by liturgical recitation, creates it. Then, by copulating with himself, he creates other entities, and then, by copulating with the entities he creates, he creates more entities.

Among the entities, in addition to humans and beasts, are the *Rg Veda* verses, the *Yajur Veda* chants, and the *Sama Veda* chants, meters, and rituals. And, when death creates the *atman*, he carries it for a year before its birth, and then he opens his mouth to swallow it. But, as he opens his mouth, he creates speech by crying out, and, thinking killing speech will reduce his supply of food, he begins eating everything else he's created.

And this section says doing that gave Aditi her name and her nature, that one who knows the name and nature of Aditi in that way becomes the eater of the whole world, and that the whole world becomes that person's food.

Aditi is a personification of Earth in some Vedic metaphorical situations and the mother of the *devas* in others. And, as in the meaning of the horse ritual in the first section, who's what in this section and throughout the *Upanishads* is questionable, and this section, becoming effectually a sort of metaphor for the first section, continues through references to the horse ritual. It says death desired his corpse to befit a ritual for him to receive a living *atman*, that then it became a horse and bloated to be fit for the ritual, and that death, believing the horse shouldn't be confined, immolated it at the end of the year, as an offering to himself. And it says death assigned the other animals to the deities and that, because of that, people immolate the horse consecrated to Prajapati and regard it as an offering to all deities.

One consistency in the *Upanishads* is that Prajapati generally personifies the initiation of the transition between the unity of *Brahman* and the illusion of differences. And immolating a horse was an annual Hindu ritual, and this section makes death a metaphor for all kinds of life and thus effectually says that death is life, that, because its everything, life is also death, and that accordingly the ritual isn't a sacrifice, and that's true of all Hindu ritual offerings the *Upanishads* describe. And the third section of this chapter begins by saying Prajapati's offspring were the *devas* and the *asuras*.

It says the *asuras* were older but were competing with the *devas* for the worlds and that the *devas* decided to overcome the *asuras* in a ritual by means of the high chant, and, in this story, they tell speech to sing it for them.

Speech sings it, and, while procuring for the *devas* what's useful in speech, it keeps for itself what's pleasant in what it hears. But the *asuras* think that, with that being the *devas*' high chant, the *devas* will overcome them. So they rush at speech and riddle it with evil.

And this story says evil is the disagreeable things a person says. And, with variations appropriate to the function of each, it repeats those events for breath, sight, hearing, and the mind. But the end is substantially differently for breath in the mouth.

When the *asuras* try to riddle breath in the mouth with evil, they're smashed to bits as is a clod of earth hurled against a rock, and they're scattered in all directions. And then the *devas*, who at this point in the story are the five functions of body to which the story has referred, ask one another where breath in the mouth went, and they say it's in the mouth. And this section calls those functions together *Prana*.

And, in this and others sections of the *Upanishads*, both *Prana* and its separate components are *devas*. And other sections of the *Upanishads* add components to *Prana*. And some, including this one, give *Prana* other names.

This section says both that *Prana*, because it's the essence of the body parts, is *Ayasa* and that, because death keeps away from, it's *Dur*. And it also says death keeps away from men who know that, that *Dur* drove the evil that's death from other deities and chased it to the ends of the earth, where it threw down the evil of the other deities, and that, to keep from confronting evil and death, we shouldn't visit foreigners or travel to frontiers. And it says that, after liberation from death, speech, breath, sight, hearing, and the mind became fire, wind, the sun, the quarters, which in Vedic literature are the various directions through space, and the moon. And it says *Dur* carries beyond the reach of death anyone who knows that.

And it says that, because only breath, eating whatever is eaten, stands firm in the world, it procured food for itself by singing. It says the other deities told breath in the mouth the world is only food, that they asked it to give them a share of it, and that it gathered them around it for that. And it says that whatever food one eats through breath in the mouth satisfies the others.

And it says that whoever knows that will be a patron and a leader of those who gather around him and that, if any of that person's people try to be his rival, they'll be unable to support their dependents.

But, saying following that person will enable them to support their dependents, it makes that interdependence a metaphor for universal unity. It says people knowing parts of that story will acquire wealth or power of various kinds, but together the details of the story say all wealth is the same wealth and that accordingly, because everything is everything, it's *Brahman*. And this section says *Ayasi* is *Brhaspati*, who in other Vedic stories is a personification of speech and a priest of the deities, that, because *Brahman* is speech, *Brhaspati* is also *Brahmanaspati*, that speech is the high chant, and that, by way of other homophonic connections, it's as large as an elephant and as small as a gnat.

And it quotes a ritual song requesting being led from the unreal to the real, from the darkness to the light, and from death to immortality. It interprets those verses by saying asking to be led from the unreal to the unreal is the same

as asking to be led from death to immortality. And it says nothing is obscure in asking to be led from death to immortality.

And it says that, by singing the other lauds of the ritual, the singer may procure a supply of food for himself and may also procure for himself or for the patron of the ritual whatever else he desires.

And this chapter's fourth section begins with another metaphorical creation story. "*Purusha*" is a Sanskrit word meaning "person", and this section begins by saying that in the beginning this world was but one *atman* and was in the form of a man. And it says that, because, ahead of all this that is, it burnt up all evils, it received the name *Purusha*.

"*Purva*" is Sanskrit for "ahead", and "*us*" is Sanskrit for "burning us". And this section also says that then the world, lacking real distinctions, was distinguished only by names and appearance. And, naming various human characteristics and activities, it says that, because a man who thinks he's any of them is incomplete in any of them, he doesn't understand himself. And, in this story, *Purusha* is afraid, as persons are afraid when they're alone, until he asks himself what he fears if he's all that is, and then his fear leaves him. But, also in this story, finding no pleasure, he splits his *atman* into a husband and a wife.

And next this section says Yajnavalkya used to say the two of us are like two halves of a block and that therefore space here is completely filled by a woman, and later in this chapter Yajnavalkya is a brahmin who teaches both a king and one of Yajnavalkya's two wives. And also in this story the husband and wife the *purusha* created by splitting his *atman* copulate and give birth to humanity, but the wife asks herself how, after begetting her from his *atman* that was his own body, the *purusha* could have copulated with her, and accordingly she becomes a cow. But the husband becomes a bull and copulates with her again, and such continues through the creation of every male and female pair, down to the ants.

And the *purusha*, recognizing that, because he created all that, he alone is all of creation, also creates food and the deities, and this section says that, because he's all the deities, they're their own creation. But it says that, because *Brahman* created the deities superior to him and created them immortal while he was inferior to them and mortal, *Brahman* is superior to creation. And it says that then, other than names and imaginings, the world had no distinctions, and that neither does it now.

And it says people don't see that the *purusha* is the superior creation. It says the reason for that is that, because the *purusha* is called breath when he's breathing or speech when he's speaking, he's incomplete. And, repeating that for other components of *Prana* and saying those are but names of the *purusha*'s

various activities, it says a man who thinks he's any one of them understands neither *Prana* nor the *purusha*.

It says that, because, in *Prana*, its components became one, a man should think of the activities of the *purusha* simply as his *atman*. And, calling the *atman* the innermost thing, it says it's dearer than a son or wealth or anything else. And it says that, if a man claims that something other than his *atman* is dear to him, and someone tells him he'll lose what he holds dear, he may lose what he holds dear. And it says that, when a man sees that only his *atman* is dear to him, what's dear to him shall never perish.

And next this section asks what, since people think they'll become the whole by knowing *Brahman*, *Brahman* knew to be able to be the whole. And, as this section begins by saying that in the beginning this world was only the *atman*, at this point it says that of *Brahman*. And it says that how *Brahman* became the whole was by thinking it was what it was.

And it says that only the deities who know that become the whole, that that's also true of seers and humans and is true now, that, if a man knows he's *Brahman*, he becomes the whole world, and that the deities can't prevent that.

It says that, if a man thinks he and a deity are different persons, he doesn't understand, that neither can the deities prevent that, and that, because, as livestock are useful to men, men are useful to the deities, the prospect of men understanding that displeases the deities,. And, saying that the loss of one head of livestock is painful, it asks how much more painful would be losing many. And next it formulates the caste system.

It says that, in the beginning, because *Brahman* wasn't fully developed, it created the ruling power, a form superior to itself. And it says that, because nothing is superior to the ruling power, a brahmin pays homage to a kshatriya by prostrating himself to him at an anointing ceremony. And it lists some deities that are equivalent to the kshatriyas.

Kshatriyas are the ruling caste, and brahmins are the priestly caste, and this section of this chapter of the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* says the priestly power is the womb of the ruling power. But it says that, if a king rises to the summit of the ruling power, he returns in the end to the priestly power, as to his own womb. And it continues similarly through the other castes.

Saying that *Brahman*, yet not fully developed, created the vaisya caste, it lists some deities it says are equivalent to the vaisyas, and, saying that *Brahman*, yet not fully developed, created the sudra caste, it says the sudra caste is the earth and nourishes this entire world and all that is.

So, effectually, it says that, as, because *Brahman* is everything, everything is *Brahman*, each caste is essential to each other caste, and this section also says that, yet not fully developed, *Brahman* created *dharma*.

“*Dharma*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “law” or “righteousness”, and this section says it’s also a form superior to *Brahman*, that in this world it’s the ruling power standing above the ruling power, and that, because of that, by appealing to *dharma*, a weaker man makes demands of a stronger man.

And it also says *dharma* is truth. And it says that because of that people say a man speaks *dharma* when he speaks the truth and that a man speaks the truth when he speaks *dharma*. But it says all those entities are also other entities and that the *atman* is a world for all entities.

And it says again that, in the beginning of this world, only the *atman* was. And, as this section says at its beginning that the *purusha* split himself into a husband and a wife and copulated with her, at this point it says the *atman* desired a wife for him to father offspring. But it also says the *atman*, to perform rites, desired wealth.

And it says the *atman* desired nothing more, that one gets nothing more, and that single people now have those two desires. And it says that, if a person hasn’t obtained either of those desires, he thinks he’s completely incomplete. And it extends that into effectually saying *Prana* is the completeness.

And it says the *atman*’s mind is his *atman*, that his speech is his wife, that his breath is his offspring, that his sight is his human wealth, and that hearing is his deific wealth. And, perhaps suggesting a reason Hindus call their primary scriptures that which is heard, it says people find human wealth with their sight and find deific wealth with their hearing. And this section says that, because one performs rites with one’s *atman*, the *atman*’s *atman* is its rites.

And, calling that the fivefold ritual, it says the ritual animal is fivefold and that the human being and everything that’s either in this world or not in it is fivefold, and this section ends by saying that anyone who knows that obtains this whole world.

The fifth section, beginning by saying the father produced the seven kinds of food by wisdom and toil, elaborates on food as a metaphor for the sustenance of all, asks why the seven kinds aren’t exhausted when they’re eaten every day, and says the man who knows food as the inexhaustible eats it with his face, reaches the deities, and lives on invigorating food.

It says one of the seven kind of food is common to all here and that it’s what people eat but that, because it’s a mixed food, a man who venerates it doesn’t eliminate evil. It says two of the seven kinds are burnt offerings and offerings that aren’t burn but that some say they’re the new moon, the full moon, and rituals and that accordingly people shouldn’t make offerings endlessly. And it says the father gave the other kind of food to beasts, that, because in their infancy both men and beasts live only on milk, it’s milk, that those who offer

milk for a year avert repeating death, and that, because offering milk offers the whole world a supply of food for the deities, a man who, on the day on which he offers such an oblation, possesses that knowledge and averts death.

And next it asks why, while the deities are eaten every day, they don't decrease. And this section also says the inexhaustible is the *purusha*, that the *purusha* continually generates food, and that, if he stops doing that, the food'll be exhausted, and it says he eats food with his face that's the mouth and that he reaches the deities and lives on invigorating food, and it calls doing that a eulogy. And next it says the *purusha* kept the other three kinds of food for himself and that they're mind, speech, and breath.

And, qualifying that in regard to the other two principal functions of *Prana*, it says we see and hear through the mind. And, more literally listing kinds of breath, it says they're the out-breath, the in-breath, the inter-breath, the up-breath, and the link-breath. But next it says those are what constitutes the *atman*, that the *atman* consists of speech, mind, and breath, and that they're also other sets of entities.

It says they're the *Rg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, the deities, the ancestors, the humans, the father, the mother, the child, what one knows, what one seeks to know, what one doesn't know, and the extent of the earth, the fire, the sky, the sun, the waters, and the moon. And it says the earth is the *atman* of speech and that the fire is its luminous appearance, and, saying the same of the sky, the sun, the waters, and the moon, it says that, by becoming them, the components of *Prana* help those entities. And it says they're all limitless.

Next this section says that, while those who venerate those entities as infinite win a world with no limit, those who venerate them as finite win a limited world. And next it says Prajapati is the year and has sixteen parts and that fifteen of the parts are the nights while the sixteenth is constant, and it compares that to the waning and waxing of the moon. And next it says man's fifteen parts are his wealth while his sixteenth part is his *atman*.

And next it says all the worlds are the world of men, the world of ancestors, and the world of deities, but the *Upanishads* also designate many other worlds. And this section says a man who knows how everything came from everything and is everything has no rivals and accordingly shouldn't take the life of anything, and it says one can win the world of men only by having a son. And, describing a rite of transfer in which a man who's about to die tells his son he's *Brahman*, the ritual, and the worlds, it calls *Brahman*, the ritual, and the worlds the extent of the universe. And it says that, when a man knows that, he enters his son with *Prana* and becomes the *atman* of all beings.



And, also in this section, the functions of *Prana* become weary. Each brags that it's the best of them, and death takes the form of weariness and shackles them, but death can't capture the central breath. So, agreeing that the central breath is the best of them, the functions of *Prana* agree to become forms of it, and this section says that because of that all of them are called *Prana*, that because of that a family is called by the name of a man who knows that, and that a man who contends with a man who knows that withers and dies.

And this section also says that fire, the sun, the moon, and other deities similarly bragged, that, because only the wind doesn't disappear and doesn't set, it has the position among the other deities that the central breath has among the components of *Prana*, that, because those deities keep doing that bragging, the only observance a man should undertake is breathing in and out with the wish that death not capture him, and that by that he'll win *yoga* with the world of the deity that's *Prana* or the wind.

And the sixth and final section of the first chapter of the *Bhṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣhad* begins by saying the world is a triple reality, that it's name, appearance, and action, and that, while all are one, those components are entities ranging from *Prana* to *Brahman*.

And, saying the immortal is veiled by the real, it closes by saying that, while the real is name and appearance while name and appearance veil *Prana*, the immortal is *Prana*.

The first section of the second chapter of the *Bhṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣhad* is a conversation between a brahmin teacher and a kshatriya king of Kashi. The teacher asks the king to let him tell him a formulation of *Brahman*, and the king, offering the teacher a thousand cows for that, says people will say he's a Janaka. Janaka is the king Yajñavalkya advises.

The teacher begins by saying he venerates as *Brahman* the *puruṣa* in the sun. And the *Vedas*, pointing out that the sun shines on all with no discrimination, designate several personifications of the sun as metaphors for *Brahman*. But the king, telling the teacher not to begin a conversation with him about the sun, says he venerates the sun only as the most eminent of all beings and their head and king and that anyone who knows that will become their head and king, and the conversation continues similarly through other entities and rewards. The last entity in the series is the *atman*, and the king says he venerates it only as one possessing a body, and then the teacher asks the king to permit him to come to him as a student.

The king asks the teacher whether a brahmin's being a kshatriya's wouldn't be a reversal of the norm. But he grants the request, and, taking the brahmin by hand to a man who's sleeping, he calls the sleeping man great king

Soma dressed in white. Soma is a drink *Vedas* associate with the moon and treat as a deity.

The man doesn't respond to the address, and the kshatriya awakens him by touching him, and the man goes away. And then the kshatriya asks the brahmin where, while the man slept, was the *purusha*, and whither it had returned, and the brahmin doesn't know. So the kshatriya tells him the *purusha* had gathered the cognitive power of the man's *prana* into his own cognitive power and was resting in the space in the heart. And he says a man's words are wherever he travels in his dreams while that *purusha* has control of his *prana*.

But he says that, when a man's in dreamless sleep, that *purusha* slips through 72 thousand veins from the heart to the pericardium and rests there oblivious to everything, as is one at the height of sexual bliss. But next he says that all the *prana*, worlds, and deities spring from the *atman* and that the *atman's upanishad* is the real behind the real. And this section closes with the kshatriya telling the brahmin that *Prana's* the *atman* and that the *atman's* the real behind *Prana*.

The second section refers to other metaphorical deific personifications and other entities and their relationship to one another and especially to *Prana* and speech. It names some persons, uses them similarly metaphorically, and says a man knowing that becomes the eater of the whole world. And it says that then the whole world becomes that man's food.

This chapter's third section says *Brahman's* in two appearances, that one appearance has a fixed shape while the other doesn't, and that one's mortal while the other's immortal. Calling them this and that, it designates differences, in the deific sphere and in reference to the *atman*, between the two appearances, but it says the rule of interchangeability is in what isn't. And it says nothing's beyond that negation and that, because the real consists of *Prana*, its name is the real behind the real.

And the fourth section tells of the conversation between Yajnavalkya and his wife Maitreyi. Yajnavalkya begins the conversation by telling Maitreyi he's about to leave that place and asking her to let him make a settlement between her and his other wife, Katyayani. Presumably, he's speaking of distributing his wealth between them, to leave the place of a householder to be a *sannyasin*, a person living a life of renunciation.

But Maitreyi asks him whether possessing all the wealth of the world would make her immortal. And he replies that it would only permit her to live the life of a wealthy person, and she asks him what then would be its purpose. And she asks him instead to tell her all he knows.

Yajnavalkya, beginning his reply by telling her she's always been dear to him and that then she's saying something especially dear to him, asks her to

sit and listen and try to concentrate while he explains. He begins his explanation by saying husbands and wives don't hold one another dear from love for one another but from love for their *atman*. And he says the same of other things dear.

He specifies wealth, children, the priestly power, the royal power, the worlds, the deities, other beings, and the whole, *Brahman*. But he tells her one should see, hear, reflect, and concentrate on the *atman*. He says that, by doing that, one gains the knowledge of the whole world.

He asks that the entities he's specified as dear forsake anyone who thinks they reside in anything other than the *atman*. And, citing some similes and metaphors for all being all, he tells her the *atman* rises from and with all those entities and that it disappears when they've disappeared. And he says that, because of that disappearance, no awareness is after death.

Then Maitreyi tells him he's confused her. But, telling her he hasn't said anything confusing, he says awareness requires being separate from that of which one's aware. And, asking her by what means one can perceive what by means of which one perceives the whole world, he ends that account of that conversation by asking her by what means one can perceive the perceiver.

The fifth section says various entities are the honey of all beings. It begins by saying the earth is the honey of all beings and that all beings are the honey of the earth. And it says the radiant and immortal *purusha* that's in the earth, the *atman*, and the physical body are the *atman*, *Brahman*, and the whole.

And most of this section repeats that but replaces the earth and the physical body with other entities. The entities instead of the earth are water, fire, the wind, lightning, thunder, the sun, the moon, the earth, space, *dharma*, truth, humanity, and the *atman*. And the entities instead of the physical body include semen, speech, and the space within the heart.

And, quoting verses of the namesake of the Atharva Veda and saying the honey's the honey he communicated to the Asvins, this section says the seer seeing that declared the verses. Presumably the seer is Atharvan, and the verses refer to the horse ritual and tell the Asvins that Dadhyanc Atharvana became a bird, entered the fort as the *purusha*, and has assumed the likeness of the form of every being, and this section says nothing isn't sheltered and secured by him. The Asvins, in other Vedic literature, are deific personifications of medicine and are physicians to the other deities.

And this section says the *purusha*'s the ten thousand, the many, and the innumerable. Calling it this *Brahman*, it says it has no before or after and no inner or outer and that it's the *atman* here perceiving everything. And it says that's the teaching.

And the sixth and final section of this chapter is a list of genealogy from Pautimasya, presumably the compiler of the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*, back to *Brahman*.

The first section of the third chapter begins by saying the king of Videha once set out to perform a ritual and intended to present lavish gifts to the officiating priests. The king is Janaka, and he corrals a thousand cows with ten pieces of silver tied to the horns of each. So brahmins flock there.

Janaka asks that the most learned of them drive away the cows. But no one dares until Yajnavalkya tells a pupil of his to drive them away, and then the other Brahmins furiously murmur the question of how Yajnavalkya could dare to claim to be the most learned. And then Janaka's *hotr* priest, the leading priest of the ritual, asks Yajnavalkya that question directly.

Yajnavalkya, replying that he bows to the most learned of the brahmins there, asks whether they aren't all there for the cows, but the priest questions him further.

He begins by asking him how, when this entire world is overwhelmed by death and caught up in it, the patron of a ritual can free himself from its grip. And Yajnavalkya, replying that the patron can do it by means of the *hotr* priest, says that's by means of the fire and speech and that the *hotr* priest is speech, fire, and complete freedom. But the priest continues.

He asks Yajnavalkya more questions, questions similar to his first question, and Yajnavalkya, referring to other priests of the ritual and asserting other equivalencies and rewards, answers them similarly.

So, after Yajnavalkya's eighth reply, the *hotr* priest falls silent.

But in the second section another brahmin asks Yajnavalkya the number of graspers and over-graspers. And Yajnavalkya replies that the number is eight for each and that the graspers are the out-breath, speech, the tongue, sight, hearing, the mind, hands, and skin, and he names an over-grasper for each. He names words for speech, etc.

But, continuing, that brahmin also questions Yajnavalkya concerning death. He begins by asking of which deity, since the world is food for death, is death the food, and Yajnavalkya replies that death is fire and that fire is the food of water, and the brahmin asks him whether, when a man dies, the in-breath and the out-breath leave him, and Yajnavalkya replies that they don't. He says, perhaps alluding to the horse ritual, that they accumulate within his *atman* and causes it to bloat.

And he also says that what doesn't leave a man when he dies is his name, that a name and all the deities are limitless, and that the world a man wins by his name is limitless. And next that brahmin asks Yajnavalkya what happens

to a person when upon his death the various physical components of his being human disappear into other entities, and Yajnavalkya replies to that by calling that brahmin friend and telling him they can't talk of that publicly. He asks him to take a hand and go with him to talk of it privately.

So they go. And they talk only of *karma* and praise only *karma*. And, after Yajnavalkya tells the brahmin a man becomes something good by good *karma* and becomes something bad by bad *karma*, that brahmin falls silent.

In the third section another brahmin tells Yajnavalkya that he and other itinerant students once visited the home of a brahmin who had a daughter a *gandharva* had possessed and that the students asked the *gandharva* of the end of the worlds and where in the world were the Parikshitas.

The Parikshitas, in Vedic literature, are brothers of a royal family who atoned for behavior of theirs by means of the horse ritual. And that brahmin asks Yajnavalkya where they went, and Yajnavalkya tells him they went where people who offer the horse ritual go, and the brahmin asks him where that is. And Yajnavalkya, replying with similes of great distance and tiny distance and not answering explicitly, tells the brahmin that Indra took the form of a bird, handed the Parikshitas to the wind, and took them where those who'd offered the horse ritual were. Indra, in Vedic literature, is the king of the *devas*.

And Yajnavalkya also tells that brahmin that the *gandharva* was praising the wind, that both separate things and the totality of things are only the wind, and that whoever knows that averts repeating death, and then that brahmin falls silent.

In the fourth section a brahmin asks Yajnavalkya to explain to him the *Brahman* that's plain and not cryptic. Yajnavalkya replies that it's each of the different kinds of breath, and that brahmin, saying that saying that is like referring to a cow and a horse and saying they're a cow and a horse, repeats his request. And Yajnavalkya tells him the *atman* within all is that brahmin's *atman* and that all else is grief. And then that brahmin falls silent.

But, in the fifth section, another brahmin repeats that brahmin's request. Yajnavalkya also tells that brahmin his *atman* is the *atman* within all, but that brahmin asks which *atman* is the *atman* within all, and Yajnavalkya, telling him it's the *atman* beyond hunger, thirst, sorrow, delusion, old age, and death, says that, when brahmins know that *atman*, they give up the desire for sons, wealth, and worlds and undertake the mendicant life, that accordingly a brahmin should stop being a pundit and try to live as a child, and that, when a brahmin stops living as a pundit or a child, he becomes a *muni*. "*Muni*" is a Sanskrit word referring to a person who's realized absolute truth by direct experience.

But Yajnavalkya says that, when a brahmin stops living either as a *muni* or as he was before he became a *muni*, he becomes a brahmin and remains such a brahmin however he lives and that all other than that is grief, and then that brahmin falls silent.

In the sixth section, Gargi Vacaknavi questions Yajnavalkya. Excepting Yajnavalkya's wife Maitreyi, Gargi is the only woman in the thirteen principal *Upanishads* to involve herself in philosophical discussions. And Gargi begins her questioning of Yajnavalkya by asking him on what, since this world is woven on water, water is woven, warp and woof.

Yajnavalkya tells her it's woven on air, and Gargi asks him on what air is woven, and that cycle continues through Yajnavalkya telling her air's woven on the worlds of the intermediate region, that those worlds are woven on the worlds of the *gandharvas*, that those are woven on the worlds of the sun, that those are woven on the worlds of the moon, that those are woven on the worlds of the stars, that those are woven on the worlds of the deities, that those are woven on those of Indra, that those are woven on those of Prajapati, and that those worlds are woven on the worlds of *Brahman*.

But, when Gargi asks Yajnavalkya on what are woven the worlds of *Brahman*, he tells her not to ask too many questions. He tells her that, if she does, her head will shatter apart, that she's asking too many questions about a deity about whom she shouldn't ask too many questions, and that that's why she shouldn't ask too many questions. And, when he tells her that, she falls silent.

One's head shattering apart, in other *Upanishads* and in other instances in this one, is a metaphor for not recognizing the unity of everything. But, in the seventh section, Uddalaka Aruni, a brahmin who proves himself lacking that recognition in other stories in the *Upanishads*, continues the questioning of Yajnavalkya. He says he and others were learning of the ritual in the house of the brahmin whose wife was possessed by a *gandharva*, that the *gandharva* asked those there on what this world and the next world and all beings are strung together, and that the *gandharva* asked whether they knew the inner controller of those worlds and beings. And Aruni says the teacher said he didn't and that the *gandharva* told the teacher that whoever knows it knows *Brahman*.

And then Aruni tells Yajnavalkya that, if he doesn't know that but drives away the cows meant for the brahmins, his head will shatter apart. And Yajnavalkya, saying he knows it, tells Aruni the string is the wind and that the reason people say of a dead man that his physical parts have come unstrung is that they're strung together on the wind. And he tells him in various ways that his *atman* is the inner controller.

He tells him his *atman* who's present within the earth but different from it, whom the earth doesn't know, whose body is the earth, and who

controls the earth from within, is the inner controller and the immortal. And he says his saying that of those entities is with respect to the body and that the components of *Prana* are among those entities, and, saying that of entities other than earth, he says his saying it of them is in respect to entities other than the body. And he says the controller sees but can't be seen, hears but can't be heard, thinks but can't be thought, and perceives but can't be perceived, that no one other than the controller sees, hears, thinks, or perceives, and that all else is grief. And then Aruni falls silent.

But, in the eighth section, Gargi returns to questioning Yajnavalkya.

Calling him the man and saying she's going to ask him two more questions, she tells the other brahmins that, if he can answer those two questions, none of them will be able to defeat him in philosophical debate.

"Ask, Gargi," says Yajnavalkya, and she tells him she's rising to challenge him with questions as a fierce warrior of Kasi or Videha, stringing his bow and taking two deadly arrows in hand, would challenge an enemy.

"Give me the answers to them," she also says.

"Ask, Gargi," says Yajnavalkya again.

Kasi is the kingdom of the king who says in the first section of this chapter that, if the teacher would teach him of *Brahman*, people would say he's a Janaka. And the first of Gargi's two additional questions is on what are woven warp and woof things beneath the earth, above the sky, and between the earth and the sky, and things people call past, present, and future, and Yajnavalkya replies that they're woven on space. And her second additional question is on what space is woven, and, replying that it's woven on the imperishable, he describes the imperishable in ways in which he says brahmins refer to it.

He says it's the imperishable at whose commands the sun, the moon, and increments of time stand apart, at whose command rivers flow east and west from snowy mountains, at whose command people flatter givers, at whose command deities depend on patrons of rituals, and at whose command forefathers depend on ancestral offerings.

So, essentially, he's saying that the imperishable is what imagines the difference to which the notion of heads shattering apart metaphorically refers in the *Upanishads*.

And he also tells her that, were a man to make offerings, offer rituals, and perform austerities in this world for thousands of years while not knowing that, all the man had done would come to nothing, and he tells her that a man who departs from this world while not knowing that imperishable is pitiful, but that a man who departs from this world after coming to know it is a brahmin.

And he tells her it's the imperishable that sees, hears, thinks, and perceives but can't be seen, heard, thought, or perceived, and that no one other than that imperishable sees, hears, or thinks, or perceives.

And Gargi tells the other brahmins there that they should consider themselves fortunate if they escape Yajnavalkya by merely paying him their respects. She tells them none of them will ever defeat him in philosophical debate. And she again falls silent.

But, in the ninth section, one more of the brahmins there dares to question Yajnavalkya. Vidagdha Sakalya asks him the number of the deities, and Yajnavalkya replies in accordance with a ritual invocation lauding pantheism that they're three and three hundred and three and three thousand, and Sakalya asks him how many actually. Yajnavalkya replies that they're 33, and Sakalya again asks him again how many actually, and Yajnavalkya replies that the number is six. And that cycle continues, with Sakalya repeating the question as Yajnavalkya answers with the numbers three and two and 1 ½, until he reaches one. And then Sakalya asks him who then are the three and three hundred and three and three thousand.

Yajnavalkya replies that they're but the powers of the deities, and Sakalya repeats that question for each of the other numbers in Yajnavalkya's previous replies, and Yajnavalkya names various deific personifications of entities. And, when that cycle reaches the number 1 ½, he says that, because the world increases in the wind, the wind is 1 ½ deities, and he says the one deity is *Prana* and is called *Brahman* and *tyad*. "*Tyad*" is an indefinite pronoun.

But Sakalya continues questioning through a cycle of identities of *purushas*, until he asks Yajnavalkya who's the *purusha* who's the final goal of every *atman*, and then he says a man knowing that *purusha* would be a man who truly knows.

And Yajnavalkya says he knows that *purusha* and that it's the bodily *purusha*. And then he addresses Sakalya as Sakalya and asks him who's that *purusha*'s deity. And Sakalya says its deity is the immortal.

And that begins a cycle of Yajnavalkya answering Sakalya's questions of *purushas* and their deities by asking who's the deity of each, until Sakalya says the deity of the *purusha* associated with a son is Prajapiti, and then Yajnavalkya tells him the other brahmins must be playing with him.

And then Sakalya asks Yajnavalkya to tell him what formulation of *Brahman* he knows that has enabled him to outtalk the brahmins there, and Yajnavalkya replies that he knows the quarters with their deities and foundations, and that begins a cycle of Sakalya asking him the foundation of various deities.



But, when, after Yajnavalkya says the heart is the foundation of faith, truth, and speech, Sakalya asks the foundation of the heart, Yajnavalkya explodes and calls Sakalya an imbecile to think it could be founded anywhere other than in the *atman*. And he says that otherwise dogs or birds would eat it or tear it. But Sakalya persists.

He asks Yajnavalkya on what the *atman* is founded, and Yajnavalkya says it's founded on the out-breath. And that begins a cycle of questions that continues through the other kinds of breath, until Yajnavalkya says the up-breath is founded on the link-breath. And then he tells Sakalya that the *atman* isn't graspable, doesn't decay, and has nothing sticking to it, and that the kinds of breath are the eight abodes and worlds and the eight deities and *purushas*.

And then he tells Sakalya that, if he can't tell him who's the *purusha* who provides the connection, carries off the other *purushas*, brings them back, and rises above them, his head will shatter apart.

And Sakalya says he doesn't know that *purusha*. And, not only does his head shatters apart, but also robbers mistake his bones for something else and steal them. And then Yajnavalkya offers to let any of the other brahmins or all of them together question him, or let him question any of them, or all of them together. But none of them dare.

So he questions them with a poem. The poem, beginning by saying man is like a mighty tree that can have but one birth, asks who could beget the tree again. And it ends by saying *Brahman*, perception and bliss, the highest good, and the gift of those who give, awaits those who know that and stand firm.

The first section of the fourth chapter begins with Yajnavalkya coming to Janaka. Janaka, having formally seated himself, asks Yajnavalkya whether he's come for cows or for disquisitions. And Yajnavalkya replies that he's there for both.

He asks Janaka what others have told him, and Janaka replies that a brahmin told him *Brahman* is speech. And Yajnavalkya, saying that saying that's like saying one has a father, a mother, or a teacher, tells Janaka that the brahmin who told him that probably was reasoning from the question of what a person who can't speak possibly can have. And he asks him whether that brahmin told him the abode and foundation of speech.

Janaka says the other brahmin didn't, and Yajnavalkya says the brahmin was one-legged. So Janaka asks him to tell it to him, and Yajnavalkya tells him speech is its own abode, that space is its foundation, and that one should venerate speech as knowledge. So Janaka asks him what constitutes knowledge, and Yajnavalkya, replying that speech constitutes knowledge, tells Janaka that through it we know the *Vedas*, histories, ancient tales, sciences,

*Upanishads*, verses, aphorisms, explanations, glosses, offerings, oblations, food, drink, this world, the next world, and all beings. And he tells him the highest *Brahman* is speech.

He tells him that, when a man knows and venerates speech as such, speech never abandons him, that all beings flock to him, and that he becomes a deity and joins the company of deities, and Janaka exclaims that he'll give Yajnavalkya a thousand cows with bulls and elephants.

But Yajnavalkya, replying that his father told him never to accept a gift before giving instruction, asks Janaka what else others have told him. So, with Yajnavalkya telling Janaka that one should venerate breath as dear, sight as truth, hearing as limitless, and the mind as bliss, their disquisitions continue through the other components of *Prana*. The disquisitions vary for each component, but the benefit from the knowledge and veneration doesn't, and Yajnavalkya says each component is the highest *Brahman*.

And this section ends with a similar disquisition concerning the heart, and the brahmin Janaka says told him *Brahman* is the heart is Vidagdha Sakalya, the brahmin whose head, in the previous chapter, shatters apart after Yajnavalkya calls him an imbecile to think the heart could be founded anywhere other than in the *atman*.

The second section of this chapter begins with Janaka descending from his seat, declaring homage to Yajnavalkya, and asking him to teach him. Yajnavalkya, replying that, as a king would equip himself with a chariot or a ship for a great expedition, Janaka has equipped himself with the *Upanishads*, asks him where he'll go when he leaves this world, and Janaka replies that he doesn't know.

So, saying he'll tell him, Yajnavalkya tells him a series of metaphors for the unity of *Brahman*. He begins by saying the name of the *purusha* in the right eye is Indha but that, because the deities in some way love the cryptic and despise the plain, people cryptically call him Indra, and one of the metaphors says *Prana* is each of the four directional quarters, and each metaphor refers to other metaphors and entities. And Yajnavalkya ends this series by telling Janaka that Janaka has attained freedom from fear.

So Janaka, telling Yajnavalkya that Yajnavalkya has taught him and others freedom from fear, asks that freedom from fear be Yajnavalkya's also, and, again bidding homage to Yajnavalkya, he tells him he and the people of Videha are at his service.

And the third section of this chapter tells of another conversation between Yajnavalkya and Janaka.

It says Yajnavalkya thinks that on that occasion he won't teach Janaka but that on an occasion when they discussed the daily ritual, he granted Janaka a

wish, and, on the occasion in this section, Janaka's wish is for the freedom to ask Yajnavalkya any question he wishes, and he asks Yajnavalkya what's the source of light for a person here, and that initiates a series of questions and answers that refer to dreaming and constitute a ramble through expressions of various notions fundamental to the *Upanishads*.

Yajnavalkya says the *purusha* who's the *atman* has two places and that one place is this world while the other's the other world. But next he says a third world is the place of dreams, that the two other worlds meet there, and that there the *purusha* takes materials from this world apart and puts them back together. And, citing a poem that presents the wandering of a single goose as a metaphor for the *purusha* that's ultimately the *atman* and *Brahman*, he says the *purusha*, dreaming with his own radiance there, becomes his own light and creates things for himself.

And he describes dreaming in which a man is oblivious to everything within and without as is a man embraced by a woman he loves. He says that's dreaming in which all desires are fulfilled, in which one's free from desires and far from sorrows, and in which the only desire is for the *atman*. And he says that there a father and a mother, worlds, deities, and Vedas aren't fathers, mothers, worlds, deities, or Vedas, that there thieves, abortionists, outcasts, and pariahs aren't thieves, abortionists, outcasts, or pariahs, and that there recluses and ascetics aren't recluses or ascetics.

He says that, because there one has passed beyond all sorrows of the heart, neither good nor evil follows one there. And he says that there one doesn't see, smell, taste, speak, hear, think, or perceive anything, but that there, because those abilities are indestructible, losing any of them is impossible, one has those abilities. But he says no second reality is there to which one could apply any of those abilities as though it were distinct from one's *atman*, and, saying that there one becomes the one ocean and the only seer, he tells Janaka that there is the world of *Brahman*.

And he tells him it's the highest goal, the highest attainment, the highest world, and the highest bliss, and that other creatures live on but a fraction of that bliss, and next he lists a hierarchy of bliss.

Saying the highest human bliss is being successful and wealthy, ruling others, and enjoying human pleasures to the utmost, he says a hundred measures of that bliss are one measure of the bliss the ancestors who've won their world enjoy, and he repeats that multiple through other entities. He continues it through *gandharvas*, creatures who are deities by rites, creatures who are deities by birth, creatures who are learned in the *Vedas* and aren't crooked or lustful, and through the bliss enjoyed in the world enjoyed in the world of Prajapati. And the hierarchy ends with the bliss enjoyed in the world of *Brahman*.

At several points in this section Janaka tells Yajnavalkya he'll give him a thousand cows but that he'll need to tell him more than that to obtain release from the wish. And one of those points is when Yajnavalkya tells him the world of Brahmin is the highest bliss. And that alarms Yajnavalkya.

Thinking the king is sharp in flushing him out of every corner, he tells him that, when one has enjoyed oneself in the realm of dream and rushes by the same path back to the realm in which one is awake, one, because of old age or sickness, becomes feeble. And he says that, as one's physical *atman* is breathing its last, it goes creaking along, saddled with the *atman* of knowledge. And he gives Janaka three more metaphorical similes.

He says that, as fruit detaches itself from its stem, the *purusha* frees himself from his physical parts and rushes along the same path to a new *Prana*. He says that, as soldiers, magistrates, equeuries, and village headmen, waiting with food, drink, and lodging for a king about to arrive, shout when the king arrives, people, as though they're awaiting a man who knows all that, shout that *Brahman* is coming and has arrived. And he says that, as soldiers, magistrates, equeuries, and village headmen throng around a king who's about to depart, *Prana* throngs around the *atman* as one breathes one's last at the time of death.

And, with Yajnavalkya continuing to describe death, that conversation continues into the fourth section. He says that, as the person loses the abilities Yajnavalkya has said are indestructible, people say the dying man is sinking. And he says that then the top of the heart lights up.

He says that then the *atman* departs with the light through the eye or the head or some other part of the physical *atman* and that *Prana* departs with it, that that's like a caterpillar coming to the tip of a blade of grass, reaching out for a new foothold, and drawing itself onto the new foothold, that it's like a weaver removing yarn from a design and weaving a design that's newer and more attractive, and that it's like what the *atman* does after knocking down the physical *atman* and rendering it unconscious.

And he says the new foothold and design may be of a forefather, a *gandharva*, a deity, *Brahman*, or another being, but next, saying the *atman* is clearly *Brahman*, he lists things of which it's made. The list includes perception, *Prana*, earth, water, light, darkness, desire, the desireless, anger, the angerless, the righteous, and the unrighteous. And he directly says it's made of everything.

And, regarding *karma*, he says a person here consists simply of desire, that a man resolves in accordance with his desire and acts in accordance with his resolve, and that he becomes what he becomes in accordance with his action. But he says *Prana* doesn't depart from a man who's free from desires and desires only his *atman*. He's says that man is *Brahman* and goes to *Brahman*.

And, saying *Prana*'s nothing other than *Brahman* and nothing other than light, he recites some verses agreeing with him and connecting what he's said more explicitly with the notion of unity, and among the verses are some verses saying people who worship ignorance enter blind darkness and that people who delight in learning enter blinder darkness.

But he also says the controller of all neither becomes more by good action nor becomes less by bad actions. He says the controller is the lord of all, the ruler and guardian of creatures, and a dike separating the worlds to keep them from mingling. And he says it's what brahmins seek to know by means of Vedic recitation, ritual, giving, austerity, and fasting.

And he says that, upon knowing the controller, a man becomes a *muni*. He says that, when men desire the controller as their world, they undertake the ascetic life of wandering. And he says that, when men of former time knew that, they didn't desire offspring.

He says they reasoned that their offspring was their *atman* and their world and that, giving up the desire for sons and wealth and worlds, they undertook the mendicant life, and he says the desire for sons is the desire for wealth, that the desire for wealth is the same as the desire for worlds, and that both are only desires.

And, repeating other expressions of his of unity and eternity, and saying a man who knows all that becomes calm and patient and sees all as the *atman*, he says the man passes across evil while evil doesn't pass across him, that he burns up all evil while evil doesn't burn him, and that he becomes a brahmin free from evil, stain, and doubt.

And, saying the man's the world of *Brahman*, he tells Janaka he's taken Janaka to *Brahman*, and Janaka replies that then he'll give Yajnavalkya himself and the people of Videha as his slaves.

And this section closes by saying a man who knows that *Brahman* is free from fear and doubtlessly becomes that *Brahman* free from fear.

And the fifth section is another version of the conversation between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi. This version says directly that Maitreyi participated in philosophical discussion while Katyayani understood only womanly matters and that Yajnavalkya was preparing to undertake a different mode of life. And it says that, after telling Maitreyi that the instruction he'd given her is all immortality is, he went away.

And the sixth and final section of this chapter also lists genealogy from Pautimasya back to *Brahman*.

The first section of the fifth chapter of the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* begins with a poem saying the world there is full, that the world here is full, that

fullness proceeds from fulness, and that, after taking fully from the full, it remains full. And it says *Brahman* is space, that the primal one is space, that space is windy, that the son of Kauravyayani said that, that it's the *Vedas*, and that brahmins know it. The poem doesn't say who Kauravyayani is, but the writer or reciter says that, whatever one must know, he or she knows by that.

The second section says the three kinds of children of Prajapati were *devas*, humans, and *asuras* and that they lived with their father as Vedic students. In this story, after they complete their study, each group in turn asks Prajapati to say something further to them. So, telling each group the syllable "da", he asks them whether they understood.

Each group says it did, and Prajapati tells each that it did, but each expresses its understanding differently. The *devas* say they understood him to say "*damyata*," while the humans say they understood him to say "*datta*," while the *asuras* say they understood him to say "*dayadvam*". In Sanskrit, "*damyata*" means "restraint", while "*datta*" means "giving", while "*dayadvam*" means "compassion", and next, saying that the divine voice thunder says "da" three times, this section directs demonstrating restraint, giving, and compassion, and observing all three.

And a syllable of a Sanskrit word meaning "heart" is also "da", and, saying it also means "giving", the third section of this chapter also gives other meanings to the other two syllables of that word meaning "heart". And, extending phonetics into a metaphor for the unity of all, most of the next twelve sections treat other words similarly metaphorically. And they also extend the metaphor into promises of different worlds.

The thirteenth section specifies the unity of the breath of *Prana* with the words of the *Vedas*, their chants, kshatriya power, and possessing the worlds, and most of its fourteenth section treats the *Gayatri*'s meter as a metaphor for the mutual unity of words with similar syllabification.

The *Gayatri* is a Vedic poem praising the sun, and this chapter's fourteenth section effectually says that, by cursing a person by worshiping the *Gayatri*, one can turn it against a person one hates. It says the worshiper can keep a person from obtaining or fulfilling desires and can obtain or fulfil the desires for himself instead, that, after turning a brahmin into an elephant, Janaka once asked the brahmin how he claimed to know the *Gayatri*, and that the brahmin said he didn't know the *Gayatri*'s mouth. And it says the *Gayatri*'s mouth is only fire, that accordingly a fire burns all of whatever one puts into it, that, similarly, however many evil things a man who knows that does, he eats them all, and that then he emerges clean and pure and free from aging and death.

And the fifteenth and final section of this chapter is a poem saying a golden dish covers the truth. Pusan is a Vedic name for the sun, and the poem's

writer or reciter asks Pusan to open the dish for him to see. And, calling Pusan the sole seer, Yama, and the son of Prajapati, the writer or reciter asks him to spread out his rays and draw in his light.

Yama is a Vedic personification of death, but the writer or reciter also tells Pusan he sees his fairest form, that he's he, that the never-resting is the wind and the immortal, that ashes are his *atman*'s lot, and that they're *Om*. And, telling the mind to remember the deed, he or she, telling fire it knows all coverings, asks a deity to lead us to wealth along an easy path, but the writer or reciter doesn't name the deity. And, asking that deity to keep the wrong that angers us far from us, he or she tells it we'll offer it the highest praise.

The first section of the sixth chapter begins by saying that, when a man knows the best and the greatest, he becomes the greatest among his people. Saying the best and the greatest is *Prana*, it says that, by knowing that, if one desires becoming the greatest among others, one may. And it refers similarly to each component of *Prana*.

But it calls speech the most excellent, sight the firm base, hearing the correspondence, and the mind the refuge. And it includes semen among the components of *Prana* and calls it fecundity. And next it tells how breath is *Prana* and the best and the greatest.

And also in this section the components of *Prana* ask *Brahman* which of them is the most excellent. *Brahman* tells them the most excellent of them is the one that, were it to depart, they'd think its departure the most detrimental to the *atman*. So each of them departs, spends a year away, returns, and asks the others how they lived in its absence.

When speech returns, the others tell it they lived as the dumb would live but that otherwise they functioned as they had. And they reply similarly to each, telling sight, hearing, the mind, and semen that they lived as would the blind, deaf, simple, or impotent. But, when breath begins to depart, it uproots all the others.

So they tell breath they can't live in its absence, and breath tells them, if that's true, to offer him a tribute. And the tribute they offer is that breath possess with them the qualities by which this section designates each component at its beginning. But next breath asks what will be its food and clothing.

And the others reply that everything there, including dogs, worms, and insects, is its food, and that water is its clothing. And this section says that, when a man knows in that way that breath is food, nothing he eats or accepts becomes an improper food. And, saying that's the reason wise and knowing people sip water before and after eating, it says they think they're assuring that breath isn't left naked.

The second section begins with Svetaketu entering the assembly of the king of Pancala while people are waiting on him. Svetaketu is the son of Uddalaka Aruni, and the king asks him whether his father has taught him, and Svetaketu says he has. But Svetaketu knows the answers to none of the questions the king asks him.

The king invites him to stay, but he ignores the invitation, runs home, and complains to his father that he told him he was well educated. So Aruni calls Svetaketu his clever boy and asks him what the situation is. And Svetaketu suggests that the king isn't legitimate.

But he tells Aruni what happened. And, asking Svetaketu what the questions were, Aruni tells him he knows his father and that he's taught him all he knows, and he asks him to return with him to the palace, for them to live there as students. But Svetaketu tells him to go alone.

So he does, and the king offers to grant him a wish. So he asks the king to tell him what he told the boy, and the king, telling him his wish is deific, asks him to make a human kind of wish. But Aruni, saying the king knows he already has his share of gold, cows, horses, slave girls, blankets, and clothes, tells the king to give him the infinite and boundless and not be stingy. And the king tells him he'll have to request in the correct manner.

So Aruni, calling the king his lord, tells him he's coming to him as a pupil. The king replies that the knowledge has never been in the possession of a brahmin, but he tells Aruni that, to keep Aruni's ancestors from causing the king harm, he'll disclose it to him, and he also asks him who can refuse a man who speaks the way Aruni did. So, in the remainder of this section, the king tells Aruni of various behavior and comparisons, paths and destinations, and rewards and punishment.

One of two of the paths leads a person consisting of mind to the regions of lightning and on to the worlds of *Brahman*, from which the person doesn't return. But the other path of the two ends with the person on it repeating a cycle of being offered in the fire of man, taking birth in the fire of woman, and rising to the worlds of the sky. And this section ends by saying those who don't know those two paths become worms, insects, or snakes, and the notion that everything is everything isn't in what that kshatriya king tells the brahmin Aruni.

The third section begins with a person it doesn't name saying he wants to attain greatness. And next, presumably with the person it doesn't name performing it, is a description of an elaborate ritual involving cow dung and pouring ghee into a mixture of other ingredients. During the ritual, the person prays to another person the section doesn't name and offers the ghee to the components of *Prana* and other entities, including what's been and what shall



be, the all and the whole, and Prajapati. And the praying person tells the mixture it's various other entities.

Then he lifts the mixture and tells it it's the power and that, because an entity he doesn't name is king, lord, and ruler, its power is in him. And next, asking the person to whom he's praying to make him the king, lord, and ruler, he sips the mixture while reciting a poem saying honey fills and is various entities. Next, reciting some verses to the sun and repeating the verses to honey, he asks that he become this whole world, the earth, the intermediate region, and the sky. And next he sips some water and lies behind the ritual fire with his head toward the east.

And, in the morning, he worships the sun. Saying it's the one lotus in the quarters, he asks that he become the one lotus among men. And next he returns the way he came and sits behind the fire, silently reciting the lineage.

And next this section says that, after telling that to his pupil Vajasaneya Yajnavalkya, Uddalaka Aruni said that, if one were to pour the mixture on a withered stump, it'd grow new branches and sprout new leaves. And it says Yajnavalkya did the same to a student of his and that the repeating of that continued through three more students to the students of Satyakama Jabala. And this section says one shouldn't disclose that to anyone who isn't a son or a pupil.

And this section says four things are made of fig wood, that they're spoons, cups, kindling sticks, and stirring sticks, and that the ten types of cultivated grain are rice, beans, barley, sesame, millet, mustard, wheat, lentil, peas, and legumes, and it ends with directions for preparing an offering of ghee.

The fourth section, beginning by saying the essence of the beings here is the earth, says the essence of the earth is the water, that the essence of the waters is the plants, that the essence of the plants is the flowers, that the essence of the flowers is the fruits, that the essence of the fruits is man, and that the essence of man is semen.

And next in this section is a creation story in which Prajapati, asking himself why he doesn't prepare himself a base for semen, creates a woman and copulates with her, and this section says that, because of that, a man should copulate with a woman, and next it says a woman's vulva is the sacrificial ground, that her pubic hair is the sacred grass, that her labia majora are the press for extracting soma, and that her labia minora are the fire at its center.

And it says a man who copulates with that knowledge obtains a world as great as that of a man who performs a soma ritual, that he appropriates to himself the merits of the woman, and that, if the man doesn't know that, the woman appropriates to herself the merits of the man. And it says knowing that made Uddalaka Aruni exclaim to others that many brahmins who copulate while

not knowing that depart this world drained of virility and deprived of merit. And this section also describes rituals involving smearing semen.

And it also says that, if a woman refuses to copulate with a man at the end of her menstrual period, the man should beat her with a stick and tell her he takes her virility and splendor from her. And, describing how to make copulation a ritual for fathering the sort of son or daughter a man desires, it describes rituals for auspiciously beginning a son's life and for determining success of various kinds during the son's life. But its only request for daughters is that they be learned and have a full life span.

And each other mention of Uddalaka Aruni in the *Upanishads* is also in the context of references to materialistic behavior and desires and to misunderstanding of the metaphorical meaning of the equivalencies and correspondences. And Yajnavalkya's silencing him in the third chapter of this *Upanishad* makes this chapter's saying Yajnavalkya was a student of Aruni's questionable. And another question is whether that's a result of this *Upanishad's* being a compilation.

And, while the next section, which is the fifth and final section of this final chapter of the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*, lists the genealogy from Pautimasi back to Brahman, it includes more links than do the other two genealogies this *Upanishad* lists, and it lists Yajnavalkya as a son of Uddalaka, while the other two lists mention neither Yajnavalkya nor Aruni.

But this list also includes the deific personification of the sun Aditya, and there it interrupts the listing to say that these white Yajurvedic formulas coming from the sun have been proclaimed by Vajasaneya Yajnavalkya, and then it continues the listing on to *Brahman*.

## Chapter 4 Other Upanishads

The *Chandogya Upanishad* is part of the *Sama Veda*, and it's the second longest *Upanishad* and may be the *Upanishad* with the oldest components that aren't also in the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad*. The beginning of its title is the origin of the English word "chant", and that suggests that its authors or compilers were priests who sang the *saman* chants, and much of it is metaphorical comparisons of the sounds of words. And it incorporates some of that into some of its versions of stories and metaphors that are also in the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad*.

The first section of its first chapter begins with the syllable "Om". It says that, because one begins the high chant with that syllable, one should venerate the high chant as that syllable. And, like the final chapter of the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad*, it says the essence of the beings here is earth, that the essence of earth is water, and that the essence of water is plants.

But it also says the essence of man is speech, that the essence of speech is the *Rg* verses, that the essence of the *Rg* verses is the *Saman* chants, and that the essence of the *Saman* chants is the high chant. And, saying the high chant is the essence of all essences and the highest and the ultimate, it asks what the *Rg* verses, the *Saman* chants, and the high chant ultimately are. And, saying the *Rg* is only speech and that the *Saman* is breath, it extends its assertion that one should venerated the high chant as the syllable *Om* into saying it is that.

But next it says speech, breath, the *Rg*, and the *Saman* are couples in coitus, that a pair in coitus unites with the syllable *Om*, that the pair satisfies one another's desires, and that one who knows that becomes a man who satisfies desires. It doesn't say the man satisfies desires particular to him, but it says that, because one assents to something when one says the syllable *Om*, it signifies assent. And it says the assent is only fulfillment.

And saying that, because of its essence, priests say the syllable *Om* in rites to honor its greatness, it says that both those who know that and those who don't know it perform the rites, but it says knowledge and ignorance are

different things and that only what's performed with knowledge, belief, and awareness of the *Upanishads* becomes potent.

The second section tells a version of the story of breath in the mouth becoming *Prana* by defeating the evil deities after they riddle the other components of *Prana* with evil. But this version doesn't mention death, and, while it says the five components of *Prana* venerated the high chant, it doesn't say they sang it. And, after that story, this section says other entities also venerated the high chant.

Excepting one, those other entities are deities, and the exception becomes a priest of a people and, through his singing, secures their desires for them. And this section ends by saying that's with respect to the *atman*, and the third section begins by saying that what follows is with respect to the deific spheres, but most of the third through the ninth sections are metaphors involving phonetics. They effectually say that, because everything is everything, sounds are everything.

The tenth section tells a story of a pauper who was in Kura when locusts had devastated the land. The pauper begs from a rich man eating groats, and the rich man tells the pauper that all he has is what's he's been served there, and the pauper asks for some of that. The rich man gives him some and offers him something to drink, but the pauper replies that doing that would be drinking the rich man's leftovers, and the rich man asks the pauper whether what he's already accepted isn't his leftovers. And the pauper, replying that it is but that he'll die if he doesn't eat it, takes some of it home to his wife.

His wife, already having gathered enough alms food, saves what he gives her. And next morning the pauper rises and says a king is preparing for a ritual and that, if he had some food, he'd be able to earn some money. He says the king might choose him to perform as a priest, and his wife tells him they still have the groats he brought home, and he eats some and goes to the ritual.

He arrives late, but he sits with the chanting priests and tells each priest the priest's head will shatter apart if he sings the chants while not knowing the deity linked to them, and the priests stop chanting and sit.

In the eleventh section, the patron of the ritual tells the pauper he'd like to know who he is, and the pauper tells him his name. Then, asking the pauper to carry out the priestly functions, the patron tells him he selected the others to do that only because he couldn't find the pauper. The pauper agrees to do it, but with the conditions that the others sing the hymns of praise and that he receive the amount of remuneration they receive, and the remainder of this section is the pauper's telling the singers the entities that are the deities of their chants.

In the twelfth section dogs gather around a white dog. Telling the white dog they're hungry, they ask it to find some food for them by singing. As

do priests, the dogs hold onto one another's backs and slide stealthily while singing a hymn of praise, and then they sit together, make the sound "hum", sing the syllable *Om* three times, ask to eat and drink, and ask that the deities Varuna, Prajapati, Savitr, and the lord of food bring food there. And, after repeating twice the request to bring it, they repeat the syllable *Om*. Varuna and Savitr are deific personifications of water and the sun.

The thirteenth section, after identifying various sounds with various entities, says the accompanying sound "hum" remains unexplained. But it says that, when a man knows the *upanishad* of the *Saman* chants, speech will yield to him milk that's the milk of speech. And it says he'll come to own and eat his food.

"*Sama*" is a Sanskrit cognate of the English word "same", and the first twenty sections of the second chapter of the *Chandogya Upanishad* associate syllables and larger components of the *Saman* chants with various entities and occurrences ranging from the sun to sexual intercourse, indicate various rewards for knowing those associations, and associate some rules of behavior with them.

The 21<sup>st</sup> section says the associations it mentions are the *Saman* woven upon the whole, that a man knowing that becomes the whole and should venerate that *Saman* with the thought that he's the whole, and that that's the basic rule.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> section indicates associations of more sounds with other entities, designates ways of singing the chants, including roaring indistinctly and dissonantly, tells ways one shouldn't perform them, and lists requests one might have in mind during the chanting.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> section says the torsos of three types of persons are *dharma*. It says the first type pursues rituals, Vedic recitation, and giving, that the devotion of the second type is only to austerity, and that the third type is a student of the *Vedas* who settles himself permanently at a teacher's house. This section doesn't mention hymns, but it says Prajapati incubated the worlds and that the words "*bhur*", "*bhuvah*", and "*sva*" sprang from the triple *Veda*.

Those three words mean "being", "sensing", and "accomplishing", and this section says the syllable *Om* sprang from them, that *Om* bores through all words as a pin bores through leaves, and that this whole world is only *Om*.

The 24<sup>th</sup> section, describing rituals that occur throughout a day, says the Adityas and other deities are present to the patron at the third pressing of soma. Aditya, like Savitr, is a name for deific personification of the sun. But the Adityas are also deities with other identities.

Of course the rituals include *Saman* chants. And the final ritual of the day involves the *saman* of all deities and, to win absolute sovereignty, asks them to open the door to the worlds and let us see all the deities. Of course, in the

context of the *Upanishads*, absolute sovereignty is realizing that all is all and that thus, because one is all, one can do all.

The first eleven sections of the third chapter of the *Chandogya Upanishad*, using honey, hives, and bees as metaphors for everything, specifically include the *Saman* chants and the secret rules of substitution.

The first of those eleven sections begins by asserting that the honey of the deities is the sun, and the first four of those eleven sections relate the four quarters to the four *Vedas* flowing from them, and the fifth section relates them specifically to *Brahman*.

In other sections of this sequence, the deities neither eat nor drink but become satiated by only looking at the nectar, but they also enter into it and emerge from its appearance, and the sequence says that one who knows that becomes like the deities.

Listing a hierarchy of five nectars, it says some deities subsist on the fifth with *Brahman* as their mouth. Asserting that someone knowing the fifth nectar in that way will achieve dominion over those deities as long as the sun rises in the zenith and sets in the nadir, it says the time of that is twice as long as the sun will rise in the north and set in the south. Next it says that, after rising in the zenith, it will never rise or set but will remain alone in the middle. And it says it has never either set or risen.

And the eleventh section, containing a request to the deities that the composer or reciter not be stripped of the formulation of *Brahman*, says that, for someone who knows in that way that this *upanishad* is the formulation of *Brahman*, the day is always with the sun never setting.

And next it says Brahma taught that formulation of truth to Prajapati, that Prajapati taught it to Manu, and that Manu taught it to his children. Brahma is a deific personification of creation, and Manu is both the name of the first man and a deific personification of humanity. But this section also says Manu taught that formulation of truth to Uddalaka Aruni and his oldest son.

The twelfth section, while saying all of creation is the *Gayatri*, specifies that it's the earth, the *atman*, the four quarters, and the six types, but it doesn't say what the six types are, and it says *Brahman* is both only the space inside a person and the space outside a person.

The thirteenth section says the heart contains five openings, that each of them is a component of *Prana*, and that the heart is also other entities. And, saying the openings are the five courtiers of *Brahman*, it says they're the doorkeepers of the sky. And it designates rewards for knowing all that.

The fourteenth section, beginning by saying *Brahman* is the whole world, says a man's made of resolve and should resolve that his *atman* lying within his heart is smaller than a mustard seed and larger than all the world, and

it says it's *Brahman* and that a man, on his departure from here after death, shall become it.

In the fifteenth section a person it doesn't name makes other substitutions and says breath is all of creation and that the *purusha* turns to it and other entities for protection. The sixteenth section, beginning by saying a ritual is a man, associates the life of a man with the *Gayatri* meter, other meters, and other components of the ritual and also involves other entities in the metaphor, and such continues through the seventeenth section. And the eighteenth section is metaphors for *Brahman* and the legs of *Brahman*, and the nineteenth section metaphorically explains the metaphor that *Brahman* is the sun.

The first section of the fourth chapter begins by saying Janasruti Pautrayana was a man who was devoted to giving. It says that, thinking people would eat food from him everywhere, he gave a lot of cooked food and had hospices built everywhere. And it tells of a conversation between two geese flying overhead at night.

One of the geese, telling the other to look at a light like Janasruti Pautrayana that's spread throughout the sky, tells him, if he doesn't wish to be burnt, not to touch the light. The other goose asks the first goose why he's speaking of Janasruti Pautrayana as though he's the gatherer Raikva. And the first goose asks the second how Janasruti is like Raikva.

The second replies that, as all lower throws of dice go to the one who wins the highest throw, all things people do go to Raikva, and he says the same of anyone who knows what Raikva knows, and Janasruti hears the conversation. So next morning he tells his steward what he heard, and the steward looks for Raikva but returns and says he didn't find him, and Janasruti tells the steward to look for him in a place where one would search for someone not a brahmin. So the steward, finding a man scratching his sores beneath a cart, respectfully approaches him and asks him whether he's the gatherer Raikva, and the man says he is. So the steward returns to Janasruti and tells him he found him.

In the second section, Janasruti takes Raikva six hundred cows, a gold necklace, and a carriage drawn by a she-mule, and, offering them to him, he asks him to teach him the deity he venerates. But Raikva calls him a sudra and tells him to keep his goods and his cows and drive them back to Janasruti's place. And Janasruti does.

But he returns to Raikva with what he initially brought, four hundred more cows, and his daughter, and, offering all that to Raikva, with his daughter to be Raikva's wife, he also offers him the village there where Raikva lives. And then, lifting the daughters face, Raikva calls Janasruti a sudra again, but he also tells him he could have swindled him with just that face, and he tells him to

drive all he's brought to Raikva's place. And next this section says the villages among the Mahavrsa that are called Raikvaparna stand where Janasruti lived with Raikva. And it closes by saying that next is what Raikva told Janasruti.

And the third section says that, with respect to the deific sphere, the gatherer is the wind, that accordingly the sun and the moon pass into it when they set and that so does the water when it evaporates, that, with respect to the *atman*, the gatherer is breath, and that accordingly, when a man sleeps, the other components of *Prana* pass into it.

And next in this section is a story of a Vedic student begging food from two brahmins. The brahmins refuse the request, but the student, reciting some verses saying one deity swallowed four mighty ones, asks the brahmins who's the guardian of the world. So one of the brahmins replies with verses saying it's the *atman*, and, saying he and the other brahmin venerate the *atman*, he directs giving the student some food.

And this section says the highest throw of the dice is only food, but it also says it's a meter that eats food and has sunk its teeth into this whole world, and it closes by saying the meter that has sunk its teeth into the whole becomes an eater of food and that one who knows that does that.

And the fourth section begins a story that, like the stories of Raikva and the pauper, may obviate the caste system.

In it a boy telling his mother he wishes to be a Vedic student asks her his lineage. She tells him that, because she was young and promiscuous at the time of his birth, she doesn't know his lineage. But, saying her name is Jabala and that his is Satyakama, she tells him he should say he's Satyakama Jabala.

So he goes to a teacher and tells him all his mother told him. And, asking Sakyakama who but a brahmin could speak that way and not stray from the truth, the teacher tells him to fetch some firewood and says he'll perform Sakyakama's initiation. And then he selects four hundred emaciated and weak cows and tells Sakyakama to care for them, and, driving them away, Satyakama calls back that he won't return before they're a thousand. And, after saying Satyakama lived away for years, this section ends by saying that what follows is what happened when the cows increased to a thousand.

And, in the fifth section, a bull, telling Satyakama he and the cows have reached a thousand and promising to tell him a quarter of Brahman, tells Satyakama to take the cows back to the teacher's house. And, along the way, in the fifth through the eighth sections, the bull, a fire, a wild goose, and a water bird tell Satyakama the four quarters of *Brahman* and the four quarters of each of the quarters. And the sixteen quarters and quarters of quarters are various entities, and the totality constitutes another metaphor for *Brahman* being



everything and for venerating everything. And this story designates a reward for knowing each quarter and for worshipping *Brahman* as each.

But the bull says the name of the totality of the quarter of Brahman he tells is Far Flung, and the fire says the name of the totality of the quarter of Brahman he tells is Limitless, and the wild goose says the name of the quarter of Brahman he tells is Radiant, and the water bird says the name of the one he tells is Having a Home.

So, in the ninth section, when Satyakama reaches the teacher's house, the teacher tells him he has the glow of a man who knows *Brahman* and asks him who taught him. Satyakama acknowledges that beings other than humans taught him, but he tells the teacher he's heard from people of the teacher's eminence that knowledge leads one most securely to the goal when it's learned from a teacher. So he asks the teacher to teach him, and this section closes by saying the teacher explained it to him and omitted nothing.

And the tenth section, beginning by saying a student lived under Satyakama Jabala and tended his fires for twelve years, begins a story of Satyakama permitting other students to return home but not permitting his student Upakosala Kamayalana to do that. In this story, Satyakama's wife, telling Satyakama that Upakosala has performed his austerities and faithfully tended the fires, tells him to teach Upakosala before the fires teach him. But Satyakama goes on a journey, and Upakosala stops eating.

So Satyakama's wife urges him to eat and asks him why he isn't eating. And, replying that the desires within him are many and bring various dangers, Upakosala says he's overwhelmed by afflictions and won't eat. So the fires, after telling one another what Satyakama's wife told Satyakama of Upakosala, agree to teach him. And they tell him *Brahman* is breath, joy, and space.

Upakosala tells them he understands that *Brahman* is breath but doesn't understand how it can be joy or space, and, after telling him joy and space are the same, they explain to him both breath and space, and, in the next three sections, the householder's fire, the southern fire, and the offertorial fire, in ways similar to the ways in which the fire, the bull, and the birds taught Satyakama, teach Upakosala further.

So, in the fourteenth section, the fires tell him he has the knowledge of both them and the *atman*. But they tell him their teacher will point out the goal to him, and Satyakama returns and, telling Upakosala his face glows as the face of a man who knows *Brahman*, asks him who taught him. Upakosala asks Satyakama who could have taught, but he tells him the fires appeared differently before, and then Satyakama, calling Upakosala son, asks him what they told him. And then Upakosala acknowledges what the fires taught him.

So Satyakama tells him they told him only of the world but that he'll teach him of that of which one says bad actions, as water doesn't stick to a lotus leaf, don't stick to one who knows it, and Upakosala asks Satyakama to do that.

So, in the fifteenth section, with other metaphors, Satyakama tells Upakosala that *Brahman* is immortal and free from fear and is called lovely uniting, lovely leading, and shining and that a path from which one doesn't return to humanity is to *Brahman* through flame.

The sixteenth section, beginning by saying that, because the wind purifies the whole world as it moves, it's the ritual offering, says, before incorporating other entities into that metaphor of unity, that the two tracks of the wind are mind and speech.

And the seventeenth section tells a version of the story of Prajapati incubating the worlds. This version specifies that he extracted their essences during that incubation and that their essences are the fire from the earth, the wind from the intermediate region, and the sun from sky. And, calling those the triple deities, it says Prajapati incubated the triple *Veda* from the words "bhur" of the *Rg* verses, "bhuvah" of the *Yajus* formulas, and "svar" of the *Saman* chants.

The first section of the fifth chapter begins a version of the story of the contest between the components of *Prana* to decide which of them is greatest, and the second section, including what the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*'s version says of breath and food, continues that story through its end and ends with a version of the ghee ritual in the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*. This version doesn't mention Uddalaki Aruni, but this section also says Satyakama Jabala said of the story of breath and food what the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* says Aruni said of the ghee ritual and a withered stump. And the third through ninth sections of this chapter tell a version of the story of Svetaketu and Aruni and the king of Pancala, and this version provides more detail.

One detail is that the king includes in his answers to Aruni that the ritual fire is a woman with the firewood her vulva, and another is that, to the question of how the highest world doesn't fill with all the people who go there, it says they become tiny creatures.

And such is how many stories of Aruni act as metaphors for how one's head can shatter apart, and this chapter's tenth section, continuing that story into also telling of a path through flame to *Brahman*, says the path is the path to the deities, and it doesn't say one doesn't return from it.

And the eleventh section begins a story of some extremely wealthy and immensely learned householders beginning a discussion of the question of what's their *atman* and *Brahman* and deciding to go to Uddalaka Aruni. And in

this story Aruni decides he can't answer the householders' questions completely. So, deciding not to try, he takes them to another teacher.

That teacher, receiving them with honor and telling them he's about to perform a ritual and will give them what he'll give the officiating priests, asks them to stay awhile. But, saying that, when a man is immersed in a particular topic, he should speak on that topic, they tell him the topic is the *atman*. So the teacher tells them he'll give them his response the next day, and, the next day, they return carrying firewood. But he doesn't initiate them as students.

Instead, in the twelfth section, he immediately begins instructing them. And, from that section through the seventeenth, he asks each of them what he venerates as the *atman*. Each gives an answer different from each of the others' answers, and the teacher, telling each of them that he venerates, as the *atman* common to all men, entities other than what each of them venerates, says each of the entities they venerate is but a part of the *atman* corresponding to a different human body part. And, to Aruni, who says he venerates the earth as the *atman*, he says the earth is but the feet of the *atman*.

And, also telling each a different reward he'll receive for knowing what he tells each, he designates for each a different calamity he'd have suffered if he hadn't come there, and each calamity involves the body part the brahman designated for his *atman*. He tells the first brahmin he questions that his head would have shattered apart, and he tells Aruni his feet would have withered away. So his description of the *atman* is literally from head to foot.

And, in the eighteenth section, after saying of the *atman* that's common to all men that it eats food within all the worlds, he tells the brahmins that the brightly shining is the head, that the dazzling is the eye, that what follows diverse paths is *Prana*, that what's ample is the torso, that wealth is the bladder, that the earth is the feet, that the ritual site is the stomach, that the sacred grass is the hair, that the householder's fire is the heart, that the southern fire is the mind, and that the offertorial fire is the mouth.

And, in the nineteenth through the 23<sup>rd</sup> sections, he incorporates that further into a ritual. He tells the brahmins that one should offer food to the five kinds of breath sequentially, that the five components of *Prana* are satisfied in that way, and that so are other entities. And he says that, after those entities are satisfied, the *atman* doing the offering is satisfied and possesses, with fame and the luster of sacred knowledge, children, livestock, and a food supply.

And he says in the 24<sup>th</sup> and final section of this chapter that, were one to offer the daily fire ritual while not knowing that, the offering would be as though he'd made it on ashes. But he says that an offering with that knowledge would be within all the worlds, beings, and *atmans* and that all the bad things in the offering person would burn up as the tip of a reed in a fire. And he tells the

brahmins that, accordingly, were a man knowing that to give his leftovers to an outcaste, he'd have made an offering in the *atman* common to all men. And this section closes with the teacher citing a poem saying all beings gather at the fire ritual as hungry children gather around their mother.

The first section of the sixth chapter begins with Aruni telling Svetaketu to take up the life of a celibate student because no one in their family hasn't studied and is the kind of brahmin who's a brahmin only by birth. So, at twelve years old, Svetaketu goes away, and, at 24 years old, after learning all the *Vedas* and becoming arrogant and swell-headed, he returns, thinking himself learned, and Aruni tells him he's become that. But he also tells him he must have learned the rule of equivalency by which one thinks, hears, and perceives what one hasn't before thought, heard, or perceived, and Svetaketu asks how that rule works. Aruni, beginning his answer by asking whether this world is or originally was what isn't, asks how what is can come from what isn't. And the remainder of this chapter is Aruni telling his son various metaphors and similes. And the metaphors shatter into materialistic differentiation.

And, in that process, Aruni asks Svetaketu to enact some of them. In the seventh section, he tells Svetaketu, to see what effect it has on his memory, not to eat for fifteen days, and Svetaketu forgets the *Vedas*. So Aruni tells him to eat and learn from him, and Svetaketu eats and answers all his father's questions. And Aruni says the meaning of that exercise is that food is a component of the mind.

And, in the sixteenth section, he tells Svetaketu of a method of knowing whether a person is a thief. He says that, if the person is innocent, he turns himself into the truth and that, when one heats an ax and requires him grasp it, he isn't burnt. And he says that what keeps him from being burnt constitutes the *atman* of the whole world that's the truth.

Basically, using Aruni's inability to understand the metaphors to illustrate the metaphor of one's head shattering apart, this chapter is a parody of pedantry, but the sixteenth and final section of this chapter ends by saying that Svetaketu learned from Aruni that he's the *atman*.

The first section of the seventh chapter begins with a person whose name is Narada coming to a person whose name is Sanatkumara and asking him to teach him. Narada says he's studied the *Vedas*, histories, ancient tales and various other subjects but doesn't know the *atman*, and, saying he's a man of sorrow and has heard that those who know the *atman* pass across sorrow, he asks Sanatkumara to take him to the other side of sorrow. And Sanatkumara replies that what Narada has studied is only name and that one who venerates *Brahman* as name obtains freedom in every place name reaches.

Narada then asks Sanatkumara whether anything is greater than name, and Sanatkumara replies that something is, and Narada asks him to tell him that. So, in the second through the fourteenth sections, varying in what he says is the greatness of each and in how he says it's great but saying the result of venerating each as *Brahman* is freedom of movement in every place each entity reaches, Sanatkumara speaks of other entities in a similar way. The entities after name are speech, mind, intention, thought, meditation, perception, strength, food, water, heat, space, memory, and hope.

In the fifteenth section, speaking similarly of *Prana*, Sanatkumara says that one's father, mother, brother, sister, teacher and *Brahman* are *Prana*. And, saying that, because only *Prana* becomes all of them, people are sure to rebuke a person who speaks harshly to those people, he damns the person and refers to him as though he's killed them and *Brahman*. And he says that a man seeing, thinking, and perceiving in that way becomes one who outtalks, that accordingly he should readily acknowledge that he outtalks, and that he shouldn't deny it.

In the sixteenth section Sanatkumara says a man outtalks only when he talks with truth. And, in that section through the 22<sup>nd</sup>, he says perceiving must precede truth, that thinking, having faith, producing, acting, and well-being must precede one another in that order, and that Narada should perceive each, and Narada says he does. And, in the 23<sup>rd</sup> section, saying well-being is only plentitude, Sanatkumara tells Narada plentitude is what he should seek to perceive, and Narada says he also perceives plentitude.

In the 24<sup>th</sup> section Sanatkumara says scarcity is where one hears or discerns something else and that plentitude is the immortal while scarcity constitutes the mortal, and Narada asks him on what plentitude is based. Sanatkumara says it's based on one's greatness but may not be based on cows, horses, elephants, gold, slaves, wives, farms, or houses, what people here call greatness. He says that, because those entities are based on one another, he doesn't consider them great.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> section he says plentitude is everywhere and that so is the *atman*, that a man who sees, thinks of, and perceives the *atman* in that way and finds pleasure in the *atman*, dallies and mates with the *atman*, attains bliss in the *atman*, is his own master, and has complete movement in all the worlds, and that others attain perishable worlds and have no freedom of movement in any.

And, in the 26<sup>th</sup> and final section of this chapter, he says that, when a man sees it in that way, *Prana* springs from the *atman*, that so do the entities he mentions in the second through fourteenth sections, and that so do other entities. And this section quotes verses saying a man seeing rightly sees no death, disease, or distress and sees all completely, that one's being becomes pure when one's food is pure, that one's memory becomes pure when one's being is pure,

and that, when one acquires memory, all knots are cut away. And it says Lord Sanatkumara points out, to a man who's wiped away all stains, the way to cross beyond darkness. And it closes by saying people call Sanatkumara Skanda.

The first section of the eighth chapter repeats the metaphor of the *atman* and *Brahman* being a small space in the heart while also being everything. And, calling it a lotus, a dwelling place, and the fortress of *Brahman*, it says those departing this world after discovering that and real desires obtain complete freedom in all the worlds. But the second section lists material desires one may obtain in material worlds.

The third section, saying real desires are masked by the unreal, elaborates on that. The fourth and fifth sections, referring to various observances in this and other *Upanishads*, use them as metaphors for the life of a celibate student. And the sixth section uses colors, light, and the continuity of space to indicate the unity of the universe.

The seventh section begins by saying Prajapati said the *atman* one should try to discover and perceive is the *atman* free from evil, aging, death, sorrow, hunger, and thirst, the *atman* whose desires and intentions are real. And next it begins a story in which the *devas* and the *asuras* have become aware of that and agree with one another to try to discover it. So, in this story, Indra and Virocana separately go to Prajapati with firewood in their hands.

Indra represents the *devas* while Virocana represents the *asuras*. And, after they live the life of celibate students for 32 years, Prajapati asks them why they're there and what they want. And, replying to their telling him, he says the *atman* they're seeking is the one in the eye. So they ask him who's the one they see in water and a mirror. And he tells them it's the same one.

In the eighth section, telling them to look into a pan of water, he asks them what they see. They say they see themselves as they are, and he tells them to adorn themselves and look again and tell him what they see, and they tell him they see themselves adorned. And he tells them that what they see then is *atman* and *Brahman*.

So then they go away, but, seeing them go, Prajapati says that the side holding that *upanishad*, whether it's the *asuras* or the *devas*, shall be vanquished, and Virocana returns to the other *asuras* totally content and tells them that *upanishad* and says that one who cares only for that *atman* wins both this world and the next.

And next this section says people whom people call evil are people who give no gifts, offer no offerings, and lack belief, and it says evil deities hold to that *upanishad* and that, by offering food and clothing and ornaments and believing they'll win the next world that way, they perform funeral rites for dead persons.

But, in the ninth section, before reaching the *devas*, Indra recognizes the danger of that *Upanishad* and, again carrying firewood, returns to Prajapati. He tells Prajapati various ways in which the *atman* that's adorned suffers as does the one that that isn't adorned. And Prajapati tells him he's correct and tells him to wait another 32 years.

In the tenth section, he tells him the *atman* who goes happily in a dream is the *atman* and *Brahman*. And, with his heart content, Indra again goes away, but, after recognizing that the dreaming *atman* also suffers, he returns again. And Prajapati again tells him he's correct and again tells him to wait another 32 years.

In the eleventh section, Prajapati tells him the *atman* in dreamless sleep is the *atman* he seeks and is *Brahman*. And, recognizing that the *atman* in dreamless sleep is oblivious of everything, Indra again, before reaching the other *devas*, returns with firewood. But this time Prajapati tells him to wait but five years.

And, in the twelfth section, Prajapati essentially tells Indra that the *atman* that's *Brahman* is consciousness itself and that it's essentially *Prana* with no physical body to constrain it.

And the thirteenth and fourteenth sections briefly say that in different ways, and the fifteenth says Brahma told that to Prajapati, that Prajapati told it to Manu, and that Manu told it to his children, and it also briefly describes an ideal Hindu life.

It says the person goes from his teacher's house, where he learns the Vedas during the time after his time performing tasks for teacher, to his own house, that there he daily recites the *Vedas* in a clean place and rears virtuous children, and that he draws all of his sense organs into himself and refrains from killing anyone, excepting worthy persons.

And this section, the final section of the final chapter of the *Chandogya Upanishad*, says that one who lives that way all his life attains the world of *Brahman*, and it closes by saying he doesn't return again.

The *Yajur Veda* is two compilations. Hindus, to indicate that the organization of one is less systematic than that of the other, call them the black *Yajur Veda* and the white *Yajur Veda*. And the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, which Hindus attribute to Vedic students whose teacher's name was Tittiri, meaning "partridge", is part of the less systematic black *Yajur Veda*. And it's from the point of view of a student.

The first section of its first chapter is a poem beginning with the syllable *Om*. Asking for kindness from various deities, including Indra, Bhrspati, and Vishnu, a Vedic personification of the preservation of the

Universe it calls Vishnu of the long strides, the poem bids homage to *Brahman*, says the wind is *Brahman*, and asks that it help the writer or reciter and the teacher. And it ends by repeating the syllable *Om* and repeating the word “*shanti*” three times. “*Shanti*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “peace”.

The second section, which also begins with the syllable *Om*, says it’ll explain phonetics, that phonetics are phoneme, accent, strength, articulation, and connection, and that by that it has explained phonetics.

The third section, after quoting another verse, says it’ll explain the hidden *upanishad* of combining the five topics it says are the worlds, the lights, knowledge, progeny, and the *atman*. And, not identifying the antecedent of the pronoun “they”, it says they call them the large-scale combinations and, by placing them in the context of other words, links each with other entities. And the fourth through tenth sections quote other verses, associate various phonetics and other entities with other entities, and repeat generalizations and instructions of other *Upanishads*, including that *Brahman* is *Om*.

The eleventh section, including speaking the truth, following the *dharma*, treating one’s parents and teacher as deities, and, when in doubt, emulating eminent brahmins, lists admonitions from the teacher to students after they’ve completed their study.

And the twelfth and final section of this chapter is a poem that, beginning and ending as does the poem that’s the first section and also requesting kindness from the entities including Vishnu of the long strides, says *Brahman* has helped the writer or reciter and the teacher.

The nine sections of the second chapter present more verses and forms of expressions of other *Upanishads*. And so do the ten sections of the third chapter. But the third chapter pertains mostly to food.

Its first six sections are a story of the deific personification of water Varuna telling his son, in response to the son’s asking him to teach him *Brahman*, that food and the components of Prana are *Brahman*.

Its seventh section says one shouldn’t belittle food. Its eighth section says that one shouldn’t reject food. And its ninth section says one should prepare much food.

Its tenth section, along with referring to other expressions of other *Upanishads*, says one should never turn anyone from one’s home. It says that, when a man who knows that departs from this world, he first reaches the *atman* that’s food. And it closes by saying that knowing that is the *upanishad*.

And immediately before that closing statement is a verse with food saying it’s like the light in the middle world.



The *Aitareya Upanishad* is part of the *Rg Veda*, and a fourteenth century commentator said Mahidassa Aitareya was its author, but more recent research hasn't verified that.

The three sections of its first chapter are a creation story saying that the *atman*, before creating the worlds, deities, man, food, and the wind for capturing food, was all that blinked an eye. And, after the *atman* gives birth to himself and sees only the man that's *Brahman* and the utmost, this story and chapter end by saying *Brahman*'s name is Inandra but that, because the deities love the cryptic, people call him Indra. The variety of creation stories in the *Upanishads* is but one indication that they're mainly metaphorical and not literal.

The one section of the second chapter, beginning by saying the embryo comes into being as semen within a man, calls semen the radiance the man gathers from all the arts he bears as his *atman* in his *atman*. It says his first birth is when he deposits the semen in a woman and gives birth to the embryo, that the embryo becomes one with the woman's body as though it were part of her body, that accordingly it doesn't harm her, that it should nourish her as she nourishes it, and that, when it takes care of itself before its birth, it takes care of itself for the continuity of the worlds. It says continuance is its second birth and that its *atman* is appointed to perform the rites while, after it's done all it has to do, its other *atman* ages and dies. And it says its third birth is when, as soon as it departs from this world, it's born again.

But the one section of the third chapter begins by asking what's the *atman*. It says various designations for various sensations are but designations of cognition, that the *atman* is *Brahman*, Indra, Prajapati, all the other deities, and all the other entities, everything that has life, and that knowing is the eye of all that, that the *atman* is founded on knowledge, that knowledge is the eye of the world, and that it's *Brahman*. And this third and final chapter of the *Aitareya Upanishad* closes by saying *Brahman* went up from this world with that *atman* consisting of knowledge and that, having obtained all of its desire in the world of the sky, it became immortal.

The *Kausitaki Upanishad* is also part of the *Rg Veda*. It mentions Kausitaki, presumably a brahmin teacher, twice. But it doesn't otherwise identify him.

The seven sections of its first chapter are another story of Aruni sending Svetaketu to officiate at a ritual. In this story Svetaketu fails to answer the question of whether the world in which Svetaketu would place the patron of the ritual has a closed door or another road, and, after Aruni carries firewood to the patron, the patron tells him that, because he hasn't succumbed to pride, he'll see that he sees the answer clearly, and he tells him a story. The story he tells is

various kinds of situations, including celestial nymphs and *Brahman* sitting on a couch, and it gives no indication of any metaphorical correspondence.

The first section of the second chapter, beginning by saying Kausitaki said *Brahman* is *Prana*, says mind is its messenger, that the other components of *Prana* are other entities, that anyone who know that possesses those entities, and that, with its not asking them, those deities bring offerings to the *Prana* that's *Brahman*.

And it says that's like a man begging in a village and receiving nothing, that the man sits down and vows never to eat anything given there, and that then the people who spurned him offer invitations, but the totality of this section essentially expresses the story of the competition among the components of *Prana* that ends with everything being *Prana*'s food.

And the second section of this chapter is another brief form of that story, but the second form begins with Paingya, whom it doesn't otherwise identify, saying *Brahman* is *Prana*.

The third section tells of a ritual to use the components of *Prana* to capture equivalencies of objects of value on which one has set one's heart, and the fourth section tells of a ritual to offer the components of *Prana* to secure favor of a man or a woman or a group of men or women, and the fifth section through the tenth tell of other rituals involving other entities to satisfy other desires.

The eleventh section begins by saying that next is the dying around of the deities. It says that, while the fire burns, *Brahman* shines forth here, but that, when the fire stops burning, it dies. And it says its radiance then goes to the sun, while its *Prana* goes to the wind.

And it says of *Brahman* and the shining of the sun, the moon, and a flashing of lightning what it says of *Brahman* and the fire. And it says that, when all those deities have crept into the wind, they don't lose the identity of their *atman* but emerge from it again. And it says all that was with respect to the deities and that next will be with respect to the *atman*.

The twelfth section contains a similar sequence, but it substitutes components of *Prana* for the fire and the other shining entities, and the breath substitutes for the wind. And it says that, were the southern and northern mountain ranges to rush at a man to level him, they couldn't if he knows that. And it says the people he hates and those who hate him would die around him.

The thirteenth section begins by saying that next is gaining preeminence, but it's another version of the contest between the components of *Prana* recognizing the preeminence of breath. And, saying that then they united with the breath that's intelligence, departed from the *atman*, entered the wind, and went to the sky with space as their *atman*, it says a person who knows that

does that. It says he goes to where the deities are and, because the deities are immortal, becomes immortal.

The fourteenth section, beginning by saying that next is the father and son ceremony, tells of a ritual in which the father's near death, lies on top of the son, and tells him he'll transfer his senses and other abilities to him. But it says that, if the father finds talking difficult, he should instead briefly tell the son that he's placing his *Prana* in him. And it says that, if the father recovers his health, he should live either under the son's authority or as a wandering ascetic.

The first section of the third chapter begins with a person whose name is Pratardana arriving, as a result of war and valor, at the residence of Indra. Indra tells Pratardana to choose a gift, but Pratardana asks Indra why he doesn't choose something he thinks is beneficial to a human, and Indra replies that a superior doesn't choose for a person inferior to him. And, to Indra's telling him to choose for himself, Pratardana replies that he'll do without the present.

But this section says Indra's the truth and accordingly doesn't deviate from the truth, and next in it, because it's what Indra perceives to be most beneficial to a human, he tells Pratardana to perceive only him. But next he tells Pratardana of destructive acts he's accomplished, including smashing beings in the sky and intermediate region and on earth while breaking numerous agreements. And he says he didn't lose a hair of his body while doing all that.

But the second section, beginning with Indra saying he's *Prana* and the *atman* that's consciousness and telling Pratardana to venerate him as life and immortality, says immortality is in this world.

And the remainder of the eight sections of this chapter assert in various ways the unity of *Prana* and its correlation and unity with consciousness, *Brahman*, and the *atman*.

The twenty sections of the fourth chapter are a version of the story in the second chapter of the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* of the reversal of norms of the brahmin and the kshatriya king of Kasi. But this version says that, as long as Indra didn't understand the *atman* that's the unity of *Prana* and didn't understand its correlation with consciousness, the *asuras* prevailed over him, and it says that, when Indra came to know that, he smashed them. And this version ends with the kshatriya telling the brahmin that a formulation of truth is that the maker of the entities the brahmin said he venerates is the one the brahmin seeks.

And the twentieth and final section of this final chapter of this *Upanishad* closes by saying a man who knows that also wipes off all evils and secures supremacy, sovereignty, and lordship, over all beings.

The *Kena Upanishad* is part of the *Sama Veda*, and its title is its first word, meaning “by whom”. Its first chapter is a poem that, by saying *Brahman* is conscious of the components of *Prana* while the components of *Prana* aren’t conscious of *Brahman*, essentially says what the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* says Yajnavalkya told Maitreyi of perception and the perceiver. And most of its second chapter is a poem about not knowing one doesn’t know.

Its third chapter begins by saying *Brahman* won a victory for the deities but that they jubilantly told themselves the victory and the greatness were theirs. And, in the story, *Brahman* reads their minds and makes himself visible to them, but, not recognizing him, they wonder what that strange apparition is and tell fire and wind to find out what it is. So each scurries to it and asks it, but it replies by asking each what it is, and each replies by telling its name.

So *Brahman* asks each what sort of power it has, and they tell *Brahman* they can burn up or carry away this whole world, and *Brahman* places a blade of grass before each and tells it to burn that up or carry it away, and they can’t return and tell Indra to find out what the strange apparition is, but it vanishes. And, in the spot in the sky where it was, Indra finds a beautiful woman, Uma, the daughter of Himavat, a deific personification of the Himalayas. And he asks her what the strange apparition was.

In the fourth chapter Uma tells Indra the apparition was *Brahman* and that he and the other deities were jubilant at the victory *Brahman* had won, and Indra immediately realizes the apparition was *Brahman*, and next this chapter says that, because they were in close contact with *Brahman*, fire, wind, and Indra surpass other deities, but that, because Indra not only was in close contact with *Brahman* but also was the first to recognized that *Brahman* was *Brahman*, Indra surpasses the other deities.

And next it tells a rule of correlation and equivalency of the deific and the *atman* spheres, in which crying “ah” when seeing and blinking at lightning is in the deific sphere, while memory and imagination are in the *atman* sphere.

And next is a request to be taught the *upanishad*, and a reply is that the requester has been taught it, that austerity, self-control, and rites are its foundation, that the *Vedas* are its limbs, and that truth is its abode, and this final chapter of this *Upanishad* closes by saying that, when one comes to know the *upanishad* in that way, one undoubtedly wipes out evil and becomes firmly established in the heavenly world that’s endless and invincible.

The *Katha Upanishad* is part of the black *Yajur Veda*. Its title is a Sanskrit word meaning “distress”, and it’s a story of a conversation between a boy whose name is Naciketas and the deific personification of death Yama. And

the boy's name is a Sanskrit phrase referring to one's seeking nothing other than unending spiritual energy.

Its first chapter begins with Naciketas' father giving away all his possessions, and, in this story, as cows his father is presenting as ritual gifts are led away, belief takes hold of Naciketas, and he reflects that the cows have drunk all their water, eaten all their fodder, been milked dry, and are totally barren, and he reflects that the worlds to which a man who's given them goes are called joyless.

So three times he asks his father to whom he'll give him, and the third time his father shouts at him that he'll give him to death. And the remainder of this Upanishad is in verse beginning with Naciketas reflecting that he's the first and middlemost of many to go and asking what Yama must do and what he'll do with him that day. But, during his first three nights in Yama's house, Yama isn't there, and neither is any food.

So Naciketas reflects that a brahmin wrests hopes, expectations, fellowship, goodwill, children, livestock, rites, and gifts from a foolish man in whose house he resides with no food. And, when Yama returns, he accordingly offers Naciketas three wishes, and Naciketas' first wish is that his father's anger subside and that, when Yama dismisses him, his father greet him with joy. And Yama promises to grant that wish.

And Naciketas, when he makes that wish, calls his father Gautama. And Yama, when he grants it, calls Naciketas' father Uddalaka Aruni. And other Upanishads call Uddalaka Aruni Gautama. But this section begins by calling him Usan. So his identity is questionable.

But, whatever is his identity, Yama, in this story, tells Naciketas his father will have a restful night seeing him released from death. And next Naciketas tells Yama that Yama is studying the fire altar leading to the sky, and, saying people in the sky enjoy immortality, he asks Yama to explain the ritual to him. And he says that's his second wish.

And he learns it so well that Yama, telling him he'll give him another wish, names the fire ritual for Naciketas and gives him a gold disk, but he demurs at Naciketas' third wish.

Naciketas, telling Yama that some people say a man exists when he's dead while other people say he doesn't, tells him his third wish is that he teach him that. Yama, replying that, because it's a subtle doctrine and difficult to understand, the old deities had doubts of it, asks Naciketas to make another wish. But Naciketas tells Yama he can't find anyone like Yama to explain it and that no other wish is equal to it.

Yama asks him to choose sons and grandsons who'll live a hundred years, plenty of livestock, elephants, and horses, gold, dominion over a wide

expanse of earth, and to live as many autumns as he wishes. And he shows Naciketas lovely girls with chariots and lutes of a kind man can't obtain. But Naciketas tells him to keep his horses, songs, and dances.

Saying Yama can't make a man content with wealth and asking him whether we can keep our wealth when we've seen him, Naciketas tells him we live only as long as Yama lets us. And he asks him what man with insight, who, having grown old in this wretched and lonely place while looking at its beauty and pleasure and joy, has met those who don't die or grow old, would delight in long life. And, again asking Yama to tell him the point on which mortals have great doubts, he asks him what happens at that great transit. And he says probing that deep mystery is his wish and that he wishes for nothing else.

So, in the second chapter, Yama praises Naciketas for preferring the good to the gratifying, for looking at but rejecting things people desire, and particularly for rejecting the golden disk and, preferring knowledge, not regarding it as wealth.

And Naciketas, saying he knows that what Yama called a treasure is transient, tells Yama he built his fire altar because of that and that Yama has gained the eternal by things eternal, and Yama tells him that satisfying desires is the foundation of the world, that uninterrupted rites bring ultimate security, and that great and widespread praise is the foundation of that.

And, saying the primeval one is difficult to perceive, he tells Naciketas he considers welcome in his house a mortal who understands the primeval one and, because he's found something in which he can rejoice, rejoices in it.

And Naciketas asks Yama to tell him what he sees to be difference between right and wrong doctrines, between what's done here and what's left undone, and between what'd been and what's to be. And Yama replies that the word all the *Vedas* disclose, the word all austerities proclaim, is "*Om*". And he says that, when one knows that syllable, one obtains one's every wish.

He says it alone is *Brahman* and that one who knows that rejoices in *Brahman*'s world. And, calling such a person the wise one, he says he isn't born and doesn't die, hasn't come from anywhere, and hasn't become anyone. And he says such a person is unborn, eternal, primeval, and everlasting and isn't killed when the body is killed. And he says that, if the killer or the killed thinks he kills or is killed, neither understands.

And he says the *atman* lies within the heart of a living being and is finer than the finest and larger than the largest, that, with no desires and free from sorrow, a man perceives by its grace the creator's grandeur, and that then the person roams far while sitting down and goes everywhere while lying down.

And he says the *atman* can't be grasped by teachings, great learning, or consciousness, that neither can one who hasn't quit his evil ways, isn't calm and

composed, or doesn't have a tranquil mind grasp it, that only the man the *atman* chooses can grasp the *atman* whose *atman* the *atman* chooses, that for him the brahmin and the kshatriya are like a dish of boiled rice, and that for him death is like the sprinkled sauce, and he asks who knows where he is.

And the remaining four chapters of this Upanishad express the basic notions of the *Upanishads* through other metaphors and other explanations of personifications and rituals, including the fire ritual.

Its fourth chapter says the self-existent one pierced the aperture outward but that a *muni* also looks inward, that what by which one experiences the physical is also that by which one perceives the straits of both deep sleep and being awake, that one who sees any kind of diversity here goes from death to death, and that one who regards the laws as distinct runs here and there after them.

And its sixth and final chapter ends by saying that, after Naciketas received that body of knowledge and the entire set of *yoga* rules death taught, he attained *Brahman*. It says he became free from aging and death and that so shall others who know that teaching of the *atman*.

The *Isa Upanishad* is part of the White *Yajur Veda*. “*Isa*” is a Sanskrit word meaning “by the lord”, and it's the first word of the *Isa Upanishad*, as the title of the *Kena Upanishad* is its first word. The *Isa Upanishad* is the first *Upanishad* in most Indian compilations of the *Upanishads*, and it's one poem fitting on fewer than three ordinary book pages.

Beginning by saying that, whatever being is in the world, the lord dwells in the whole world, it says that accordingly one should eat what's been abandoned and not covet anyone's wealth, and, saying that, only by performing our *karma* in this world, we should desire to live our hundred years, it says that, by that and not otherwise, *karma* doesn't smear off on us.

Saying that, when a man sees his *atman* in all beings and sees all beings in his *atman*, the lord doesn't seek to hide from him, it asks what bewilderment or sorrow can be in regarding the *atman* of one who sees that oneness, and it essentially says the lord is that. It says people who worship ignorance enter blind darkness, that people who delight in learning enter into blinder darkness, that the lord or the *atman* is far different from both knowledge and ignorance, and that one who knows both together passes beyond death by ignorance and attains immortality by knowledge. And it says the same of becoming and not becoming.

Saying a golden dish covers truth, it calls Pusan the sole seer and asks Pusan to open the dish for its writer or reciter to see, and next, calling Yama the sun and the son of Prajapati, it asks him to spread out his rays and draw in his

light, and the writer or reciter, saying he sees Pusan's fairest form, calls Pusan the *purusha* up there and the never resting immortal wind.

And, after saying ashes are this body's lot, he exclaims the syllable *Om* and twice tells the mind to remember the deed. And, telling fire it knows all coverings, he asks the lord to lead us to riches on an easy path and keep far from us the offense that angers. And this *Upanishad* closes by saying we'll offer the lord the highest song of praise.

The *Svetasvatara Upanishad* is part of the black *Yajur Veda*. Its title is the name of a teacher. And each of its chapters is a poem.

Its first chapter begins by saying people who inquire about *Brahman* ask what's its cause. Asking why we were born, by what we live, and by whom we're governed, it asks those who know *Brahman* whether we live in pleasure and pain, each in our separate situation. Asking whether we should regard *Brahman* as time, nature, necessity, chance, elements, the source of birth, or the *purusha*, it says those who follow the discipline of meditation have seen that one alone governs all those causes, from time to the *atman*. And, saying we study the one as a wheel, it extends that metaphor into other metaphors of the *Upanishads*.

Its second chapter, beginning by effectually saying the sun is a *yogi*, says that Savitr, yoking his mind and then his thoughts, having recognized that the fire is the light, brought it here from the earth. It asks that Savitr, yoking the deities with their mind as they go the sky and with their thoughts as they go to the firmament, stimulate them to create the lofty light. And it says the inspired poets of the lofty poet unite their minds and their thoughts.

And it describes physical and mental means to *yoga*. It says a wise man, by keeping his body straight with its three sections erect and drawing his senses together into his mind and his heart, shall cross with the boat of Brahman all the frightful rivers. And it says that, by compressing his breaths, curbing his movements, and exhaling through his nostrils when his breath is exhausted, he should keep his mind under control as he would a wagon yoked to unruly horses.

It says the place where one engages in yogic practice should be level, clean, and free of gravel, fire, and sand, that it should be near such as noiseless running water, that it should be pleasing to the mind and not offensive to the eye, and that it should be provided with a cave or nook sheltered from the wind.

And it says that, in the practice of *yoga*, mist, smoke, wind, fire, fireflies, lightning, and crystal moon are apparitions paving the way to full manifestation in *Brahman*, that lightness, health, absence of greed, a bright complexion, a pleasant voice, a sweet smell, and little feces or urine, are the first



working of practice of *yoga*, and that, when earth, water, fire, air, and space have arisen together, and the body made of those five elements becomes equipped with the attribute of *yoga*, a man will no longer experience sickness, old age, or suffering and will obtain a body tempered by the fire of *yoga*.

It says that, as a disk smeared with clay shines brightly when cleaned, an embodied person perceiving the true nature of the *atman* becomes solitary and free from sorrow with his goal attained, that, by means of the *atman* resembling a lamp, a man practicing the restraint of *yoga* sees here the nature of *Brahman*, and that it pervades all quarters.

And, saying that, by seeing the nature of *Brahman*, the person, because he's known the entity unborn, unchanging, and unsullied by any objects, is freed from all fetters, it describes that entity in further ways as other *Upanishads* describe *Brahman* and *Brahman*'s identity with the *atman*, and it closes by offering adoration to the entity who abides in every being.

And the third chapter describes Rudra. Essentially presenting him as a metaphor for *Brahman*, it says he has eyes everywhere, a face everywhere, arms everywhere, and feet everywhere, and, calling him benign, it asks him to provide us with lucid consciousness. But, saying he's higher than *Brahman*, it says that in the beginning he created Hiranyagarbha. Hiranyagarbha is a deific personification of the Himalayas.

The fourth chapter extends that description of Rudra into a metaphor of two companions nestling in a tree, one of them eating a fig while the other watches, not eating. In the metaphor, stuck on the same tree, one of them is deluded by her who isn't the lord, but, when he sees the other, who's the contented lord and his majesty, his grief disappears. And this chapter also says one should recognize the illusory power as primal matter and see the illusionist as the great lord.

Most of the fifth chapter is a mixture of more metaphors. It says that, after spreading nets in diverse ways in this world, the deity that's *Brahman* gathers them in, creates them again, and tears them down. And this and other chapters of this *Upanishad* refer to the relationship between the three *gunas* and their *karma*. The *gunas* are *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, the qualities of goodness, passion, and darkness.

The sixth chapter, by essentially producing a metaphor for ineffability, further says what Rudra or *Brahman* is or isn't. But it also says that, when a man knows the cause comprehended through *Samkhya*, the cause that's changeless among the changing and conscious among the conscious beings, and dispenses desires among the many, he's freed from all fetters. And it says that the wise Svetasvatara, by the power of his austerities and by the grace of the lord, first came to know *Brahman* and then proclaimed it as the highest means of

purification, bringing delight to those who have passed beyond their order of life to the company of seers.

And it says the supreme secret of that was proclaimed in *Vedanta* in a former age, that one should never proclaim it to a person who isn't of tranquil disposition or to one who isn't one's son or one's pupil, and that only in a man who has the deepest love for the lord and shows the love toward his teacher he shows toward the lord do those points declared by the noble one shine forth.

*Samkhya* is a category of Hindu epistemology Svetasvatara most prominently promulgated, and other Vedic literature more explicitly presents Rudra as a deific personification of the destruction of the universe, and some of that literature calls him Shiva.

Some commentators say the *Mundaka Upanishad* is part of the *Atharva Veda* while some say it's part of no *Veda*. Its title refers to shaving, and some commentators say it refers to ascetics' shaving their heads, while other commentators say its meaning is questionable. And its first chapter begins with a poem saying Brahma arose as the first of the deities and disclosed the knowledge of *Brahman* to Atharvan, his firstborn son.

Most of the remainder of its three chapters is instructions to a householder that are similar to instructions in other *Upanishads*, but its third chapter also repeats the story of the two birds in the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* and says that, in the worlds of *Brahman* at the time of the final end, the ascetics having become fully immortal shall be fully liberated.

And it stipulates that one should teach that knowledge of *Brahman* only to those who are versed in the *Vedas*, preform rites, are grounded in *Brahman*, and offer themselves with faith in the lone seer, and only if they've duly performed the head vow.

The *Prasna Upanishad* is part of the *Atharva Veda*, but commentators say many *Upanishads* now in the *Atharva Veda* didn't originate with it but entered it after its original compilation, and the *Prasna Upanishad* and the *Mundaka Upanishad* are examples. "*Prasna*" is Sanskrit for "question", and the *Prasna Upanishad* is six questions six brahmins ask the venerable Pippalada, and his responses to them. Each chapter is one question and Pippalada's answer to it.

The first chapter also says the brahmins are devoted to *Brahman*, grounded in *Brahman*, and in search of the highest *Brahman*, that they go to Pippalada with firewood in their hands, that he tells them to live there a year, practicing austerity, chastity, and belief, and that he tells them he'll answer all the questions he knows. And the format is like that of the story in the fifth

chapter of the *Chandogya Upanishad* in which Uddalaka Aruni takes brahmins to another brahmin for answers to questions he can't answer. And, as in that story, the questions and answers are similar to other questions and answers in the *Upanishads*.

But the questions in this *Upanishad* are more academic and less metaphorical than most, and Pippalada ends his answering by bidding homage to the supreme seers.

Some commentators say the *Mandukya Upanishad* is part of the *Atharva Veda*, while others say it originated with the *Rg Veda*. And some say its title means "frog", while others say it's the name of a breed of horses, while others say it refers to the bottom of a horse's hoof, while others say it means a kind of coitus. But, whatever its origin and whatever its title means, it begins by saying the whole world is the syllable *Om*, and it ends by saying the *atman* is *Om* and that anyone who knows that enters the *atman* by the *atman*. And all of its brief entirety is metaphors for that premise of Hinduism.

The *Maitri Upanishad* is part of the black *Yajur Veda*. Its title is a Sanskrit word referring to benevolence and is also the name of the person to whom the principle speaker in the *Maitri Upanishad* attributes most of the notions he presents. And scholars generally agree that the *Maitri Upanishad* is the most recent of the thirteen principal *Upanishads*.

Its first chapter begins by saying the laying of the ritual fires is the ritual of *Brahman*. Asking that, after laying the fires of the former works, the person laying them meditate on the *atman*, it says that thus the ritual becomes perfect in all of its parts, but next it asks on whom one should meditate. And it answers that the person on whom one should meditate is called *Prana* and that the following story is of him.

The story that mainly constitutes this *Upanishad* begins with a king whose name is Brhadhratha regarding this *atman* as transitory and, having ceased to feel desires, established his son on his empire, and gone into a forest, practicing austerities, lifting his arms, and standing gazing at the sun for a thousand days.

At the end of the thousand days, Sakayana's son who knows the *atman* comes to Brhadhratha as a smokeless fire burning with splendor and tells him to rise and choose a boon. Brhadhratha, making obeisance and replying that he doesn't know the *atman* and has heard that the son of Sakayana knows it, asks him to teach it to him, but the son of Sakayana, whom this *Upanishad* also calls Sakayana, tells Brhadhratha that the boon he's requested was accomplished in

former times but has become difficult to attain. And he asks him to choose another boon.

So Brhadratha replies with a song beginning by calling Sakayana the adorable one and asking what's the use of enjoying pleasures in his *atman*. In the song he lists components of his *atman*, including phlegm, semen, and urine, and he lists contingencies that assail it, including wrath, greed, delusion, fear, sorrow, jealousy, separation from the loved, and union with the unloved. And he asks what then he has to do with enjoying desires.

And, singing that we see this *atman* to be perishing, as do gnats, heroic warriors, and deities, he refers to the drying of the oceans, the falling of the mountains, the submergence of the earth, and the departure of deities from their place in the earth and asks what's the use of enjoying pleasures if one who has fed on them is seen to return again and again.

And, asking Satyakana to deliver him, he sings that in this world he's like a frog in a dry well, and the song and this chapter close with Brhadratha calling Satyakana the adorable one again and telling him he's our refuge.

The second chapter begins with Satyakana then being well pleased and calling Brhadratha the banner of the race of Ikshvaku. Ikshvaku, in Indian legend, is a king from whom other royalty in Hindu scriptures descended, and Satyakana tells Brhadratha that Brhadratha has speedily attained his desire and knows the *atman*. He tells him he's known far and wide by the name of the wind and that the *atman* he seeks is his own. But Brhadratha asks Satyakana which *atman* he means.

And, replying that Maitri said it's the *atman* that continues to breathe while mounting to the subtle *atman* and wandering in various directions while not wandering and that Maitri also said it's the calm *atman* that rises above both the physical *atman* and the subtle *atman*, becomes the supreme light, and appears in its own nature, Satyakana calls Maitri the *muni* and says he said the *atman* to whom he referred is the immortal unfearing *Brahman*.

And he tells Brhadratha that he's telling him the knowledge of *Brahman* and the *Upanishads* as Maitri taught it to us. And, telling him he'll tell it to him, he begins by telling him of persons the *sruti* calls Valakhilyas and saying they were pure and mighty and in control of their passions and that once they spoke to the Prajapati Krati. In the *Vedas* the Valakhilyas are authors of *Vedas*, and another story in the *Vedas* says the Valakhilyas were sons of Kratu, a Vedic personification of the Prajapati personification of creation.

And, in this story, the Valakhilyas, telling Prajapati Kratu that this *atman* is like a cart in that it lacks consciousness, they ask him to tell them to what being imperceptible to the senses belongs the power that made it seem conscious and moves it. And Prajapati Kratu replies by describing *Brahman* as

do other *Upanishads* and comparing it to the detachment of ascetics amid sensible objects. And the Valakhilyas reply by asking him the manner by which such an aloof person made this *atman* move and seem conscious.

Prajapati Kratu replies with various metaphors and similes, including a version of the stories of how the original Prajapati divided himself into *Prana* and all the other entities with their various activities. But he says no dark fruits of *karma* assail that *atman* as it wanders through various bodies while, in its unmanifest minute invisible incomprehensible purity from identity, it abides nowhere. He says it isn't an agent, that it seems to be an agent only as it abides in what isn't, that it's pure, unchanging, unmoving, and undefilable, and that it's unstirred by passion or desire. And he says that, abiding in itself as the perceiver and having veiled itself in the web of the three *gunas*, it stands as the enjoyer.

The third chapter begins with the Valakhilyas replying by asking Prajapati Kratu what, if that's the greatness of the *atman*, is the other *atman*. They ask what's the *atman* that's bright or dark fruits of *karma*, the one that obtains honorable or mean births and thus has upward or downward courses, the one bright or dark fruits of action and various dichotomies assail as it wanders. And Prajapati Kratu replies that it's the fragmentary *atman*.

He says its fragments are nominal and physical and that the *gunas* assail its immortal nature that's essentially like a drop of water on a lotus leaf. He says that, from that assailing, it suffers bewilderment and doesn't see the lord within it that's the cause of all *karma*. And he says that then it becomes conscious of and subject to the fragmentation.

He says that, in that separateness and the soiling from the *gunas*, it's uncertain, unstable, unknowing, forlorn, and desirous, and that it thinks disparate thoughts and is bound as a bird in a snare and thus, entangled in the fruits of its *karma*, attains honorable or mean births. And he says that elsewhere has been said that what acts is the fragmentary *atman* while what uses the fragments to causes that *karma* is the internal *atman*. He says that, informed by the internal *atman* and hammered by the *gunas*, the fragmentary *atman* becomes manifold.

And he says that, as the hammer doesn't overpower the fire when it hammers the iron, the assailing overpowers the fragmentary *atman* but not the essential *atman*. But next he says that elsewhere is said that the *atman* first sprang from copulation and grew in a place like a pit and then issued through the urinary passage and became a conglomeration of bones, urine, phlegm, oil, fat, diseases, etc. And next he says that elsewhere are listed the effects of the *gunas* of darkness and passion, *tamas* and *rajas*.

He says effects of *tamas* are confusion, fear, despondency, drowsiness, sloth, inattention, old age, sorrow, hunger, thirst, niggardliness, wrath, atheism, ignorance, envy, mercilessness, folly, shamefulness, irresoluteness, rashness, and fickleness. And he says effects of *rajas* are thirst, fondness, inordinate affection, covetousness, maleficence, love, hate, dissimulation, emulation, greed, conciliation of friends, dependence on family, aversion to some sexuality, attraction to other sexuality, backbiting, and profligacy. And this chapter closes by saying those effects fill the fragmentary *atman* and make it manifold in various forms.

And the fourth chapter begins with the Valakhilyas bidding worship to Prajapati Kratu and asking him to tell them how the fragmentary *atman* rejoins the *atman* after escaping from that. And Prajapati Kratu replies that elsewhere has been said that what's done can't be undone and marches toward death, that the senses are unreal but seem real to mortals, and that the fragmentary *atman* is devoted to them and doesn't remember immortality. But next he replies more positively.

He says the only way to counter the *karma* of the fragmentary *atman* is through the *Vedas* and performing the duties they prescribe for one's caste. But, saying no attainment of knowledge of the *atman* is for one who doesn't practice asceticism, he says one says ascetic observance obtains purity, that purity obtains consciousness, and that consciousness obtains the *atman*. And he says one doesn't return from obtaining the *atman*.

And he says that one who knew the knowledge of *Brahman* said asceticism is the door to *Brahman* and that one whose guilt asceticism has purged and who continually meditates on *Om* says *Om* is the greatness of *Brahman*.

And he says that thus one obtains *Brahman* by knowledge, asceticism, and meditation. He says that, by worshiping *Brahman* through those three, one obtains indestructible infinite bliss that's above the deities and isn't susceptible to decay. And, saying it completely fills, he says the person it fills then attains unity with the *atman* and release from what once overpowered the person and reduced the person to being but a charioteer.

And then, calling Prajapati Kratu the explainer, saying that some people worship Agni, Vayu, the sun, time that's *Prana*, food, Brahma, Rudra, or Vishnu, and telling Prajapati Kratu that the one that's best shall be theirs, the Valakhilyas ask him to tell them which is best.

Prajapati Kratu replies that those entities are but the main forms of *Brahman*, that *Brahman* is all, and that each person in the world rejoices in that to which he clings, but, asking that all reject the differences and worship only

*Brahman*, he says that then one wanders in sequentially higher worlds until the dissolution of the universe and one's absorption into the *atman*.

And the fifth chapter begins with Kutsayana's hymn of praise. It doesn't identify Kutsayana, but the hymn says that what it's praising is Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Prajapati, Agni, Varuna, Indra, the moon, food, Yama, the earth, and all. And, telling that entity that it's imperishable, it says dependence on it for both proper and relative good is manifest.

And, bidding glory to it, the hymn tells it that it's the world, the lords of the world, the maker and enjoyer of all, life, the lord of all pleasure and joy, that its *atman* is tranquil, that it's the least visible and is inconceivable and indemonstrable, and that it has neither beginning nor end.

And next this chapter says this was initially only *tamas* abiding in *Brahman*, that *Brahman* sets it into motion, that it passes into inequality that becomes *rajas* that in motion passes into inequality that becomes the *guna* of goodness, *sattva*, and that flavor flowed from *sattva* in motion.

And it says flavor is a portion only the *atman* measures but that each separate *atman* reflects it, is cognizant of the physical *atman*, and possesses its signs of will, certainty, and consciousness. It says Prajapati and the other deities this chapter has previously mentioned are its forms, that its portion *tamas* characterizes is the same as Rudra, that its portion *rajas* characterizes is the same as Brahma, and that its *sattva* portion is the same as Vishnu. And this chapter addresses all of that to students.

And it closes by saying that all of it's one while being three, eight, eleven, twelve, and infinite, that it's manifest everywhere, that from that manifestation is being that enters and pervades all beings and is the lord of beings, and that thus it's the *atman* within and without.

The sixth chapter begins by saying this *atman* bears a twofold form. It says its forms are *Prana* and the sun and that *Prana* is internal while the sun is external. And it says a saying is that the internal *atman*'s motion is inferred from the motion of the external *atman*.

But it says one who's wise, void of guilt, has a clear mind, is master of his senses, and firmly abides in *Brahman* with eyes withdrawn says the external *atman*'s motion is inferred from the internal *atman*'s motion. It says the golden being who's within the sun and beholds this earth from within its golden sphere is the same as the being who abides in the lotus of the heart and devours food. And it says it's time and invisible and devours all beings as its food.

And next the Valakhilyas ask what's its lotus and its composition, and Prajapati Kratu, replying that it's the same as space, that the four quarters and intermediate quarters are its petals, and that *Prana* and the Sun revolve near one

another, asks that one worship it by the syllable *Om*, by the words “*bhur*”, “*bhuvah*”, and “*svar*” in the Gayatri, and by the entire *Gayatri*.

And he says *Brahman* also has two forms, that they’re the material form and the immaterial form, and that the material form is unreal while the immaterial form is real and is *Brahman*, and he says *Brahman* is light, that light is the sun, and that the sun is *Om*.

And he says that, because *Om* consists of the three *matras*, it divided itself into three parts. The *matras* are poetic rhythms, and Prajapati Kratu says all things are woven warp and woof on them and that *Brahman* says he’s that. And he says *Brahman* asks that we meditate on the sun being one and that we fix our *atman* on that.

And next he says elsewhere is said that all that’s the high chant. And he continues that extension of identity through other things, including space, air, fire, water, earth, and a deific fig tree. And he says the high chant’s essence is brightness, that it’s void of sleep, and that it’s inviolable by age or death.

He says *sruti* says all that and that the high chant possesses three steps and three letters and is known to be fivefold and concealed in a cavern. He says *Brahman* has three feet and has its roots upward and that the world is but one deific fig tree that’s *Brahman*, *Om*, and the splendor of the sun. And he says that whatever one who knows *Om* desires is his.

And so he continues, with both elaboration and repetition, through saying the world was unuttered when Prajapati kindled his consciousness and uttered the words “*bhur*”, “*bhuvah*”, and “*svar*” to start the diffusion, and on through more elaboration and repetition. He refers in various ways to thinking and not thinking, to sensing and not sensing, to the components of *Prana*, and to eating and not eating and all being food. And, in the mix, he says that, with time being imperceptible, the mix is the only proof of the existence of time. So he makes time but part of the mix.

But, asking, amid the variations of metaphors with several references to the syllable *Om*, that the absence of limitations contemplate itself, he says that then the mind attains freedom from all organs and that from that freedom one is no longer capable of either pleasure or pain and gains absolute unity. And he says of *Om* that two kinds of *Brahman* to be contemplated are sound and non-sound and that the one of those two that’s sound is *Om* and that by way of it a man rises above to merge with the non-sound. And he says that’s the end, immortality, absorption, and beatitude.

And he says the syllable *Om* is sound but ends in silence, that it’s soundless, void of fear or sorrow, and full of joy and satisfaction, and that it’s firm, immoveable, indestructible, and imperishable. But, after saying that of



time also, he says the name of the mix is Vishnu. So essentially he says Vishnu is *Brahman*.

But, amid more returns to metaphorical complexity, he says the dim perception attains distinctness and that it all belongs to the mind being thus absorbed in the bliss that's its own witness and is the indestructible resplendent *Brahman* that's the end and the only world.

And, after telling Brhadhratha of Maitri teaching all that, Sakayana tells him the sons of Prajapati mounted the path to *Brahman* by that knowledge. He tells him a man attains contentment and endures contraries and dispassion by the practice of *yoga*. And he asks that no one reveal that deep secret to anyone who isn't a pupil or a dispassionate son.

And this chapter says that, after making obeisance to Brhadhratha, Sakayana told him that with his heart fixed on his inner *atman*. It says he asked that the secret be given to one who's possessed of all virtues and is entirely devoted to his teacher. And next, beginning with the syllable *Om*, he describes such a person's path to *Brahman*.

He asks that, seated in a pure place and being pure and abiding in *sattva*, the person continue studying, speaking of, meditating on, and worshiping *Brahman*, that the person then become absorbed in the perfect *Brahman* who yearns toward the perfect, and that he transcend his separate *atman*.

He says that, with all his bonds cut asunder by manifestation of *Brahman*, void of hope and void of fear from others as he's void of fear from his *atman*, he then attains imperishable unbound happiness that's the entire absence of desire and the highest outcome, the supreme treasure.

And he says that ordinarily a man's makeup is desires whose characteristics are certitude, volition, and ego awareness. He says the man is in bonds because of that, that emancipation is the opposite of it, that some say certitude is the binding of the *gunas*, and that emancipation arises from destruction of that attachment, but that one sees and hears only by the mind. And he says desire, volition, doubt, belief, disbelief, firmness, lack of firmness, shame, understanding, and fear are but mind.

He says the stream of uncertain, unstable, destitute *gunas* carries the person into susceptibility to disparate awareness, that voiding all that defines emancipation and is, of all the paths to Brahman, the opening of the door, and that by that the person shall pass beyond this darkness.

And he says the *munis* declare that, when the five organs of knowledge remain within the mind while consciousness makes no effort, they call that the highest aim.

And, having said that, next in this chapter, with his heart fixed on his inner *atman*, the son of Sakayana ceases. And, after making obeisance to him

and duly offering him his homage, the king whose name is for the wind goes to the northern path with his aim attained. And this chapter says the northern path is the path to *Brahman* and that, bursting open the door to the sun, the king departed by the upward path.

And next this chapter says the *munis* declare on that point that endless are the rays of the *atman* that abides like a lamp in the heart. And it says the *munis* list colors of them and say one of the rays pierces the sun and that, having passed beyond the world of *Brahman*, some rays attain the supreme abode. But it says they say other rays take different paths, that the other hundred rays of the heart point upward but that a man obtains by them the mansions of other classes of deities, that the rays of many colors point downward and have faint luster, and that by them a man passes helpless to receive here the fruit of his *karma*. And this chapter says that thus the sun is the cause of creation, the sky, and emancipation.

And next this chapter presents questions and answers of persons it doesn't name. One of them asks with what the senses are identical when they go out to their objects, and another answers that they're identical with the *atman*, that the *atman* sends them forth or restrains them, and that so do the *Asparasas* and the sun's rays. The *Asparasas* are deific personifications of aspirations, and the replying person says the *atman* devours its objects by the five rays of the sun. And this chapter also says others say the five components of *Prana* are the signs of the *atman*.

Another of the questions is which of the *Asparasas* or the sun's rays is the *atman*. And an answer to that question is that what defines the *atman* is marks like purity, cleanliness, simplicity, and calmness, that it's to be apprehended by its own signs but that the apprehension is of what has no signs, that it's like heat, and that the things it pervades are a sign of fire and are like the pure sweet taste of water. But others answer that intellect, firmness, memory, and knowledge are its sign, that, as smoke signifies a blaze, or as sparks signify fire, those are its signs only as shoots are signs of seed, and that thus people declare that *Prana* comes forth again and again from the *atman* as sparks come from fire and as beams come from the sun.

And next this chapter, or people in it whom it doesn't identify, says that *Prana*, all the worlds and *Vedas*, and all beings come from the being abiding in the *atman*, that the *atman*'s mystery is that and the good that's that, and that, as plumes of smoke come from fire from kindling green wood, the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Sutras*, and other writings come forth as a sign of that great being to whom all things belong.

And next, with references to various metaphorical behavior and personifications, this chapter uses the fire ritual as an extensive metaphor for the

cycle of differentiation and return to unity. But, in keeping with the *Upanishads*' frequent cycling from the metaphorical to the somewhat literal and back, this metaphor extends to the person extinguishing the mind, which it says is described as both pure and impure, to enter *Brahman*. It says that, when the mind is perfectly motionless and free of sleep and agitation, it vanishes into the highest place. And it says that, as long as it's kept beneath, it becomes lost in the heart. And it says that's knowledge.

And, next after that metaphor, this chapter says that the imperishable, having meditated on the *atman* revealing itself as being the size of a thumb in the span within the *atman*, becomes identical to the supreme. And it says all desires are gathered there.

It says the *munis* declare that, with that revelation like the flame of a lamp burning dimly or brightly, the *Brahman* that's the great deity and the object of universal praise entered all beings.

And this chapter closes with the syllable *Om* preceding bidding adoration to *Brahman*.

The seventh chapter, beginning with a list of various entities and their behavior and characteristics, ends that list by bidding adoration to the entity that takes all forms and abides in space. And next, presumably by way of Sakayana, it addresses a king who presumably is Brhadratha. It tells him that next follow the impediments to attaining knowledge.

And, whether or not the speaker is Sakayana, next this chapter says the source of the net of infatuation is that one who's fit for transcendence has intercourse with those who aren't.

It says that, while a tree with branches spreading wide is directly before such people, they take up with the mean bush. It lists mean bushes, including people whom pleasure lures, people who are forever on others' errands, begging, or living by mechanical trades, people who perform rituals for people who shouldn't make offerings, sudras who read sacred books, and other sudras. And the list also includes knaves with matted hair, dancers, soldiers, religious mendicants, actors, and those whom kings employ for their business.

And it includes outcasts, persons who worship wealth, and people who propitiate the yaksas. It includes raksasas, goblins, pisacas, snakes, imps, those who wear red garments, earrings, and skulls under false pretenses, and those who, by false arguments, examples, deceptions, and magic, oppose those who are followers of the *Vedas*. And it says those people are also thieves.

And it says *sruti* says the world, bewildered by juggling denials of the *atman* and by false examples and reasons, doesn't know the difference between the *Vedas* and false science. And it says Brhaspati, in the form of a deific personification whose name means "lucid" but who councils the *asuras*, created

false science to give security to Indra and the *asuras*. And it says that, by that false science, one declares good to be evil and evil to be good.

It says such people ask men to ponder the Vedic rites that produce suffering. And, asking that people not read that false science, it says temporal pleasure is only the fruit of one who violates his caste, and it asks that no one attempt it. And it says a saying is that what's known as science and what's known as non-science widely oppose and diverge from one another.

And next it addresses Naciketas and tells him he thinks that, because many objects of desire don't draw him away, he's desirous of knowledge.

But it says that, while those who dwell in non-science while imagining themselves wise and learned go here and there in delusion as the blind led by the blind, one who knows science and non-science together crosses death by non-science and enjoys immortality by science.

And it says the *devas* and the *asuras* went to *Brahman*, worshiped him, told him they desired the knowledge of the *atman*, and asked him to tell it to them, that *Brahman* reflected that the *asuras* thought the *atman* was a thing other than what it is and for that told them a thing other than the truth, and that infatuated men now devotedly follow that. And it says those men abolish the only means of transcendence, that they speak falsely and look upon falsehood as truth as one looks on a magic show, that what the *Vedas* declare is true, and that wise men follow that. And it asks that, because that falsehood would be its fruit, a brahmin study nothing contrary to the *Vedas*.

And this final chapter of the *Maitri Upanishad* says the essence of the *Vedas* is that the supreme splendor of the space abiding in the heart is in three sites, that those three sites are fire, the sun, and *Prana*, and that the syllable *Om* is the essence of that space.

And it says the splendor germinates by that syllable, shoots upward, expands, and becomes continuously the vehicle of the worship of *Brahman*, that, with the air in the belly, it rises in the place where the digestive fire conceals itself as the smoke branching up in the air climbs around the boughs of a tree when the wind blows, and that it's like salt thrown into water or like heat in ghee.

But it says all that manifestation is but like the illusive work of a magician when he projects his will, that thus the *munis* ask how that is and answer that the *Vedas* are called lightning because, when they're uttered, they illuminate every corporal being, and that for that the *munis* ask that one adore the infinite splendor by the syllable *Om*.

But it also says that the being in the eye who abides in the right organ is Indra, that the being in the eye who abides in the left organ is his wife, that their union takes place in the space within the heart, that the blood in the heart is their

food, that a channel goes from the heart, is fixed in the eye, divides into two, and serves both, and that the mind stirs up the fire in the *atman*.

It says the fire sends forth the wind that, producing a low sound, passes through the breast, that, first set in motion in the heart by the churning fire stick, the sound is less than the least but then doubles in the throat, and that, when it reaches the tip of the tongue, it's triple.

And it says that, when it issues forth, people call it the mother, that one who sees all that sees death or misery no more, and that a seer sees the all and obtains the all everywhere. And it says that dwelling in the eye, wandering in dreams, enjoying sound sleep, and abiding beyond, are the four conditions, and that the fourth is the greatest. And it says the one-footed *Brahman* walks in the three and that the three-footed *Brahman* walks in the last.

And it says that, by reason of the experience of the false and the true, the great *atman* appears possessed of duality.

And it closes by again saying it appears possessed of duality.

## Chapter 5 Bhagavad Gita

The *Bhagavad Gita* is part of the *Mahabharata*. “*Mahabharata*” is Sanskrit meaning “great Bharata”, and the *Mahabharata* is a compilation of poems narrating deeds of the Indian emperor Bharata and his descendants, and many say it’s the longest poem in any language. But the *Bhagavad Gita*, while being but a small part of the *Mahabharata*, is more important to most Hindus than any of the *Mahabharata* that precedes it or follows it.

Most of the *Bhagavad Gita* is Sanjaya telling Dhrtarashtra of preparations for a battle. In the *Mahabharata*, Dhrtarashtra’s son Duryodhana inherits from Dhrtarashtra the empire Bharata founded, and the battle is to decide whether the five sons of Dhrtarashtra’s brother Pandu take it from Dhrtarashtra and his hundred sons, and Sanjaya is Dhrtarashtra’s charioteer. But neither Dhrtarashtra nor Sanjaya is on the battlefield, and Dhrtarashtra is blind.

Hindus say Vyasa composed the *Bhagavad Gita*. Hindus also call him Veda Vyasa and Vyasa Deva and say he compiled the *Vedas*, and, in the *Mahabharata*, before its section that’s the *Bhagavat Gita*, Vyasa appears to Dhrtarashtra and tells him Sanjaya can see times and places in which he isn’t present. And most of what Sanjaya tells Dhrtarashtra is a conversation between Arjuna and Krishna on the battlefield.

Arjuna is an archer and one of Pandu’s sons. And Krishna is Arjuna’s charioteer and an incarnation of Vishnu. And, for reasons the song makes obvious, the fortunate one to whom its title refers is Krishna.

Its first chapter begins with Dhrtarashtra asking Sanjaya what his sons and the sons of Pandu did after assembling at Kuruksetra, the place of pilgrimage, desiring to fight. Sanjaya replies that Duryodhana, after looking over the arrangement of the army of the sons of Pandu, went to his teacher and described the situation to him. And the description includes names and qualities of warriors and an assessment that Dhrtarashtra’s side has the advantage.

Sanjaya says that Bhishma, a senior warrior on the side of Duryodhana, loudly blew his conch shell, making a sound like the roar of a lion, giving Duryodhana joy. And, next in his narrative, other conch shells combine with that sound and sounds of various kinds of drums and horns to make a tumultuous sound. But, on the other side, Krishna, Arjuna, and others blow their conch shells and sound a variety of other instruments. And, uproariously vibrating in the sky and on earth, that shatters the hearts of the sons of Dhrtarashtra.

Then, in his chariot, Arjuna takes up his bow and prepares to shoot, but instead he begins the conversation with Krishna. He asks Krishna to draw the chariot between the armies for him to see with whom, because of their desire to please Dhrtarashtra, he must fight. And he sees friends and relatives among them

So compassion overwhelms him, and he tells Krishna that, feeling his mouth drying, his body trembling, his skin burning, his hair standing on end, and his bow slipping from his hand, he's become unable to stand. He says he's forgetting himself, that his mind is reeling, that he sees only causes of misfortune and doesn't see how any good can come from killing his kin, and that he can't desire any victory, kingdom, or happiness from it. And he says he's not ready to fight them, either for the earth or for the three worlds.

He says that, if he and Krishna kill such as those aggressors, guilt will overcome them, that destruction of the dynasty would vanquish the family's *dharma*, that a result would be pollution of the women of the family, that unwanted progeny comes from degradation of femininity, that unwanted population causes degradation of life for both the family and those who cause it, that such corruption extends to the community, and that he's heard that people who causes it dwell forever in the lower world.

And he says that better for him would be that the sons of Dhrtarashtra, with weapons in hand, kill him on the battlefield, unarmed and unresisting, and Sanjaya says that, having thus spoken on the battlefield, Arjuna cast aside his bow and arrows and, with grief overwhelming his mind, sat down in the chariot.

And the second chapter begins with Krishna replying to that. Asking Arjuna how those impurities have come upon him and telling him they're inappropriate for a man who knows value, he says they don't lead to higher worlds but to infamy. And he tells him to rise and not yield to that degrading impotence.

Arjuna begins his reply by asking again how he can attack people who are worthy of his worship, and he repeats more of what he's previously said. But, following that by telling Krishna that he's Krishna's disciple and surrenders

to him, he asks him to instruct him in *dharma*. But, repeating again some of his reasons for reluctance to fight, he vacillates again. And, saying he shall not fight, he falls silent.

So Krishna tells him that, while he's speaking learned words, what he mourns isn't worthy of grief. He says those who are wise lament neither for the living nor for the dead, that never was a time when he or Arjuna or the kings there didn't exist, and that neither shall any of us ever cease to be. He says that, as the body passes from youth to old age, the spirit passes at death to another body.

And he says such a change doesn't bewilder a sober person, that the appearance and disappearance of happiness and suffering are like the appearance and disappearance of winter and summer, that they arise from mental perception, and that one must try to tolerate them.

And he says that one who's patient through both the appearance and disappearance of both happiness and suffering is eligible for liberation, that those who see the truth have observed that nonexistence doesn't endure, and that the eternal doesn't change.

But, while saying in various ways that no birth or death or coming into being is for the imperishable eternal *purusha* in the body, he tells Arjuna to fight because the material body of the indestructible immeasurable eternal *purusha* is certain of annihilation. And he tells him that no one who thinks he kills or is killed is knowing and that, because beings are unmanifest before creation and unmanifest after their time of manifestation, neither is the belief that one shall repeat eternally the cycle of birth and death reason to lament. And, while designating no antecedent for the Sanskrit demonstrative pronoun he uses, he says that this is indestructible and amazes some, while others can't understand it in any way.

Presumably this is the totality of all that Hindus generally call *Brahman*. And, after telling Arjuna that, because nothing can kill this, he has no reason to grieve for any living being, Krishna tells him to consider his kshatriya *dharma*. Telling him that, because no engagement is better for a kshatriya than fulfilling his *dharma* to fight, he has no reason for hesitation, he says that, when opportunities for fighting that kshatriyas don't seek open higher worlds to them, they're happy.

And, adding to his argument that, if Arjuna incurs guilt by neglecting his kshatriya *dharma*, he'll also lose his reputation for fighting, he says people will always speak of his infamy, that dishonor is worse than death for an honorable person, that generals who have esteemed his reputation will think he left the battlefield in fear, and that his enemies will speak unkindly of him and scorn his abilities, and he asks him what could be more painful to him than that.



And, telling him he'll either die on the battlefield and attain the higher worlds or conquer and enjoy a kingdom in this world, he tells him to rise with determination and fight because of that. But he also tells him to fight for the sake of fighting and not consider happiness or suffering, loss or gain, or victory or defeat. And he tells him he'll never incur guilt by doing that.

And next, saying he's been describing analysis of the *yoga* of consciousness, he asks Arjuna to hear the *yoga* of fruits of *karma* and how he can free himself from its bondage, and he tells him no loss is in that and that a little advancement on that path can release him from great danger. And he says that, while that path has many branches, those who are on it are resolute in consciousness and unity of purpose. And he compares it to Vedic study.

He says flowery words are for followers of the *Vedas* who lack knowledge and advocate sensual pleasure for rising to higher worlds but that consciousness and mental clarity occur neither by attachment to sensual pleasure nor by material opulence. And, saying the *Vedas* pertain to the three *gunas*, he tells Arjuna to transcend them into only *sattva*. He says that, by that transcendence, the *atman* is free from division either for protection or for gain.

But he says that, as a great reservoir can serve the purposes of a small well, knowing the purpose of the *Vedas* can serve their purpose. And he tells Arjuna to abandon all attachment to success or failure and perform his *karma* in equanimity. And he says one calls equanimity *yoga*.

And, telling Arjuna to surrender himself fully to consciousness and use *yoga* consciousness to be far from all abominable *karma*, he says those who wish to enjoy fruits of *karma* are misers and that by engaging in *yoga* consciousness one is rid in this life of both happiness and suffering, and he tells Arjuna to apply the art of *yoga* to all *karma*. Telling him that, by way of *yoga* consciousness, the most mindful are free in the material world from the fruits of *karma*, he says that accordingly they become free of the bondage of life and death and that they reach that state by no illusions. And he tells Arjuna that, when he's passed from the forest of delusion, his consciousness will go to not knowing any of what one shall hear or has heard.

The Sanskrit word for "hear" here is "*sruti*", and Krishna next says that one says that relinquishing the mental fabrication of sensual pleasure purifies the *atman* to achieve transcendental satisfaction. He says that one calls a *muni* one whose mind neither suffering nor happiness agitates, one who's free of attachment and fear and anger, and one whose mind is steady. And, including detachment from affection, praise, and envy in that, he calls it fixation in *prajna*, perfect knowledge.

And he says that, as a turtle draws in its limbs, the body retains the abilities of the senses. But, saying that superior consciousness ignores the

senses, he tells Arjuna that, while the senses are strong and can forcefully distract a discriminating person trying to control them, one who restrains and controls them and engages his mind in him fixes his *prajna*. And he tells him that contemplating the objects of the senses develops attachment to them, that lust develops from that attachment, that anger arises from lust, that delusion arises from anger, that bewilderment of memory arises from delusion, that bewilderment of memory causes loss of consciousness, and that loss of consciousness results in degradation.

But he says systematic detachment of the *atman* results in deific reward. And, after more elaboration on that, he closes this chapter by saying the deific reward is attainment of Brahma *nirvana*. Essentially Brahma *nirvana* is extinguishing the differentiations the *Upanishads* say Prajapati created.

But the third chapter begins with Arjuna asking Krishna why, if consciousness is better than *karma*, he's telling him to direct his *karma* toward gory war, and, telling Krishna his equivocating words are bewildering his consciousness, he asks him for certainty. And Krishna, replying that he's already explained to him the two kinds of devotion in the world, says they're *jnana yoga* and *karma yoga*, *yoga* through devotional learning and *yoga* through devotional action. And he says one can't attain liberation from *karma* by renouncing all *karma*.

He says the *gunas* force action, that controlling action doesn't remove the sense of them from the mind, and that the *atman* thinking otherwise is in foolish delusion and is called a pretender, but, saying that sincerely trying to control the mind by *karma yoga* is much better than trying by *jnana yoga* and that one can't maintain the body with no *karma*, he tells Arjuna to perform his ritual *karma*.

Ritual *karma* is ostensibly *dharma karma*. So, since Krishna has already told Arjuna his kshatriya *karma* is his *dharma* duty, effectually he's again telling him to fight. So, effectually, he was correct in telling Arjuna he'd already explained it, and next he elaborates on the relationship between ritual and *karma* since creating began.

But he also says that, by offerings to the deities, Arjuna will please both the deities and himself. And he says that, by cooperation between men and the deities, prosperity will reign for all, that anyone who enjoys gifts but doesn't offer them to the deities is a thief, and that anyone who prepares food for the sensual pleasure of his *atman* eats guilt. And he says all physical bodies subsist on food, that rain produces food, that rituals produce rain, and that *karma* produces ritual.

But he also says all *karma* comes from *Brahman*, that accordingly the pervasiveness of *Brahman* is manifest in rituals, and that following a life of sensuality instead of following that cycle is a life of guilt.

But he also says that no *karma* is for one who accepts and enjoys his *atman*, that by that one has both nothing to gain by *karma* and no reason not to perform it, and that neither has a person any need to depend on other persons.

And next he says considering that is a reason to perform one's *karma*, that Janaka and other kings attained perfection by that, and that, considering the general welfare of the world, so should Arjuna. And, saying people emulate great leaders, next he says that he, Krishna, has no *karma* requirement and wants nothing in the three worlds, but that, nevertheless, because if he didn't all men in all ways would emulate his abstention from it, he engages in his *karma*. And he says results of his not engaging in it would be the ruin of all the worlds, the creation of useless populations, and the destruction of all living beings.

And he says that, as the ignorant act with attachment, the knowing, for the general welfare of the world, should act with detachment. But he says that, instead of disturbing the minds of the ignorant by inducing them to stop their *karma*, the knowing should engage them in ritual *karma*. And next, saying the delusion of separateness of ego leads the *atman* into thinking it does what the *gunas* do, he says detachment is knowing otherwise. But he says those who know shouldn't disrupt that.

And next Krishna tells Arjuna that, to fulfill the *atman* mindfully with no desire or profit, Arjuna should relinquish his *karma* to him. And, again telling him to fight with no reluctance, he says men who comply with their mind with no devotion and no envy are free of *karma*. But, telling him to know that those who from envy don't do that are in thoughtless ruin, he asks him how one can restrain them from following their nature. And, saying destruction in faulty performance of one's own *dharma* is better than the danger of perfectly performing another's *dharma*, he warns against the control of the stumbling blocks of both attachment and aversion.

And Arjuna replies to that by asking what forces a person to guilt against his own desire, and, saying it's lust, Krishna says again that lust transforms into anger, and he says the *rajas guna* causes that, that lust is the great devouring enemy here, that it obscures knowledge as dust obscures a mirror, and that it's an insatiable fire.

The Sanskrit word for lust here is "*kama*", and it refers to desire for any pleasure from physical sensations, and Krishna says the senses, the mind, and consciousness are its seat and that, in the names of those sensations, it confounds knowledge and the physical body. And, telling Arjuna to begin destroying that destroyer of knowledge by controlling his senses, he says the

senses are beyond their objects, that the mind is beyond the senses, that consciousness is beyond the mind, and that the *atman* is beyond consciousness. And he closes this chapter by telling Arjuna to use consciousness of the *atman* to destroy the enemy that's the formidable *kama*.

Krishna begins the fourth chapter by saying he taught that *yoga* to a personification of the sun Vivasvan. And he says Vivasvan taught it to the personification of humanity Manu and that Manu taught it to Ikshvaku. In Hindu legend, Ikshvaku was the first king of the solar dynasty, and Bharata's dynasty descended from that dynasty.

But, saying that, after time and more succession of kings, the teaching of that *yoga* scattered, Krishna tells Arjuna he's teaching it to him because he's his worshiper and his friend, and he says it's the utmost secret. Arjuna asks how, since Vivasvan's birth preceded Krishna's, he's to understand that Krishna taught that *yoga* in the beginning, and Krishna replies that he and Arjuna have passed many births, but that Arjuna doesn't know his births, while Krishna knows all of his. And he says that, while being the birthless supreme *atman* and lord of all physical bodies, when manifestations of discrepancies in *dharma* become dominant, he situates his nature in an illusional *atman*, that, to deliver the adherent, annihilate the decadent, and reestablish *dharma*, he does that age after age, and that one who knows one's *karma* is deific leaves reincarnation and attains him.

And he says that, free of attachment, fear, and anger and fully in knowledge, many achieve purity and attain him by loving him, that he rewards all who surrender to him and follow him in every way, and that, by desiring perfection through ritual *karma* and through worshiping other deities, success comes quickly to men here.

And he says he created the caste system and differentiates *karma* by the *gunas*, but he tells Arjuna to know that he, Krishna, is the agent but neither acts nor changes, that his detachment is complete, that so is the detachment of one who knows that of him, that such was also true of past authorities, that they also performed their *karma*, and that accordingly so should Arjuna.

And next he asks what *karma* is and what it isn't. And, saying those questions bewilder the eloquent, he tells Arjuna he'll explain and that the explanation will liberate Arjuna from misfortune. And he says understanding the intricacies of *karma* is difficult, that thus one should know properly what forbidden *karma* is and what inaction is, and that one who sees *karma* in what isn't *karma* and sees in *karma* what isn't *karma* is conscious among men and is in *yoga* while engaging in *karma*.

But his explanation is what he's previously said of *yoga* and self-control, of the difference between *karma* for *kama* and *karma* with detachment from the *gunas*, and of how all that serves the purpose of Vedic ritual.

And, after elaborating on various Vedic behavior and saying it serves the same purpose, he tells Arjuna that after that behavior he'll see that all living beings are the *atman* and thus are him, Krishna. And next, repeating more of what he's said of knowledge and *yoga* being identical, he says anyone who learns the way of that arrives at that destination in time, and perhaps quickly. But he says that one who ignores that way and doubts the *atman* never arrives there, either in this world or in the next.

And he closes this chapter by telling Arjuna to use that weapon of knowledge to sever his doubt and stand and fight in *yoga*.

But the fifth chapter begins with Arjuna telling Krishna that Krishna has recommended both renunciation of *karma* and *yoga* and asking him to tell him definitely which is more beneficial, and Krishna replies that both lead to liberation but that *karma* for *yoga* is better, and he says that one who performs *karma* with detachment is like a *sannyasin*, a person who renounces.

And Krishna, saying again that detachment effects easy release from the bondage of differences, next says that the less intelligent say *Samkhya* is different from *karma yoga* while the learned say situating oneself in either enjoins the fruit of both.

"*Samkhya*" literally means "numbering", and in Svetasvatara's epistemology it designates a system of analytical study arguing that two entities or qualities compose the universe, that they're *prakriti* and *purusha*, and that *Prakriti* is nature while *purusha* is personality.

But Krishna effectually argues that *Samkhya* is a form of *jnana yoga* and that, because both *jnana yoga* and *Samkhya* are approaches to *yoga*, *jnana yoga* achieves the function of *yoga*. And that accords with his assertion that he's the *purusha* and that *yoga* is essentially unity with him. So he denigrates the premise of *Samkhya* while arguing for its eventual effectuality.

But next he says that neglecting *karma yoga* afflicts one with suffering and that *munis* attain *Brahman* with no delay, and what he argues is less what Hindus generally call *karma yoga* than what Hindus generally call *bhakti yoga*, the approach to *yoga* through worship. Generally, *karma yoga* is the path to *yoga* through deeds, while *jnana yoga* is the path to *yoga* through knowledge, while *bhakti yoga* is the path to *yoga* through worship. And what Krishna emphasizes most in this conversation is worshipful submission to him as though he's *Brahman*.

But next he somewhat contradicts both that and his enjoining Arjuna to fight. He says that through *yoga* a pure *atman* achieves compassion for every manifest *atman*. But next he says that through *yoga*, while engaging in all the interrelationships of a manifest *atman*, an *atman* does nothing. He says that, as water doesn't affect a lotus leaf, guilt doesn't affect one who performs one's *karma* while relinquishing the results to *Brahman*. And he says *yogis* perform their *karma* only for purification.

And next he repeats all that in terms of entanglement in *kama*, and he calls the physical body a city of nine gates and uses mastering it as a metaphor for self-control, but he never reconciles his injunction for detachment with his injunction for compassion. He says knowing persons regard brahmins, cows, dogs, and dog-eaters equally, but he never reconciles that assertion with his assertion that Arjuna should fight because his kshatriya *dharma* is different from sudra *dharma*. And Arjuna never asks him to do that.

And next, telling Arjuna of how *yoga* makes one happy in this world if one relinquishes *kama* and realizes *yoga* before leaving this world, Krishna says that one whose happiness and joy and purpose are internal is a *yogi* in Brahma *nirvana* and attains being *Brahman*, and he says again that detachment, equanimity, self-control, and knowing the *atman* achieves Brahma *nirvana* quickly.

And next he gives physical instructions for meditation. He directs restraining the senses from attention to external objects, directing the vision between the eyebrows, and controlling the breath in the nostrils. And he closes this chapter by again directing knowing him to be *Brahman*.

He begins the sixth chapter by again saying detachment isn't renunciation of ritual or *karma* but renunciation of the fruits of *karma*. And he repeats in various ways more of what he's said, and one way is by saying the *atman* is the friend of one who follows his instructions, while it's the enemy of one who fails to conquer the mind. And he also says a *yogi* should dwell in seclusion.

He doesn't say how a warrior can dwell in seclusion, but he adds to his physical instructions for meditation going to a sanctified place, fixing there a firm seat that's neither too high nor too low, laying grass on it, and covering it with a deerskin and a soft cloth, and he says the *yogi* should sit on that and control his mind, senses, and activity. And he directs keeping one's body, head, and neck erect and looking at the tip of one's nose and, with a calm mind while in *Brahman* celibacy, fearlessly subduing one's mind to Krishna, seating one's thoughts in him, in what's beyond. And he says the *yogi* then has attained peace, the *nirvana* beyond, and the sky.

And he also says *yoga* doesn't come from eating or sleeping too much or too little and that regulating one's eating, sleeping, and leisure for maintaining *karma* achieves *yoga* and alleviates suffering, and he repeats conditions he's previously said are essential to *yoga* and knowing the *atman*. And he says the *yogi*'s mind is like a lamp in a windless place, steady and unwavering in *yoga* and in the *atman*, and next, calling that state *samadhi*, he says characteristics of it are restraint of thought from the physical, purifying the *atman* in happiness and consciousness, and never moving from truth. And he says it's freedom from all suffering that arises from physicality.

And next he says *yoga* requires no distraction into any form of *kama* or sensuality or mentality. He says it requires step-by-step restraint carrying the mind by conviction into consciousness of the *atman*, that it requires thinking of nothing else, and that the *atman* must bring the mind under control from wherever its unsteady flickering agitates it. And he continues saying in various ways that *yoga* is realization that all beings are in the *atman*, that the *atman* is in all beings, and that realizing that requires performing *karma* with no *kama*. And, saying again that it's essentially seeing him everywhere, he says he's never lost to a *yogi* and that a *yogi* is never lost to him.

But Arjuna replies to that by saying that, because he's restless and in an unsteady situation, he doesn't see the system of *yoga* Krishna has described. He says the flickering mind is strong and obstinate and that subduing its agitation is as difficult as subduing the wind. And Krishna replies that Arjuna is correct but that subduing it is possible through what he's told him.

But Arjuna replies by asking Krishna the destination of one who begins that process but fails. Asking whether that person perishes in nowhere, he tells Krishna that only Krishna can dispel that doubt, and he asks him to do it. And Krishna, telling Arjuna that destruction, for anyone who engages in auspicious activities, is never in this world or the next, says that, after many years in worlds of others who have acted worthily, a person who has entered the path to *yoga* but strayed from it receives reincarnation in the home of worthy or wealthy people, that, rarely in this world, such a person may receive reincarnation in the home of a *yogi* of great mentality, and that such a person resumes the path where he left it. But he tells Arjuna he needn't seek that, that he surpasses the other students of *Brahman*, and that ultimately he'll attain the destination beyond.

But then, returning to describing *yogis* in general and saying they're superior to both ascetics and performers of materialistic *karma*, he tells Arjuna just to become a *yogi*, and he closes this chapter by saying he's of the mind that the greatest *yogis* are those who unite their mind and *atman* by belief and worship with him.

The seventh chapter begins with Krishna telling Arjuna to hear how he can know him and telling him he'll explain fully all that remains to be known here, that some of the many thousands of men endeavor to achieve perfection, that some achieve it, and that some of those who achieve it know it's he, and he begins his explanation by saying his *prakriti* has eight separate components and that they're earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, consciousness, and certainly false ego.

And he tells Arjuna to understand that he's also in a *prakriti* beyond that and beyond what comprises living entities exploiting the universe, that those two kinds of *prakriti* together are the source of the birth of all creatures, that he's inclusive of the universe and is the source of both manifestation and annihilation, that nothing is beyond him, and that all of this is strung on him as pearls are strung on thread. And he says he's also the taste in water, the light of the sun and the moon, the syllable *Om* in the *Vedas*, the sound in space, and the ability in humanity. And, in this reassertion that he's all and *Brahman*, he continues through a list of other entities he says he is.

But he says that, in the delusion from the three *gunas*, the universe doesn't know he's beyond it and inexhaustible. Earlier, when he refers to a ninth *prakriti* of his that's beyond the eight and exploits the universe, he doesn't say what that *prakriti* is. But here he says the *gunas* are his deific delusion.

And he says that, though that deluding illusion is difficult to overcome, those who surrender to him overcome it. And he calls those whose knowledge the illusion steals foolishly surrendering miscreants and the most degenerate of humanity. And he calls what they do acceptance of the *asuras*.

And next he says four kinds of virtuous persons serve him, that they're the distressed, the inquisitive, the wealth-seeking, and the knowing, and that those who know and worship him are special. He says he and they are dear to one another and that, in his mind, their *atman* is also his. And he says they're certain to attain him and the ultimate destination.

And he says that, after many births, they surrender to him, that such a great *atman* is rare to see, and that those who surrender to other deities are controlled by their own *prakriti*. But he says he gives faith for surrendering to him to anyone who desires to do that, that he makes the person's faith steady, and that such a person obtains his desire, but that he grants it. And he says the fruit of those of little intellect is perishable and that they go to the worlds of the other deities while his worshipers come to him.

But he says those who don't know him aren't conscious of imperishable actuality and think he was unmanifest before he was manifest, that, by the *yoga* of illusion, he's not manifest to everyone, and that the foolish world never can understand that he's unborn and inexhaustible, and he tells Arjuna he



knows all of the past, the present, and the future, and all manifestation of life, while no one knows him.

And, telling Arjuna that the duality of desire and hatred deludes all manifestations of life from birth, he says those who've eradicated their guilt by righteous *karma* and worship him with determination are free of the delusion of that duality, that those seeking liberation from aging and death by taking shelter in him are *Brahman* by wholly knowing righteous *karma*, and that he governs all manifestations and deities and rituals.

And he closes this chapter by saying that at the time of death those who know that unite their thought with him.

The eighth chapter begins with Arjuna calling Krishna the ultimate *purusha* and asking him what are *Brahman* and the *atman*, what are *karma* and material manifestation, and what are called deities. And he asks him who controls ritual, how one lives in the body, and how one can know Krishna at the time of death. And Krishna replies with the fundamental precepts of Hinduism.

He says the indestructible *Brahman* is beyond creation, is called the *atman*, and is manifest in the creation of materiality and *karma*. But he also says of himself that he's the *purusha* of the deities and is in the rituals and all embodiment. And he says again that remembering him at the end of materiality attains his being.

And he also says again that the alternative to remembering him is remembering another being and becoming that. And, telling Arjuna not to make that mistake, he repeats other Vedic descriptions of *Brahman*, meditation, auspicious behavior, and the cosmos. And, saying again that attaining his being is easy for the *yogi* who doesn't deviate from engaging in thinking of him, he tells Arjuna that one who does that, having achieved the transcendental perfection of the great *atman*, never returns to this place of misery.

And, saying reincarnation is in the worlds not arriving in him, he, in terms of days and nights of *Brahman*, elaborates on the Hindu expression of the cycle of creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe, and he says his abode is beyond all that, that so is the *purusha*, and that one can achieve the *purusha* by pure and constant worship of its pervasive manifestation.

And next he tells Arjuna he'll describe the times at which *yogis* either return or, not returning to other abodes, attain his abode. He says *yogis* who attain his abode pass away during the light of the fortnight of Agni or during a white fortnight during the six months of the sun passing to the north and that the *yogis* who return pass away in smoke or at night during a dark fortnight of the moon during the six months of the sun passing to the south and reach the region of the moon and return. And then, more concisely, he says the two ways of

passing are by light and by darkness, that *yogis* don't return when they depart from the universe in light but that they return when they pass in darkness, and that *yogis* who know those two paths are never bewildered. And he tells Arjuna to engage in *yoga* at all times.

And he closes this chapter by saying the *yogi* who knows that surpasses Vedic studies, ritual, giving, and austerities and both attains their fruit and achieves the destination beyond them that's also their origin.

And he begins the ninth chapter by telling Arjuna he's speaking to the non-envious, that he'll tell him the most secret knowledge, and that knowing it will free him from misfortune. He says what he'll tell him is the king of knowledge and secrecy, that it's pure and ultimately practical and true, and that actuating it will bring everlasting happiness. And he says the *purusha* not faithful to it doesn't attain him at death and instead returns to *samsara*.

*Samsara* is the illusion of materiality, and Krishna says his unmanifest form pervades the universe, that all beings are in him while he isn't in them, that, while his inconceivable *yoga* maintains all beings, they're situation is never in him, and that, while his *atman* is the origin of creation, neither is he ever in it.

But next he tells Arjuna to understand that, as the situation of the mighty wind blowing everywhere is always in the sky, all creatures' situation is always in him, and he says that, at the end of each eon, all manifestations enter his *prakriti*, that he creates them again at the beginning of the next eon, and that the cosmic cycle of creation and recreation is in his personal *prakriti* and is automatic and unavoidable.

But he says again that, because of his detachment from it, the *karma* of all that doesn't bind him or attract him, and he says his *prakriti* manifests both the moving and the not moving, and that the universe operates because of that.

And next he says that, not knowing he's beyond the human body and is the great lord of creation, fools deprecate him. And he says that, baffled in hope, *karma*, and knowledge, such people take shelter in the bewilderment of the *prakriti* of the *asuras*. But he says that, knowing he's the inexhaustible origin of creation, the great *atman* takes shelter in his *prakriti* and serves with unwavering mind.

He says that, always chanting and bowing to him with determination, each great *atman* always engages in worshiping him. He says others, through study and worship and in other ways, also engage in praising him in unity, duality, diversity, and the universal form, but that he's the ritual and other components of it he names. And again he lists various other entities he says he is.

Among them are the mother and father of the universe, the *Vedas* and the students of them who drink soma, and immortality and the personification of death. And he says those who study the *Vedas* and drink soma enjoy deific pleasure in the world of Indra. But he says they don't escape reincarnation.

And, continuing to elaborate on ways in which people fail to attain him, he continues alternating that with repeating ways by which he's said one achieves him and ways in which he's beyond all else, and he says he'll accept a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, or anything else any *atman* worshiping him offers him in pure conscience.

And, telling Arjuna to do that and saying doing it will liberate his *atman*, he tells him he'll achieve him by that. And he says he envies no one, is partial to no one, and is equal to all, that anyone who worships him is in him, and that it'll eradicate the most abominable guilt. And he says the person doing it will soon become a righteous and lawful *atman* and attain lasting peace.

And, saying that's also true of those of lower birth, he specifies women, vaisyas, and sudras, but he says it's more true of brahmins and kshatriyas, and, again telling Arjuna to worship him to leave suffering, he says in other ways what he's said of how to worship him.

He begins the tenth chapter by telling Arjuna he'll give him more and better knowledge, and he says that neither the deities nor the great composers of the *Vedas* know either his origin or his opulence or that he's their origin, but he continues, in different ways and in the same ways, repeating what he's said.

And he says talking of him to one another perpetually pleases his worshipers and that he gives them understanding by which they can come to him. And Arjuna tells him that the grandest of what he's said of himself is true, that all the authors of the *Vedas* say what he's said, and that now he, Krishna, is explaining it to him, Arjuna. And he lists people he calls deific authors of the *Vedas*, and he includes Vyasa in the list.

And he tells Krishna he accepts that what he's told him is truth and that neither the *devas* nor the *asuras* can know that revelation of Krishna's greatness. And, again calling Krishna the ultimate *purusha*, he also calls him the origin and lord of creation, the deities, and the universe. And he tells Krishna that only Krishna personally knows Krishna's *atman*.

And, asking Krishna to say in detail the deific opulence of his *atman* by which he pervades the worlds, he calls him a *yogi* and asks him how he should know, think of, and remember his manifestation, and he tells him that no amount of hearing of his *yoga* satisfies him.

And Krishna, replying that he'll tell him the principal opulence of his *atman* but that it's limitless, again lists entities he says he is, and he includes in

this list the *Vedas*, Indra, thought, Yama, Shiva, Agni, Brhaspati, silence, wisdom, the *Gayatri*, the ocean, the Himalayas, Arjuna, Vyasa, and spring.

That's an example of calling Shiva what the *Maitri Upanishad* calls Rudra. And, saying again that his opulence is infinite, he says that all that's beautiful and glorious is from but a speck of his splendor. But he closes this chapter by asking Arjuna what need he has for knowing that one speck of him pervades the universe.

And the eleventh chapter begins with Arjuna telling Krishna that, by favoring him with the secrets beyond, Krishna has removed his delusion. And he says he's heard from him details of the appearance and disappearance of all manifestations. But he tells him he wishes, if Krishna thinks he can see it, to see Krishna's eternal *atman*.

So, telling Arjuna to behold the hundreds of thousands of various multicolored deific manifestations no one before has seen, Krishna tells him he'll see them all at once in his body. But he tells him he won't be able to see them with his eyes and that he'll give him deific eyes to see that inconceivable *yoga* of his. And then Sanjaya tells Dhrtarashtra that Krishna displayed to Arjuna his universal form.

And the description of the display begins with Arjuna seeing innumerable mouths and eyes and wonderful visions. He sees innumerable deific weapons and ornaments, and he sees deific garments and innumerable deific scents covering Krishna's body, and the effulgence resembles hundreds of thousands of suns rising simultaneously in the sky. And he sees all the many thousands of divisions of that deific form simultaneously in one place.

And then, in overwhelming wonder and ecstasy and with his hair on end, Arjuna folds his hands and bows and, saying he sees *Brahman* sitting on a lotus with Shiva and the *rishis* and deific serpents, repeating earlier descriptions and ways of describing the totality of all, saying he sees in the form no end, middle, or beginning, and adding further to the variety of Sanjaya's description, he prays to that deific vision,

Telling that deific form of Krishna's that he's of the mind that it's paramount in various ways in which Krishna has said he is, he calls it the great *atman* and says seeing its terrible pervasiveness perturbs the three worlds. He tells it that all the deities surrender to it and enter it, that some of them are afraid and praying, and that, with prayers and hymns, great *rishis* and perfect beings are crying for peace. And he lists *devas* and *asuras* he says are beholding the form in wonder.

And, after more details of its multiplicity, he says it perturbs his *atman* within and that he has no steadiness or mental tranquility. And, calling it

Vishnu, he tells it that, seeing its terrible teeth and faces and the fire of time, he knows no direction. And, calling it the lord of lords and the refuge of the universe, he begs for grace.

He says he sees Dhrtarashtra, Bhishma, and other warriors rushing into its mouths and becoming attached between its teeth with their heads smashed. He says those great warriors and kings enter the blazing mouths as rivers rush into oceans and that he sees people speeding into the mouths as moths dash to destruction in blazing fire. And he tells it it's devouring people on all sides with its flaming mouths and that, while manifesting scorching rays, it's covering the universe with its effulgence.

And, calling it the greatest of the deities, he offers it obeisance, asks it to be gracious and explain to him who it is, and tells it he's not certain of its mission. And the form, replying that its time, the great destroyer of worlds, destroying all here, says it'll destroy all the soldiers on both sides there but will except Arjuna. And it tells Arjuna to rise and conquer his enemies because of that and to enjoy a flourishing kingdom.

Saying that, by previous arrangement, the killing of the others is its, it tells Arjuna to be but the measuring of the killing. And, naming Bhishma and others and saying it has already killed them, it tells Arjuna it'll conquer his enemies in battle and to fight with no disturbance. And Sanjaya says Arjuna again folded his hands, trembled, and offered obeisance, and that he spoke with a faltering voice.

While repeating some of what he and Krishna have previously said of Krishna, Arjuna adds the logic that, by being all-pervasive, Krishna is all. And he says he's presumptuously thought him a friend and that he immeasurably asks Krishna to forgive him for calling him his dear friend from foolishness or in jest while not knowing his glory as they laid or sat or ate together alone or with companions. And he tells him that, laying down the body, he begs for mercy as fathers should tolerate their sons, as friends tolerate their friends, and lovers their dearest.

And, saying that seeing what's never been seen has gladdened him but that the fear perturbs his mind, he asks Krishna to be gracious and show him the deific form of the lord of deities and the refuge of the universe, and, calling him the universal form, asking him to manifest that other form, and calling him the thousand-handed one, he asks to see his four-handed form with helmet and club and disk in hand. So Krishna, replying that he's happily shown him by his *atman yoga* the full effulgence of his limitless form beyond the universe that no one else has ever seen or can see by ritual, study, righteous acts, or severe austerity, tells him not to let seeing that horrible form trouble or bewilder him and to see fearlessly and with pleasant mind his other manifestation. And

Sanjaya says that then, by manifesting again the beautiful form of his great *atman*, Krishna encouraged the fearful Arjuna.

And Arjuna says that seeing Krishna's beautiful human form has settled his thoughts and restored his *prakriti*. And Krishna, telling him the other form is difficult to see but that the deities aspire to see it, again lists ways by which one can see it and again says one can see him as he is only by worshiping him with no impurities, but he adds the requirement of having no enemies. And he closes this chapter by saying that such a person who fulfils his requirements comes to him.

But the twelfth chapter begins with Arjuna asking Krishna whether worshiping him is more perfect than *yoga* beyond manifestation and sensation. And Krishna replies that to his mind worshiping him is the most perfect *yoga*, but he says those who control their senses and worship the unmanifest inconceivable unchanging immovable for the good of all beings also achieve him, but that, for those in bodies, that's more difficult. And, saying devoting all only to him delivers *yogis* from birth and death in little time, he tells Arjuna to do that systematically and readily.

And he tells him that, if he's unable to do that, he'll achieve him by devoting his *karma* to him, that, if he's unable to do that conscientiously, he should situate himself in his *atman* by renouncing all fruits of *karma*, that such renunciation is better than meditation, and that meditation is better than knowledge. That is, effectually, he says that *karma yoga* is better than *dhyana yoga*, while *dhyana yoga* is better than *jnana yoga*, but that *bhakti yoga* with him as its object is more readily effective than is any other approach to *yoga*. But he repeats some of what he's previously told Arjuna of what behavior he appreciates, and much of it's also pertinent to *karma*, *dhyana*, and *jnana yoga*.

And, in addition to what he's previously said, he says that, if they worship him beyond all else, those to whom honor and dishonor, heat and cold, and residence and homelessness are equal are dear to him, but, not reconciling that with his having told Arjuna earlier to consider his reputation in his decision whether to fight, he closes this chapter by saying again that worshiping him is dear to him.

The thirteenth chapter begins with Arjuna telling Krishna he wishes to know *prakriti*, the *purusha*, the field, and the knower of the field, and to understand knowledge and the object of knowledge.

Beginning his reply by saying one calls the body the field and calls one who knows the body the knower of the field, Krishna tells Arjuna to know Krishna is the knower of all fields and that he's of the mind that knowledge is

knowing the field and its knower, and he tells Arjuna to understand as he summarizes the influences and changes of the field.

And, saying the *rishis* have described its causes and effects in various hymns, *Brahman* threads, and aphorisms, he lists entities and ways in which the entities behave. The entities are the great elements, false ego, consciousness, the senses, the objects of the senses, desire, happiness, suffering, aggregation, thought, and resolve. And he says the list is a summary exemplifying the interactions of the field

And he lists entities and behavior he says are knowledge. They're humility, pridelessness, nonviolence, tolerance, simplicity, approaching a spiritual master, cleanliness, steadfastness, self-control, renunciation of sense objects, absence of false ego, perceiving fault in birth, death, aging, disease, and suffering, detachment, dissociation from son and wife and home, constant equanimity with both the desirable and the undesirable, attaining in Krishna perpetual and complete unity of worship, aspiring to places of seclusion, detachment from people, knowing the *atman*, knowing what is, and knowing learning. And he declares that all else is ignorance.

And next he tells Arjuna that next he'll tell him the knowledge by which is tasting the eternal *Brahman* that's the spirit that's beginninglessness and subordinate to him but beyond the good and the not good. He says its hands, legs, eyes, heads, faces, and ears are everywhere in the world and cover all, that it's the origin of all senses and the *gunas*, that, with no attachment and no *gunas*, it maintains all and is the master of the *gunas*, that it's inside and outside all beings, that, by its knowable subtlety, it's both moving and not moving and both far and near, that, with no division, it's all beings, that one should understand that it maintains creation while both developing and devouring it, that it's in all that's luminous, that it's the origin of light, that one says it's beyond darkness, that it's knowledge, what one knows, and what one comes to know, and that it's in everyone's heart. And then, saying he's described in summary the field, knowledge, and the knowable, he says that, upon understanding it, his worshippers attain his manifestation.

And next he says that neither *prakriti* nor the *purusha* has beginning and that *prakriti* is also the origin of the *gunas* and variation, but he says one says *prakriti* is the instrument of the cause and effect of materiality, while the *purusha* is the instrument of happiness, suffering, and enjoyment, and he says that, in the *purusha*'s *prakriti*'s situations, it enjoys, through birth in species of life both good and not good, the *prakriti* of the *gunas*.

But he says one says that in the body is a *purusha* beyond that. And, calling it the great lord and the *atman* beyond, he says it oversees, permits, and masters enjoyment and that one who know all that escapes rebirth. And he says

some see that *atman* beyond by meditating on the *atman*, while some see it by *Samkhya*, while some see it by *karma yoga*, while others lack understanding but transcend death by their willingness to hear from others of the *atman* beyond.

And next, returning to Arjuna's question that begins this chapter, he tells him to know that all of that comes into being and that, while coming into being by the union of the field and the knower of the field, it either moves or doesn't move. He says one who sees is one who sees that the indestructible lord beyond resides equally in all of creation. And he says one who sees that doesn't degrade the *atman* and reaches the destination beyond.

Next he says that one who sees that *prakriti* performs all acts, that the *atman* that doesn't act sees perfectly, that one who sees through authority that all the separate manifestations of being are in one while expanding everywhere thereafter attains *Brahman*, and that, by the eternity transcending beyond, the *atman* in the body never acts, is never in entanglement, is as pervasive and pure as the sky, and illuminates the field as the sun illuminates the world.

And he closes this chapter by saying that knowing the difference between the field and the master of the field liberates the manifest being from *prakriti* and into knowing the approach to the beyond.

And he begins the fourteenth chapter by telling Arjuna he'll tell him again of the beyond that's the ultimate knowledge by which *munis* attain perfection beyond here. He says that, taking shelter in that knowledge and attaining one's *dharma*, one has neither birth at the creation nor disturbance at the annihilation. And he says his origination of *Brahman* in the great pregnancy thereafter creates the possibility of being.

And next, beginning by naming them, he elaborates on the *gunas*. He says *sattva* is goodness, while *rajas* is passion, while *tamas* is darkness, and he says they're a product of *prakriti* and condition the eternal body that's in the body. Saying *sattva* is pure illumination with no illusion and that it conditions happiness and understanding, he tells Arjuna to know that the origin of *rajas* is desire, that it produces hankering and binds bodies to *karma*, that *tamas* is of ignorance and is delusion of bodies, and that it binds them with madness, indolence, and sleep. And he says *sattva* binds one to happiness, while *rajas* binds one to *karma*, while *tamas* covers understanding and binds one to madness. And he says each, at various times, surpasses the other two.

He says one says that, when illumination develops in the gates of the body, *sattva* increases, that, when greed and drive activate *karma* while uncontrollable desire develops, *rajas* is excessive, and that, when darkness and madness and illusion develop, *tamas* is manifest.



He says that, when *sattva* is in development at dissolution, the embodiment attains the worlds of the ultimately knowing, that, when *rajas* is in development at dissolution, one attains birth in association with those in the involvement of *karma*, and that, when *tamas* is in development at dissolution, one takes birth in a foolish species.

He says one says the fruit of *karma* in *sattva* is righteous and pure, while the fruit of *rajas* is suffering, while the fruit of *tamas* is ignorance. He says knowledge develops from *sattva*, that greed develops from *rajas*, and that madness and delusion develop from *tamas*. And he says those in *sattva* go upward, while those in *rajas* dwell in the middle region, while *tamas* occupants descend.

And he says that, when a seer properly sees that nothing other than the *gunas* acts, the seer transcends the *gunas* and receives promotion to Krishna's manifestation. And he says that, when one's body transcends the embodiment the three *gunas* produce, one can taste the nectar of freedom from suffering from birth, death, and age. And then Arjuna asks what are the symptoms of having transcended the *gunas* and what's the behavior of those who've transcended them.

And, beginning by saying the person who has transcended them neither disdains nor desires development of illumination, attachment, or delusion, Krishna replies that the person exhibits the equanimity he's previously described. He says that one who doesn't fail to render *bhakti yoga* to him transcends the *gunas* and attains the level of *Brahman*. And he closes this chapter by saying he's the foundation of *Brahman* and the *dharma* of happiness.

Beginning the fifteenth chapter by referring to the fig tree to which the sixth chapter of the *Maitri Upanishad* refers, Krishna says one says it has upward roots and downward branches, that it's eternal, that its leaves are hymns, and that one who knows it knows the *Vedas*, but that its branches also extend upward while its roots also extend downward. And he says the *gunas* develop the branches, that its twigs are the sense objects, that *karma* binds the downward roots in the world of man, and that here one can never perceive its form, its beginning or end, or where is its foundation. And he says its rooting is strong but that one must cut it with the strong weapon of detachment.

And next, saying one must find the place from which one never returns and there surrender to the ancient original *purusha* from whom beginning extended, he summarizes some principles of what he's previously said.

He says that, having no pride, having conquered delusion and faulty association, and being intent on the eternal *atman* while in dissociation from

*kama* and free of dualities and what one calls happiness and suffering, the unbewildered attain that eternal situation.

And next he says the sun, the moon, and lightning don't illuminate his transcendent abode from which one never returns. But he says the living beings that are his fragments in the world of life eternally struggle in *prakriti* with the mind and the six senses, that, as air carries aromas from their source, the lord takes the embodiment one acquires and relinquishes from body to body, and that the eyes and ears and other means of sensation in the mind enjoy the sense objects. And he says the foolish the *gunas* control never see either reversal of physicality or enjoyment but that those with the eye of understanding can see all that and that *yogis* can see it in their *atman* while those who haven't realized their *atman* may try to see it but can't. And he tells Arjuna to understand that the splendor in the sun that illuminates the universe and is also in the moon and in fire come from him.

He says that, by entering what comes and by sustaining beings, his energy nourishes vegetation by becoming the soma that's the moon and supplying its juice, that he's the deific personification of fire that becomes the various quarters of the breath of *Prana* and digests the four kinds of food, that he's in all hearts, that remembering and knowing and forgetting are from him, and that he's the knowable and the compiler and knower of the *Vedas*.

And he says *purushas* in the world are either fallible or infallible, that one calls the unchanging beings infallible, and that they're the best *purushas*. But he says one calls the *atman* beyond, the one who enters and maintains the three worlds, the inexhaustible lord. And he says that, in celebration in the world and in the *Vedas*, he exceeds the infallible and is the utmost *purusha*.

And, saying that one who knows he's the utmost *purusha* knows all and worships him in every way, he tells Arjuna he's revealed the most secret revelations and that it's the consciousness of consciousness, and he closes this chapter by saying consciousness of it is the work of works.

He begins the sixteenth chapter by listing conditions for attaining birth with the qualities of the *devas*. The conditions are fearlessness, submission to *sattva*, *jnana yoga* in charity, mental control, ritual performance, Vedic study, austerities, simplicity, nonviolence, honesty, absence of anger, renunciation, tranquility, aversion to faultfinding, mercy to beings, lack of greed, gentleness, modesty, determination, vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, absence of envy, and absence of expectation of honor. And he says the conditions characteristic of the *asuras* are pride, arrogance, vanity, harshness, and ignorance.

Saying that the good deific conditions lead to liberation while the evil deific conditions lead to bondage, he tells Arjuna the good deific conditions characterized Arjuna's birth, and not to despair. And, telling him beings are characteristic of either the *devas* or the *asuras* and that he's spoken at length of good deific conditions, he tells him to hear from him then of the evil deific conditions. And he begins that by saying persons demonstrating the evil deific conditions never know of either proper or improper behavior and that clean truth isn't in them.

He says they say the universe has no substance, foundation, or controller, and no cause beyond the cause of *kama*, that, accepting that view, they've lost consciousness of the *atman* and engage in unbeneficial *karma* for the destruction of the universe, that, taking shelter in insatiable *kama* and absorbing their minds in delusional notions of pride, they avow flourishing in the impermanent and the unclean, and that, in immeasurable anxiety until death, under cover of *kama* beyond other mentality, and accordingly ascertaining entanglement in hundreds of bonds of *kama* and anger beyond mindfulness, they desire enjoying *kama* for the purpose of illegally accumulating wealth.

And next he lists delusions of such a person. He says they're that the person has gained wealth by his desire, that it shall increase, that he's killed his enemies and shall kill more, that he's the lord and the enjoyer and is perfect, and that he's powerful, happy, and wealthy among noble families. And he says the person, questioning whether anyone is equal to him, says he'll sacrifice to charity and thus rejoice.

He says that, thus in the perplexity of a network of numerous fears, such persons slide unclean into the lower world, that, impudently complacent of their *atman* and in the delusion of mindfulness of wealth, they sacrifice while pridefully devoid of rules, and that, in the cover of all that, they enviously blaspheme him in the *atman* in their bodies and beyond.

And he says he puts those envious troublesome lowest of humanity forever into the inauspicious wombs of the evilly deific, that, thereafter gaining birth after birth as evilly deific species in condemnation to that destination, they never achieve him, and that the three gates to the lower world and destruction of the *atman* are *kama*, anger, and greed and that one must relinquish them.

And, saying that one who relinquishes Vedic rules and continues acting lustfully never achieves perfection, happiness, or the level beyond, he tells Arjuna that Arjuna knows his duty by the evidence of scriptural declarations of requirements and proscriptions, and he closes this chapter by telling him he should enact his *karma* here accordingly.

But the seventeenth chapter begins with Arjuna asking Krishna whether persons who don't do that are in *sattva*, *rajas*, or *tamas*, and Krishna, telling Arjuna that the *gunas* are manifest both in bodies and in belief, tells him to hear from him how. Beginning by saying persons in *sattva* prefer *devas*, while persons in *rajas* prefer *asuras*, while persons in *tamas* prefer ghosts, he next says the thinking of those who harm others or engage pridefully in either austerities or *kama* is deviant. And he tells Arjuna to know they torment him within their bodies and that they're evilly deific.

He doesn't say how that's relevant to Arjuna's question, but next, saying eating, rituals, austerities, and charity are of three different kinds, he lists the kinds accordant with each *guna*.

He says food palatable to those in *sattva* increases duration of life, strength, health, happiness, and satisfaction and is juicy, fatty, lasting, hearty, palatable, and pleases the heart, that food palatable to those in *rajas* is bitter, sour, salty, hot, pungent, dry, and burning and causes suffering, misery, and disease, and that food palatable to those in *tamas* is food one eats three hours after the cooking of it and is tasteless and smells bad, that others leave it, and that it's untouchable.

And, telling Arjuna to know that performing rituals while fixing the mind on Vedic requirements with no desire for its fruits is in *sattva*, while performing rituals while desiring its fruits or for pride is in *rajas*, he says one considers performing ritual with no distribution of food, no mantras, payment to priests, and no belief to be in *tamas*.

And then he refers to austerities. He says one calls physical austerity devotion to the *devas*, brahmin teachers, and other worthy persons who are in cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy, and nonviolence. He doesn't say how fighting is nonviolent, but he says that one calls austerity of voice words that don't agitate, are truthful, dear, beneficial, and convey teachings, that one calls austerity of mind not misleading others, being grave and in control of the *atman*, and purifying one's being, and that one says that one's executing those three kinds of austerity with belief beyond and no desire for fruits is in *sattva*. And he says one says that performing austerity for the sake of respect or honor or devotion here is in *rajas* and is flickering and fleeting and that one says that performing austerity while foolishly trying to torture the *atman* or for the sake of annihilating others is in *tamas*. And then he refers to charity.

He says one remembers giving worthy charity regardless of return to a suitable person at a suitable place and time to be in *sattva*, that one remembers giving grudgingly with expectation of return to be in *rajas*, and that one considers giving to an unworthy person at an impure place and time, with no attention to the act, to be in *tamas*.

And then, citing the mantra “*Om tat sat*”, he says it’s an indication of *Brahman*. It means “all that’s good”, and, saying ancient brahmins considered it Vedic and used it in rituals, he says brahmins begin rituals, charities, and austerities with “*Om*”, that, for liberation from entanglement, they perform those acts with the word “*tat*” while not desiring fruit from them, and that “*sat*” indicates all of that and also the *karma* from it. And he closes this chapter by saying that performing those activities with no belief never has *sat*, either after death or here.

And the eighteenth and final chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* begins with Arjuna telling Krishna he wishes to know the purpose of the renunciation of sannyasins and the kinds of renunciation. And Krishna says that the intelligent say one should renounce all *karma*, while others are of the mind that one should never renounce ritual, charity, or austerity. And next he tells Arjuna to hear him declare three kinds of renunciation.

He says the *karma* of ritual, charity, and austerity purifies the intelligent and that one should never renounce it but should perform it from duty and renounce the fruit of it. He says one declares renouncing deserving *karma* by delusion to be in *tamas* and that one should never do that, that renouncing *karma* for fear of harm to one’s body is in *rajas* and doesn’t gain the fruit of renunciation, and that performing *karma* only from duty and renouncing its fruit is in *sattva*. And he says the renouncer who’s in *sattva* neither hates inauspicious *karma* nor is in attachment to auspicious *karma* and that *sattva* absorbs that person’s intellect and cuts away his doubts.

And he says the fruits of the three kinds of *karma*, unfortuitous *karma*, fortuitous *karma*, and mixture of those two kinds of *karma*, come, after death, to one who doesn’t renounce, but that they never, before or after death, come to one who renounces.

And next, telling Arjuna to understand from him what one says are the five causes for perfection of *karma*, he says they’re the place, the performer, the various instruments, the various kinds of endeavor, and the good deific, that those five factors initiate a person’s *karma* through body, speech, or mind, and that, due to absence of consciousness, anyone seeing the *atman* to be the only worker foolishly never sees.

And, returning to his argument for fighting, he says that one who’s never of false ego and whose consciousness is never attached doesn’t kill when he kills in this world and is never in entanglement.

And next, asserting two more taxonomies of *karma*, he says knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower are the three factors motivating *karma* and that the burden, the *karma*, and the performer are the

three factors of accruing *karma*. And he tells Arjuna to hear those taxonomies from him in terms of the *gunas* and *Samkhya*.

He tells him to know that the knowledge by which one sees the one imperishable being in the innumerable manifestations of living beings is in *sattva* and that the knowledge by which one sees multiple different manifestations in a living entity is in *rajas*, and he says that one says that ignorantly clinging with no cause to one meager activity as though it's all is in *tamas*.

And he says one says that orderly *karma* one performs with detachment from love or hatred or desire for fruits is in *sattva*, that *karma* one performs laboriously with false ego and desire for fruits is in *rajas*, and that *karma* delusional intention initiates is in *tamas*.

And he says that one says that one who's free of material attachment and performs with no false ego and with determination, enthusiasm, and constancy, whether perfectly or unsuccessfully, is in *sattva*, that one declares that a performer who desires fruits of *karma* and is greedy, envious, unclean, and sorrowful or joyful is in *rajas*, and that one says that an obstinate dishonest insulting lazy morose dilatory performer whose *prakriti* is disjunct is in *tamas*.

And next he tells Arjuna to hear him describe in detail the differences in consciousness and constancy among the three different *gunas*.

He says conscious knowledge of what's action and what isn't action, what's duty and what isn't duty, what's fear and what's fearlessness, and what's bondage and what's liberation is in *sattva*, that imperfect consciousness of the distinctions between *dharma* and what isn't *dharma* and between duty and what isn't duty is in *rajas*, and that covering in mental delusion consciousness of *dharma* and what isn't *dharma* and misdirecting all things is in *tamas*.

And next he tells Arjuna that determination by which one sustains mind, senses, and activities by continuous *yoga* is in *sattva*, that determination by which one sustains the purposes of *kama* because of attachment to desire for fruits from *dharma* is in *rajas*, and that determination by which one never relinquishes the foolishness of dreaming, fear, morose lamentation, and delusion is in *tamas*.

And next he tells Arjuna to hear from him of the three kinds of happiness and of the practice wherein one gains joy and the end of suffering.

He says one says that what begins as poison and ends as nectar is in *sattva* and originates from the *atman*, consciousness, and satisfaction, that one remembers that the combination of senses and sense objects that begins as nectar but ends as poison is happiness in *rajas*, and that one says the happiness that begins and ends in deluding the *atman* in sleep, laziness, and illusion is of *tamas*.

And he says nothing that's from *prakriti* either on earth or in divinity among the deities is free of the influence of the three *gunas* and that that's the origin of the division of the characteristics of the four castes. He says peace, discipline, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, certainty, knowledge, wisdom, and righteousness are the origin of the *karma* of brahmins, that heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness in battle, not fleeing, generosity, and leadership manifest the origin of the *karma* of kshatriyas, that plowing, care of cattle, and trade are the origin of the *karma* of vaisyas, and that service is the origin of the *karma* of sudras. And next, saying a man achieves perfection by following his own duty, he tells Arjuna to hear how a man engages in his *karma* to attain perfection, and he says one does it by devotion to the pervasive source of all being.

And next he says again that imperfectly performing one's own *dharma* is better than perfectly performing another's. But this time he adds that performing *karma* in accordance with one's characteristics never achieves adverse reactions. And he says that, as smoke covers fire, fault and *karma* originate simultaneously and that accordingly one should never relinquish all endeavors only because of fault.

And, saying again that conscientious detachment and mental control with no desires and the perfection of nonreaction attains renunciation, he repeats other qualifications for realizing *Brahman* that he's asserted in previous chapters. And, again calling that worshiping him, he elaborates on it further and again tells Arjuna that thinking that all that is false determination and thus not fighting will be taking shelter in false ego and won't be engaging in his *prakriti*. And he tells him his *karma* will accord with the conditions of his origin, despite his delusion, nevertheless.

And, saying the lord of all beings resides in their heart and places them mechanically under the direction of illusion, he again tells Arjuna that, if he wholly surrenders, he'll receive the eternal peace beyond.

And then, telling him he's described to him secrets of secrets, he tells him to consider it fully and do as he wishes, but he continues his argument. Telling him that, because he's dear to him, he's telling him the paramount secret, he tells him to hear it for his benefit, think of him, be his worshiper, offer him his obeisance, abandon all varieties of *dharma*, and surrender to him only. And, telling him he'll come to him by that, he tells him he'll deliver him from all manifestations of guilt, and he tells him not to fear.

But he also tells him never to reveal what he's told him to anyone who isn't an austere worshiper devoting service or to anyone who's envious of him. And he says the reason for that proscription is that one who explains the secrets to a worshiper doubtlessly will come beyond to him. And he says no man is

dearer to him than such a man and that, in this manifestation, neither shall anyone become dearer to him.

And, saying that one who hears and believes with no envy will attain liberation in the world of righteous *karma*, he then asks Arjuna whether, having heard with full attention, he's dispelled his delusion. And Arjuna replies affirmatively and says that, by Krishna's mercy, he's regained his memory, that Krishna has removed all doubts from his situation, and that he'll execute Krishna's instructions. And then Sanjaya says that hearing Krishna's and Arjuna's wonderful discussion of the great *atman* has stood his hair on end.

He says that, by the mercy of Vyasa, he's heard those secrets that are beyond *yoga* from the *yoga* lord Krishna speaking directly and personally, and he tells Dhrtarashtra that, when he remembers that wonderful message of righteous Krishna and Arjuna, he receives pleasure again and again.

And, saying the same of remembering the great form of Krishna, he says his wonder's great, that, wherever are the *yogi* lord Krishna and the bearer of bow and arrow Arjuna, there is opulence, victory, and certain morality, and that he's of that mind.

And some Hindus call the *Bhagavad Gita* an *Upanishad*. But a question is whether the *Bhagavad Gita* may indicate the difference between *sruti* and *smrti*. Much of it accurately repeats expressions in the *Upanishads*, but it treats the caste system as though it's an ideal of Hinduism and not a metaphor for the disjunction Hinduism seeks to obviate, and its effort to use it as an excuse for killing and war is also antithetical to the fundamental premise of Hinduism. And Arjuna's compassion and conscience express that premise of unity directly, and *bhakti yoga* is an effort to realize *Brahman* by worshiping metaphorical personifications. So another question is whether, by trying to solicit cows from Bharata kings, Vyasa's head shattered apart.



## Chapter 6

### Judaism

Judaism derived its name from Judah, the fourth son of the thirteen children of a shepherd who wandered between the Mediterranean Sea and the Euphrates River before settling in Egypt, about three millennia ago.

The definitive scripture of Judaism is the *Miqra*. “*Miqra*” in Hebrew means “convocation” or “reading”, and the *Miqra* is a compilation of 23 books in the Hebrew language, but Judaic people also call it the *Tanakh*. “*Torah*” means “teaching” in Hebrew, while “*nevi'im*” means “prophesy”, while “*ketuvim*” means “writing”, and “*TaNaKh*” is an acronym for those three words. And Judaic compilations of the 23 books ordinarily present them in order by the categories those three words designate.

The *Miqra* refers to many deities, what translators of scripture into English generally call gods, and it’s monotheistic in saying that one of them is superior to the others. And, while calling that superior god by several names, it generally calls him El, and translators of the *Miqra* into English generally call him God, as though he’s the only god. But it makes no monistic assertion, either that everything is God or that God is everything. And it’s more like the *Bhagavad Gita* than like the *Upanishads*.

The fundamental premise of Judaism is that God prefers the descendants of Judah to all other beings, and that he’ll give them power over other beings and give them land and other material wealth on Earth if they give him the treatment the *Bhagavad Gita* says Krishna solicited from Arjuna, but that he’ll give others power over them and give others the wealth, if they don’t.

So Judaism, unlike the five more popular religions, is both a religion and a racial heritage.

## Chapter 7

### Torah

Generally, we call the books of the *Torah* Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. But Judaic people also call them In the Beginning, Names, He Called, In the Desert, and Words. Those are the meanings of the words with which those five books begin.

Some Judaic people say Moses, the person the Book of Exodus says received the first of Judaism's scriptures from the superior god, wrote the *Torah*, and accordingly they also call the *Torah* the five books of Moses. But the Book of Deuteronomy describes his death, and linguists say the books are in a variety of writing styles, indicating at least four different authors. And the narrative is inconsistent in many ways.

In keeping with the meaning of both titles for the Book of Genesis, its first chapter begins by saying that, in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth, in six days.

During the first day in that creation story, God creates shape, light and darkness, and day and night. During the second day, creating a firmament dividing the waters above the firmament from the waters beneath it, he calls the firmament heaven. During the third day, gathering the waters beneath the firmament together to let land appear, he calls the land earth and calls the water seas, and he directs letting the earth bring forth vegetation, with fruit and seeds according to their kind. During the fourth day, commanding letting the firmament be signs for seasons, days, and years, he creates a great light to rule the day and a lesser light to rule the night. And, during the fifth day, creating all the living creatures moving in the sea, he commands that they be fruitful and multiply, and he lets fowls multiply in the earth.

And, during the sixth day, he creates other animals of the earth, creates man in his own image, and lets man have dominion over the other animals. He creates man both male and female and tells them that, for man and all the other

living creatures to eat, he's given them vegetation yielding seeds. And he looks at all he's created and sees that it's good.

And, in the second chapter, on the seventh day, God rests from his work, blesses that day, and sanctifies it. And next in this chapter, in an elaboration and continuation or variation of the story of the creation of life, God creates man from the dust of the ground and breathes life into him. And he creates the other animals also from dust.

And he plants a garden in Eden, puts man in it, calls the man Adam, brings the other animals to him for him to name them, and makes from the ground every pleasant tree that's good to see and good for food, and a river with four heads goes from Eden to water the garden

One of the heads comes from a land with gold and other wealth. One compasses Ethiopia, and the other two are the Tigris and the Euphrates. And one of the trees is the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and another is the tree of life, and God tells Adam he can freely eat of any of the trees, excepting the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He tells him he'll die on the day he eats of that tree.

But no helpmeet is found for Adam. So, while Adam sleeps, God creates a woman from one of Adam's ribs. And Adam says she's bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh and that, because she was taken out of man, she'll be called Woman. And this chapter says that accordingly a man should leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and be one flesh with her. And it closes by saying the man and his wife were naked with no shame.

And, continuing the elaboration, the third chapter begins by saying that, of the beasts of the field God made, the serpent was the most subtle. So, in this chapter, the serpent tells the woman she won't die if she eats of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and that her eating of it will open her eyes and make her like gods, and she eats of it and gives some of it to her husband. So, seeing then that they're naked, they sew leaves together to cover themselves.

And next, hearing God walking in the garden, they hide, until God calls to Adam and asks where he is. Then Adam tells God he hid because he was naked, and God asks him how he knew he was naked and whether he ate of the fruit he'd forbidden him, and Adam replies that the woman gave him the fruit, and the woman says the serpent beguiled her. So God makes clothing for Adam and the woman but curses them and the serpent.

He makes the serpent crawl on its belly, creates enmity between the serpent and the woman, gives the woman the pain of childbirth and makes her subordinate to the man, and gives the man, until he returns to the dust from which God made him, the struggle of working to bring food from the land.

And, to keep Adam and the woman from eating of the tree of life, God evicts them from the garden of Eden. And, to keep everyone from the garden, he places cherubim with a flaming sword at its gate. But, because the woman's the mother of all living, Adam calls her Eve.

The fourth chapter begins with Eve giving birth to a son and saying she's gotten a man from God. She calls him Cain and bears another son and calls him Abel, and Abel keeps sheep while Cain tills the ground. And both make offerings to God.

Cain offers of the fruit of the ground while Abel offers of the first of his flock, and God prefers Abel's offering, and that angers Cain. God tells Cain he'll be accepted if he does well but that sin lies at the door and shall rule over him if he doesn't. But Cain kills Abel

So God asks Cain where his brother is, and Cain, replying that he doesn't know, asks God whether he's his brother's keeper. So God tells him he'll be a fugitive and a vagabond, and Cain replies that anyone who finds him shall slay him, and God marks him to prevent that and says vengeance shall be taken sevenfold on anyone who kills Cain. So Cain goes east of Eden to the land of Nod. And there he marries two women.

And this chapter says one of Cain's great grandsons was the father of people with cattle, that another was the father of people who handle harps and organs, and that another was the father of people who work with brass and iron, and, in this chapter, Cain's grandson who fathered those fathers kills a man and tells his two wives he's killed a man and that, if Cain's avenged sevenfold' he'll be avenged seventy and sevenfold.

This chapter doesn't say who or what created Cain's two wives. But it says near its end that Adam knew Eve again, that she gave birth to a son Adam called Seth because God appointed him a seed in the stead of Abel, and that Seth had a son he called Enos. And this chapter closes by saying that then men began calling on the name of God.

The fifth chapter lists the descendants of Seth through the three sons of Noah. It says of most of the men it lists from Adam to Noah that they lived more than nine hundred years, and it says Methuselah lived the longest, 969 years. And it closes by saying Noah was five hundred years old when he begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

And the sixth chapter says giants were on the earth then, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of the sons of men were beautiful, and that, when the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, they bore mighty men of renown. But, also in this chapter, God says that, because man is flesh, for God not always to strive with man, man's days shall be but 120 years. And, in this chapter, God repents making man.

That grieves at his heart, but, saying every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is continually only evil, he says he'll destroy man from the face of the earth.

But he excepts Noah. He tells him to build an ark three hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide, caulk it, and put a window and a door in it. An ark is a box, and a cubit is the length of a man's arm from elbow to fingertip, and God tells Noah he'll bring a water to destroy all flesh on earth but that he'll establish his covenant with Noah. He says Noah, with his wife and his sons and their wives, shall come into the ark, that Noah shall bring into the ark a male and a female of every kind of flesh, and that Noah shall also bring into it food for himself and for them.

In the seventh chapter, God, telling Noah to take into the ark seven of each clean and unclean kind of animal, gives him seven days to obey before rain falls for forty days and nights. And, on the seventeenth day of the second month of the six hundredth year of Noah's life, the fountains of the great deep break up, and the windows of heaven open. And the water covers the mountains and kills all flesh that has moved on earth and isn't on the ark. And the water prevails on the earth 150 days.

And then, in the eighth chapter, God makes a wind pass over the earth to assuage the water, and the ark rests on Mount Ararat. So Noah opens the window and sends a raven to go to and fro until the earth is dry. And he sends a dove to see whether the water has abated.

But the dove, because she finds no rest for her feet, returns. So Noah waits another week and sends her forth again, and she returns with an olive leaf. And he waits another week and sends her forth again, and she doesn't return.

So, on the first day of the first month of the 601<sup>st</sup> year of Noah's life, he removes the covering of the ark and sees that the face of the earth is dry, and God tells him to leave the ark with his wife and his sons and his sons' wives and take the other animals with them.

And Noah builds an alter and burns on it offering to God of every clean animal, and God smells the sweet savor of the offering and says he'll never again curse the earth for man's sake or smite everything as he has, and this chapter closes with God saying that seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease, while the earth remains.

The ninth chapter begins with God blessing Noah and his sons, telling them to go forth and multiply and replenish the earth, and saying that every beast, fowl, and fish shall fear them, and be food for them, as is the vegetation. But he says that, if they eat blood, he'll require the blood of their lives, and he says that, because he made man in his image, the blood of a man who sheds the

blood of a man shall be shed by a man. But next he says a token of his promise that never again shall water destroy the earth shall be the rainbow.

But, also in this chapter, Ham sees Noah naked while he's drunk after planting a vineyard, and Shem and Japheth, not to see their father naked, walk backward into the tent with a garment to cover him. So, when Noah awakens from his drunkenness, he curses Ham, blesses the god of Shem, and says Canaan shall be Shem's servant, that God shall enlarge Japheth, and that Japheth shall dwell in Shem's tents while Canaan serves both Shem and Japheth. And this chapter says Ham was the father of Canaan, and, as the word "Judaic" refers to descendants of Judah, the word "Semitic" refers to descendants of Shem. And this chapter ends with Noah dying, at the age of 950 years.

And the tenth chapter lists the generations of Noah's sons. It says the sons of Japheth divided the isles of the gentiles, that Babel and some other cities were the beginning of the kingdom of Nimrod, who was a son of Ham's son Cush and a mighty hunter before God, that Nimrod went to the land of Assyria and built Nineveh, that Sheba was a son of Cush's son Raamah, and that Canaan begat the Jebusite and the Amorite. And this chapter closes by saying that after the flood the families of the sons of Noah divided the nations.

The eleventh chapter begins by saying all the peoples of the earth were of one language, and, in this chapter, they travel from the east and agree to make brick and build a city and a tower whose top will reach heaven, and, to keep from being scattered abroad across the face of the earth, they agree to make themselves a name. So God comes down to see the city and the tower, says nothing will be kept from them while they have but one language, and confounds their language and scatters them abroad across the face of the earth. And this chapter says that, because of that, the city they built is called Babel.

And next it lists descendants of Shem through the birth of Lot. Lot is a son of Haran's, and Haran's brothers are Nahor and Abram, and those three are sons of Terah. And Haran dies in the city of Ur in the land of the Chaldees.

And, also in this chapter, Nahor and Abram take wives. Nahor takes Milcah, and Abram takes Sarai, and Terah takes the four of them and Lot from Ur to go to the land of Canaan. But, when the six of them reach the city of Haran, they dwell there until Terah dies, at the age of 205.

Ur was near the mouth of the Euphrates, and the *Miqra* doesn't say the name of the city of Haran was for Terah's son Haran, but the city of Haran was in what's now southcentral Turkey.

The twelfth chapter begins with God telling Abram to leave his house and go to a land God will show him. He also tells him he'll make of him a great nation, bless him, make him a blessing, and make his name great, that he'll bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him, and that Abram will bless

all the families of the earth. And, in this chapter, Abram takes Sarai and Lot and all their substance and goes to the land of Canaan.

At Shechem, God tells Abram he'll give that land to his seed, and Abram builds an altar there. But he moves on and builds another altar on a mountain between Beth-El and Ai, and "*beth-el*" is Hebrew for "house of God". But, because of a famine in the land of Canaan, Abram moves further south and on into Egypt.

In Egypt, telling Sarai he knows she's fair to look upon, Abram, to keep people from killing him for her, asks her to say she's his sister and not his wife, and Pharaoh takes her from him. For her sake, Pharaoh gives Abram sheep, oxen, asses, menservants, maidservants, and camels, but, because of her, God plagues Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, and Pharaoh asks Abram why he didn't tell him she was his wife. And, saying he might have taken her to wife, he tells him to take her and go away.

But he also tells men to send them away with all Abram has, and the thirteenth chapter begins with Abram, Sarai, and Lot returning from Egypt to the south of the land of Canaan, and it says Abram was rich in cattle, silver, and gold, and, from the south, they return to where Abram's tent had been between Beth-El and Ai, but, because Abram's and Lot's substance is too great for them to dwell together, they separate there. Abram asks Lot to choose a direction, and Lot chooses the direction of the plains of Jordan and pitches his tent toward Sodom, while Abram dwells in the land of Canaan. And, after the separation, God tells Abram to look north and south and east and west.

And, saying he'll give to Abram's seed forever all the land Abram can see and that his seed will be as numerous as the dust of the earth, God tells him to walk through the land, and this chapter closes with Abram moving his tent to Hebron and building there another altar to God.

But, in the fourteenth chapter, some kings make war on Sodom and Gomorrah and take all the goods of those cities, including Lot's goods and Lot, who then dwells in Sodom. And, suggesting that Hebron is the origin of the word "Hebrew", this chapter says one of the inhabitants of Sodom or Gomorrah escaped and told the Hebrew Abram. So Abram arms 318 trained servants born in his house and at night chases the invaders to Hobah, on the left of Damascus.

And he brings back Lot, the women and the other people, and all the goods. And then Melchizedek, whom this chapter calls the king of Salem and the priest of the highest god, brings forth bread and wine and blesses Abram. And, calling him Abram of the most high god, the possessor of heaven and earth, he blesses the god who delivered his enemies into his hands.

So, in the first instance of tithing in the *Miqra*, Abram gives Melchizedek a tenth of the spoil. And, to the king of Sodom's telling Abram to

keep the goods but leave the people, Abram says he's lifted his hands to the highest God and that, to keep the king of Sodom from saying he's made Abram rich, he'll take only a portion for the men who went with him. And this chapter ends with Abram telling the king of Sodom to let those men take their portion.

And the fifteenth chapter begins with God telling Abram that God's his shield and reward, but Abram asks God what, seeing that he's childless, that the steward of his house is of Damascus, and that the one born in his house is his heir, he'll give him.

So God, showing Abram the stars and telling him his heirs shall be as many, reminds Abram of his promise of the land. But Abram asks God by what he'll know he'll inherit the land, and then God tells him to bring him a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And Abram divides the heifer, the goat, and the ram but not the birds, and he drives away the birds that come down.

The *Miqra* assigns no meaning either to those instructions of God's or to Abram's response to them, but in this story God tells Abram his seed shall be strangers in a land not theirs and shall serve and be afflicted in that land for four hundred years, but that he'll judge the nation they'll serve and that Abram's seed shall come out with great substance.

And God also tells Abram he'll go to his fathers in peace and be buried in a good old age and that, because the iniquity of the Amorites isn't yet full, his seed will return in the fourth generation.

This chapter doesn't explain the relevance of the iniquity of the Amorites, but it says God made a covenant with Abram to give his seed land from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates River, and it lists the land's occupants. Besides the Amorites, it lists the Kenites, the Kennizites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Girgashites, the Canaanites, and the Jebusites. But, since the tenth chapter of this book say Canaan begat the Jebusite and the Amorite, a question is why this chapter lists them separately.

The sixteenth chapter begins by saying Sarai bore Abram no children but had an Egyptian handmaid whose name was Hagar. And, in this chapter, giving Hagar to Abram to be his wife, Sarai tells him to have children by Hagar for her. And Hagar conceives a child.

But, after conceiving the child, Hagar despises Sarai. So Sarai complains to Abram, and Abram tells her to do what pleases her with Hagar, and she sends Hagar away. But an angel of God goes to Hagar and, saying she'll bear a child whose name shall be Ishmael, tells her to return and submit herself to her mistress' hands.

And the angel also tells her that her seed shall be innumerable, that Ishmael shall be a wild man, that his hand shall be against every man, that every



man's hand shall be against him, and that he'll dwell with his brothers, and this chapter ends by saying that when Abram was 86 years old Hagar bare him a son he called Ishmael.

But the seventeenth chapter begins with God appearing to Abram when he's 99 years old and telling him Sarai shall bear him a son. He tells him the son's name shall be Isaac, that Ishmael shall multiply but that God's covenant shall be with Isaac, that Abram's name shall be Abraham, and that Sarai's name shall be Sarah. And he tells him a token of the covenant shall be that every child born in Abraham's house or bought with money shall be circumcised on the eighth day after birth, that that's an everlasting covenant, that anyone who breaks it shall be cut off from his people, that Sarah shall be a mother of nations, and that kings shall come from her.

Abraham falls on his face and laughs and asks himself whether a child shall be born to him and Sarah in his 99th year and her ninetieth. But, on that day, he takes all the other males born in his house and circumcises them. And Abraham, and Ishmael at thirteen years old, are circumcised on the same day.

And, in the eighteenth chapter, three men appear to Abraham at the door of his tent, and he runs to meet them, bows, calls them lord, and asks them, if he's found favor in their eyes, not to pass away, and, asking where Sarah is, they tell Abraham she'll bear a son.

But this chapter says the manner of women had ceased to be with Sarah. And in it, hearing from the door of the tent what the men say of her, she laughs, and God asks Abraham why she laughed and whether anything is too difficult for God. Sarah is afraid and denies having laughed, but God tells her she did, and Abraham orders that a calf be dressed to feed the three men. And, when they look toward Sodom and Gomorrah and leave, he goes with them part of the way. And then God tells Abraham the men are going there to destroy those places for the grievous sin in them.

Abraham asks God whether he'll destroy the righteous with the wicked and not spare those places if fifty, 45, forty, thirty, or twenty righteous people are in them. And, asking God not to be angry, he asks him whether he'll spare them for the sake of ten, and God says that, for the sake of ten righteous people found there, he won't destroy the places. And this chapter ends with God going his way and Abraham returning to his place.

It doesn't say the three men were angels, but it says God spoke to Abraham while the men were with him, and the nineteenth chapter begins with two angels arriving in the evening at Sodom.

When they arrive, Lot's sitting in the gate of Sodom, and he invites them to stay the night in his house. They say they'll stay in the street, but Lot presses them to accept the invitation. And they do.

But the men of Sodom surround the house and demand of Lot that he bring out the two men. They say their purpose is to know the two men, and Lot refuses and, saying his two daughters haven't known man, offers them to the men instead. The Sodomites nearly break the door, but the angels pull Lot into the house and tell him they'll destroy the city, and they blind the men at the door and tell Lot to take his wife and his daughters and their husbands from the city. But Lot seems to the sons-in-law to be mocking.

So next morning the angels leave the sons-in-law, take Lot's wife and daughters by hand and hurry them out of the house, and tell them to flee to a mountain and not look back. Lot's wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt, but Lot tells the angels he and his daughters would be safer in a nearby city than on the mountain, and the angels allow that, and, as the sun rises, Lot enters the nearby city, and, by raining brimstone and fire, God destroys Sodom, Gomorrah, and the plain surrounding them. But Abraham sees the smoke, and then God remembers Abraham and sends Lot out of the overthrow, and then Lot takes his daughters up to the mountain.

But, on the mountain, Lot's oldest daughter tells the younger that no man is to come to them there in the manner of all the earth. So they make Lot drunk, and the older daughter lies with him that night, and the next night they make him drunk again, and the younger daughter lies with him, And this chapter ends with the older bearing a son she calls Moab and the younger bearing a son she calls Ben-Ammi, and this chapter says they're the fathers of the Moabites and the children of Ammon.

The twentieth chapter begins with Abraham traveling to Gerar. And again, to keep people from killing him for Sarah, he says she's his sister. And Abimelech, the king of Gerar, responds as did Pharaoh.

So, telling the king of Gerar that Abraham is a prophet, God closes the wombs of his house, and this time Abraham tells Abimelech that Sarah, by being the daughter of his father but not of his mother, is both his sister and his wife. And Abimelech gives Abraham sheep, oxen, menservants, and woman servants, and, telling Sarah he's given her brother a thousand pieces of silver and that Abraham is a covering of the eyes to all who are with her, he reproves her, and Abraham prays. And God heals Abimelech and his wife and his maidservants.

The birth of Isaac is in the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter, and Sarah, saying in this chapter that God made her laugh for all to laugh with her, tells Abraham to cast Ishmael out to prevent him from being an heir with her son.

Abraham grieves for Ishmael, but God tells him Ishmael also shall be a great nation but that Isaac shall be Abraham's heir. So Abraham gives Hagar

bread, puts a bottle of water on her shoulder, and sends her and Ishmael away. And they wander in the wilderness of Beer-Sheba until the bottle is empty.

Hagar, not to see Ishmael die, throws him beneath a bush and sits a bowshot away. But she lifts up her voice, and God hears Ishmael's voice, and an angel of God, telling Hagar to lift Ishmael up in her hand, opens her eyes. And she sees a well, fills the bottle with water from it, and gives Ishmael drink, and then God tells her he'll make Ishmael a great nation. And this chapter says Ishmael grew, dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, and became an archer. And it says Hagar took for him a wife from Egypt.

And, also in this chapter, Abraham strives with Abimelech concerning a well Abimelech's servants take, and the strife ends in in a covenant between Abraham and Abimelech at Beer-Sheba, and this chapter closes with Abimelech returning to the land of the Philistines and dwelling there many days.

In the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter God tempts Abraham. He commands him to sacrifice Isaac, and Abraham builds an altar and lays wood on. Isaac asks where's the lamb for the sacrifice, and Abraham says God will provide it. But, as he takes a knife to kill Isaac, an angel of God tells him to do nothing to him.

Telling Abraham that, because he hasn't withheld his only son from him, he'll keep his promise to multiply his seed as the stars of heaven, he says his seed shall possess the gate of its enemies, and, instead of Isaac, he provides a ram for the sacrifice.

And also in this chapter Abraham is told that Milcah has born children to his brother Nahor. It lists them and says Milcah's son Bethuel has begotten a daughter whose name is Rebekah. And it closes with a list of children of Nahor's concubine Reumah.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins by saying Sarah lived to 127 years. And, in this chapter, she dies at Hebron, and Abraham buries her at Hebron in the cave of Machpelah he buys with a field for four hundred shekels from a Hittite whose name is Ephron. The Hittite offers to give him the property, but Abraham insists on paying for it.

The 24<sup>th</sup> chapter begins by saying Abraham was old, and in it he makes his oldest servant, his servant who rules over his possessions, swear not to take a Canaanite wife for Isaac. He tells the servant instead to go to his kindred to take a wife for him, and the servant asks what will be if the girl isn't willing to return with him and whether he should take Isaac with him to his kindred, and, replying that he'll be clear of the oath if she isn't willing, Abraham tells him not to take Isaac. So the servant takes ten camels laden with goods to Nahor's city, stops at a well and there, and prays to Abraham's god.

He asks that the girl he asks to put down her pitcher for him to drink say she'll also give drink to his camels and that she'll be the one God has chosen

for Isaac, and a virgin fair to look upon comes to the well and does what he requested. So, putting a gold earring and two gold bracelets weighing 10½ shekels onto her, he asks her whose daughter she is, and she replies that she's the daughter of Milcah's son Bethuel, and the servant prays that Abraham's god be blessed. And the girl runs home and tells her family what happened.

She's Rebekah, and her brother Laban, seeing the earring and bracelets, asks her to bring the servant there, and the servant tells Laban his errand and what happened at the well, and Laban welcomes him.

So the servant brings forth silver and more for Rebekah and also gives precious things to Laban and to Rebekah's mother. Next morning, Laban asks the servant to let Rebekah stay at least another ten days, but the servant asks Laban not to hinder him. And Rebekah says she'll go, and she and her maidservants ride the camels to the land of Canaan, and there they find Isaac meditating in a field.

Seeing the camels, he walks to meet them, and Rebekah sees him, alights from her camel, and asks the servant who he is. She responds to the servant's reply by covering herself with a veil, but Isaac takes her into Sarah's tent and takes her to be his wife. And this chapter closes by saying he loved her and was comforted after his mother's death.

And the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Abraham taking another wife. She bears him Midian and other sons, but he presents gifts to them and sends them away from Isaac and gives Isaac all he has. And this chapter says Abraham died at the age of 175 years and that Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah where he'd buried Sarah.

And next it lists the sons of Ishmael and says Ishmael died at the age of 137 years. And next it begins telling the generations of Isaac, beginning by saying he was forty years old when he took to wife Rebekah, the daughter of the Syrian Bethuel. And next it says Rebekah was barren until Isaac prayed to God.

And, in this chapter, when Isaac is sixty years old, Rebekah conceives children who struggle within her. God tells her that two nations are in her womb, that the people of one shall be stronger than the people of the other, and that the older shall serve the younger. And the first to emerge is red as a hairy garment, and they call him Esau, and, as the second emerges, he takes a heel of Esau's, and they call him Jacob.

And they grow, and Esau becomes a cunning hunter while Jacob is plain and dwells in tents, and Isaac, because he eats Esau's venison, loves Esau, but Rebekah loves Jacob. And Esau comes faint from the field and asks for some red pottage Jacob has stewed, and Jacob asks him to sell him his birthright for it. And Esau, saying he's on the point of death, asks what his birthright will profit him then, and Jacob asks him to swear.

So Esau swears. And, after Jacob gives him some pottage, he eats, drinks, rises, and goes his way, and this chapter closes by saying Esau despised his birthright, and it also says that, because he asked for the red pottage, Esau was called Edom. “*Edom*” means “red”, and “*esau*” may mean “hairy”, and “*jacob*” means “grasping a heel” and was an idiomatic expression referring to deceit.

The 26<sup>th</sup> chapter begins by saying a famine was in the land and that Isaac went to Gerar, to the king of the Philistines, Abimelech. And, also in this chapter, God promises the land to Isaac as he’d promised it to Abraham. And he tells him not to go to Egypt.

So a question is what’s the significance of Abraham’s effectually prostituting Isaac’s mother both to a Pharaoh of Egypt and to a king of the Philistines. And, also in this chapter, Isaac does to Rebekah and Abimelech what Abraham did to Sarah and Abimelech. But this story, while being like that story in several ways, also varies from it in several ways.

In this story God doesn’t admonish Abimelech in a dream. Abimelech looks from a window, sees Isaac playing with Rebekah, admonishes Isaac, and tells his people that anyone who touches Isaac or Rebekah shall be put to death. And, instead of giving Isaac wealth, Abimelech leaves him to sow in the land.

But Isaac receives that year a hundredfold and becomes great with flocks and herds and a great store of servants. And Philistines envy him and stop up the wells Abrahams servants dug, and Isaac digs them up again and gives them the names Abraham gave them, and then Abimelech tells him to go away. So he goes to Beer-Sheba, digs more wells, and builds an altar.

And God promises to bless him for his father’s sake. And Abimelech goes there and makes a covenant with him as he did with Abraham, and the next day Isaac’s servants tell him they’ve found water in a well they’ve dug, and Isaac calls the well Sheba, and this chapter says that’s why the name of the city there is Beer-Sheba. But next it says Esau was forty years old when he took two Hittites, Judith and Bashemath, to wife, and it closes by saying the Hittite wives were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.

The 27<sup>th</sup> chapter begins by saying Isaac became old and that his eyes were so dim he couldn’t see. And, in this chapter, he calls Esau to him and tells him to go to the field and bring some venison and make savory meat he loves, for his soul to bless Esau before he dies. But Rebekah hears that and tells Jacob to fetch two kids, for her to make savory meat Isaac loves, for Jacob to take it to Isaac to take Esau’s blessing.

Jacob says Isaac will feel him, know he’s not hairy, and curse him instead of blessing him. But Rebekah, telling him the curse will be on her, puts the skin of the kids on Jacob’s hands and neck and dresses him in clothing of

Esau's, and Jacob takes the meat to Isaac. And, to Isaac's asking him who he is, he replies that he's Esau, Isaac's first born.

And he tells him to rise, eat the venison, and bless him, and Isaac asks him how he found the venison so quickly, and Jacob says God brought it to him. Isaac says the voice is Jacob's, but he feels the kid skin on Jacob's hands, calls him to him, kisses him, smells the clothing, says he's Esau, and blesses him. He asks that God give him the dew of heaven, the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine, that people serve him, that nations bow down to him, that he be lord over his brethren, that those who curse him be cursed, and that those who bless him be blessed.

But, after the blessing, as Jacob leaves Isaac's presence, Esau brings Isaac the venison. Isaac trembles, and Esau, crying bitterly and asking whether Jacob isn't rightly called Jacob, says Jacob has taken both his birthright and his blessing. And he asks Isaac whether he doesn't have one blessing with which to bless him also.

So Isaac, asking that Esau's dwelling be of the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven, says Esau shall live by the sword and serve his brother but will break Jacob's yoke from his neck, but Esau says to himself that the days of mourning for Isaac are at hand and that he'll kill Jacob.

So Rebekah, hearing of that, tells Jacob to flee to Laban in Haran and stay there a few days, until Esau's anger turns from him. Saying that then she'll send to fetch him, she asks whether she should be deprived of both of her sons in one day, and she also tells Isaac that she's weary of life because of the daughters of Heth, and this chapter closes with her asking what good her life shall do her if Jacob takes a wife of them, the daughters of the land. Hittites are descendants of Heth as Semites are descendants of Shem.

So the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Isaac sending Jacob to take a wife of the daughters of Laban, and, in this chapter, Esau, seeing that the daughters of Canaan don't please Isaac, takes a wife from the daughters of Ishmael.

And Jacob, on his way to Haran, dreams of angels. In the dream, they ascend and descend on a ladder reaching heaven, and God stands at the top of the ladder and passes to Jacob the promise of the land and the blessings he's passed from Abraham to Isaac. So Jacob sets up the stone he used as a pillow and, saying it shall be God's house, calls that place Beth-El.

Because this chapter and others say that earlier the name of that place was Luz, and because this book earlier says Abraham built an altar at Beth-El, a question is whether Beth-El is more than one place.

But the 29<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Jacob coming to the land of the people of the east and seeing a well in a field. Shepherds are there to water their sheep, and, to Jacob's asking them their origin, they reply that they're from Haran, and

he asks them whether they know Laban. They say they do, and Jacob asks them whether he's well, and they say he is.

And they tell Jacob to behold that Laban's daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep. So Jacob tells the shepherds to water the sheep and feed them, but they say they can't until all the flocks are gathered. So Jacob removes the stone from the well and waters Laban's flock, and, kissing Rachel and lifting his voice and weeping, he tells her he's Rebekah's son. And Rachel runs home and tells Laban, and Laban welcomes Jacob.

But he has two daughters. Leah, the older, is tender-eyed, but Rachel's beautiful and well-favored, and Jacob loves Rachel and tells Laban he'll serve him seven years for her. Laban accepts the offer, but, instead, in the dark of the night, at the end of the seven years, he delivers Leah to Jacob, and next morning, when Jacob sees whom he's married and complains, Laban says the custom of the country is that the older daughter marry first.

So Jacob offers to serve seven more years for Rachel, and Laban accepts that offer also and gives him Rachel at the end of those seven years, and he also gives handmaids to his daughters, Zilpah to Leah and Bilhah to Rachel.

Jacob's love for Rachel is such that the seven years he served for her seem to him but a few days. But, when God sees Leah's hatred, he opens her womb and closes Rachel's. And Leah bears four sons.

The sons are Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, and this chapter closes by saying that then Leah left off bearing.

But the thirtieth chapter begins with Rachel envying Leah and telling Jacob she'll die if he doesn't give her children. Jacob replies by asking her who's withheld the fruit of the womb and whether he's in God's stead, but she responds to that by giving him Bilhah to be his wife and bear children for her, and Bilhah bears two sons Rachel calls Dan and Naphtali. So, seeing that, Leah gives Jacob Zilpah to be his wife and bear sons for her, and Zilpah bears two sons Leah calls Gad and Asher.

But, after that, Leah bears two more sons and a daughter and calls them Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah, and Rachel asks Leah to give her mandrake Reuben finds during a wheat harvest and gives to Leah. Leah replies that Rachel has taken her husband from her and now is asking her for her son's mandrake, but Rachel offers to send Jacob to Leah if she gives her the mandrake, and Leah accedes. And God opens Rachel's womb, and she bears a son she calls Joseph.

And, upon the birth of Joseph, Jacob asks Laban to give him his wives and children and send him back to his own country. He says Laban knows the service he's done to him, that God has blessed him, and that Laban had

possessions before but now has a multitude. And he asks Laban when he can provide for his own house.

Laban, replying that he knows God has blessed him because of Jacob, asks Jacob what he should give him. Jacob replies that he should give him nothing, but he tells Laban that, if he permits him to pass through the flock and remove the spotted and speckled cattle and goats and the brown sheep, for them to be his hire, he'll again feed and keep Laban's flock. And Laban agrees.

So Jacob removes from the herd the variously colored cattle, puts them and the brown lambs into the care of his sons, and sets three days journey between him and Laban. And, straking rods from trees to make the white in them appear, when the strong cattle drink, he sets the rods in front of them, and they bring forth ring-straked, spotted, and speckled cattle. And this chapter closes by saying Jacob increased exceedingly and had much cattle, maidservants, menservants, camels, and asses.

So the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter begins with Laban's sons saying Jacob has taken all that was their father's. And Jacob, seeing that Laban's countenance toward him isn't what it was, calls Rachel and Leah to a field and tells them Laban has changed his wages ten times and that God told him in a dream how to acquire the cattle. And he tells them that God, calling himself the God of Beth-El, told him to return to the land of his kindred.

Rachel and Leah, asking whether any part of their inheritance remains in Laban's house, say he counts them as strangers and has sold them and devoured their wealth and that what God has taken from Laban is theirs and their children's, and Rachel steals Laban's gods. And Jacob sets his sons and his wives on camels to take them and all he's acquired and return to Isaac in the land of Canaan. But Laban follows them.

In a dream God tells Laban to say nothing either good or bad to Jacob. But, when he finds Jacob on Mount Gilead, he asks him why he snuck away with his daughters as captives taken by the sword and didn't let him kiss his children or send them away with mirth and music, and he asks him why he stole his gods. Jacob, replying that he was afraid Laban would take his daughters from him by force, asks that whomever Laban finds with the gods die, and he lets Laban search for them, and Laban searches the tents of Jacob, Leah, Zilpah, and Bilhah, but Rachel has hidden the gods in camel furniture, and she sits on it. And, telling Laban the custom of women is on her, she asks that her not rising not displease him.

So, not finding the gods, Jacob and Laban pile some stones and make a covenant that harm shall come to either of them who passes over the heap to the other and that Jacob shall not afflict Laban's daughters or take other wives. And they ask that the god of Abraham and Nahor judge between them, and Jacob



swears by the fear of Isaac and offers sacrifice on the mount, and they eat bread and stay there that night. And this chapter closes with Laban rising early in the morning, kissing his children, blessing them, and returning to his place. The Hebrew word “*gilead*” means “witness heap”.

The 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins with angels of God meeting Jacob as he goes his way. He sees them, calls them God’s host, and sends messengers to Esau, in Seir, the country of Edom. And he tells the messengers to tell Esau where he’s been and of his wealth and to tell him he’s sent them with that message to find grace in his sight.

But, in the *Miqra*, a host is an army. And the messengers return and tell Jacob that Esau is coming to meet him with four hundred men. So Jacob, saying one band shall escape if Esau smites the other, divides the people, flocks, herds, and camels with him into two bands.

And, reminding God of his promises and telling him he’s become two bands, he divides one of the bands into three droves, each with 440 goats and sheep, fifty cows, thirty milk camels, and thirty asses. And, putting the droves in the charge of servants, he tells them to take the three droves one at a time across the Jordan ahead of him and tell Esau when they reach him that they’re presents for him. And at night he sends the other band, with Leah and Rachel, Zilpah and Bilhah, and his sons, across ahead of him.

And next in this chapter he wrestles with a man until the break of day. Then the man asks him to let him go, and Jacob tells him he won’t let him go until he blesses him, and the man asks him his name, and he replies that it’s Jacob. And, telling him his name will no more be Jacob, the man says that, because Jacob has power with God and men as a prince and has prevailed, his name will be Israel. And “*Isra-El*” in Hebrew means “fights God”.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins with Jacob seeing Esau coming. Dividing his family as he did the droves, he puts the handmaids and their children first, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph at the rear. But Esau runs to meet Jacob, falls on his neck, and kisses him, and they weep. And Jacob introduces his family to Esau.

Esau asks the meaning of the droves, and Jacob, telling him they’re to find grace in his sight, calls him his lord. Esau says he has enough, but Jacob asks him to take the gift because he’s seen Esau’s face as though he’s seen the face of God and that it’s pleased him. So Esau accepts the gift and, inviting Jacob to continue on, says he’ll lead the way, but, saying the children are tender and that the flocks will die if men overdrive them a day, Jacob demurs.

Esau offers to leave some people to help them, but Jacob says he doesn’t need them and that he’ll go to Seir at a pace that accords with the children and cattle, but he doesn’t go to Seir but to Succoth. And from Succoth

he goes to Shechem and buys a parcel of a field for a hundred pieces of money from the children of Hamor. Hamor is the father of Shechem, and Jacob spreads his tent at Shechem and erects an altar. And this chapter closes by saying he called the altar *El-Elohe-Isra-El*. That's Hebrew for "God, the god, of Israel".

And the 34<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Dinah, Leah's daughter who's Jacob's only daughter, going out to see the daughters of the land. And it says Shechem, Hamor's son and the prince of the country, sees her and takes her and defiles her. But it says he loved her and was tender toward her, and in it he asks Hamor to obtain her to be his wife.

So Hamor goes to commune with Jacob and asks him to dwell in the country, trade, obtain possessions there, and exchange daughters in marriage with the people of the country, and Shechem tells Jacob and his sons that, for Dinah to be his wife, he'll give any dowry they ask. So Jacob's sons require circumcision of all the men of Shechem, and Hamor and Shechem accept that condition and present it to the people of Shechem at the gate of the city. Demanding that every male who goes out the gate of the city be circumcised, they ask the people whether the beasts of Jacob's sons won't be theirs with their daughters.

But, three days later, when the men of the city are sore from the circumcision, Simeon and Levi take swords, kill all of them, and take Dinah, and Jacob's sons spoil the city and take the men's children and wives captive. So Jacob tells Simeon and Levi they've made him stink among the inhabitants of the land, that he's few in number, and that people of the land will gather themselves against him and destroy him and his house. But this chapter closes with Simeon and Levi replying by asking Jacob whether Shechem or Hamor should have dealt with their sister as with a harlot.

And the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with God telling Jacob to go to Beth-El and dwell there and make an altar to him. So Jacob tells his household to put away the strange gods among them, and they give their gods and earrings to him, and he buries them under an oak at Shechem. So, with the terror of God on the people of the cities there, they don't pursue Jacobs sons.

And Jacob builds an altar at Beth-El and calls it *El-Beth-El*, and Rebekah's nurse Deborah dies and is buried under an oak beneath Beth-El, and God, telling Jacob that kings will come from his loins, again tells him he'll be called Jacob no more but shall be called Israel.

But Jacob doesn't dwell at Beth-El. And, as he approaches Bethlehem, Rachel gives birth to his twelfth son and dies. As she's dying, she calls the child Ben-Oni, but Jacob calls him Benjamin, and he buries Rachel and sets a pillar on her grave and travels on. And, between Jacob's burying Rachel and his coming to Isaac in Hebron and sojourning there, Reuben lies with Bilhah, and Jacob

hears of that. And Isaac dies at the age of 180 years, and this chapter closes with Jacob and Esau burying Isaac.

And the 36<sup>th</sup> chapter says Esau was Edom, lists some of his descendants, and says that, because he and Jacob were too rich to dwell together, he went away from Jacob to Seir with his wives, children, and wealth, and it closes by saying he's the father of the Edomites.

In the 37<sup>th</sup> chapter Joseph is seventeen years old, and, from feeding the flock with his brothers and the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, he brings his father an ill repute of them. But this chapter says that, because Joseph was the son of Jacob's old age, Jacob loved him more than he loved his other sons, and in it Jacob gives him a coat of many colors. So his brothers, seeing that their father loves Joseph more, hate him for that and hate him more when he tells them of two dreams he has.

They and Jacob interpret the dreams to mean they'll bow to him, and Jacob rebukes him for the dreams. But, after sending his brothers to Shechem to feed the flock, he sends him to them, and, seeing him coming, they consider killing him. Reuben, thinking of returning later to save him, talks the others into throwing him into a pit instead of shedding his blood, but, in Reuben's absence, some Ishmaelite traders pass with their camels, and Judah talks the others into selling him instead, for the profit. So, after some Midianite merchantmen pass, they take Joseph's coat of many colors from him and sell him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

This chapter doesn't make clear whether the Ishmaelites and the Midianites are the same group, but, since the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter says Midian was a son of Abraham's second wife, God's telling Abram in the sixteenth chapter that Ishmael shall dwell with his brothers may explain that.

But, whichever, when Reuben returns, he finds the pit empty. He rends his clothes, but the brothers kill a kid, dip the coat in its blood, and convince Jacob that an evil beast devoured Joseph. They try to comfort him, but he weeps, mourns many days, and says he'll go to the grave mourning for his son, and this chapter ends with the Midianites selling Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, captain of the guard.

And neither does the *Miqra* say whether Joseph or his brothers knew Ishmael and Midian were their grandfather Isaac's brothers. And the 38<sup>th</sup> chapter leaves the story of Joseph to tell of Judah going from his brothers to an Adullamite whose name is Hirah, seeing a Canaanite whose name is Shuah, taking her, and going into her. And next in this chapter she bears a son Judah calls Er, and she also bears two sons she calls Onan and Shelah, and Judah takes for Er a wife whose name is Tamar. But, because Er is evil in God's sight, God kills him.

So Judah tells Onan to marry Tamar and raise seed for his brother, but Onan, knowing the seed won't be his, spills it onto the ground, and, because that displeases God, God also kills Onan, and Judah, fearing Shelah might die also, tells Tamar to go to her father's house and wait for Shelah to grow enough to marry.

In time, Shuah dies also, and Judah is comforted, and he and the Adullamite to whom he's turned go with sheepshearers to Timnath. And Tamar, seeing that Shelah's grown but that she hasn't been given to him, wraps herself, covers herself with a veil, and sits in an open place on the way to Timnath. And Judah, thinking she's a harlot, goes into her.

She asks him what he'll give her, and he tells her he'll give her a kid from the flock, and she asks him for his signet, bracelets, and staff, as a pledge until he sends the kid. He sends the Adullamite with the kid, but the people there tell the Adullamite that no harlot was there, and three months later Judah is told that Tamar has played harlot and is with child. So Judah orders that she be brought forth and burned.

But she shows him the pledge, and he acknowledges that it's his and says that, because he didn't give her Shelah, she's more righteous than he. And Tamar bears twins, and the midwife ties a scarlet thread to the hand emerging first, but the twin to whom the hand belongs draws it back. So his brother comes out first, and the one with the thread is called Zarah, and his brother is called Pharez.

The *Miqra* doesn't say what happens to Shelah, but the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter returns to the story of Joseph. And, though the 37<sup>th</sup> chapter says Midianites sold him to Potiphar, the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Potiphar buying him from Ishmaelites. And, next in the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter, Potiphar sees that God is with Joseph and gives him charge of all he has, excepting the bread Potiphar eats.

And then Potiphar's wife asks Joseph to lie with her. Joseph, saying he can't do that wickedness against God, refuses, but she catches his garment as he leaves, shows it to Potiphar, and says the Hebrew he brought to them came in to her to mock her. So Potiphar puts Joseph into the prison where Pharaoh's prisoners are bound.

But God also gives Joseph favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. So the keeper of the prison gives Joseph charge of all the prisoners and all they do. And this chapter closes by saying God made everything Joseph did prosper.

The fortieth chapter begins with Pharaoh putting his butler and his baker into the prison where Joseph is, and there they dream dreams and have no interpreter, and Joseph asks them why their countenance is fallen.

In reply to their telling him, he asks them whether interpretations don't belong to God, but he interprets their dreams. He says the baker's means

Pharaoh shall hang him and that the butler's means Pharaoh shall restore him to favor, and he asks the butler to show kindness to him, mention him to Pharaoh, and bring him out of the prison. And the Pharaoh has a feast on his birthday, hangs the baker, and restores the butler to his butlership.

The butler forgets Joseph, but the 41<sup>st</sup> chapter begins with Pharaoh dreaming two dreams two years later, calling all the magicians and wise men, and telling them the dreams. And none of them can interpret them, and then the Butler remembers Joseph and tells Pharaoh what Joseph did for him in the prison, and they call Joseph from the prison. So he shaves, changes his raiment, and goes to Pharaoh.

Pharaoh tells him he's heard he can interpret dreams, and Joseph replies that not he but God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace, and Pharaoh tells him the dreams. Joseph tells him the two dreams are one, that they mean seven years of great plenty shall come throughout Egypt, that seven years of famine shall arise after them, and that the reason Pharaoh dreamed the dream twice is that God established it and soon shall bring it to pass.

And he advises Pharaoh to appoint someone to store a fifth of the production of the plentiful years, and the advice seems good to Pharaoh and his servants. So, asking whether he can find such a man in whom is the spirit of God, Pharaoh tells Joseph that God has shown him that no one is as discreet and wise as Joseph, and, setting Joseph over his house and appointing him to rule his people, he takes a ring from one of his hands, puts it onto one of Joseph's, dresses him in fine linen, puts a gold chain around his neck, and makes him ride in his second chariot. And people cry before Joseph and bow their knees.

Joseph's thirty years old when he stands before Pharaoh, and Pharaoh also gives him the daughter of the priest of On to be his wife. Her name's similar to Potiphar's, and she bears Joseph two sons he calls Manasseh and Ephraim, and, during the seven years of plenty, he gathers corn as the sand of the sea. So, while the years of dearth are in all the lands, in Egypt is bread.

And this chapter ends with people, because the famine is sore in all the lands, coming to Joseph to buy corn in Egypt.

And the 42<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins with Jacob seeing that grain is in Egypt and asking his sons why they're looking at one another. He sends ten of them to Egypt to buy corn, but, to keep mischief from befalling Benjamin, he keeps him at home. And in Egypt the ten bow their faces to the earth before Joseph.

Joseph knows them, but, also remembering his dreams, he makes himself strange to them and accuses them of coming to spy the nakedness of the land. And, when they tell him they're twelve brothers and sons of one man in the land of Canaan and that one of them isn't and that the youngest is with their

father, he he calls them spies again. And he tells them he'll imprison nine of them while one brings the youngest there to prove them.

But, when they've been three days in ward, he tells them he'll keep but one of them, and they rebuke themselves for what they did to Joseph, and Reuben tells them he told them not to sin against the child but that they didn't listen. Because Joseph speaks to them through an interpreter, they don't know he understands them, and, when he hears their conversation, he turns from them and weeps. But he turns back and binds Simeon.

And they leave him and return to Jacob. But Joseph orders filling their sacks with grain, restoring their money to the sacks, and giving them provisions for the way. And on the way one of them opens his sack to feed his ass and finds his money in it, and their hearts fail them. And at home they find in their sacks all the money they've paid for the grain.

They tell Jacob all that happened, and Reuben tells Jacob to kill his two sons if he doesn't return from Egypt with Benjamin, but Jacob says his son won't go down with them. He tells them that Joseph isn't, that Simeon isn't, that now they'll take Benjamin away while Benjamin's brother is dead, and that then he'd be left alone. And he says that, were anything to befall Benjamin by their way, they'd bring down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

But the 43<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins with the famine sore in the land and their having eaten all the grain they brought from Egypt. So Jacob tells his sons to go again and buy a little food, and Judah reminds him of what Joseph told them, and Jacob asks his sons why they dealt so ill with him in telling the man they had a brother. And they tell him the man straitly asked them of their kindred, whether their father was still alive, and whether they had another brother.

And Judah tells Jacob to send Benjamin with him, for them and their little ones not to die. And, saying he'll be surety for Benjamin, he asks that, if he doesn't return him, he bear the blame forever. So Israel tells them to take presents, the money they found in their sacks, and double the money for grain.

When Joseph sees Benjamin, he tells the ruler of his house to bring them in and kill for them to dine with him, but that also frightens them. So they tell Joseph's steward that they found the money in their sacks, that they don't know who put it there, and that they've brought the money back, with presents and double the money for more grain, but the steward says he had their money and that their god gave them the money in their sacks, and he brings Simeon to them and takes them into Joseph's house. And he gives them food for their beasts and water to wash their feet, and they take the presents to Joseph, and again they bow to him. And Joseph turns from them, weeps in his chamber, washes his face, returns to them, and gives the order to set the bread.

The Egyptians, because eating with Hebrews is an abomination to them, eat separately. But Joseph's brothers sit before Joseph in order of their age, and Joseph sends Benjamin five times the food he sends to the others, and they marvel at one another. And this chapter closes with Joseph's brothers drinking merrily with him while he doesn't tell them who he is.

And, in the 44<sup>th</sup> chapter, he lets them leave. But he tells his steward to return their money to their sacks, put his silver cup into the sack of the youngest, and follow them and find the cup, and the steward does. Reminding him that they'd returned the money they'd found in their sacks after their first purchase, they ask that the person in whose sack the cup is die and that the others of them be bondmen, but Joseph, when they're again in his house, demands that the person in whose hands the cup was found be his servant and that the others return in peace to their father. And Judah, telling Joseph he's promised to be surety for Benjamin, asks that he be Joseph's servant, in Benjamin's stead.

But the 45<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Joseph being unable to refrain himself, ordering that the others there leave his presence, and telling his brothers who he is.

He weeps so loudly that the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh hear him. And, telling his brothers that five years of famine remain and telling them, because God sent him to Egypt to be there to save them and their father and their posterity from the famine, not to be grieved or angry with themselves, he tells them to hurry and tell their father what they've seen, and to bring him there. And he and Benjamin weep on one another's necks, and he kisses his other ten brothers, and Pharaoh hears of all that, and, commanding Joseph to tell his brothers to bring their father and their households to Egypt and to take wagons from Egypt for their children and wives, he says he'll give them the good of the land of Egypt and that they'll eat the fat of the land.

So Joseph complies and also gives his brothers changes of raiment, but he gives Benjamin five changes of raiment and three hundred pieces of silver, and he sends them with ten asses laden with corn and meat for Jacob for the way and with ten asses laden with other goods of Egypt.

Jacob's heart faints when they tell him Joseph's alive, but, when he sees the wagons, his spirit revives, and this chapter closes with Jacob saying Joseph's being alive and his going to see him before he dies is enough.

The 46<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Israel taking his journey with all he has, coming to Beer-Sheba, and offering sacrifices to the god of Isaac, and there, telling him not to fear going to Egypt, God says he'll make him a great nation there and bring him back and that Joseph shall put his hand on Israel's eyes. And this chapter, listing all the children, grand-children, and great grand-children of Israel who go, says the number of the house of Jacob, including

Joseph and his two sons, was seventy. And the list includes Dinah and Judah's sons Shelah and Zerah, but the *Miqra* mentions none of those three again.

Next in this chapter Jacob sends Judah before him to Joseph for Joseph to direct him to the land of Goshen. Joseph meets Jacob and weeps on his neck a good while, and Jacob tells Joseph to let him then die because he's seen Joseph's face still alive, and Joseph tells Jacob he'll tell Pharaoh his father's house has come to him. But he tells Jacob to tell Pharaoh, when he asks him his occupation, that it's been about cattle, and this chapter closes by saying the reason for that was that every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.

And the 47<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Jacob talking with Pharaoh. He tells Pharaoh his people are shepherds, and Pharaoh tells him they can dwell in the best of the land, in Goshen. And Pharaoh tells him to make any workers among his people rulers over Pharaoh's cattle, and he asks Jacob his age, and Jacob replies that the years of his pilgrimage are 130 and that few and evil have been the days of his life.

And also in this chapter Joseph uses the famine to buy for Pharaoh all the herds and land of Egypt that Pharaoh hasn't assigned to the priests or to Israel. He lets the other Egyptians live on the land, but he requires them to pay Pharaoh a fifth of its production, while Israel lives in the land of Goshen, has possessions there, and grows and multiplies exceedingly. But, after seventeen years in Egypt, Israel approaches death.

And he calls Joseph to him and asks him to swear not to bury him in Egypt but bury him in his fathers' burying place, and this chapter ends with Joseph swearing and Israel bowing on the bed's head.

In the 48<sup>th</sup> chapter, Joseph is told Jacob is sick. So he takes his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to him, and Jacob, telling him Ephraim and Manasseh are his and shall be his as are Reuben and Simeon, summarizes events from God's promise to him at Beth-El to his burying Rachel as he approached Bethlehem, and then he sees Joseph's sons and asks who they are. And, when Joseph tells him, he tells Joseph to bring them near to him for him to bless them.

His eyes are dim for age, and Joseph guides Manasseh toward Israel's right hand and Ephraim toward his left hand, but Israel wittingly puts his left hand on Manasseh's head and his right hand on Ephraim's.

Because Manasseh's older, that displeases Joseph. So he tells Jacob that, but Jacob says he knows it and that Manasseh shall become a people and be great but that his younger brother shall be greater. And this chapter ends with Israel telling Joseph he's given him a portion above his brothers of what he took from the hand of the Amorite with his sword and his bow. But, by then in the *Miqra*, Israel hasn't taken anything from any Amorite.



In the 49<sup>th</sup> chapter Jacob tells his twelve sons what will become of them. He tells Reuben that, because he defiled his father's bed, he'll not excel, and he tells Simeon and Levi that instruments of cruelty are in their habitations, that their anger is curses, and that he'll divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel. But he tells Judah that his brothers will praise him, that his hand shall be on the neck of his enemies, that the scepter shall not depart from him until Shiloh comes, and that the gathering of the people shall be to him. And, after promising lesser degrees of prosperity and power to his other seven sons, he praises Joseph and cites blessings of God for him.

And then he asks his sons to bury him in the cave of children of Heth. He tells them Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rebekah are buried there and that he buried Leah there. And this chapter closes with Jacob gathering his feet into the bed, yielding up the ghost, and being gathered to his people.

And the fiftieth and final chapter of Genesis begins with Joseph falling on his father's face and weeping and kissing him. And he commands his physician servants to embalm Israel, and the Egyptians fulfil forty days for the embalming and mourn for Israel seventy days. And Pharaoh accepts Joseph's request to keep his promise to bury Jacob in the land of Canaan.

And, leaving only their children, all of the house of Israel go with him. And all of the house of Pharaoh go with them and mourn with them in great lamentation on a threshing floor beyond the Jordan. And Canaanites see that and say it's a grievous mourning for the Egyptians.

When they return to Egypt, Joseph's brothers, fearing he'll punish them for what they did to him, beg his forgiveness. But, asking whether he's in the place of God, he says they meant evil but that God meant it to be good, and, promising to nourish them and their little ones, he tells them not to fear. And he also tells them God will visit them and take them out of there to the land he promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And he takes an oath from them that they'll take his bones from there.

And the Book of Genesis closes with Joseph dying at the age of 110 years and being embalmed and put into a coffin in Egypt.

But the first chapter of the Book of Exodus says a king arose in Egypt who didn't know Joseph, that the children of Israel multiplied and waxed mighty and filled the land, that Pharaoh directed dealing with them wisely to keep them from allying in war with Egypt's enemies, that he directed setting taskmasters over them to afflict them with burdens, and that the children of Israel built treasure cities for him.

But it says they continued to multiply. In this chapter Pharaoh makes their lives bitter and directs midwives to kill their sons, but the midwives fear

God, let the sons live, and reply to Pharaoh's asking them why by telling him the Hebrew women are more lively than the Egyptian women and deliver children before the midwives arrive. And, for fearing God, God gives the midwives houses, but this chapter closes with Pharaoh directing casting the sons into the river.

In the second chapter, a man of the house of Levi takes to wife a daughter of Levi, and she bears a son. Seeing that the son is good, she hides him for three months, until she can no longer hide him, and then she caulks an ark of bulrushes, puts him into it, and lays it among the flags by the riverbank. And his sister stands away and watches to see what becomes of him.

And then Pharaoh's daughter comes to the river to bathe and sees him crying. She has compassion for him and says he's one of the Hebrews' children, and his sister offers to find a Hebrew woman to nurse him, and Pharaoh's daughter accepts the offer. So the child grows, and his mother returns him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he becomes Pharaoh's daughter's son, and she names him Moses.

But, after growing more, he goes out to see his brothers and their burden. And, seeing an Egyptian smite one of them, he looks about, kills the Egyptian, and hides him in the sand, and the next day he sees two Hebrews striving with each other and asks the one who's wrong why he smote the other. So, asking Moses who made him prince and judge over them, he asks Moses whether he'll kill him as he did the Egyptian.

So Moses fears and says the killing is known, and Pharaoh hears of it and seeks to kill Moses, and Moses flees to the land of Midian, and there some shepherds drive the seven daughters of the priest of Midian from drawing water and filling troughs to water their father's flock, and Moses stands up for them and waters their flock.

So Reuel, their father, asks them why they returned so soon, and they tell him what Moses did for them. So Reuel tells them to call him to eat, and Moses is content to dwell with them, and Reuel gives Moses his daughter Zipporah. And she bears Moses a son Moses calls Gershom.

But, in time, the Pharaoh from whom Moses fled dies, and the cry of the children of Israel in bondage goes up to God, and God remembers his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The third chapter calls Moses' father-in-law Jethro and not Reuel, but it begins with Moses keeping his flock and leading it to the back side of the desert and coming to Horeb, the mountain of God, and there the angel of God appears to Moses in a flame in the midst of a bush.

The fire doesn't consume the bush, and God, telling Moses to remove his shoes because he's standing on holy ground, tells him he's seen the affliction

of his people in Egypt, that he's come to deliver them from it to a good and large land flowing with milk and honey, that it's the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and that he'll send him to Pharaoh to bring the people out of Egypt.

Moses asks God his name, and God tells him he is what he is and to tell them I Am has sent him, but he also says his name forever to all generations will be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and he tells Moses to gather the elders of Israel and tell them the God of their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob appeared to him, has visited them and seen what's done to them in Egypt, and will do what he's told Moses he'll do.

And he tells Moses the elders will listen to him but that Pharaoh won't, that he'll smite Egypt with all his wonders, that then Pharaoh will let them go, that he'll give the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, and that they won't go empty, that every woman will borrow of the Egyptians silver, gold, and raiment they'll put on their children, that they'll spoil the Egyptians.

The fourth chapter begins with Moses telling God the people won't believe him, but God tells him to throw his staff onto the ground, and, when Moses does, it becomes a serpent. Moses flees from it, but God tells him to take it by its tail. And, when Moses does that, it becomes a staff again.

And then God tells him to put his hand into his bosom. When he brings it out, it's leprous, but God tells him to put it into his bosom again, and, when he draws it out again, it becomes like his other flesh. And then God tells him that, if they believe neither of those signs, he should pour water from the river onto the land. He says that then the water will become blood.

But then Moses replies that he isn't eloquent, and God's anger kindles against him, and he asks him who made a man's mouth and makes the deaf, the dumb, the blind, or the seeing. But Moses replies to that by asking God to send someone else, and then God tells him he'll send his Levite brother Aaron to meet him, that he knows Aaron can speak well, and that he'll put words into Aaron's mouth and tell Moses what to do. And he also says Aaron will be glad at heart when he sees Moses.

So Moses asks Jethro for permission to go, and Jethro grants it. And God tells Moses that all the men in Egypt seeking his life are dead. So Moses sets his wife and son on an ass and goes with the rod of God in hand, and God tells him to tell Pharaoh that God said Israel's his firstborn and that he'll kill Pharaoh's firstborn if he refuse let Israel go to serve him.

God meets Moses at an inn and seeks to kill him, but Zipporah circumcises their son with a sharp stone and throws the foreskin at Moses' feet and calls him a bloody husband, and then God lets him go. And Aaron meets Moses at the mount of God and kisses him, and Moses tells him what God told

him and of the signs, and, after telling the elders of Israel the words God told Moses, Aaron does the signs. And they believe Aaron and Moses and bow their heads and worship.

So the fifth Chapter begins with Moses and Aaron telling Pharaoh the god of Israel asked that his people be permitted to hold a feast for him in the wilderness. Pharaoh, replying that he doesn't know God, tells Moses and Aaron they're keeping the people from their labor, and he commands the taskmasters to increase their burden by giving them no straw for the bricks they make. He requires them to gather the straw but not diminish their production.

So the officers of the Israelites futilely complain to Pharaoh and tell Moses and Aaron that God should judge them for making their savor abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh and his servants to put a sword into their hands to slay them, and this chapter closes with Moses telling God he hasn't delivered the people and that, since he sent him to speak in his name, he's done evil to them.

But the sixth chapter begins with God telling Moses he'll keep his promises and telling him to tell the other Israelites that. And, saying Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob didn't know him by his name Jehovah, he repeats some of his promises and briefly lists some of his previous interaction with the Israelites, and this chapter also lists some descendants of Israel. But most of the list is descendants of Moses' and Aaron's great grandfather Levi.

In the listing, Levi has three sons, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, and Amram is one of Kohath's sons. Amram takes his father's sister Jochebed to wife, and she bears him Moses and Aaron; Aaron takes Elisheba to wife, and she bears him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar; and Eleazar's wife bears him Phinehas. But this chapter, returning to earlier chronology of this narrative, ends with Moses telling God his lips are uncircumcised and asking how Pharaoh shall hearken to him.

And the seventh chapter tells other versions and details of other earlier events. In it God tells Moses to behold that he's made him a god to Pharaoh and that Aaron shall be his prophet. It repeats some of God's instructions to Moses and says Moses was eighty years old when he and Aaron spoke to the Pharaoh and that Aaron was 83 years old. And it tells of their showing to Pharaoh the signs of the staff becoming a serpent and the water becoming blood. But, in this chapter, God tells Moses to tell Aaron to use Aaron's staff.

But the fish die, and the river stinks, and the Egyptians can't drink the water. And Pharaoh calls wise men and sorcerers, and the magicians of Egypt do the same with their enchantments, but Aaron's staff swallows their staffs. And, with blood everywhere, the Egyptians dig around the river but can't drink water from it. And yet, as God promised, Pharaoh doesn't hearken to Moses and Aaron. His heart is hardened, and he turns into his house.

So, in the eighth chapter, a week after that plague, God sends Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh again, and Aaron and his rod inflict more plagues. Frogs come from the river and invade the Egyptians' houses and bodies, and the dust of Egypt becomes lice invading their houses, and flies do the same and corrupt the land. The magicians bring frogs from the river, but, unable to bring lice, they tell Pharaoh they're the finger of God. And, during each plague, Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron he'll let the people go. But, after each plague remits, he hardens his heart again.

And three more plagues are in the ninth chapter. A murrain kills the Egyptians' livestock but not the Israelites', and handfuls of ashes Moses and Aaron take from a furnace become dust causing the Egyptians boils, and hail and fire kill the Egyptians' crops. And, because of the boils, the magicians can't stand before Moses, but Pharaoh responds to those three plagues as he did to the first three.

And two more plagues are in the tenth chapter. Locusts fill the Egyptians' houses and eat their crops, and three days of darkness is in the land of Egypt while light is in the Israelites' houses. In this chapter Pharaoh tries to negotiate, responding to the locusts by telling Moses to take the adult Israelites but not their little ones and responding to the darkness by saying their little ones may go but not their livestock. But, saying they'll go with their young and their old, that Pharaoh must give them sacrifices, and that not a hoof will be left behind, Moses refuses to negotiate. So Pharaoh tells Moses that Moses will die if he sees Pharaoh's face again, and Moses tells Pharaoh that he's spoken well and will see his face no more.

But, in the eleventh chapter, after God directs the fulfillment of one of his earlier promises, Moses promises Pharaoh one more plague and says God also promised it.

God tells Moses to tell his people to borrow jewels of silver and gold from their neighbors. And, for that spoiling, with Moses great in the eyes of Pharaoh's servants and people, God gives the Israelites favor in the sight of the Egyptians. But Moses also tells Pharaoh that God also said he'll go out at about midnight and kill all the firstborn of Egypt.

He says each firstborn, from Pharaoh's firstborn to the beasts', shall die. He says a cry shall be throughout the land of Egypt like none that's been or shall be anymore. And he goes out from Pharaoh in great anger.

And the twelfth chapter begins with God telling Moses and Aaron that to them that month shall be the beginning of months and be the first month of the year. He tells them to tell the congregation of Israel to take for each house a yearling lamb with no blemish, and he directs that the houses for which a lamb is too much share it with other houses. And he directs killing the lambs that

evening and striking blood from the lambs onto the doorposts and lintels of the houses, and he directs that they eat the lambs whole with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. And he directs that they either leave none of it until morning or burn in the morning what remains.

And he tells them to eat it in haste, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staffs in their hands, and he calls that God's Passover. He says he'll kill the firstborn that night and that he's the lord and will bring judgement on the gods of Egypt, but that he'll pass over the houses with blood on their doorposts and lintels. And he says that, throughout the generations of the Israelites, they'll keep that day as a memorial and a feast to God by an ordinance forever, that the feast shall be seven days of eating unleavened bread, and that the soul of anyone who eats leavened bread during those seven days shall be cut off from Israel. And Moses calls the elders of Israel, tells them all that, and tells them to tell their children, when they ask, the meaning of the service.

And God kills all the firstborn as Egypt promised, and the great cry is in Egypt, and the Israelites spoil their neighbors, and the children of Israel, about six hundred thousand men besides children and a mixed multitude of flocks and herds, journey from Rameses to Succoth

And, saying that Israel dwelt in Egypt 430 years, this chapter, after giving other instructions for the Passover feast, including both that no stranger shall eat of it who isn't circumcised and that one law shall be for the Israelites and the strangers sojourning among them, closes by saying that on that day God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, by their armies.

The thirteenth chapter begins with God telling Moses to sanctify all the firstborn of Israel, both men and beasts, to God. In it God repeats some of his instructions and promises, and, to keep the people from seeing war and repenting and returning to Egypt, he leads them by way of the Red Sea and not by way of the land of the Philistines. And this chapter also says that Moses, because of Joseph's having sworn the children of Israel to take his bones with them and having said God would visit them, took the bones.

And it closes by saying that, to lead the way, God went before the Israelites in a pillar of a cloud, that, to give them light, by night he went before them in a pillar of fire, and that he didn't take the pillars from before the people.

In the fourteenth chapter Pharaoh and an army of horsemen and 600 chariots pursue the Israelites, but God says he'll be honored upon Pharaoh, for Pharaoh to know God's the lord. Near the Red Sea, the Israelites ask Moses whether he took them away to die in the wilderness because not enough graves were in Egypt, but Moses tells them not to fear, to stand still and see God's salvation, and that God will fight for them. And God tells him to lift his rod and

stretch his hand over the sea to divide it for the children of Israel to go through it dry, and an angel of God uses a cloud pillar to keep the Egyptians from seeing the Israelites before they reach the sea. And at the sea Moses stretches out a hand. And the sea divides into two walls.

The Egyptians try to follow the Israelites, but God takes the wheels from their chariots and tells Moses to stretch out his hand again. And, when he does, as the morning appears, the sea returns to its strength and overthrows the Egyptians in the midst of it, leaving none of them. So, seeing the Egyptians dead on the shore, the Israelites fear and believe God and his servant Moses.

So, in the fifteenth chapter, Moses and the children of Israel sing a song of triumph praising God and the promise of sanctuary for the children of Israel in the mountain of their inheritance and saying that the dukes of Edom shall be amazed, that trembling shall take hold of the mighty men of Moab, and that the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

And Miriam, who this chapter says is Aaron's sister and a prophet, takes a timbrel in hand, and all the women go after her with timbrels and dances. And Miriam answers them, telling them to sing to God for his triumphing gloriously, throwing the horses and riders into the sea. But, in the next three days of travel in the wilderness, the Israelites find no water.

And, when they find water, they can't drink it. It's bitter, and the Israelites murmur against Moses, but Moses cries to God. And God shows him a tree, and Moses throws the tree into the water, making it sweet.

And he makes the people an ordinance to hearken to God. He tells them that, if they do what's right in God's sight, heed God's commandments, and keep his statutes, God won't do to them what he did to the Egyptians. And they travel on to a place with twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees, and they camp there by the water.

But, in the sixteenth chapter, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they left Egypt, when they come to another place, the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmurs against Moses and Aaron.

Asking them whether they brought them to the wilderness to die of hunger, they say that in Egypt they sat by flesh pots and ate bread to the full, and, telling Moses he'll rain bread from heaven in the morning and give flesh to eat in the evening, God, to prove whether they'll obey his law, feeds them.

The flesh he gives them is quail, and the bread is as small as frost but like coriander seed tasting like honey wafers, and, because they don't know what it is, the Israelites call it manna. And, excepting for the sabbath, God tells them to gather the manna each day and leave none for the next day, and, forbidding gathering it on the sabbath, he tells them to gather for the sabbath twice as much the day before the sabbath. But some of them gather more than

they need, leave it for a day that isn't the sabbath, and find it breeding worms and stinking. And some go out to gather it on the sabbath and find none.

So God asks Moses how long they'll refuse to keep his commandments and his laws. But, saying God commanded keeping an omer of manna to lay before him for their generations, Moses tells Aaron to put the omer in a pot. And this chapter says the Israelites ate manna for forty years, until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan, a land inhabited.

But in the seventeenth chapter they travel on and again have no water and again murmur against Moses. And God tells Moses to smite a rock in Horeb with the rod with which he smote the river. He says he'll stand before Moses on the rock and that water will come from it.

It does, and the Israelites also smite the Amalekites in this chapter. Amalek fights Israel, and Moses tells Joshua to choose men to fight back while he stands on a hill with the rod of God in hand, and Israel prevails when Moses holds up the hand with the rod in it, and Amalek prevails when he lets it down. But Moses' hands are heavy.

So Aaron and Hur, who go with him to the top of the hill, put a stone beneath him. So he sits on the stone, and they stand on each side of him and stay up his hands, and his hands are steady until the sun sets. And Joshua discomfits Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword, and God tells Moses to write in a book and tell Joshua he'll end remembrance of Amalek beneath heaven. But this chapter closes with Moses building an altar because God swore to war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Other than by calling Joshua the son of Nun, neither this chapter nor any previous chapter of the *Miqra* identifies either Joshua or Hur, and no other chapter otherwise identifies Nun.

The eighteenth chapter says Moses had sent Zipporah away, and it begins with Jethro hearing of the good God did for Israel and bringing her back to him with his two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. And Moses bows to Jethro, kisses him, and tells him of the flight from Egypt and the travail along the way. And Jethro says that then he knows God is greater than all gods.

And, seeing Moses judging the people from morning to evening and telling him doing that will wear him and his people away, Jethro advises Moses to continue judging great matters but to appoint judges to judge small matters. So Moses chooses able men from throughout Israel and makes them rulers over thousands and hundreds and fifties. But this chapter ends with Moses letting Jethro go away to his own land.

The nineteenth chapter begins in the third month of the exodus, and in it the children of Israel come to the wilderness of Sinai and pitch there, and Moses goes up to the mountain. God tells him there that he'll make Israel a



kingdom of priests, and he tells him to tell the people that and that, because the earth is his, if they obey his voice and keep his covenant, they'll be a peculiar treasure to God. And Moses tells them, and they say they'll comply, and Moses tells God.

Then God tells Moses to be ready for him to come down onto Mount Sinai on the third day in sight of all the people and to tell the people to sanctify themselves and wash their clothes. But, telling Moses to set boundaries, he says any man or beast other than Moses and Aaron who touches the mountain shall be stoned and put to death. And Moses brings out the people, and smoke is on the mountain, and God descends in fire.

And the voice of a trumpet sounds long and louder and louder, and Moses goes to the top of the mountain, but God tells him to go back down. He tells him he and Aaron may come up but that, if Moses lets the priests and the people come up, he'll break through on them. So Moses goes down and speaks to the people again.

And, in the twentieth chapter, God adds ten more commandments to his law. The first he tells the people is that they'll have no other gods before him, and the second is that, because he's a jealous god visiting the iniquity of the fathers onto the third and fourth generation, they'll neither make any likeness of anything that's on or above or beneath the earth nor bow down to such a likeness. The third is that they'll not take his name in vain, and the fourth is that, because he made the heaven, the earth, and the sea in six days and rested on the seventh, they'll not work on the sabbath. The fifth is that, for their lives to be long on the land he'll give them, they'll honor their father and their mother. The next four are that they'll not kill, commit adultery, steal, or bear false witness against their neighbors. And the tenth is that they'll not covet anything of their neighbors'.

But, when the people see the thundering and lightening, they stand far off. They say they'll hear if Moses speaks to them, but they ask Moses not to let God speak to them, because they'll die if he does, and Moses tells them that, to keep them from sinning, God came to prove them by his fear before their faces. And then Moses goes into the thick darkness where God is, and there God tells him to tell the people that they've seen that he's talked with them from heaven and to tell them again not to make gods of gold or silver to be with him.

And he tells him to tell them to make of the earth an altar to him, to sacrifice on it burnt offerings and peace offerings of sheep and oxen, and that he'll come to them and bless them in all the places where he records his name, but he tells them not to pollute by using a tool on it any altar of stone they build and not to discover their nakedness by ascending steps to an altar to him.

And, in the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter, God begins listing more commandments. Some of them elaborate on the ten commandments, but most of them in this chapter legislate slavery, beginning with limiting how long Israelites should own Israelites. He commands freeing them in the seventh year.

And he commands freeing with them their wives and children, if the marriage was before the purchase, but not if it wasn't. And he says that, if the slave tells his master he prefers to stay with the master to be with his wife and children, the master should take him to the judges and drive an awl through his ear at a doorpost. He says that then the slave will serve the master forever.

And next God says that, if a man sells his daughter into slavery, she shouldn't be released as menservants are. But he says that, if she doesn't please the master, he must let her be redeemed, that the master may not sell her to a strange nation, and that, if the master betroths to his son the daughter he's bought into slavery, he must deal with her as a daughter. And he requires freeing her if the son takes another wife.

And next God stipulates punishment for killing, stealing, and other harm. The basic rule is to pay in kind, but he's most specific in regard to men who strike and hurt a woman with child, if mischief follows. For that, he says the punishment shall be a life for a life, an eye for an eye, etc., but he says that, if no mischief follows, the punishment shall accord with what the husband lays on the perpetrator and with what the judges determine,

And he stipulates separately for slaves and oxen. He says the punishment for smiting the eye of a slave or his maid shall be freeing the slave, and he requires stoning an ox who gores and kills a man or a woman. But he stipulates that, if the ox isn't known to have pushed or gored previously, its owner be acquitted, but that, if the ox has a reputation for doing that, the owner shall also be killed. But, if the person the ox killed is a slave, he excepts the owner from that stipulation and requires that the recompense then be but thirty shekels of silver. And he similarly mitigates punishment for killing or harming slaves in other circumstances and for other behavior of oxen concerning slaves.

In the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter he stipulates considerations for various sorts of theft. He begins by saying a person killing, stealing, or selling another's ox or sheep shall restore five oxen for an ox or four sheep for a sheep. And he permits killing a thief while he's breaking in darkness, and, under other circumstances, he permits selling people for stealing.

And also in this chapter he stipulates considerations for enticing a virgin. He says the enticer of a virgin must marry her if she isn't betrothed but that, if her father refuses to give her to the enticer, the enticer must pay the dowry of virgins. And also in this chapter he forbids letting a witch live, and he requires putting to death anyone who lies with a beast, and he requires

destroying anyone sacrificing to a god other than him. And, forbidding vexing or oppressing a stranger, he tells the Israelites the reason is that they were strangers in Egypt.

And he forbids afflicting a widow or an orphan, usury against poor people, and keeping overnight raiment that's collateral for a debt. And, forbidding eating flesh that beast tear in fields, he requires casting it to dogs. And this chapter ends with God telling the Israelites they'll be holy men to him.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter he forbids following a multitude to do evil, bias toward the poor, and taking a gift to pervert the words of the righteous, and he stipulates that each seventh year be a sabbath for the land to rest and that then the poor and the beasts may eat from it. And, saying he'll send an angel before the Israelites to help destroy the inhabitants in the land he's promised, he directs heeding the angel. And, forbidding that the Israelites make any covenant with the inhabitants of that land, he says serving their gods will be a snare. But he tells them that, if they serve him, he'll take sickness from their midst.

In the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter Moses writes all the words of God, builds an altar with twelve pillars, one for each of the tribes of Israel, and, sacrificing and sprinkling blood on the altar and the people, reads the book of the covenant, and the people promise to comply with it, and Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel go up and see God.

As they eat and drink, a paved work of sapphire stone is under God's feet, but God says only Moses should come near him. And, telling Moses to come to him, he says that, for Moses to teach the others, he'll give him tablets of stone and a law and commandments he's written. And Joshua goes with Moses nearer to God, and this chapter calls Joshua Moses' minister, but only Moses goes into the cloud covering the mount. And this chapter closes by saying Moses was on the mount forty days and forty nights.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter God tells Moses to tell the children of Israel to offer materials for a sanctuary, an ark, a table, a candlestick, an ephod, and a breastplate. He says the sanctuary is for him to dwell among them and that Moses should put into the ark the testimony he'll give him. And he specifies some materials and design.

The materials he specifies in this chapter include jewels, gold, silver, brass, linen, skins, wood, incense, oil for anointing and light, and spices. And he tells Moses the ark should have a gold mercy seat where Moses can meet and commune with him between two gold cherubim, and he says the candlestick should be of gold and have six branches and that its bowls should be like almonds, and he also commands making gold tongs and snuff dishes. And he directs making staves and rings for carrying all that.

In the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter he calls the sanctuary a tabernacle and specifies its dimensions and more materials and design. In the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter he directs building an altar with horns, specifies tools and vessels for sacrifices, and gives more specifications for other components of the sanctuary. And in the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter he directs making garments in which Aaron and his sons should administer the priests' office.

The garments include ephods, miters, and breeches, with stones, images of pomegranates, the Urim and Thummim of judgement, and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and God directs engraving "holiness to the lord" on the miter. And, also in the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter, God directs anointing, consecrating, and sanctifying Aaron and his sons, for them to minister to him in the priests' office, and he says that, for them not to bear iniquity and die, the garments he specifies shall be on them when they come into the tabernacle of the congregation. And this chapter closes with God saying that being in the garments when coming near the altar to minister shall be a statute for Aaron and his seed forever.

In the 29<sup>th</sup> chapter God specifies how to hallow Aaron and his sons to minister to him in the priests' office. The instructions include killing some animals and putting some of the blood on Aaron's and his sons' right ears, right thumbs, and right big toes. And, after giving the instructions, God says he'll sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, that he'll sanctify Aaron and his sons to minister to him in the priests' office, that he'll dwell among the children of Israel and be their god, and that they'll know he's their god who brought them out of Egypt for that. And this chapter closes with God saying he's the lord their god.

The thirtieth chapter begins with God directing the construction and placement of the altar. And, telling Moses that Aaron shall light the lamps at evening, he says he should burn incense on the altar perpetually through his generations, and he forbids burning strange incense on it or making meat offerings, drink offerings, or burnt offerings on it. And he says that once each year, with the blood of the sin offering, Aaron shall make an atonement on its horns.

And, for Aaron and his sons to wash their hands and feet when they enter the tabernacle, he directs making a brass laver and putting it between the tabernacle and the altar. And, telling Moses that, when he takes the number of the children of Israel, each of the children of Israel, to keep plague from them, shall give God a ransom for his soul, and he says the ransom shall be that both the rich and the poor give half of the shekel of the sanctuary. And he also describes oil and incense and their use in the tabernacle.

And in the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter God appoints people to do the work of making the tabernacle and its furnishings. The first he names is Bezaleel, and he says

he's the son of Hur's son Uri of the tribe of Judah. And this chapter closes with God giving Moses two tables of stone written with God's finger.

But the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins with the people, seeing that Moses has delayed in coming down from the mount, asking Aaron to make gods. Aaron tells them to bring him their earrings, makes from them a golden calf, and builds before it an altar. And they take burnt offerings and peace offering to it, sit down to eat, and rise up to play.

So, telling Moses to go down because they've corrupted themselves, God says he's seen that the people are stiff-necked, and, telling Moses to leave him alone to consume them in his wrath, he says he'll make a great nation of Moses. But Moses asks God why he's angry at his people he's brought from Egypt and why the Egyptians should say he brought them out to kill them in the mountains and consume them from the face of the earth, and he reminds God of some of God's promises. So God repents, and Moses, with the two tables of testimony, with writing of God on both sides, turns from him.

Joshua tells Moses a sound of war is in the camp, but Moses says it's a sound of song, and, seeing the people dancing naked, he casts the tables from his hands and breaks them, burns the calf, grinds it to powder, strews it on water, makes the people drink it, and asks who's on God's side. So all the sons of Levi gather to him, and he tells them to go through the camp and kill every man's brother, companion, and neighbor. So three thousand Israelites fall that day.

But Moses returns to God and asks him, if he doesn't forgive their sin, to blot him from the book he's written. And God, after replying that he'll blot from his book whoever has sinned against him but telling Moses to go and lead the people to the place he's promised, says again that an angel will go before him. But this chapter closes by saying that, because the people made the calf Aaron made, God plagued them.

In the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter, again telling Moses to go to the land he's promised, God again says he'll drive the inhabitants from it by sending an angel before him, but he says that, because the people are stiff-necked, he won't go among them. And, telling Moses to tell them that, he tells him to tell them to put off their ornaments, for him to know what to do to them, and he tells him to tell them he'll come into the midst of them and consume them in a moment. So the people, when they hear that beside Mount Horeb, mourn and put off their ornaments.

And next Moses pitches the tabernacle far from the camp and calls it the tabernacle of the congregation. People seeking God go out to it, and Moses enters it, and the people stand in the doors of their tents and watch until he's in it. And then they see the cloudy pillar descend and stand at the door.

And, as God speaks to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend, they worship. And, before leaving Joshua in the tabernacle and returning to the people, Moses reminds God that he's told him to bring up the people, that he knows his name, and that he's found grace in his sight. But, telling God that God hasn't told him with whom he'll send him, he asks God to show him the way and to consider the nation of Israel God's people. And God replies that his presence shall go with Moses and that he'll give him rest.

But Moses tells God not to take the people up if God's presence doesn't go with them. And, asking God how else one can know the people have found grace, he says he and the people shall be separated from all the people of the earth in that way. And God says he'll do what Moses asked, but next Moses asks God to show him his glory.

God replies that no man can see his face but that he'll make all his goodness pass before Moses and that he'll proclaim his name before him, and, saying he'll be gracious and show mercy to whom he will and telling Moses to stand on a rock that's beside Moses, he tells him he'll put him in a cleft of the rock, cover him with his hand while he passes, and then take his hand away, for Moses to see his back parts but not his face.

The 34<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with God telling Moses to hew two more tablets of stone. Saying he'll write on those tablets what he wrote on the tablets Moses broke, he tells him to be ready to come up to Mount Sinai next morning and present himself to him at its top. And he tells him to let no man be seen on the mount and to let no flocks or herds feed before it.

And Moses obeys, and God passes before him, proclaiming that he's God, that he keeps mercy for thousands, and that he forgives iniquity and trespassing but visits the iniquity of fathers on children to the third and fourth generation. And, while repeating some promises and injunctions from other chapters, he adds some stipulations and commands, including breaking the idols and cutting down the groves of the people of the land he's promised. And he forbids seething a kid in its mother's milk.

And, after forty days, Moses descends with the new tablets. Aaron and the people, because the skin of Moses' face shines, are afraid to come near him, and, not knowing that, Moses talks with them. But then he puts a veil over his face that he removes when he's speaking with God before God.

In the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter, Moses tells the people what God commanded for the sanctuary, and the people willingly bring the materials. And, In the 36<sup>th</sup> chapter, Bezaleel and the other workers tell Moses the people have brought enough, and Moses commands that they offer no more for the sanctuary, and the workmen begin the work. So, either the chapters aren't in chronological order, or the tabernacle in the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter isn't the tabernacle God commanded

constructing, and in the 37<sup>th</sup> chapter Bezaleel makes the ark with the mercy seat and the cherubim, the table, the candlestick and other appurtenances, the staves and rings for carrying all that, and the anointing oil, incense, and spices.

In the 38<sup>th</sup> chapter, he makes the altar with a horn at each corner, the vessels and utensils for it, the staves and rings for carrying that, and the laver and curtains and other components of the sanctuary, and the 38<sup>th</sup> chapter also tells how much gold, silver, and brass the workers use and how much came from each of the 603,550 men it says went to be numbered.

In the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter, Bezaleel makes the garments for Aaron and his sons, and he and the other workers take to Moses all they've made, and this chapter, calling that the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, closes with Moses seeing that they've done what God commanded and blessing them.

The fortieth chapter begins with God telling Moses to set up the tabernacle of the congregation on the first day of the first month, and he gives Moses instructions for that, for dressing Aaron and his sons, and for using the altar. And, on the first day of the first month of the second year of the exodus from Egypt, Moses follows those and other instructions, puts the testimony into the ark, lights the lamps, and offers, as God commanded. But, when he finishes and sets up the hanging of the gate to the court around the tabernacle, he can't enter it. The cloud, because it abides there, covers the tabernacle, and the glory of God fills it.

And this chapter, the final chapter of the Book of Exodus, says the children of Israel traveled when the cloud was taken up but not when it wasn't, and it closes by saying that, in sight of all the house of Israel, the cloud of God was on the tabernacle by day and that fire was on it by night, throughout all their journeys.

In the first chapter of the Book of Leviticus God gives Moses instructions for preparing burnt offerings of a sweet savor to him. In its second chapter, beginning by saying the offerings should be of fine flower with oil and frankincense on it, God gives Moses instructions for presenting meat offerings, and he says that what a priest doesn't burn on the altar shall go to Aaron and his sons. And in the third chapter he gives instructions for preparing animals for peace offerings, says the peace offering is food made by fire for a sweet savor and that all the fat is God's, and instructs sprinkling blood on the altar and pouring it at its base, and this chapter closes with God saying a perpetual statute for generations shall be to eat neither fat nor blood,

In the fourth chapter he gives instructions for sin offerings from people who sin through ignorance. The kind of animal varies with the kind of person,

whether the persons are priests, all the congregation, rulers, or common persons, but each sacrifice involves the priest dipping a finger in the blood and sprinkling it seven times before God before the veil of the sanctuary. And, in each offering, the priest puts some of the blood on the horns of the altar.

And in the fifth chapter God gives instructions for trespass offerings. Trespasses may be touching an unclean thing, swearing to do evil or good, or ignorance of a holy thing of God's. And, depending on the kind of the trespass, the offerings may be animals, flour, or shekels of silver.

God calls some of the trespass offerings burnt offerings or sin offerings, and for those he requires sprinkling and pouring of blood on the side of the altar and at the bottom of it, and he also requires making amends for harm done concerning the holy things.

In the sixth chapter, he calls some lying and thievery trespasses, directs restoration and a trespass offering for that, gives other ritual directives for who may eat the offerings, and says a fire shall burn forever on the altar.

In the seventh chapter, he gives more stipulations for the burnt, trespass, peace, and sin offerings and adds wave and heave offerings to the kinds of offerings. He says the soul of anyone who touches an unclean thing and eats the flesh of a peace offering while his uncleanness is on him shall be cut off from his people and that so shall the soul of anyone who eats blood. And, while he doesn't specify the purpose of a heave offering, he says wave offerings are waved before God.

In the eighth chapter, Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons follow God's instructions for anointing, consecrating, and sanctifying Aaron and his sons for the priests' office, and they wave an offering during seven days of that, and, in the ninth chapter, on the eighth day, are more offerings of various kinds.

But the tenth chapter begins with Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu offering strange fire before God. So fire goes out from God and consumes them, and, commanding two of their cousins to carry them out of the camp, Moses tells Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar to let their brothers bewail the burning. And, to keep them from dying, he tells them not to uncover their heads or rend their clothes, and he tells them to eat the wave and heave offerings that are their due.

But he finds their sin offering burnt. So, telling Aaron God gave him the offerings to bear the iniquity of the congregation and make atonement for it before God, he asks Aaron why he didn't comply with those commands. But Aaron asks him whether, after what befell him on that day, God would have accepted his eating it before him. And, hearing that, Moses is content.

In the eleventh chapter God tells Moses what animals the children of Israel should or shouldn't eat. And he begins by saying they should eat beasts



that have cloven hooves and chew the cud but shouldn't eat those that accord with either criterion but not with both. Examples are camels, because they chew the cud but don't divide the hoof, and swine, because they divide the hoof but don't chew the cud. And, saying the animals they shouldn't eat are unclean to them, he tells how or whether they can clean things. And he tells how to clean oneself if one touches what's unclean.

And he says in the twelfth chapter that women shall be unclean after giving birth. He says they'll be unclean for two weeks after giving birth to a daughter but one week after giving birth to a son. And he requires them to bring at the end of either period a burnt offering and a sin offering to the priest at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

In the thirteenth chapter he tells Moses and Aaron how the priests should diagnose leprosy in people and clothing, what to do with clothing in response to various kinds of leprosy, and how to know whether they've cleaned it by washing it or should burn it.

And in the fourteenth chapter God tells Moses ways to clean people of leprosy. The ways, depending on the ability of the person, involve shaving heads, washing, offering animals, sprinkling blood, or offering fine flour they mingle with oil. And he also tells how to diagnose, after the people are in the land he's promised, various kinds of leprosy in houses, how to treat people who've lain in the houses, and how to dispose of the houses one can't clean.

In the fifteenth chapter he tells Moses and Aaron how to clean people who touch semen, menstruation, or women menstruating, how to clean the men and women who discharge in those ways, and how to clean the people and things they touch.

The sixteenth chapter begins with God telling Moses Aaron shall not at all times come into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat that's on the ark. He tells him Aaron shall come in with a young bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, that he'll attire himself in the linen clothing God earlier directed making, and that, before donning the clothing, he'll wash his flesh in fresh water. And God also tells Moses how Aaron shall make atonement for the sins of Israel.

The atonement involves a bullock and two goats, and Aaron, to decide which of the goats is to be the scapegoat, is to cast lots between them. The bullock is to be killed as a sin offering for Aaron and his house, and the goat that isn't the scapegoat is to be killed as a sin offering for the other people of Israel, but the scapegoat is to be presented alive before God. And Aaron, to put the sins of the children of Israel onto the scapegoat, is to lay his hands on its head and confess all their iniquities, transgressions, and sins.

And next Aaron's to send the scapegoat into the wilderness by a hand of a fit man who shall let the goat go, wash his clothes, bathe in fresh water, and return to the camp. And God says all that's to be an everlasting statute for the tenth day of the seventh month. And he says that day's also to be a sabbath of rest.

In the seventeenth chapter God tells Moses to tell Aaron that any child of Israel who kills an ox, a lamb, or a goat anywhere and doesn't bring it to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation to offer it to God shall be cut off from his people, that anyone who eats an animal that dies of itself must wash his clothes and bathe and shall be unclean until evening, that anyone who doesn't comply with that shall be cut off and bear his iniquity, and that all that shall also apply to strangers.

In the eighteenth chapter God forbids for the children of Israel the behavior of the lands of Egypt and Canaan. He forbids incest, including approaching one's sister as Abraham said he did, and he includes in that proscription marrying one's wife's sister while one's wife is alive. And, calling it abomination, he forbids lying with beasts and being with mankind as with womankind. And he forbids letting one's seed pass through fire to Moloch.

He says that, because the nations he'll cast out before them are defiled in those ways, the children of Israel shouldn't defile themselves in those ways, that, because the land is defiled by the defilement of those nations, it vomits out its inhabitants, and that he visited iniquity on it, and he tells Moses to tell the children of Israel to keep the land from spewing them out for defiling it.

In the nineteenth chapter, saying the purpose is to provide for the poor and the strangers, God forbids reaping the corners of fields or gathering the gleanings or every grape of a vineyard. And he also forbids rounding the corners of one's head, marring the corners of one's beard, cutting one's flesh for the dead, and printing marks on it. And he forbids letting cattle breed diversely, mingling seed one sows, and mingling linen with wool when one dresses. And he forbids keeping all night the wages of a hired man.

Saying the purpose is to keep the land from falling to whoredom and becoming full of wickedness, he forbids prostituting one's daughter. And, saying that, if a man lies carnally with a betrothed slave, he must bring a ram to the tabernacle of the congregation for a trespass offering, he directs that the woman be scourged but that, because she wasn't free, she shouldn't be killed. And he also forbids cursing the deaf and putting a stumbling block before the blind, and, directing loving one's neighbor as oneself, he includes strangers sojourning in the land. And, to keep people from being defiled by wizards and people who have familiar spirits, he forbids seeking after wizards and regarding people with familiar spirits.

In the twentieth chapter God tells Moses that any Israelite or stranger among the children of Israel who gives his seed to Moloch shall be stoned to death, that he'll set his face against any man who hides his eyes from that, and that he'll cut him off from his people. Listing other behavior for which the perpetrator shall die, he includes cursing one's mother or father, both the man and the woman if a man commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, men lying with men as with women, some kinds of incest, and both the man and the beast if a man lies with a beast. And he says a man who lies with a woman while she's menstruating shall be cut off from his people and that the retribution for lying with one's uncle's or brother's wife shall be to die childless.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter God forbids defilement by touching dead bodies, but he excepts bodies of one's children, parents, or virgin sister. He forbids marrying whores or women men have put away, and he requires burning any prostitute who's a daughter of a priest. And he requires that priests marry virgins.

He forbids that people with a blemish come near the altar to offer God's bread. And blemishes he specifies are blindness, lameness, a flat nose, scabs, scurvy, and a broken foot, hand, or stoness. But he says seed of Aaron with a blemish may eat God's bread.

In the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter God gives Moses more instructions particular to priests and sacrifices. Calling sacrifices the holy thing, he says members of the priests' family, anyone born in the priest's house, and any soul the priest buys with money may eat them. And, in the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter, he designates various feasts and gives Moses instructions for celebrating them, and Moses declares the feasts to the children of Israel.

In the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter, the son of an Israelite woman and an Egyptian man strives with an Israelite man in the camp, blasphemes the name of God, and curses. After taking him to Moses, the Israelites confine him while they wait for the mind of God to be shown to them, and God tells Moses to let those who heard the man take him out of the camp and let all the congregation stone him to death. And, besides requiring death for blasphemy, God repeats his injunction to respond in kind to other killing and harming.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter, for the people to eat during the sabbath years he's required for the land, God promises plenty in the year preceding each. And, directing that the year after each seventh sabbath year be a jubilee year, he requires permitting persons who sold property during the 49 years preceding each jubilee year to redeem it during the jubilee year, and he gives various stipulations for various kinds of property and various kinds of persons. And he stipulates that prices during the forty-nine years vary in proportion to the number of years remaining before the next jubilee year.

Stipulations are different for land than for houses, for houses in walled cities than for houses in cities with no walls, and for priests' property than for others' property. And, despite God's earlier requirement that one law be for both the Israelites and the strangers among them, the jubilee year redemption stipulations require freeing Israelite slaves during the jubilee year but don't require freeing strangers the Israelites have enslaved. Slaves, both Israelites and strangers, are one of the kinds of property to which God refers in this chapter, but in it God requires treating Israelites as hired servants and not as bond servants as they treat strangers. That suggests that God's law applies to constraints on strangers but not to blessings, and other chapters of the *Miqra* confirm that suggestion.

In the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter God promises prosperity and success in war for obeying him. And he promises failure in war and other horrors if they don't, and one of the horrors is eating one's children. And this chapter closes by saying those are the statutes and judgements and laws God made between him and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

But, in the 27<sup>th</sup> and final chapter of the book of Exodus, God adds regulations for various kinds of taxes for various kinds of persons and situations, and this chapter closes by saying those are the commandments God commanded to Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.

The first chapter of the Book of Numbers begins with God telling Moses, in the tabernacle of the congregation on the first day of the second month of the second year after they left Egypt, to number the children of Israel. But, in this chapter, he directs that he limit the numbering to those who are twenty years old or older and able to go out to war. And, because the Levites are to maintain the tabernacle, he also tells Moses not to number them.

Treating Ephraim and Manasseh as separate tribes, he names a person from each tribe to stand with Moses to do the numbering, and this chapter tells the total number for each tribe. The total for all tribes is 603,550, and, suggesting that the Book of Numbers begins before the building of the tabernacle, that's the same as the total in the 38<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Exodus. But, in the second chapter of the Book of Numbers, God gives Israel its order of march.

74,600, the number for Judah, is larger than the number for any other tribe, and God begins directing the order of march by saying Judah shall pitch on the east side, toward the rising sun. And he directs that Issachar and Zebulon pitch with Judah and that those three tribes set out first. And the total number of the three is 186,400.

God directs that Simeon and Gad pitch with Reuben on the south side and that they set forth in the second rank, and the total number in their camp is 151,450. He directs that Manasseh and Benjamin pitch with Ephraim on the west side and that they go forward in the third rank, and the total number in their camp is 108,100. And he directs that Asher and Naphtali pitch with Dan and that they go hindmost, and the total number in their camp is 157,600.

And he says the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward in the middle with the camp of the Levites. And, in the third chapter, God tells Moses to number the Levites, and Moses numbers the descendants of Merari, Gershon, and Kohath separately, and this chapter says where each group is to pitch around the tabernacle. And it specifies some of each group's duties.

And God also tells Moses that the Levites, and not all the first born of the other children of Israel he demanded in exchange for the Passover, shall be God's. And he tells Moses to number the firstborn males of the other children of Israel, and Moses finds that number to be 22,273, while the number of Levites is 22,000. So God tells Moses to redeem the additional 273 by taking from the people five shekels of the sanctuary for each of them and giving it to Aaron and his sons.

In the fourth chapter, God tells Moses and Aaron that, before the descendants of Kohath carry for travel the ark, the altar, the table, and the candlestick and other implements of the sanctuary, Aaron and his sons should cover them. He says the covering of the ark is to be the veil of the sanctuary and that the covering of other things is to be blue cloth with badgers' skin over it. And he says the reason for the covering is to keep the Kohathites from dying from seeing the components of the sanctuary.

And also in this chapter God directs that the descendants of Gershon carry the covering of the tabernacle and that the descendants of Merari carry its structural components, and he tells Moses to number the Levites from thirty to fifty years old who do the service of the ministry and the service of the burden of the tabernacle, and that number is 8580.

The fifth chapter begins with God telling Moses to put all the lepers out of the camp. And, with more judgements for sins in this chapter, he tells how to judge whether a woman's adulterous if her husband accuses her of adultery while neither he nor anyone else has witnessed the adultery. And the judgement involves a jealousy offering and some bitter water into which a priest puts dust from the floor of the tabernacle.

The priest requires the woman to drink the water and ask God to make a curse and an oath that her belly swell and her thighs rot if she's guilty, and then the priest writes the curses into a book, blots the writing with the bitter water, and waves the offering before God. And God says that, if her thighs rot

and her belly swells, the woman shall be a curse to her people and bear her iniquity and that her husband is guiltless, but that, if her thighs and belly don't rot or swell, she'll be free to conceive seed. But God specifies no punishment for the husband either way.

In the sixth chapter God tells Moses the law of the Nazarite. Saying Nazarites separate themselves to God and refrain from drinking wine or eating moist grapes, he forbids that razors come to their heads and requires them to keep themselves from dead bodies. And, making no exception for their parents or siblings, he requires that, if someone dies near them suddenly, they shave their heads and provide various animals for the priest to offer.

And in this chapter God tells Moses to tell Aaron and his sons how to bless the Israelites. He tells them to ask that God bless them, keep them, make his face shine on them, be gracious to them, lift up his countenance to them, and give them peace. And he says the priests will put his name on the children of Israel, and that then he'll bless them.

The seventh chapter begins on the day Moses sets up the tabernacle and anoints and sanctifies it and its contents. God tells Moses to give the Levites, for transporting the tabernacle and its furnishings, six covered wagons and twelve oxen the princes of the tribes of Israel provide, and Moses gives two wagons and four Oxen to the sons of Gershon and four wagons and eight oxen to the sons of Merari, but he gives none to the sons of Kohath. This chapter says the sons of Kohath must bear the service of the sanctuary on their shoulders.

And also in this chapter, which also treats Ephraim and Manasseh as separate tribes, the princes of the twelve tribes other than Levi bring other offerings. Each prince brings his tribe's offerings on one of twelve days. And the offering of each tribe is the same.

And this chapter closes with Moses going into the tabernacle to speak with God and hearing the voice of one speaking to him from the mercy seat between the cherubim.

The eighth chapter begins with God telling Moses to tell Aaron that, when Aaron lights the seven lamps of the candlestick, they'll light the candlestick. Next after that instruction is another version of God giving instructions for consecrating Aaron and the other Levites for the priests' office and for maintaining the tabernacle. And next after that is another version of God saying he's taken the Levites for himself instead of the Israelite firstborn he sanctified for himself on the day he smote all the firstborn of Egypt. And in this chapter God says he's given the other Levites to Aaron and his sons, to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make atonement for them.

In the ninth chapter, in the wilderness of Sinai, is the first Passover feast after the Passover, and some men who've been defiled by a dead body ask Moses why they can't make an offering, and Moses tells them to stand still while he asks God, and God tells Moses to tell the children of Israel that people who are unclean because of a dead body and people on a far journey may keep the Passover on the fourteenth evening of the second month, and he says again that anyone who forbears to keep the Passover shall be cut off from his people.

And this chapter also says that, were it for two days, a month, or a year, when the cloud was on the tabernacle, the children of Israel abode in their tents, that, were it day or night, they journeyed when the cloud was taken up, and that they rested or journeyed at the commandment of God.

In the tenth chapter God tells Moses to make two silver trumpets and how to use them to gather or alarm the people and for other purposes, and in this chapter the children of Israel, in the order of march God commanded in the second chapter, journey from the wilderness of Sinai to the wilderness of Paran.

And also in this chapter Moses talks with a person it says is Hobab, son of the Midianite Raguel, Moses' father-in-law. Moses tells him they're going to the land God promised to the children of Israel and that they'll do him good, and Hobab replies that he prefers to return to his own land and kindred. But, asking him to stay, Moses says Hobab knows how the people are to camp in the wilderness and that Hobab may be to the Israelites instead of eyes.

And this chapter closes with Moses asking God to rise up when the ark sets forward, to let his enemies be scattered and let those who hate him flee before him, and, when the ark rests, to return to the many thousands of Israel.

The eleventh chapter begins with the people complaining, God hearing it, his anger kindling, and his fire burning among them and consuming those in the uttermost parts of the camp, but most of this chapter is a version of the story of the manna and quail. It says that, when the people complained of not having flesh to eat, God told Moses he'd give them flesh until it came from their nostrils. And it says that, while the quail he gave them remained between their teeth, God inflicted on them a plague that killed many of them.

And also in this chapter a man complains of two men prophesying in the camp, and Joshua tells Moses to forbid that, but Moses says he wishes all of God's people were prophets and that God would put his spirit on them.

The twelfth chapter begins with Miriam and Aaron speaking against Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman. God hears that, and, telling Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to come into the tabernacle of the congregation, he stands in its door and tells them he'd speak to a prophet among them in a vision and a dream but that he speaks to Moses mouth to mouth. And, when the cloud departs from the tabernacle, Miriam is leprous.

So Aaron begs Moses not to let Miriam be as one dead, and Moses cries to God and begs him to heal her. And God, replying that she'd be ashamed for seven days were her father to spit in her face, tells Moses to shut her out of the camp for seven days. So the people don't journey again until she returns to the camp, and then they journey to the wilderness of Paran.

The *Miqra* makes no other mention of the Ethiopian woman. But perhaps pertinent is that the last mention of Zipporah in the *Miqra* is in the chapter saying Jethro returned her to Moses and advised him to appoint judges. And another question is whether the journey to the wilderness of Paran in this chapter is the same as the journey to Paran in the tenth chapter.

And the thirteenth chapter raises more questions of chronology. Saying God commanded Moses to send a ruler of each tribe to search the land of Canaan, it says the ruler for Ephraim was Oshea, the son of Nun. And it says Moses called Oshea Jehoshua, and it doesn't say he was Moses' minister.

But it says he disagreed with most of the rulers it says Moses sent from each tribe to spy out the land of Canaan to know whether it was good or bad and whether its inhabitants were strong or weak. And in this chapter the spies search the land forty days and return with grapes, pomegranates, and figs and say the land flows with milk and honey. But most of them say the people are stronger than the Israelites and that the land eats its people.

They say the Amalekites the book of Exodus says Joshua discomfited live there and that so do the giant sons of Anak. And they say the spies were as grasshoppers both in the sight of the sons of Anak and in their own sight. And only Joshua and Caleb, the ruler for Judah, advise invading.

And the fourteenth chapter begins that night with all of the congregation lifting up their voices crying and weeping and murmuring against Moses and Aaron. Telling them they wish they'd died in Egypt or in the wilderness, they ask them why God brought them there for them to die by the sword and for their wives and children to be prey. And they tell each other to let them make a captain and return to Egypt.

Joshua and Caleb tell them the land's good and that, if God delights in them, he'll give it to them. But the congregation bids stoning them, and God appears in the tabernacle before all the children of Israel and has a conversation with Moses like the one in the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Exodus in response to the golden calf. He agrees not to make Moses a great nation and destroy the other Israelites, but he says they'll wander in the wilderness forty years, a year for each day the rulers of the tribes searched the land.

And he tells Moses to tell them their carcasses will be wasted in the wilderness, that their children they said would be prey shall enter the land he promised them, but that, excepting Caleb and Joshua, the parents shall not.



So the people mourn. But, saying that then they'll go to the land God promised them, they disobey God again. They, after Moses tells them their enemies will smite them because God isn't with them, go to a top of a mountain. And, while Moses remains in the camp with the ark of the covenant, the Amalekites and the Canaanites discomfit them.

In the fifteenth chapter God gives more commandments for behaving in the land he's promised. And, finding a man gathering sticks in the wilderness on the sabbath, people bring him to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation and confine him while Moses asks God what to do with him, and God tells Moses all the congregation should stone him to death outside the camp. And also in this chapter God directs offering wine, and, directing that fringes with blue ribbons be in the borders of garments, he says the fringes are to remind the Israelites of God's commandments.

In the sixteenth chapter, a grandson of Kohath's leads a rebellion. His name's Korah, and he and two descendants of Reuben and 250 other children of Israel gather against Moses. So Aaron tells them they take too much on themselves, and Moses tells them to put incense before God to see whom God chooses.

He asks Korah whether God's separating him from the other children of Israel to serve God in the tabernacle is a small thing, and Korah replies by asking Moses whether his bringing them out of a land of milk and honey to kill them in the wilderness and making himself a prince over them is a small thing, and Moses tells Korah to burn incense before God the next day with his followers, and, telling him he and Aaron shall do the same, he asks God not to respect the rebels' offering.

God tells Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation while he consumes the congregation. But Moses and Aaron fall on their faces and ask God whether he'll be angry with all the congregation for one man's sin. So God tells him to tell the others to separate themselves from the tabernacles of Korah and the two Reubenites.

And, as Korah and the two Reubenites and their wives and children stand at the doors of their tents, Moses tells the other Israelites that, if the earth swallows the three leaders of the rebellion, they'll know God has sent him. And it does, and fire comes from the earth and consumes their 250 followers, and the others of the congregation flee. And Moses directs hammering the rebels' censers into sheets to cover the altar.

But, the next day, the congregation again murmurs against Moses and Aaron. They say Moses and Aaron killed the people of God, and God again tells Moses to go from among the congregation for him to consume it, and he begins a plague. But Moses again falls on his face, and this time he tells Aaron

to put incense into a censor and take it among the people to make atonement for them. And he stands between the living and the dead and stops the plague. But it kills 14,700 people, besides the rebels.

And then, because the brass censers the rebels used are hallowed, God directs making them broad plates for covering the altar, and Aaron's son Eleazar does it for it to be a memorial that no stranger not of the seed of Aaron come near the altar to offer incense to God.

And, in the seventeenth chapter, God tells Moses to tell the children of Israel to take a staff for each tribe and write Aaron's name on the staff for the tribe of Levi. And God says the staff he chooses shall blossom, and Aaron's staff brings forth buds, blooms, and blossoms and also yields almonds. So the children of Israel say they'll all perish and that whoever comes near the tabernacle of God shall be consumed with dying.

In the eighteenth chapter God summarizes the responsibilities and the rewards of the Levites. He begins by telling Aaron that he, his sons, and his father's house shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, that other Levites may join them and minister to them but not before the tabernacle of the witness, and that, for him and them not to die, they shouldn't come near the altar or the vessels of the sanctuary. And he says the Levites shall have no inheritance in the land he's promised to Israel but that he's given them for an inheritance a tenth in Israel, the tithes of the heave offerings, but that they'll offer the best tenth of the tithes to him.

The nineteenth chapter begins with God telling Moses to give a red heifer to Aaron's son Eleazar. And, in the remainder of this chapter, he tells how to use the heifer to purify people who touch a dead body. He directs burning the heifer, taking its ashes outside the camp, using them for water of separation, and sprinkling the water on the people.

The twentieth chapter begins with the congregation coming to the desert of Zin. Miriam dies and is buried there, and, with no water there, the people chide with Moses again. So God tells Moses to gather the assembly and take his rod and tell a rock to bring forth water.

But, instead of speaking to the rock, Moses calls the assembly rebels, asks them whether he and Aaron must fetch them water from the rock, and lifts his rod and smites it. Enough water comes from it for the congregation to drink abundantly, but God tells Moses and Aaron that, because they didn't believe him, they won't bring the congregation into the land he's promised. And this chapters says that, because the children of Israel strove with God, and he was sanctified in them, the water is the water of Meribah.

But the Israelites travel on to the border of Edom, and Moses sends messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom. The message summarizes what's

befallen Edom's brother Israel since dwelling in Egypt and asks permission to pass through Edom's country. But Edom replies that, if Israel passes through Edom's country, Edom will kill Israel with the sword.

So Israel journeys on to mount Hor. And there, saying Aaron shall be gathered to his people, God tells Moses to take Aaron and Eleazar up to the mount. Saying the reason for that is his rebellion at the water of Meribah, he tells Moses to remove Aaron's garments and put them onto Eleazar. And Aaron dies there, and Moses and Eleazar come down from the mount, and the house of Israel mourns Aaron thirty days.

The 21<sup>st</sup> chapter begins with a king of the Canaanites hearing of the spies, fighting Israel, and taking prisoners. So the Israelites vow to God to destroy the king's people's cities, and God hears them and delivers the cities to them, and they utterly destroy the Canaanites and their cities. And God calls that place Hormah.

From there, by way of the Red Sea, the Israelites journey around the land of Edom, but the people complain again. Speaking against God and Moses, they ask Moses why he brought them from Egypt to die in the wilderness because no bread or water's there. And, presumably referring to the manna, they say they loath the light bread.

Then God sends fiery serpents to bite them, and the serpents kill many of them. So they ask Moses to pray to God for them, and God tells Moses to make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole. So Moses makes one of brass, and, when a man a fiery serpent has bitten looks at the brass serpent, he lives, and the Israelites travel on to Beer, a well in the vicinity of the Moabites. And there, again telling Moses to gather the people, God says he'll give them water. And the Israelites sing a song to the well.

From there they travel on to the border of the Amorites, and Moses sends messengers to the king of the Amorites as he did to the king of the Edomites, and the Amorites fight Israel, and Israel smites them and takes their land from Arnon to Jabbok and to the children of Ammon and dwells in their cities, and Heshbon, a city that belonged to the Moabites before the Amorites took it from them, is one of their cities, and, after the Israelites drives the Amorites from it and travel on to Bashan, God delivers Bashan to them also.

But the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins with Israel pitching in the plains of Moab near Jericho, and, seeing the Israelites, Moab, because of how many they are, is afraid. So Balak, the king of the Moabites, speaks to the elders of Moab and Midian and sends them with rewards for divination to the Midianite Balaam, who talks with God. And Balak asks the elders to ask Balaam to curse Israel.

Balaam, saying he won't if God tells him he shouldn't, tells them to wait while he talks with God, and God tells him he shouldn't. So he returns to

the messengers and tells them God said that, and they return to Balak, but Balak sends more messengers. And those messengers are princes with promises of wealth and honor. And God tells Balaam to go with them.

But, when Balaam saddles his ass to go, God's angry and sends an angel with a sword to block his way. Balaam can't see the angel, but his ass can and turns aside into a field, and Balaam smites the ass. So the ass turns to the other side and crushes a foot of Balaam's against a wall.

So Balaam smites him again, and the ass falls beneath Balaam, and Balaam smites him again. And then God opens the mouth of the ass, and the ass asks Balaam why he smote him, and Balaam replies that the ass mocked him and that he'd kill him if he had a sword. And the ass, telling Balaam that Balaam has ridden him since he was Balaam's, asks Balaam whether he's ever before behaved as he did then, and Balaam replies that he hasn't.

Then God, after opening Balaam's eyes for him to see the angel, asks him why he smote the ass, and Balaam, replying that he sinned because he didn't see the angel, tells the angel he'll go back if his going displeases the angel, and the angel, repeating what Balaam said to the messengers and what God said to Balaam, tells Balaam to go with the princes but say only what God tells him to say.

So Balaam goes, and Balak asks him why he hadn't come before, and, asking Balak whether he has power to say anything, Balaam tells Balak he'll speak only the words God puts into his mouth, but next morning Balak takes Balaam to the high places of Baal, where they can see most of the Israelites.

Baal was one of the gods of the inhabitants of Canaan, and the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins with Balaam telling Balak to build seven altars there, prepare seven oxen and seven rams, and stand by the burnt offering while he goes to a high place for God's instructions, and, with the word God gives him in his mouth, Balaam returns from the high place to Balak, speaks of the power and multitude of Israel, asks how he can curse or defy those whom God hasn't cursed or defied, and asks that he die the death of the righteous and that his last days be as Israel's.

So Balak, telling Balaam he took him there to curse Israel but that he's blessed Israel instead, asks him what he's done to him, and Balaam asks Balak whether he mustn't speak the words God puts into his mouth.

But, saying he can see more of Israel from the top of Pisgah, Balak takes Balaam there. And, after Balaam does there what he did at the high places of Baal, Balak takes him to the top of Peor. And this chapter closes with the third and final repetition of the burnt offering.

But in the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter Balaam doesn't seek for enchantments. And, as he lifts his eyes toward the wilderness and sees Israel abiding according to its

tribes, the spirit of God comes upon him. Balak, saying Balaam has blessed Israel three times, tells him to flee to his place, but Balaam prophesies that Israel shall smite Moab and that Edom shall be a possession of Israel. And, before this chapter ends with Balak and Balaam going their separate ways, Balak going to his place and Balaam to his, Balaam similarly prophesies against Amalek and the Kenites.

But the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Israel committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab and sacrificing to their gods. They join themselves to Baal-Peor, and, to turn God's anger away from Israel, God tells Moses to hang against the sun the heads of the people who did that before him. So Moses tells the judges to kill each of the men who joined to Baal-Peor.

But, in the sight of Moses and all the congregation of the children of Israel, who are weeping at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, an Israelite brings a Midianite woman to his brothers. So Eleazar's son Phinehas rises from the congregation, chases the man into the tent, kills him, and kills the woman by thrusting a javelin through her belly, and God tells Moses that Phinehas' zeal has turned his wrath away from the children of Israel, from his consuming them in his jealousy, and that, because Phinehas' zeal atoned for the children of Israel, he's given Phinehas his covenant of peace and everlasting priesthood. And this chapter says the man and woman were a prince of the Simeonites and a daughter of the chief house of Midian.

So a question is how that relates to what the Book of Genesis says Simeon and Levi did to their sister's husband and the men of his town, and relevant to that question is that the book of Exodus says Moses was a Levite and married the daughter of the high priest of the Midianites. And in this chapter God tells Moses to vex and smite the Midianites because they beguiled him in the matters of Peor and the daughter of a prince of Midian, and this chapter closes with God saying she was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake. But the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter says the Midianite Balaam blessed Israel at the top of Peor, and several other misrepresentations of the story of Balaam are in the *Miqra*.

But the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with God telling Moses to number the children of Israel again. This time the total number of the Israelites twenty years old or older and able to go to war is 601,730. That's 1820 fewer than the earlier number, but the number for Judah is 76,500, 1900 more. And God directs allotting the land by the number of names.

And 23,000, the numbers of male Levites a month old and older in this chapter, is a thousand more than the earlier count. And this chapter closes by saying that, excepting Caleb and Joshua, none of the 624,730 Moses and Eleazar number this time were in the earlier numbering. And this chapter also lists genealogy of each tribe and says Gilead was a grandson of Manasseh's.

And the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with five great-granddaughters of Gilead's standing before Moses and Eleazar and all the congregation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Saying their father died in the wilderness and had no sons, they ask why his name should be done away from his family because of that, and they ask for possession among his brothers. So Moses takes their cause to God, and God agrees with them and tells Moses to tell the children of Israel to apply that exception to other daughters in similar situations, and he also specifies other extensions of the rules of inheritance.

And next God tells Moses to go up to Mount Abarim to see the land he's given to the children of Israel. He tells Moses that then, for his rebellion in the desert of Zin, he'll be gathered to his people as was Aaron, and Moses asks God to set a man over the congregation to lead them. So God tells him to lay his hands on Joshua, set him before Eleazar and the congregation, and put his honor on him, for all the children of the congregation of Israel to be obedient. And Moses does.

In the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> chapters, God tells Moses to command the children to perform some periodic rituals that include drink offerings, and, in the thirtieth chapter, Moses conveys to the heads of the tribes commandments from God concerning vows. He says men shall act in accordance with what comes from their mouths but that, if women's fathers disavow their vows while they're in their father's house, or if their husbands disavow them, women's vows won't stand. But he says the vows of women who are widows or divorcees shall stand against them.

And the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter begins with God telling Moses to avenge the children of Israel against the Midianites and telling him he'll be gathered to his people after that. So Moses tells the people to select a thousand men from each tribe to do that, and they kill all the Midianite men but take the women and children captive with the spoil. So Moses is angry.

Asking them why they didn't kill the women, he tells them that, in the matter of Peor, through the counsel of Balaam, the Midianites caused the children of Israel to commit trespass against God. But he tells them to except from their finishing the killing the females who haven't known man by lying with him. He tells the killers to keep the virgins alive for themselves.

But he tells them to give half of them and other spoil to the other Israelites, and he tells them to give a thousandth of the spoil to Eleazar, for a heave offering to God, and the number of virgins is 32,000. So 15,968 virgins go to the killers while 16,000 go to the other Israelites. And 32 go to God.

The only events in the *Miqra* that are more murderous than that are the Passover and the flood. And, including bearing false witness against Balaam, it violates at least four of the ten commandments in the twentieth chapter of the

Book of Exodus. And, while this chapter doesn't say whether Zipporah was among the Midianites the 12,000 killed, it says they killed Balaam with the sword and that none of the 12,000 died.

And the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins with the children of Reuben and Gad seeing that the land of Gilead and Jazer is a place for cattle. Having a multitude of cattle, they ask Moses whether their inheritance can be on that side of the Jordan and not in the land on the other side, the land God promised. So Moses, asking them whether they'll sit there while their brothers go to war and why they're discouraging the others from crossing the Jordan and fighting, reminds them of the wrath of God in previous instances of demurring.

But they say they'll fight. They say that, because of the inhabitants of the land on that side of the Jordan, they'll build sheepfolds there for their cattle and build fenced cities there for their little ones. But they say they'll go before Israel and won't return to their houses until all the children of Israel have their inheritance, and Moses accepts their promise and also permits half of the tribe of Manasseh to inherit land in Gilead.

So a question is whether Manasseh's grandson received the name Gilead because of the oath between Jacob and Laban on that side of the Jordan. But this chapter says the land Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh inherited there was Bashan and the land of the Amorites. And this chapter also tells how the 2 ½ tribes occupied and divided it.

In the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter, by a commandment of God, Moses writes the journeys of Israel. The Journeys this chapter describes begin with Israel leaving Rameses, and it says that, because the Egyptians buried all their firstborn God had smitten among them, Israel left with a high hand in their sight. And it says God also executed judgements on their gods.

And this chapter names the places where Israel pitched, tells some of what Israel did, and says Aaron was 123 years old when he died on Mount Hor. And also in this chapter God tells Moses to tell the children of Israel to drive out before them all the inhabitants of the land, to destroy their pictures and molten images, and to pluck down their high places. And he tells him to tell the children of Israel to dwell in the land because God has given it to them.

And he also tells Moses to tell them that, if they don't drive from the land its inhabitants, those who remain will be pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides and vex them in the land where they dwell, and this chapter ends with God telling Moses to tell the children of Israel that, if they don't drive them out of it, he'll do to them what he thought to do to the inhabitants of the land.

The 34<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with God telling Moses the borders of the land he's promised. The land extends from the great sea to the salt sea and from north of the Jordan River to the river of Egypt, and Moses says Eleazar and

Joshua shall divide the land, and, beginning with Caleb for Judah, he also appoints a prince from each tribe for that. And, also in this chapter, Moses says Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh received their inheritance east of the Jordan.

And, in the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter, God tells Moses what the Levites shall inherit. He says they'll have cities in the land of the other tribes and that they'll have suburbs for their beasts. And he says how large the cities and the suburbs shall be, that the number of the Levites' cities from each tribe shall vary in proportion to how many cities each tribe has, and that the total number of cities for the Levites shall be 48.

And he says six of the 48 cities shall be cities of refuge for people who unintentionally kill humans. Describing situations indicating lack of intention, he says the congregation shall judge whether the slayer is a murderer and shall deliver from the avenger of blood those its judgement says aren't murderers, but he says the refuge shall end with the death of the high priest of the refuge city. And he says that, if the avenger finds and kills a killer outside the borders of the city of refuge, he'll not be guilty of blood.

So, while commanding killing murderers, God forbids taking satisfaction for slayers in a city of refuge during the life of the priest, if the congregation judges the killing unintentional. And he says all that's to keep from polluting the land, that blood defiles the land, and that cleansing the land of bloodshed can only be by the blood of him who sheds blood. And this chapter closes with God saying that, because he dwells among the children of Israel, they shouldn't defile the land where they dwell.

The 36<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with the chief fathers of families of the descendants of Gilead asking Moses whether the inheritance of the female descendants of Gilead to whom God promised an inheritance because their father had no sons shall pass to another tribe if they marry into another tribe. And Moses tells them God commanded that every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe shall be the wife of a family of her father's tribe. And this chapter says the complaining women complied.

And this, the final chapter of the Book of Numbers, closes by saying it's the judgements and commandments God commanded by the hand of Moses to the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan near Jericho.

The first Chapter of the book of Deuteronomy begins on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year of the exodus with Moses speaking to all of Israel east of the Jordan at the Red Sea and summarizing events of their journey from Mount Horeb to the Amorites smiting them after the rebellion that prolonged their wandering in the wilderness to forty years.



In the second chapter, summarizing events from those events to the taking of Gilead from the Amorites, he says that, because God won't give him the Moabites' land, God directed him not to distress or contend with them, and he says God gave Ar to the descendants of Lot.

Relevant is that the Book of Genesis says Moab was Abraham's nephew Lot's son by his oldest daughter. But a question is whether that's why God ordered the slaughter of the Midianites basically for what the Moabites did, and relevant to that question is that Midian was a son of Abraham's. And another question is why God didn't give the Ammonites, who the Book of Genesis says descended from Lot and his younger daughter, the same consideration.

And this chapter also says the children of Esau destroyed the inhabitants of Seir before them as Israel did to the land of Israel's possession, and that raises the question of how Moses is speaking of the conquest of the land of Canaan, which doesn't occur in the *Torah*, in the past tense.

And, in the third chapter, continuing the summary through God's telling him to charge Joshua with crossing the Jordan before the people, Moses adds some details not in the previous books of the *Torah*, and he varies some details. He says Og, the king of Bashan, was a remnant of the giants, that Og's bedstead was of iron and was nine cubits long, and that God gave Bashan and Gilead to the Reubenites, Gadites, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. And he says that, for Moses to see the land God promised, God took him to the top of Mount Pisgah.

So a question is why God took Moses to the place from which the Book of Numbers says Balaam blessed Israel the second time, and also in this chapter Moses tells the people that the reason God told him he wouldn't cross the Jordan was that God was wroth with him for the people's sake, and not for his not speaking to the rock at Meribah as the Book of Numbers says.

In the fourth chapter Moses gives more reminders and tells Israel not to add to or diminish the word he's commanded them. But, saying God said the commandment against making an image of anything God created was because he or the people saw no similitude of God in the fire on Mount Horeb, he adds words to that commandment. He says it was to keep them from lifting their eyes, seeing the sun, the moon, even all the host of heaven, and worshipping and serving what God has divided to all nations under the whole of heaven.

And also in this chapter he designates the three cities that are to be the cities of refuge east of the Jordan: the cities Bezer of the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead of the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan of the Manassites.

In the fifth chapter, before giving the Israelites more reminders, Moses repeats the ten commandments. In the sixth chapter he gives more reminders

and gives instructions for teaching children his words and assuring that they remember them. And in the seventh chapter he gives more reminders and elaborates on some promises.

In the eighth chapter he continues such and also tells the Israelites that, in their forty years in the wilderness, their raiment didn't wax old, and their feet didn't swell.

In the ninth chapter he reminds the people of ways in which they've rebelled against God and proven him, tells them ways in which he's defended them before God, and says God isn't giving them the land because they're righteous but because of the wickedness of the land's inhabitants.

And he continues his reminders through the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth chapters. And in the eleventh chapter he says the land God's promised to Israel has more rain than has Egypt. And, in the twelfth chapter, saying God shall choose a place there for his name to dwell, he tells the people to take their offerings to that place and eat them there and not at other places.

In the thirteenth chapter, after warning the people against false prophets, Moses says that, if prophets or dreamers give them signs or wonders and tell them to serve gods other than God, they'll know whether they're true prophets by whether what they prophesy comes to be, and he tells them to kill the false prophets.

And he also tells them to stone to death any of their brothers, sons, daughters, or wives who entice them to serve other gods, and he tells them that, if they hear of children of Belial withdrawing the inhabitants of their city into such enticing, they should diligently investigate the matter and, if they find what they hear to be factual, kill the children of Belial and the inhabitants of their city and destroy their city.

The word "belial" is from Hebrew words meaning "worthless" and may be a cognate of the English word "belie". And, in many instances in the *Miqra*, the phrase "sons of Belial" refers to people speaking falsely. So, in the *Miqra*, a child of Belial is a person who speaks worthless words.

More reminders are in the fourteenth chapter, and one of them is of the commandment against eating anything that dies of itself, but this chapter adds that one may give it to strangers in one's gate, for them to eat it.

In the fifteenth chapter, among more reminders, Moses tells the people they should lend to and reign over many nations but that they should borrow from none and that none should reign over them. And, telling them to open their hands and lend freely to the poor among them, he says the reason for that is that the poor shall never cease from the land. And more reminders and elaborations are in the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters.

And, in the sixteenth, Moses tells of a seven-week feast beginning with the beginning of setting the sickle to the corn. And, for that, besides specifying offerings to God, it specifies including in the festivities not only Levites and sons and daughters but also male and female servants and strangers, the fatherless, and the widow. Presumably it's an annual harvest celebration.

And, in the seventeenth chapter, referring to wickedness within the gates God has given Israel, Moses specifies people worshiping gods God hasn't commanded them to worship. And, specifying in the proscription against doing that worshiping the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, he directs taking those worshipers out of the camp and stoning them to death. So, effectually, he directs killing any Hindus among them for practicing *bhakti yoga*, if the Israelites don't understand that they're worshiping parts of God's creation as a step toward perceiving the whole.

And, also in the seventeenth chapter, Moses tells the people that, when they go into the land God's promised them, they'll demand setting a king over them. And, saying they'll do that to be like other nations, he tells them to set over them a king God chooses, one from among their brothers, and not a stranger. And he tells them the king shouldn't multiply for himself horses, wives, silver, or gold or cause them to return to Egypt to multiply horses. He tells them to return no more that way.

And, telling them that, when the king sits on the throne, he should write a copy of the law that's in a book from the Levites, he says that, to fear God, not lift his heart above his brothers or turn from the commandments, and preserve in the midst of Israel his kingdom, his days, and his children, the king should have the copy with him and read from it all the days of his life.

In the eighteenth chapter Moses reminds the people of the offerings the Levites shall receive instead of an inheritance, and, reminding them not to do as the people of the land of Canaan do, he tells them not to make their children pass through fire. And, while reminding them of the injunction against false prophets, he tells them God will raise prophets like him from among them and that God commanded that they listen to the words those prophets speak in his name. And more reminders and elaborations are in the nineteenth chapter.

But in the nineteenth chapter Moses broadens the in-kind retribution stipulation in the Book of Exodus beyond mischief to a pregnant woman. He says the punishment for a false witness shall be what the false witness thought to do to the person the false witness accused, and he says other retribution shall be a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, or a foot for a foot. And he directs that one's eye not pity people those lie in wait to kill if an avenger kills him after the elders of a city of refuge evicts them.

In the twentieth chapter, telling the people not to fear superior numbers in battle, Moses says God shall be with them and that the priests shall remind them of that, and he also enjoins the officers to speak to them. Telling them to tell them who's exempt from battle, he includes men who've built a house but haven't dedicated it, men who've planted a vineyard and haven't eaten of it, men who've betrothed a wife but haven't taken her, and men who are fearful and fainthearted. And he says the reason for exempting the fainthearted is that their brothers' hearts may faint with theirs.

And he also gives instructions for spoils. He tells the people that, when they defeat a city that isn't part of their inheritance, they should kill all the men but take the women with the spoil. But he says that, when they take a city God has given them as an inheritance, they should kill all that breathe. And he directs the people to take to themselves and eat of the spoil of their enemies God's given them.

And he says that, to keep the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites from teaching them to do their abominations, they should utterly destroy them.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter Moses tells the people what to do in the land God has promised them when they find a person slain in a field and find no witness for the slaying. He says the elders of the nearest city should behead a heifer, wash their hands over it, and say their hands have neither shed the blood nor seen the shedding of it. And he says that, because God has chosen the Levites to try by their word every controversy and stroke, the priests should come near.

And next he tells them what to do when they wish to marry a beautiful woman they see among their captives. He says they should take her home, shave her head, pare her nails, and let her bewail her parents for a month, and he says that, if later they find no delight in the woman, they should let her go wherever she wishes and not sell her for money or make merchandise of her. And he says the reason for that is that they've humbled her.

And he also says that, if a man has two wives and hates one while loving the other, he shouldn't prefer for inheritance a son of the one he loves over a son of the one he hates, and he says a double portion of inheritance should go to the oldest son, irrespective of which wife is his mother.

And he also says in this chapter that the parents of a stubborn and rebellious son should take him before the elders. He says they should tell the elders he's their son but that he's stubborn and rebellious, doesn't obey them, and is a glutton and a drunkard. And he says the people of the city should stone the son to death.

And this chapter closes with instructions for hanging a man who's committed a sin worthy of death. He says the people should hang him on a tree

but not leave the body hanging all night but bury it on the day of the hanging. And he says the one who's hanged is cursed of God and that those stipulations are to keep from defiling the land God has given them for an inheritance.

In the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter, Moses requires returning to its owner animals one finds, and he says women and men dressing in garments appropriate to the opposite sex is an abomination to God. He says that, if a person finds on the ground a bird nest with young ones and eggs, the person may take the young ones and the eggs but should let the mother go. And he says that, to keep from bringing blood on houses, houses should have a battlement on their rooves to keep people from falling from them.

And he says that, if a man brings an evil name on his wife by saying she wasn't a virgin when he married her, her parents should take the tokens of her virginity to the elders of their city at its gate and spread the cloth before them. And he says that, if the parents bring the tokens, they should chastise the man and that he should pay the parents a hundred shekels of silver for bringing an evil name on a virgin of Israel. But he says that, if they don't, the men of the city should stone the woman to death at the door of her father's house.

And he directs stoning a man who lies with a virgin betrothed to another man and, if they lie together in a city, also stoning the woman. And he says the reason for stoning the man is that he humbled his neighbor's wife and that the reason for stoning the woman is that she didn't cry out. But he says that, if the man lies with her in a field, where she cries out with no one to save her, nothing should be done to the woman. And he says the punishment for raping a woman who isn't a virgin is to pay her father fifty shekels of silver.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins with Moses saying men whose stones are wounded and men whose private member is cut off shouldn't enter the congregation of God. And he says that, to their tenth generation, neither should a bastard, that, because they didn't provide the congregation with bread and water during the exodus, neither should an Ammonite, and that, because they hired Balaam to curse Israel, neither should a Moabite. But, forbidding abhorring an Edomite or an Egyptian, he directs that, because Israel was a stranger in the Egyptians' land and because the Edomites are Israel's brother, Egyptians and Edomites be let into the congregation in the third generation.

And he also says that, because God walks in the camp, the people should ease themselves outside the camp and have on their weapon a paddle to bury what comes out. And, forbidding delivering to his master a slave who escapes and forbidding that the person to whom the slave escapes oppress the slave, he requires the person to let the slave dwell within his gates in a place the slave likes best. And, saying no whores or sodomites shall be among the sons of Israel, he forbids bringing the hire of a whore or the price of a dog into the house

of God for a vow. And he forbids lending on usury to one's brother, but he permits lending on usury to strangers. And he requires paying debts when one vows, but not when one doesn't.

And this chapter closes with Moses permitting eating one's fill in one's neighbor's vineyard or standing corn but forbidding using a vessel or sickle to do that.

In the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter Moses says that, if, because the men find them unclean, women find no favor in the eyes of men who've taken them to wife, the men may write a bill of divorcement and send them away.

And, specifying either the lower or the upper millstone, he forbids withholding from debtors things they pledge but need for their livelihood. And he says fathers shouldn't be killed for what they're children do and that children shouldn't be killed for what their fathers do. He says every man should be killed for his own sin.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter Moses limits to forty the number of stripes for wicked men worthy of being beaten. And he says that, if brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and leaves a widow, and the remaining brother refuses to marry the widow, the widow should loose a shoe from him in the presence of the elders and spit in his face. And he says the brother's name in Israel shall be called the house of him who has his shoe loosed.

He says that, if, by putting forth a hand and taking by the secrets a man who's smiting her husband, a woman tries to deliver her husband from strife, the people should, with no pity in their eyes, amputate the hand.

And he forbids muzzling an ox while it treads grain.

In the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter Moses tells the people to set before God a basket of the first fruits they receive after they come to the land he's promised them and then, saying their father was a Syrian ready to perish and went down to Egypt with a few and became a mighty nation, speak before God of their sojourn in Egypt and of the exodus.

And this chapter also instructs tithing for the Levites, the strangers, the fatherless, and the widows among them, for them to eat within their gates and be filled.

The 27<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Moses and the elders commanding the people to keep the commandments Moses commanded that day. And they also direct that, on the day on which they pass over the Jordan, the people should set up great stones on Mount Ebal, plaster the stones with plaster, and write on them all the words of the law Moses delivered. And they direct that, using no tool on it, they set up an altar there to offer burnt offerings to God, and that they eat there and rejoice before God.

And Moses and the Levites tell the other Israelites that on that day they'll become the people of God, that Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, that Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse, that the Levites shall loudly list some laws and say that he who violates them shall be cursed, and that the people shall say amen.

The 28<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Moses and the Levites telling the people of blessings that shall come to them if they obey the law, but most of this chapter is their telling the people of horrors that shall come upon them if they don't, horrors including being scattered across the face of the earth and eating their children. And this chapter closes with their telling the people God shall respond to disobedience by taking them to Egypt with ships, that they'll be sold to their enemies to be slaves, and that no one shall buy them.

The 29<sup>th</sup> chapter begins by saying that, besides being the covenant God made with the children of Israel in Horeb, it's the words of the covenant he commanded Moses to make with them in the land of Moab. And the remainder of this chapter is more reminders and descriptions of blessings and curses, including what strangers might say upon seeing what God shall do to the children of Israel and the land, if they don't obey. And it closes by saying secrets are to God while revelations are to the people and their children forever, for them to do the words of the law.

In the thirtieth chapter Moses tells the people that, if they repent and return to obedience after the horrors have come upon them, God will return them to the blessings and put the curses onto their enemies. Calling on heaven and earth to record that day against the people, saying he's set before them life and death and blessing and cursing, and telling them to choose life for them and their seed, he says that's the choice of their loving God, obeying his voice, and cleaving to him. And he says that's because God is the life and length of their days in the land he swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

In the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter Moses tells all of Israel that he's 120 years old, that God told him he'll not go over the Jordan, and that God and Joshua shall go before them. And he writes the law, delivers it to the elders and the Levites who bear the ark of the covenant, and tells the Levites to put it into the ark. And God tells him to present himself and Joshua in the tabernacle, for him to give Joshua a charge.

And, in the tabernacle, in a pillar of a cloud, he tells Moses the people shall disobey him in ways he's said they might and that the trouble he said would befall them if they did shall occur. And, giving Moses a song Moses writes, he gives Joshua a charge to be strong and courageous and take the children of Israel into the land he's promised them, and he says he'll be with

Joshua. And Moses tells the Levites to gather the elders and officers, and he tells them they'll corrupt themselves and suffer the troubles.

And this chapter closes with Moses speaking to the congregation the words of the song God gave him, and, in the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter, are the words of the song. It declares God's power and goodness, refers to what he's done for Israel and to Israel's failure to comply with his law, and promises punishment for that iniquity. So, basically, it declares the basic premise of Judaism.

And, on that day in this chapter, God tells Moses to go up to Mount Abarim, to Mount Nebo, in the land of Moab, against Jericho.

He tells him to behold there the land of Canaan and die there as Aaron did on Mount Hor. And he tells him again that the reason is that, by not sanctifying him in the midst of the children of Israel, he trespassed against him at the waters of Meribah, in the wilderness of Zin. And the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins by saying it's the blessing the man of God Moses gave the children of Israel before his death.

But it's in the first person plural and refers to Moses in the third person and says he commanded the law and the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob and that he was king in Jeshurun when the heads of the tribes of Israel gathered together. And, after blessing each tribe, including Levi and not blessing Ephraim and Manasseh separately, it says no one is like the god of Jeshurun. The *Miqra* also calls Israel Jeshuran in other books, and, in no instance, does it give any indication of why.

The 34<sup>th</sup> chapter begins by saying Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo to the top of Pisgah, and it says God showed him land from Gilead to the utmost sea and told him it was the land he'd promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and it says Moses died there. It says he was 120 years old, that his eyes weren't dim, that his natural force wasn't abated, and that God buried him in the land of Moab against Beth-Peor. And it says no man knows where his sepulcher is but that the children of Israel wept for him thirty days in the plains.

And it says that, because Moses laid his hands on him, Joshua was full of the spirit of wisdom, that the children of Israel listened to Joshua but did as God commanded Moses, and that not since then has a prophet arisen in Israel like Moses, whom God knew face to face in all the signs and wonders God sent him to do to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt, to all of Pharaoh's servants, and to all his land.

And this chapter, the final chapter of both the Book of Deuteronomy and the *Torah*, closes by saying God's knowing Moses face to face was in all the mighty hand and great terror Moses showed in the sight of all Israel.



## Chapter 8

### Nevi'im

Excepting the Book of Judges and the Book of Kings and combining the prophesies of twelve prophets into The Book of The Twelve, the titles of the eight *Nevi'im* books are the names of the prophets whose prophesies they mainly express: Joshua, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

The first chapter of the Book of Joshua begins with God telling Joshua his servant Moses is dead. Telling him to cross the Jordan with all the people to the land he's given them, he says it's the land to Lebanon from the wilderness east of the Jordan where Joshua is, and from the River Euphrates to the great sea toward the going down of the sun. And he says that, if Joshua's strong and courageous and acts in accordance with the law Moses commanded to him, no man shall stand before him all his life. And Joshua tells the officers of the people to pass through the host and tell the people to prepare victuals to pass over Jordan in three days.

And he reminds the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh that they took their inheritance east of the Jordan but promised to help fight for the land of Canaan for the others. So they promise again and say they'll do whatever Joshua commands them to do and that whoever rebels against Joshua's commandment shall be put to death. But they also stipulate the condition that Joshua be strong and of good courage.

And the second chapter begins with Joshua sending two spies to Jericho. They lodge with Rahab, a harlot whose house is on the wall of the city, and the king of Jericho sends people demanding that she bring the spies out to them. But she hides the spies beneath stalks of flax on the roof of the house.

After the gates of the city close for the night, the people searching for them pursue them to fiords of the Jordan, and Rahab tells them she knows God has given them the land, that the people have heard that God dried the Red Sea for their escape from Egypt, and that the people's hearts melted as soon as they heard that, and she asks the spies to reward her kindness to them by saving alive

her, her parents, her siblings, and all they have. The spies, stipulating that she and her family remain in their house and that she tell no one their business, promise that and tell her to mark her house with a scarlet thread in the window. And she, telling them to hide three days in a mountain, lets them down outside the wall of the city by a rope.

And three days later, when the pursuers return to the city, the spies descend from the mountain, cross the Jordan back to Joshua, and tell him that, because all the inhabitants of the land faint from them, God has delivered all the land into their hands.

So, in the third chapter, Joshua tells the priests to carry the ark of the covenant to the brim of the Jordan. He tells the other Israelites to follow the ark but go a thousand cubits behind it to know which way to go, and God, telling Joshua he'll begin to magnify Joshua's might in the sight of Israel and that he'll be to him as he was to Moses, tells him to tell the priests to stand still when they reach the brim of the Jordan. And Joshua tells the people they'll know by what happens then that they'll drive the inhabitants of the land from before them.

And, when the priests step into the water, it rises in heaps upstream and downstream from them, and the people cross the Jordan on dry land as they'd crossed the Red Sea, and the priests stand on dry land until the people cross.

In the fourth chapter God tells Joshua to tell a man from each tribe to take a stone from where the priests stood and put it where they'll lodge that night. And Joshua tells them to carry the stones on their shoulders when they cross the Jordan and pile them where the priests stood, for the pile to be a sign in times to come for the people to tell their children, when the children ask what's the purpose of the pile, that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant. He says that's for all the people of the earth to know the might of the hand of God and for the people of Israel to fear God forever.

And the fifth chapter, with its author referring to the Israelites in the first person plural, begins by saying the kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan and the kings of the Canaanites west of the Jordan heard God had dried the waters and that, because of the children of Israel, their hearts melted with no spirit in them. And God, in this chapter, saying none of the people he led from Egypt remain and that he's rolled away from Israel the reproach of Egypt, tells Joshua, because the last circumcisions were in Egypt, to make sharp knives and circumcise the Israelites. And the people call that place Gilgal, camp there three days while the circumcision heals, and celebrate the Passover, and the manna stops. And this chapter says the people ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

And Joshua, next in this chapter, sees at Jericho a man with a sword, goes to him, and asks him whether he's of Israel or of Israel's adversaries, and

the man says he's the captain of God's host, and Joshua falls on his face, worships him, and asks him what God says to his servant, and the man tells him to loose his shoe from his foot, because the place where he's standing is holy.

The sixth chapter begins by saying that, because the city was narrowly closed because of the children of Israel, no one was entering or leaving Jericho. And in it God tells Joshua to have the people, with the ark of the covenant and seven rams' horns, march around the city once each day for six days, and on the seventh day to tell the priests to blow a loud blast on the horns and tell the people to shout. He tells him that then the walls of the city shall fall down flat, and Joshua does that and also tells the people not to make any sound with their mouths until he tells them to shout. And they obey, and the walls fall.

And the Israelites spoil the city and kill all the men and women and children in it, excepting Rahab and the people at home with her, and Joshua tells the two spies to bring them out, and Rahab dwells in Israel with her father's household and all she has.

And Joshua also tells the Israelites that the city and all that's in it shall be cursed. And he tells them, to keep themselves from being cursed, not to take of the cursed thing, and they burn all the city and all in it, excepting what's gold, silver, brass, or iron. They put that into the treasury of God.

But, in the seventh chapter, Israel loses its next battle. Joshua sends about three thousand men to Ai, and Ai chases them from its gate and smites about 36 of them. So Joshua rends his clothes, falls on his face before the ark of God, and asks why and what he can say when Israel turns its back to its enemies. And, telling him to get up, God says the reason for the loss was that Israel had taken the cursed thing, that it's among the people, that the next morning men shall be brought by their tribes, families, and households until the man who took it's taken, and that he'll be burnt.

So next morning Joshua rises early, and the taking occurs, until a man whose name is Achan is taken from the tribe of Judah. Achan tells Joshua he saw among the spoils a Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a fifty-shekel wedge of gold, coveted them, and buried them in his tent. So Joshua sends messengers to Achan's tent, and they find the things and bring them to Joshua, and all Israel takes Achan, the things, Achan's sons, daughters, livestock, tent, and all else he has, to a valley, and there they stone them, burn them, and pile stones on top of them.

So, in the eighth chapter, promising success, God tells Joshua to attack Ai again. And this time Joshua takes thirty thousand men and places an ambush of five thousand men behind Ai between it and Beth-El. And all the men of Ai leave the city and attack Joshua and the other Israelites in front of the city, and

the Israelites there flee until God tells Joshua to stretch out his spear toward Ai, and then the ambush arises and sets the city afire.

The men of the city see the smoke, but, because the fleeing Israelites turn and attack them, they have no place to flee, and the Israelites spoil the city and kill everyone in it, excepting its king.

They bring the king to Joshua, and Joshua hangs him from a tree until evening, when he commands that the carcass be taken down and thrown at the gate of the city. And, after piling a great heap of stones thereon, he builds in Mount Ebal the altar of whole stones Moses and the elders commanded the people to build there. And then people do the reading and cursing and blessing Moses and the elders also then commanded.

In the ninth chapter, when the kings of the inhabitants of the land hear what the Israelites did to Jericho and Ai, they gather to fight Israel. But Hivites of Gibeon dress in worn clothing, load old sacks, old wine bottles, and moldy bread onto asses, go to Joshua, and tell him that, because they've heard what God did to the Egyptians and others, they've come from a far country to make a league with him. And Joshua makes peace with them.

Three days later he hears they're his neighbors, and the congregation murmurs against them. But the princes of Israel tell the congregation they've sworn to the league by God, and Joshua's decides to enslave them but not smite them. And the congregation accepts that decision.

But, in the tenth chapter, the king of Jerusalem hears how Joshua took Ai and Jericho and how the inhabitants of Gibeon made peace with Israel. So, because Gibeon's a royal city and greater than Ai, he fears greatly and recruits the kings of Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon to help him smite Gibeon. So the men of Gibeon ask Joshua to help them.

So Joshua goes up from Gilgal with all the people of war. And God, telling him not to fear, slays, chases, casts great stones from heaven, and tells the sun in the sight of Israel to stand still over Gibeon while the Israelites avenge themselves on their enemies. So the five kings flee into a cave, and Joshua hears of that, commands rolling stones on the mouth of the cave and setting guards to keep the kings in it until the children of Israel end the great slaughter, and then, telling the captains of the Israelite men of war to put their feet on the necks of the kings, says God will do that to all their enemies. And he smites the kings, slays them, hangs them on five great trees until evening, throws them back into the cave, and lays great stones on the cave's mouth.

And, in the remainder of this chapter, the Israelites smite the kings' cities and other cities and countries, including Goshen and Gaza. And this chapter says that, because God fought for Israel, Joshua took those kings and

their land all at one time. And it closes by saying all Israel returned to the camp at Gilgal.

In the eleventh chapter some other kings attack Israel, and God tells Joshua to hough their horses, and Joshua houghs them, puts the kings to the sword, and takes their cities. Though none of them surrender as did the Hivites of Gibeon, he doesn't burn their cities, but he kills all their inhabitants who breathe, and God and the Israelites go on to conquer other people. And this chapter, saying that, according to what God said to Moses, Joshua took the whole land and gave it to Israel for an inheritance, closes by saying the land rested from war.

And the twelfth chapter lists kings it says Israel smote east of the Jordan, and kings it says Joshua smote west of the Jordan from Lebanon south, and it lists people the *Torah* says God promised to drive out of the land.

But the thirteenth chapter begins with God telling Joshua he's old while much land is yet to be possessed, and, listing the remaining land and telling Joshua he'll drive from before the children of Israel the inhabitants of some of that land, God tells him to divide it by lot to the 9 ½ tribes that didn't receive land east of the Jordan, and he specifies the allocation of the land east of the Jordan to the other 2 ½ tribes.

In the fourteenth chapter he specifies the allotment of the land west of the Jordan, and the children of Judah go to Joshua at Gilgal, where Caleb, telling Joshua he was forty years old when Moses told him to spy out the land and that God has kept him alive 45 years since then, asks Joshua to give him the mountain God promised him then, and Joshua blesses him and, because Caleb has wholly followed God, gives him Hebron.

The fifteenth chapter allots more land to Judah, and Caleb drives some of the inhabitants from it and promises his daughter Achsah to whoever will smite Kirjath-Sepher, and Caleb's nephew Othniel does, but, when Achsah comes to Othniel, she moves him to ask her father for a field. When she lights from her ass, Caleb asks her what she wishes, and, asking him for a blessing because he's given her a south land, she asks him to give her springs also. And he gives her both the upper and the lower springs.

But this chapter closes saying that, because Judah couldn't drive the Jebusites from Jerusalem, they dwell there with Judah to this day. And the sixteenth chapter tells the lot of Ephraim and says Ephraim didn't drive the Canaanites from Gezer and that the Canaanites dwell among Ephraimites but serve under tribute. And the seventeenth chapter designates the lot of Manasseh west of the Jordan and says Manasseh also dwelt with Canaanites they couldn't drive from the land but that they asked Joshua why, seeing that they're a great people, he gave them but one lot.

So Joshua tells them, if they're a great people and if Mount Ephraim isn't enough for them, to go up to the wood country and cut down there for themselves in the land of the Perizzites and giants. And, telling them they have great power, he says that, despite the Canaanites being strong and having iron chariots, they'll drive them from the valley and won't have but one lot and that, because it's a wood they'll cut down, a mountain shall be theirs. And this chapter says Manasseh also had land and cities in Issachar and Asher.

The eighteenth chapter begins with the congregation assembling at Shiloh and setting up its tabernacle there. It says seven tribes hadn't received their inheritance, and in it, asking them how long they'll wait before beginning to possess the land God has given them, Joshua tells them to send three men from each tribe to divide the land into seven parts and bring the description to him. They do, and he casts lots, and the first lot is for Benjamin, and the remainder of this chapter describes Benjamin's lot.

In the nineteenth chapter, the second lot goes to Simeon, the third to Zebulun, the fourth to Issachar, the fifth to Asher, the sixth to Naphtali, and the seventh to Dan. And this chapter describes those lots and says Dan's lot was too little for the Danites and that they took Leshem with the edge of the sword and called it Dan. And it says that, because Judah's lot was too much for Judah, Simeon received part of it.

And this chapter says Eleazar helped Joshua with the allotting, that, according to the word of God, the children of Israel gave Joshua the city he requested, that the city was Timnath-Serah in Mount Ephraim, and that Joshua built it and dwelt there.

The twentieth chapter begins with God telling Joshua to appoint the cities of refuge, and the cities he appoints west of the Jordan are Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtali, Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Hebron in the mountain of Judah, and this chapter also repeats the list of the three cities of refuge east of the Jordan.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter the Levites come to Joshua in Shiloh and ask for the cities and suburbs God has promised them, and one of the cities that falls by lot to them is Hebron. So Caleb relinquishes it both to the Levites and for refuge, but this chapter says he kept its fields, and this chapter also says Shechem was allotted to the Kohathites and that the Levites had received the 48 cities the Book of Numbers says they'd receive, and it also says God gave the Israelites rest. It says he delivered their enemies into their hand and that not a man of their enemies stood, and it closes by saying nothing failed of the good things God had spoken to the house of Israel, that all came to pass.

In the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter, telling the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh that took land east of the Jordan that they've fulfilled the

promise they made to Moses, Joshua permits them to return to their land east of the Jordan, and he blesses them.

But, at the Jordan, on their way, they build an altar. So the congregation west of the Jordan gathers to go to war against them, and Eleazar's son Phinehas and a prince of the chief house of each of the other tribes go to speak to them and ask them whether the iniquity of Peor wasn't enough to turn God against them. But they reply that they didn't build the altar for burnt offerings but to witness against the children of the tribes west of the Jordan who might say the tribes east of the Jordan have no part in God, and that pleases Phinehas and the princes. So they bless God for Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh not intending war, and the children of Reuben and Gad call the altar Ed.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins by saying that long after that Joshua waxed old and stricken with age. And in this chapter he gathers all of Israel and tells them God shall expel the remaining nations of Canaan from their inheritance and that one Israelite shall chase a thousand. But, saying that's contingent on their obeying God's commandments, he tells them that, if they don't, the people of the land will be a scourge to them, and he repeats other predictions.

In the 24<sup>th</sup> and final chapter of the Book of Joshua, Joshua gathers all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summarizes events since Abraham's father served other gods, and, saying God said that, because he wouldn't listen to Balaam, he delivered Israel out of the hand of Balak, he tells the Israelites they'll be unable to serve God. They swear they shall, but, telling them they're witnesses against themselves, he makes a covenant with them and writes it in the book of the law of God. And he sets a great stone beneath an oak beside the sanctuary of God there.

And then, at the age of 110 years, Joshua dies. The people bury him at Timnath-Serah in his inheritance on Mount Ephraim, and they bury the bones of Joseph in Shechem in the parcel of ground Jacob bought from Dinah's father-in-law for a hundred shekels of silver, and the parcel becomes an inheritance of the children of Joseph. And Eleazar dies, and they bury him also on Mount Ephraim, in a hill belonging to Phinehas.

The first chapter of the book of Judges begins with the children of Israel asking God which of them will go against the Canaanites first after Joshua's death.

God says Judah shall, and Judah asked Simeon to help, and they find Adoni-Bezek in Bezek and killed ten thousand men. Adoni-Bezek flees, but they catch him and cut off his thumbs and big toes, and he says he's done that to seventy kings who gathered at his table. And Judah and Simeon take him to Jerusalem for his death, and Judah burns Jerusalem and takes Gaza.

But this chapter also tells of events in the book of Joshua, lists people the Israelites couldn't drive from the land, and says Moses' Kenite father-in-law dwelt among the people in the wilderness of Judah, but the *Torah* doesn't say Moses had a Kenite father-in-law.

The second chapter begins with an angel of God coming from Gilgal to Bochim. The angel, presumably speaking for God, tells the Israelites he took them out of Egypt and made a covenant with them but that they disobeyed his commandment to throw down the altars of the inhabitants of the land he'd promised. And he tells them, presumably for God again, to make no league with them.

But, with an account of the death of Joshua, this chapter says the people served God all Joshua's days and all the days of the elders who outlived him and had seen what God had done for Israel, but that then they forsook God.

It says they did evil in God's sight and served Baal, Ashtaroth, and other gods around them, and that God's anger was hot against them. But it says God raised judges and that, when they repented, the judges delivered them from the hand of those who spoiled them. But it says that, when each judge died, they returned to their disobedience. And that's the general theme of the Book of Judges.

The third chapter begins with a list of what it says are the nations God left to prove and teach war to the children of Israel who hadn't known the wars of Canaan. The five lords of the Philistines are at the beginning of the list, and this chapter says the children of Israel dwelt among the nations God said he'd drive from before them, that they took their daughters to be their wives and gave their daughters to their sons, and that they served their gods. And the first judge it says God raised is Caleb's nephew Othniel.

And, in this chapter, in the first example of this book's general theme, God's anger is hot against Israel's disobeying him, and he sells the children of Israel to the king of Mesopotamia. They serve him eight years, until Othniel, after the spirit of God comes on him, delivers them and judges Israel forty years. And Israel rests those forty year but, when Othniel dies, returns to its disobedience. And the then, continuing the theme, God strengthens the king of Moab.

And the king of Moab gathers the children of Ammon and Amalek to smite Israel, and Israel serves the king of Moab for eighteen years. But the Israelites cry to God again, and then God raises Ehud to judge them, and Ehud, concealing beneath his raiment a dagger that's a cubit long, takes a present to the king of Moab. And, saying he has a message from God, he thrusts the dagger into the king's belly.



The king's so fat that the hilt goes in with the blade, and Ehud can't draw the dagger back out, but dirt comes out. And Ehud escapes and goes to Mount Ephraim and blows a trumpet, and the Children of Israel follow him and kill about ten thousand lusty Moabite men of valor, and the land rests for eighty years. And, after Ehud, Shamgar judges Israel and kills six hundred Philistines with an ox goad and delivers Israel.

But, in the fourth chapter, the children of Israel again return to doing evil in God's sight, and God sells them into the hand of Jaban, a king of Canaan. Sisera is captain of Jaban's host, and the children of Israel cry to God because he has nine hundred iron chariots, and God raises the prophetess Deborah to judge Israel. And she tells a man whose name is Barak that God commanded her to take ten thousand of the children of Naphtali and Zebulun and said he'd draw Sisera into her hand.

Barak says he won't go if Deborah doesn't. And, telling him God told her he'd deliver Sisera into the hand of a woman, she goes with him. And God discomfits Sisera and his chariots and all his host.

But, because peace is between Jaban and Heber, Sisera flees on his feet to the tent of Jael, Heber's wife. Heber is a child of Hobab, whom this chapter says was Moses' Kenite father-in-law, while the Book of Numbers says Hobab was the son of Moses' father-in-law Ragueul, who it says was a Midianite like Moses' father-in-law Jethro or Reuel. But, be any of that as it may, in this chapter Heber has separated himself from the Kenites, and Jael invites Sisera into her tent and, telling him not to fear, covers him with a mantle.

And, in response to his request for a little water to drink, she opens a bottle of milk and gives him drink from it. And, after telling her to stand at the door of the tent and tell any man who comes that no man is there, he goes to sleep. And she uses a hammer and a tent peg to nail his head to the ground.

And Barak comes to the tent, and Jael tells him she'll show him the person he's seeking, and he goes into the tent and sees Sisera lying dead with the tent peg through his temples, and this chapter closes by saying the hand of the children of Israel prospered and prevailed against Jaban until they destroyed him.

And the fifth chapter begins with Deborah and Barak singing a song that day. The song, praising God for avenging Israel when the people offered themselves, rebukes the tribes of Gilead for not helping. And Deborah says in it that she arose, a mother in Israel.

And the song also says Jael shall be blessed above women in the tent and that she smote off Sisera's head after taking in hand the workman's hammer and the tent peg and piercing his temples. And it says Sisera's mother looked through a window and asked why his chariot was long in coming and that her

wise ladies answered by asking whether the chariot's wheels haven't sped and divided a young woman or two of the spoil to the young men and divided to Sisera a prey of diverse colors and needlework for the necks of the spoilers. And it asks God to let all his enemies perish but let those who love him be as the son when he goes forth in his might, and this chapter closes by saying the land had forty years of rest.

And, continuing this book's theme, the sixth chapter begins by saying that the children of Israel again did evil in God's sight, that God delivered them into the hand of Midian, and that the Midianites were as grasshoppers for multitude and destroyed the increase of earth until one comes to Gaza.

It doesn't say how the Midianites were so many after Moses destroyed them, but it says the children of Israel cried again and that God sent a prophet to them telling them he'd save them, and next in this chapter an angel comes to Joash's son Gideon as he threshes wheat by a winepress to hide the wheat from the Midianites. The angel, calling Gideon a mighty man of valor, saying he'll save Israel from Midian, and telling him to prepare a kid and some unleavened cakes and put them on a rock, puts forth a staff and touches the flesh, and it and the cakes disappear. Fire comes from the rock and consumes them.

Gideon bows and says that, because he's seen an angel of God face to face, he'll die, but God tells him not to fear and says he won't die, and Gideon builds an altar there. And later that night God tells him to take his father's young bullock and throw down his father's altar to Baal and cut down the grove beside it, and Gideon takes ten of his servants and obeys. But, because he fears his father's household and the men of their city, he does that at night.

The men of the city demand of Joash that he bring out Gideon for him to die, but Joash tells them to let Baal plead against him. And they call Gideon Jerubbaal, and the spirit of God comes upon him, and he blows a trumpet and sends messengers to Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they come to meet him. But he asks God for another sign.

Telling God he'll put a fleece on the floor, he says that, if the dew's on the fleece and not on the ground, he'll know God will keep his promise to save Israel by his hand. And next morning the ground is dry, and Gideon wrings a bowl of water from the fleece, but he asks God to do the opposite that night. And this chapter ends with God giving him that sign also.

So the seventh chapter begins with Jerubbaal and the people he's gathered in Gilead preparing to fight the Midianites, but God tells him that, if the Israelites aren't to say they saved themselves, the people he's gathered there are too many. He tells Gideon to tell them to let whoever's fearful leave Mount Gilead early, and, saying those remaining are also too many, he tells Gideon to

take them to water. He says he'll save him by the three hundred who drink by lapping from their hands water they bring to their mouths.

And that night he tells Gideon, if he's afraid, to go down to the host with his servant Phurah, and Gideon and Phurah go down and hear a Midianite telling another Midianite of a dream he's had of a barley cake tumbling into the host of Midian and smiting a tent, and the Midianite hearing the dream says that, because God has delivered the host of Midian to Gideon, the barley cake is Gideon's sword.

So Gideon rejoices, returns to the three hundred, and tells them to arise because God has delivered the host of Midian to their hand. And, dividing them into companies of a hundred and putting a trumpet into a hand of each man and a pitcher with a lamp in it into the other hand of each, he tells them to blow the trumpets, break the pitchers, and, when he blows the trumpet, to cry "the sword of the lord and of Gideon". And they do.

And the Midianites run, cry, and flee, and God sets their swords against one another. And the others Gideon gathered gather again, and he sends messengers to Mount Ephraim, and people from their also gather. And they join the chase, behead two Midianite princes, and take their heads to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.

The eighth chapter begins with the men of Ephraim chiding Gideon for not having called them when he went to fight, but Gideon asks them what he's done in comparison to their taking the heads of the two Midianite princes. So their anger abates, and Gideon and the three hundred cross the Jordan to continue the pursuit of two kings of Midian, and he tells people of Succoth and Penuel what they're doing and asks them for bread for his followers. They refuse, but he continues the pursuit, kills 120 thousand men, and captures the two kings, and he teaches the elders of Succoth with thorns and briars of the wilderness, kills the men of Penuel, and beats down its tower.

And he asks the two kings what kind of men they killed at Tabor. They reply that the men resembled children of a king, and Gideon agrees and tells them the men were his brothers and that he wouldn't be killing them if they hadn't killed the men. And he tells his firstborn son to kill them.

But Jether, the firstborn son, is young and afraid to draw his sword. The kings tell him to kill them because a man is as his strength, but Gideon kills them and take the ornaments from their camels' necks. And then the men of Israel ask Gideon and his son and his son's sons to rule over them because he's delivered them from the hand of Midian.

Gideon tells them God shall rule over them, but, because their prey have gold earrings because they're Ishmaelites, he also asks them to give him the earrings. So again the *Miqra* identifies Midianites with Ishmaelites and

merchandise, and the men of Israel also put 1700 shekels of gold into a blanket, and Gideon makes an ephod of it and other spoil from the kings and their camels, and he puts it in Ophrah, his city, and the people go whoring after it, and it becomes a snare to Gideon and his house. But this chapter says Midian lifted its head no more, that the country was quiet forty years in the days of Gideon, and that, because Gideon had many wives, he had seventy sons. And it says his concubine who dwelled in Shechem bore him a son he called Abimelech.

And, saying Gideon died old and was buried in his father's sepulcher in Ophrah, it closes by saying that, as soon as Gideon was dead, the children of Israel went whoring after Baal, and that they showed no kindness to the house of Jerubbaal that accorded with all the good he'd shown to Israel.

And, in the ninth chapter, Abimelech asks his mother's brothers in Shechem whether they'd prefer him to rule over them or would prefer Jerubbaal's seventy other sons. So they pay Abimelech to hire vane people to fight for him, and, excepting the youngest of Gideon's seventy sons, he kills all of them on one stone at Gideon's house in Ophrah. But Jotham, the surviving son, hides and goes to the top of a hill and shouts a parable indicating that Abimelech shall destroy his followers.

And the remainder of this this chapter is a complex of treachery and deceit killing more than a thousand people before a woman drops a millstone from a tower onto Abimelech's head, and then Abimelech asks his armorbearer to kill him, to keep people from saying a woman killed him, and the armorbearer does.

And, saying that after that the Israelites again worshiped other gods and that God sold them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites, the tenth chapter tells of two more judges and ends by saying the Israelites again repented and that the princes of Gilead said whoever would save them from the Ammonites would be head over the inhabitants of Gilead.

The eleventh chapter begins by saying the Gileadite Jephthah was a mighty man of valor and that Gilead begat him by a harlot. And in it, because Jephthah's the son of a strange woman, Gilead's wife thrusts him away and tells him he shouldn't inherit his father's house. So Jephthah flees to the land of Tob, and there vain men gather to him and go out with him.

But, when the Ammonites war against Israel, the elders of Gilead ask Jephthah for help. Jephthah rebukes them for thrusting him out, but he tells them he'll help them if they make him head over them, and they accept that offer. So Jephthah sends to the king of the Ammonites messengers with arguments that the Ammonites' refusing to give bread to the Israelites during the exodus justified the Israelites' conquering them.

They reject Jephthah's arguments, but, as he passes over Gilead to them, the spirit of God comes to him, and he tells God that, when he returns in peace, he'll offer him a burnt offering of whatever comes from the door of his house, and God delivers the Ammonites into his hands.

But, when Jephthah returns to his house, his daughter greets him with timbrels and dances, and she's his only child, and a virgin. So he rends his clothes, but, telling her of his vow, he says he can't go back on opening his mouth to God. And she tells him to do to her what, for his vengeance on the Ammonites, went from his mouth.

But she asks him to let her alone to go up to the mountain for two months of bewailing her virginity with her fellows. So, telling her to go, he sends her with her companions, and she returns at the end of the two months, and he does to her what he vowed he'd do. And this chapter ends by saying the daughters of Israel went four days each year to lament the daughter of the Gileadite Jephthah.

But, in the twelfth chapter, the men of Ephraim tell Jephthah that, because he didn't ask them to help against the Ammonites, they'll burn his house. So Jephthah gathers the men of Gilead and smites the men of Ephraim, and, asking men of Ephraim to say "Shibboleth", they kill them when they mispronounce it. And this chapter says Jephthah judged Israel six years and was buried in a city of Gilead, and the remainder of it tells of three more judges.

It says Ibzan judged Israel seven years, had thirty sons and thirty daughters, sent his daughters abroad, and took thirty daughters from abroad for his sons, that the Zebulonite Elon judged Israel ten years and was buried in the country of Zebulun, and that Abdon judged Israel eight years, was buried in the land of Ephraim on the mountain of the Amalekites, and had forty sons and thirty nephews riding seventy ass colts.

The thirteenth chapter begins by saying the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of God and that he delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years. And next in this chapter an angel comes to the barren wife of a Danite, says she'll bear a son, tells her not to drink wine or strong drink or eat anything unclean, and says no razor shall come to the son's head. He says that's because the son shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb and shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

Calling the angel a man of God, she tells of that to her husband. And her husband prays to God for God to send the man of God again to teach him and his wife what to do to the child. So the angel returns and repeats the instructions, and the husband offers on a rock a kid to God, and the angel ascends to heaven with the flame of the offering. So then the husband knows the man of God is an angel, and he and the wife fall on their faces.

He also says that, because they've seen God, they'll die. But the wife tells him that, if killing them would please God, he wouldn't have accepted the offering from them and that neither would he have told them what he told them. And she bears a son and calls him Samson.

The fourteenth chapter begins with Samson going to Timnath, seeing a Philistine woman, and asking his parents to acquire her for him. His parents ask him why he prefers the Philistine to the daughters of his people, but he repeats his request and says she pleases him, and the three of them go to Timnath. And this chapter says the parents didn't know the occasion was from God to seek an occasion against the Philistines. And, at the vineyards of Timnath, a young lion roars against Samson. And he rends it as though it were a kid.

He doesn't tell his parents of that, but he talks with the woman, and, returning later to take her, he turns aside to see the carcass of the lion, finds a swarm of bees and honey in it, eats some of the honey, and takes some to his parents.

After the marriage he makes a feast in which thirty of his companions participate, and, at the feast, asking a riddle regarding the lion and the honey, that out of the eater came forth meat and that out of the strong came forth sweetness, he bets the companions thirty sheets and changes of raiment that they can't answer the riddle. So, asking his wife to obtain the answer from him, they threaten to burn her and her father's house if she doesn't provide it to them, and she weeps and wheedles Samson until he tells her the answer. But the spirit of God comes upon him when they tell him the answer, and he goes to Ashkelon, kills thirty men, spoils them to pay the bet, and angrily returns to his father's house. So this chapter ends with his wife being given to a companion he'd used as a friend.

But the fifteenth chapter begins with Samson taking a kid to his wife to go into her chamber. Her father, saying he gave her to Samson's companion because he thought Samson hated her, asking him whether her younger sister isn't fairer, and offering her to him instead, doesn't let him in. So Samson catches three hundred foxes, turns them tail to tail, puts a torch between the tails, and turns them loose in the Philistines' standing corn. So the Philistines, hearing he did that because his father-in-law gave his wife to his companion, burn his wife and her father.

Samson slaughters many of them, but survivors of the slaughter camp in Judah, and three thousand men of Judah come to Samson and, asking him what he's done to them and whether he doesn't know the Philistines are rulers over them, tell him they'll bind him and deliver him to the Philistines. He asks them whether they'll turn upon him, and they tell him they'll only bind him and deliver him, and he lets them bind him with new cords. But, after they deliver

him, he breaks the bonds, finds the jawbone of an ass, and kills a thousand men with it.

And then he's thirsty and tells God that God has delivered him but that he'll die of thirst. So God cleaves a hollow place in the jawbone, and water comes from it and returns Samson's spirit, and he revives. And this chapter closes by saying Samson judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

But the sixteenth chapter begins with Samson going to Gaza, seeing a harlot, and going into her. The Gazites hear of that and lay in wait to kill him in the morning, but Samson rises at midnight and on his shoulders takes to the top of a hill at Hebron the doors and posts of the gate of the city. And after that he loves another woman.

Her name is Delilah, and each of the lords of the Philistines promises her eleven hundred pieces of silver for her to tell them wherein lies Samson's strength, and she presses Samson daily for the answer.

He lies to her three times, and each time she tells the lies to the Philistines, and they prove them lies by attacking Samson. But, after the third time, Delilah tells Samson he doesn't love her if he doesn't tell her, and he tells her that, because he's been a Nazarite from his mother's womb, his strength comes from his not shaving. So she calls for a man to shave him while he sleeps on her knees, and the Philistines put out his eyes and imprison him.

So the lords of the Philistines gather to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon to celebrate his saving them from their enemy Samson. And, to make sport of him when they're merry, they bring him from the prison and set him between two pillars of the house where they're celebrating. But, in prison, Samson's hair has grown, and he asks the youth holding his hand there to let him feel the pillars of the house, to lean on them. And he prays to God to strengthen him to avenge himself against the Philistines for his eyes.

The house is full of men and women, and about three thousand are on its roof. And, taking hold of a pillar on each side of him and asking that he die with the Philistines, he bows himself with all his might, and the house falls. So he kills more at his death than he did in his life, and his brothers come with all his father's house and bury him in the burial place of his father.

But the seventeenth chapter deviates somewhat from the general theme of the book of Judges. In it a man of Mount Ephraim whose name is Micah steals eleven hundred shekels of silver from his mother but returns it, and she tells him God has blessed him and that she'd dedicated the silver to God for her son to make a graven image and a molten image. So she and her son use two hundred shekels of the silver for that.

So then, having a house of gods, Micah makes an ephod and a teraphim and consecrates one of his sons to be his priest. But a Levite looking for a place leaves Bethlehem and stops at the house, and Micah offers the Levite ten shekels of silver each year and food and a suit of apparel, to dwell with him and be his father and his priest. And the Levite accepts the offer, and Micah consecrates him to be his priest, and this chapter closes with Micah saying he knows that God, seeing he has a Levite to be his priest, will do him good.

But the eighteenth chapter begins by saying that no king was in Israel in those days and that that the tribe of Dan hadn't received its inheritance. And some Danites seeking their inheritance find some land they think they can take and stop at Micah's house and see his image and ephod and teraphim and take them. The Levite asks them what they're doing, but the Danites, after asking him whether he'd rather be a priest of the house of one man or a priest of a tribe and family of Israel, take him also.

Micah follows them and complains. But, seeing that they're too strong for him, he returns home, and the Danites go on and take the land and name its city Dan. And, saying Manasseh's son Gershom's son Jonathan and his sons were priests of the tribe of Dan until the captivity of the land, this chapter closes by saying they set up Micah's graven image all the time the house of God was in Shiloh.

In the nineteenth chapter, continuing the deviation from the general theme of the Book of Judges, a Levite sojourning on a side of Mount Ephraim takes a concubine of Bethlehem, and she plays the whore against him and returns to her father's house. Four months later, the Levite goes to her father's house to speak kindly to her and retrieve her, and her father welcomes him, entertains him five days, and asks him to stay longer. But, on the evening of the fifth day, the Levite and the concubine leave on two asses.

The Levite's servant suggests that they stop at Jerusalem for the night. But Jerusalem is a city of the Jebusites, and the Levite says he won't stay in a city of strangers. So they travel on to Benjamin's city Gibeah.

There, because no one takes them in, they sit down in the street. But an old man returns from his field work and invites them in, and they eat and drink in his house until some sons of Belial demand that the old man send out the man he's taken in, for them to know him. So the old man offers them his virgin daughter and the concubine instead, and, when they ignore him, the Levite brings them the concubine. And they abuse her all night.

In the morning they release her. And she falls down at the door of the old man's house with her hands on the threshold, and the Levite finds her there and tells her to rise for them to go, but no one answers. So he puts her on her



ass, takes her home, cuts her into twelve pieces, and sends the pieces throughout Israel.

And, in the twentieth chapter, because the children of Benjamin refuse to relinquish to them the sons of Belial who killed the concubine, 400 thousand Israelites who draw sword go to the house of God and ask God which of them should go out first, and God tells them Judah should, and they wage war against the children of Benjamin.

At Gibeah, on the first day of the fighting, the Benjamites kill 22 thousand Israelites, and they kill eighteen thousand the second day. But the ark of the covenant is in Gibeah then, and the Israelites offer sacrifices and inquire of God, and Phinehas is there and asks God whether they should go out again against their brother Benjamin, and God says he'll deliver Benjamin into their hand the next day. So the next day, in the manner of the Israelites ambushing Ai under the command of Joshua, the Israelites ambush Gibeah, and they continue on to burn other cities of Benjamin and kill other men and beasts and all else that comes to hand.

And the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter begins by saying the men of Israel had sworn at Mispah not to give any daughter to Benjamin as a wife. But, asking whether one of the tribes should be cut off from Israel, they ask which of the tribes of Israel didn't help against the Benjamites. And, saying those of Jabeth-Gilead weren't among the 400 thousand, they kill all the people of Jabeth-Gilead who aren't virgin women and give the virgin women to the remaining Benjamite men to be their wives, but they're not enough. So, saying a feast of God is in Shiloh each year, they tell the Benjamites to go there and lie in wait in vineyards and kidnap the virgin daughters of Shiloh dancing at the feast.

And this chapter, the final chapter of the book of Judges, closes by saying again that in those days no king was in Israel and that every man did what was right in his own eyes.

The first chapter of the Book of Samuel begins by saying a man of Mount Ephraim whose name was Elkanah had two wives. It says one was Penninah, that the other was Hannah, and that Elkanah loved Hannah more and gave her more food at the sacrifices they attended each year in Shiloh, but that she was barren. In this chapter Elkanah asks her whether he isn't better to her than ten sons, but she refuses to eat, and, weeping near the temple, she asks God to give her a son.

The priests there are Eli and his two sons. And Eli, sitting at a post of the temple and seeing Hannah moving her lips but not speaking, thinks she's drunk, asks her how long she'll be drunk, and tells her to put away the wine. So, saying she's been pouring out her soul to God, she tells him not to count her a

daughter of Belial, and so, telling her to go in peace, Eli says God will grant her petition, and she returns to her house at Ramah, conceives and bears a child, and calls him Samuel

So, having told God in her prayer at the temple that, if God would relieve her affliction by giving her a son, she'd give him to God all the days of his life and that no razor would come upon his head, with Elkanah's permission, she stays home from the annual sacrifices until she's weaned Samuel, and then she takes Samuel with some other offerings to Eli in Shiloh, reminds him of who she is, and tells him of her vow.

The second chapter, beginning with Hannah thanking and praising God, says Samuel administered before Eli, that each year, when Hannah and Elkanah went to the annual sacrifice, Hannah made Samuel a little coat and took it to him, that Eli blessed Elkanah and Hannah and asked God to give Hannah seed for the loan of her son to God, and that she conceived and bore three more sons and two daughters.

But it also says Eli heard that Hophni and Phinehas, his sons the first chapter says were also priests in Shiloh, lay with the women of the assembly and took the best of the offerings for themselves. So in this chapter Eli rebukes them, but they don't listen to him, and a man of God goes to Eli and, asking him why he honors his sons above God after God has chosen him to be a priest, tells him God said the house of Eli's father would walk before him forever but that no more of it would, and the angel says a sign of that to Eli would be that Hophni and Phinehas would die and that God would raise up a faithful priest. And this chapter closes with God telling Eli that what remains of his house shall beg the faithful priest for them to eat a piece of bread for a priestly office.

And the third chapter begins by saying Samuel ministered before Eli. And it says no vision was open there then, that the word of God was precious, and that Eli's eyes were beginning to dim. And one night in this chapter, after Eli lies down in his place but before the lamp of God goes out in the temple where the ark of God is, God calls Samuel. And Samuel answers that he's there, but he runs to Eli.

Saying he didn't call, Eli tells Samuel to lie down again, and God calls him again, and he runs to Eli again, and Eli tells him to lie down again and, if God calls again, to ask him to speak. And this chapter says Samuel yet knew neither God nor the word of God, but God calls again, and Samuel obeys Eli, and God tells Samuel of what the man of God told Eli. Samuel's afraid to tell Eli what God told him, but Eli asks him to tell him, and he does. And Eli tells Samuel it's God and to let God do what seems to him good.

And this chapter closes by saying all of Israel from Dan to Beer-Sheba knew Samuel was established to be a prophet of God and that, because, by his word, God revealed himself to Samuel there, God appeared again in Shiloh.

But in the fourth chapter the Philistines array themselves against Israel and kill about four thousand men in a battle. So the Israelites take Eli's sons and the ark of the covenant from Shiloh into the fighting, and, when the ark enters the camp, the earth rings with the shouts of the Israelites, and, hearing the noise, the Philistines fear. But they tell each other to strengthen themselves against the god who saved Israel from the Egyptians and not to let themselves be servants to the Hebrews. And about thirty thousand footmen of Israel fall, and the Philistines kill Hophni and Phinehas and capture the ark.

So, with his clothes rent and dirt on his head, a Benjamite from the Israelite army tells Eli. And Eli, when he hears what happened to the ark, falls backward from his chair, and his neck breaks, and he dies. And Phinehas' wife, dying giving birth to a son she calls Ichabod, says that, because the ark of God was taken, the glory of God departed from Israel. And this chapter says Eli was 98 years old when he died and that he'd judged Israel forty years,

In the fifth chapter the Philistines set the ark beside their god Dagon in Dagon's house in Ashdod, but next morning they find Dagon on its face before the ark. They set it back up, but the next morning they find its head and the palms of its hands on the threshold, leaving only its body, and God smites Ashdod and its surrounding area with emerods. So the men of Ashdod gather the lords of the Philistines and demand carrying the ark to Gath.

And then God smites Gath with great destruction and smites its men with emerods in their secret parts. So they send the ark to Ekron, and the people of Ekron, saying they've brought it there to kill them, gather the lords of Philistines and demand, because of the deadly destruction throughout their city, sending the ark to its own place. And this chapter closes by saying the hand of God was heavy there, that emerods smote the men there who didn't die, and that the cry of the city went up to heaven.

The sixth chapter begins by saying the ark was in the country of the Philistines for seven months, and then in this chapter the Philistines ask priests and diviners what to do with it. The priests and diviners, asking the Philistines why they're hardening their hearts as did Pharaoh, advise making a new cart and sending the ark away with two milk cows that have never been under a yoke. And they advise not sending it empty but putting a trespass offering into a coffer beside the ark.

The offering is a gold emerod and a gold mouse for each of the five lords of the Philistines, the lords of Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. And, to see whether God's hand was in the evil that was upon them, the priests

and diviners advise letting it go its own way, to see whether it goes to the coast of Beth-Shemesh. And the five lords follow the ark and see that it goes directly to Beth-Shemesh.

While the people of Beth-Shemeth are reaping their wheat, it arrives near a stone in the field of the Beth-Shemite Joshua, and the people lift their eyes, see it, and rejoice. So Levites put the ark and the coffer on the stone and cut the wood of the cart, and the men of Beth-Shemeth offer burnt offerings to God, and the five lords return to Ekron. But, because some of the men of Beth-Shemeth look into the ark, God smites 50,070 of them.

So others send messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-Jearim to tell them the Philistines brought the ark of God and to ask them to fetch it. And, opening with the men of Kirjath-Jearim fetching it and taking it to the house of Abinadab, the seventh chapter says they sanctified Abinadab's son Eleazar to keep it there. And this chapter says it was there twenty years.

And, also in the seventh chapter, the Philistines gather again against Israel. But Samuel tells the people of Israel to return to God, and they put away Baal and Ashtaroth and serve only God, and Samuel gathers the people in Mizpah, draws water for God, and offers him a suckling lamb, and the people ask Samuel not to stop crying for them. So, while the Philistines try to smite the Israelites, the Israelites, with help from God, subdue them and take Ekron and Gath back from them.

And this chapter says the Philistines came no more to the borders of Israel, that Samuel judged Israel all his days, that the hand of God was against the Philistines all those days, and that Samuel returned to his house in Ramah and built an altar there but yearly made a circuit of Beth-El, Gilgal, and Mizpah.

But the eighth chapter begins with Samuel, when he's old, making his sons judges over Israel. And they take bribes and pervert judgement, and the elders ask Samuel to give them a king to judge them, for Israel to be like all the nations. That displeases Samuel, but God, saying they're rejecting God and not him, tells him to listen to them.

But he also tells him to tell the elders the manner of the king who will reign over them. He tells him to tell them the king will take their sons and set a hierarchy of captains over them, that he'll take their daughters to be his confectionaries, cooks, and bakers, and that he'll take a tenth of their wealth and make them his servants. And he tells him to tell them they'll cry out because of the king they'll choose and that God won't hear them.

But the people persist in their demand. And in the ninth chapter God selects an extraordinarily tall Benjamite whose name is Saul to be their king. And, while Saul seeking some lost asses of his father's, God directs a complex set of events and activities for Samuel and Saul to find and identify one another.

And Saul, when Samuel tells him why, says he's of the smallest tribe of Israel and isn't worthy.

But the tenth chapter begins with Samuel pouring a vial of ointment onto Saul's head and telling him God has anointed him to be captain over his inheritance. And, beginning by telling him he'll find at Rachel's sepulcher at Zelzah in the border of Benjamin two men who'll tell him the asses he's seeking have been found, he gives Saul some instructions involving signs involving his heart changing for him to prophesy with some prophets, and, telling the people Saul's their king, he writes the manner of the kingdom in a book and lays it up before God. But some sons of Belial despise Saul, bring him no presents, and ask how he can save them, and this chapter closes with Saul holding his peace.

But, in the eleventh chapter, when Saul hears Ammonites have offered peace to the people of Jabesh-Gilead on the condition that they thrust out their right eyes, the spirit of God comes upon him. So, by treating a yoke of oxen as the Levite of Mount Ephraim treated his concubine of Bethlehem the Benjamites killed, he gathers 300 thousand children of Israel and thirty thousand men of Judah. And he and they save the people of Jabesh-Gilead.

So, after the slaying and scattering of the Ammonites, the people ask Samuel to bring them the sons of Belial who despised Saul. But Saul says no man will be put to death on that day on which God wrought salvation in Israel, and Samuel tells the people to come to Gilgal to renew the kingdom there, and there they sacrifice peace offering before God. And this chapter closes with Saul and all the men of Israel rejoicing greatly there, and the twelfth chapter begins with Samuel telling all of Israel to behold that he's listened to them and made Saul king before God in Gilgal. But next he admonishes them.

Saying he's old, he tells them to witness against him before God if he's defrauded them or oppressed them, and they witness that he hasn't. But, witnessing against them, he summarizes what God has done for them and how they've disobeyed God, and he asks God to send thunder and rain to prove his power. He tells them that, for God's great name's sake and because making them his people has pleased him, God won't forsake his people, but next he returns to threatening Israel. And this chapter closes with Samuel telling the people that, if they keep doing wickedly, both they and their king will be consumed.

The thirteenth chapter begins with Saul, when he's reigned three years, choosing three thousand men of Israel. He chooses two thousand to be with him in Mishmash in Beth-El and a thousand to be with his son Jonathon in Gibeah, and Jonathan smites the Philistine garrison in Gibeah, and Saul blows the trumpet throughout Israel. But all of Israel, hearing that Saul smote a garrison of Philistines and that the Israelites are in abomination to the Philistines, hide

themselves in caves, thickets, rocks, hills, and pits or cross the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead.

Saul makes a peace offering, but, because Samuel doesn't come to Samuel at a time Samuel appointed, he makes the offering in Samuel's absence. So, when Samuel arrives, he asks Saul why he didn't wait, and Saul replies that he forced himself to make the offering because he saw Samuel was late and that the Philistines had gathered against him. So Samuel replies that God has sought another king for Israel but that, if Saul had done what God commanded him to do, God would have established Saul's kingdom forever.

And this chapter also says that, because the Philistines wished to keep the Israelites from having swords, no sword or smith was in the land of Israel, that the Israelites needed to go to the Philistines to sharpen their tools, and that no sword or spear was with the people with Saul and Jonathan on the day of a battle, but that Jonathan had them.

And, in the fourteenth chapter, Jonathan and his armor bearer attack the Philistines with no help from others. Jonathan, asking his armorbearer to go with him into the Philistines' camp at night and telling him they'll announce their presence, says that whether they attack or withdraw will depend on how the Philistines respond. And he tells him that, if the Philistines tell them to come forward, God has delivered the Philistines into their hands.

And the Philistines, telling each other to behold that the Hebrew have come out of the hole in which they've hidden, tell Jonathan and his armorbearer to come to them for them to show them a thing, and Jonathan and his armorbearer kill about twenty Philistines.

And then the earth quakes, and the Philistines tremble and turn their swords against one another, and Saul tells a priest to bring the ark, and the Hebrews who defected to the Philistines and those who were hiding in Mount Ephraim join the fight, and they smite the Philistines from Mishmash to Aijalon.

But Saul demands a curse on any man who eats before evening, and Jonathan doesn't hear that and eats honey from a rod he dips into a honeycomb, and the people eat with the blood some of the livestock they spoil from the Philistines. So Saul, building the first altar the *Miqra* says he built to God, says that whoever brought that sin shall die, and, casting lots until the lot falls to Jonathan, he says Jonathan must die. But the people, telling him Jonathan saved that day with God, ask that God forbid that one hair of Jonathan's head fall to the ground.

So Saul remits, and he also stops following the Philistines then, but this chapter says war was against the Israelites all his days. And it also says he smote the children of Moab, Ammon, Edom, and others, wherever he turned, and it names Saul's wife, children, and father and says his uncle Abner was

captain of his host. And it closes by saying Saul took to himself any valiant man he saw.

In the fifteenth chapter Samuel tells Saul God commanded destroying the Amalekites and all they have. But Saul spares the Amalekites' king and the best of their sheep and oxen, and God again tells Samuel he repents having made Saul king, and Samuel cries in grief to God all night. But he tells Saul.

Saul replies that the people took the livestock to offer it to God in Gilgal, but Samuel, asking him whether God has more delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices than in obedience to his commandments, turns away, and Saul begs forgiveness and grabs and rends Samuel's mantle, and Samuel tells him God has rent the kingdom from him that day, and Saul begs him to turn again to him to worship God.

So Samuel turns and worships God. But, telling Saul to bring the Amalekite king to him, he tells the king his mother will be childless as his sword has made mothers childless, and he hews the king into pieces before God in Gilgal and returns to his house in Ramah, and Saul returns to his house in Gibeah. And this chapter closes by saying Samuel went no more again to Saul until the day of his death, but that he mourned for Saul nevertheless, while God repented making Saul king over Israel.

And the sixteenth chapter begins with God asking Samuel how long he'll mourn for Saul. And he tells Samuel that, because he's provided himself a king among the sons of the Bethlehemite Jesse, he'll send him to Jesse. Samuel says Saul will kill him, but God tells him to take a heifer and say he's going there to sacrifice to God.

Jesse shows Samuel seven sons. But, of one Jesse shows him, God, telling Samuel not to look on his countenance or the height of his stature, says God looks on the heart. And Samuel, saying God has chosen none of them, asks whether any remain. And Jesse says his youngest is keeping the sheep. And Samuel tells him to fetch him.

He's ruddy and of a beautiful countenance and good to look at, but Samuel takes a horn of oil and anoints him in the midst of his brothers, and this chapter calls him David, and the spirit of God comes upon David from that day forward, and it departs from Saul.

And an evil spirit from God troubles Saul. So his servants tell him that and ask him to let them seek a man who's cunning with the harp to play to make Saul well, and Saul agrees, and one of the servants tells him of David, and Saul sends messengers to Jesse. So David comes to Saul with gifts from Jesse, and Saul loves him greatly and makes him his armorbearer, and Saul's refreshed and well when David plays a harp, and the evil spirit departs from him.

But in the seventeenth chapter is another version of how David became a servant of Saul's. In it the Philistines and Israel gather for battle in the valley of Elah, and a Philistine from Gath whose name is Goliath is six cubits and a span tall and offers to settle the strife by fighting one Israelite on the condition that the loser's side become servants of the winner's side. And, in this version, Jesse, David's father, is an Ephrathite of Bethlehem-Judah, and three of his sons are among Saul's army.

David's at home tending their father's sheep, but Jesse sends him to the battlefield with food for his brothers and the captain of their thousand, and David hears Goliath's challenge. Other Israelites there say the king will enrich the man who kills Goliath, giving him his daughter and freeing his father's house. And David asks who that uncircumcised Philistine is, to defy the armies of the living God.

His brothers say he's only there to see the battle, but Saul hears of what David said and sends for him. He tells him that, because he's a youth while Goliath has been a man of war all his life, he can't go against Goliath. But, saying he killed a lion and a bear threatening his father's sheep, David replies that the God who delivered him from their paws shall deliver him from the hand of Goliath.

So Saul arms him with a brass helmet and a coat of mail, and David girds his sword onto his armor and tries to go, but then he says he can't go with the arms. Saying he hasn't proven them, he removes them, takes five stones from a brook, puts them in a shepherd's bag, and goes against Goliath with a sling in hand. And Goliath ridicules him.

But David, telling Goliath God doesn't save by sword or spear and saying he'll take Goliath's head and give the Philistines' carcasses to birds and beasts, slings a stone into Goliath's forehead. So Goliath falls on his face, and David uses Goliath's sword to decapitate him, put's Goliath's armor in his tent, and takes his head to Jerusalem. And the Israelites chase the Philistines to Gath and Ekron and spoil their tents.

So Saul asks Abner whose son David is. Abner says he can't tell, but he brings David, with Goliath's head in hand, to Saul. And this chapter closes with Saul asking David whose son he is and David replying that he's the son of Saul's Bethlehemite servant Jesse.

And the eighteenth chapter begins by saying that, at the end of David's speaking with Saul, Jonathan's soul was knit with David's. And Saul takes David into his house and won't let him go back to his father's house, and Jonathan makes a covenant with David and removes his robe and gives it to David, with his sword and bow. And Saul sets David over men of war.



But David behaves so well that women come out of the cities and sing that Saul has killed his thousands while David has killed his ten thousands, and that angers Saul, and again an evil spirit from God comes upon him, and, saying he'll smite David to the wall, he throws a javelin at him while he's playing his harp. But David escapes, and Saul, seeing that God has departed from him but is with David, is afraid of David. So he sends him from him and makes him a captain of a thousand.

And he also promises him his oldest daughter but, saying she'll be a snare to him against the Philistines, gives her to someone else and gives David his youngest daughter instead. Other servants of Saul's tell David that Saul delights in him and that he should be Saul's son-in-law, but David, asking them whether being a king's son-in-law is a small thing, says he's a poor man and lightly esteemed. And they tell that to Saul, and Saul tells them to tell David to bring him a hundred Philistine foreskins instead of a dowry, and David kills two hundred Philistines and takes their foreskins to Saul.

So then Saul gives him his youngest daughter, Michal, and she loves David, and then Saul's more afraid of David and becomes David's enemy continually, but David behaves more wisely than all of Saul's servants.

The nineteenth chapter begins with Saul telling Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. But Jonathan, telling David to escape and hide, argues with his father for David's sake, and Saul repents. So David returns, but the evil spirit comes upon Saul again, and then Michal helps David escape, and David goes to Samuel and hides with him and other prophets.

Saul hears where he is and sends messengers to take him, but the messengers prophesy with the prophets, and Saul sends more messengers, and they do the same. So Saul goes, but he strips off his clothes, prophesies before Samuel, and lies down naked all day and all night, and this chapter closes with people responding to that as they did when Samuel sent him among prophets before he anointed him. They ask whether Saul isn't among the prophets.

In the twentieth chapter, Jonathan renews his covenant with David and proves it in various ways against Saul's efforts to kill him, and Saul, telling Jonathan he won't inherit the throne as long as David's alive, throws a javelin at him, and this chapter closes with Jonathan telling David they've sworn for God to be between them and their seed forever.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter David goes to the priest Ahimelech in Nob. Ahimelech is afraid, but David, telling him he's on a secret mission for Saul, asks him for food and bread. Ahimelech says he has only hallowed bread, but he gives it to David on the condition that the men with him have kept themselves from women, and David tells him they and he have.

And also, telling Ahimelech that, because the king's business required haste, he has no weapons with him, David asks him whether he has a spear or a sword, and Ahimelech replies that Goliath's sword is there, and David says none's like it. But also present is Doeg, an Edomite who's Saul's chief herdsman. So David goes from Ahimelech to Gath.

But the servants of Achish, the Philistine who's king of Gath, ask whether David isn't the king of the land and whether people didn't sing about him that Saul killed his thousands while David killed his ten thousands. So David fears Achish and, scrabbling on the doors of the gate and letting his spittle fall on his beard, feigns madness. So Achish asks his servants whether they brought that madman to play mad in his presence. And he asks them whether David should come into his house.

So the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins with David escaping to a cave. And all of his father's house hear of that and go there, and so do all who are in distress, in debt, or discontented, and David becomes captain of them. They're about four hundred men, and he takes them to the king of Moab and asks him to let his parents also be with him, until he knows what God will do with him, and his followers hide with him until the prophet Gad tells him to go to Judah.

And Saul, accusing his servants of conspiring against him and not telling him of Jonathan's oath with David, asks them whether David will give them land and make them captains, and Doeg tells him of David's visit to Ahimelech. So Saul sends for Ahimelech, all of Ahimelech's father's house, and all the priests of Nob and asks Ahimelech why he and David conspired against him. So Ahimelech asks Saul who of his servants is as faithful as David and whether then was the beginning of his inquiring of God for him. And he asks Saul not to impute anything to him or to his father's house.

Saul, telling him he and all his father's house shall die, tells footmen to kill the priests of God because they helped David and knew where he went but didn't tell him, but the footmen refuse. So Saul tells Doeg to do it, and Doeg kills 85 persons in linen ephods, and he also kills with the edge of the sword all the men, women, children, oxen, asses, and sheep of Nob. But Ahimelech's son Abiathar escapes and tells David, and David tells Abiathar he knew Doeg would tell Saul and that he'll guard Abiathar's life as his own. And this chapter closes with David telling Abiathar he'll be safe with him.

More of David's fighting with the Philistines and hiding from Saul is in the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter, and in it David asks God whether he should save Keilah from the Philistines and whether the people of Keilah will betray him to Saul, and God replies affirmatively to both question. So David both saves Keilah and flees, and Jonathan, saying David will be king of Israel and that he'll be second to him, helps him further. And Saul, to fight the Philistines, stops pursuing him.

But, at the beginning of the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter, he resumes pursuing him, and, during the pursuit, he sleeps in a cave where David and his men are hiding. So David's men tell David God has delivered his enemy into his hand, but David replies that God forbids that he stretch out his hand against God's anointed, and instead he cuts off the skirt of Saul's robe. And, emerging from the cave after Saul, he shouts to him and shows him the skirt, and Saul, saying David's more righteous than he and that he knows David will be king of Israel, asks him to swear he won't cut off his progeny. And David swears, and they go separate ways.

The 25<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning by saying Samuel died, says all the Israelites gathered together, lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah, and next it says David went to the wilderness of Paran.

And next it says a wealthy man in Maon whose possessions were in Carmel was sheering his sheep in Carmel. It says the man's name was Nabal, that his wife's name was Abigail, and that she was of good understanding and beautiful countenance, while he was churlish and evil. And, in this chapter, David sends ten men to greet Nabal in peace in David's name, ask him for food, and tell him David's men were with Nabal's shearers and didn't harm them.

But, saying manservants break away from their masters, Nabal refuses, and David and four hundred of his six hundred men gird on their swords. But one of David's men tells Abigail, and Abigail loads food on asses, goes to meet David, alights from her ass, falls at his feet, tells him she knows he didn't harm the shearers, and asks him to regard her, who didn't see his men, and to disregard Nabal. And she also advises David not to let what he might do be reproach for him when he's king, and, asking that God and her and her advice be blessed for keeping him from harming her, David says that otherwise Nabal and any who piss against the wall wouldn't be left by morning. And he accepts the gift.

And Abigail returns to Nabal and, finding him drunk at a feast he's holding, waits until morning to tell him what she did. And, when she tells him, when the wine is gone out of him, his heart dies within him, and he becomes as stone. And, ten days later, he dies.

And David hears of his death and sends to commune with Abigail for her to be his wife, and she bows and asks that she may wash the feet of the servants of her lord. But this chapter says he also took Ahinoam of Jezreel to be his wife. And it says Saul gave Michal to Phalti of Gallim.

And in the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter David has another opportunity to kill Saul while he sleeps, and this time he takes Saul's spear and a cruse of water and not the skirt of Saul's robe, but he and Saul speak similarly to one another.

But, in the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter, telling himself that then one day he'll perish by the hand of Saul and deciding to take refuge among the Philistines, David returns to Achish. And this time he and his six hundred men and his two wives and his men's households dwell with Achish, and he asks Achish for a town in his country, and Achish gives him Ziklag. And from there, spoiling them for livestock and raiment, he invades the Amalekites and others of that land and Egypt.

And also, to keep Achish from knowing what he's doing, he kills all the men and women. And, when Achish asks him what he's been doing in his travels, he tells him he's gone against the south of Judah, the Kenites, and the Jerahmeelites. And Achish believes him and thinks David has made himself abhorrent to Israel, but David hears Saul again has stopped pursuing him.

And the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with the Philistines gathering to fight Israel again, and Achish asks David for help, and David replies that Achish will see what David can do, and Achish says David will keep Achish's head forever.

And, with Samuel dead, God doesn't answer Saul's inquiries. So Saul, telling his servants to seek a woman who has a familiar spirit, disguises himself and goes to her with two other men. Because Saul has expelled wizards and people with familiar spirits from the land, the woman's afraid, but, to her saying that, Saul responds by swearing by God that no punishment shall come to her. So she asks him whom she should bring up.

He tells her to bring up Samuel, and, when she sees Samuel, she cries out loudly and tells Saul he's Saul and asks him why he's deceived her. But, telling her not to be afraid, he asks her what she sees, and she says she saw the gods ascending from the earth. And he asks what form she sees.

Then she says a mantle covers it, and Saul, perceiving that it's Samuel, falls on his face, and Samuel asks him why he's disquieted him to bring him up, and Saul replies that God isn't answering him, and Samuel tells him that the next day God will deliver him and Israel to the Philistines and that, because Saul disobeyed God, he and his sons will be with Samuel.

And Saul, because he hasn't eaten that day or night, falls lengthwise on the earth. Still he refuses to eat, but the woman and the men with him compel him, and the woman kills a calf and bakes some unleavened bread. So he and the men eat, and this chapter closes with Saul and the two men rising and going away in the night.

The 29<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with David and his six hundred men gathering with Achish and the other Philistines to fight the Israelites who have pitched by a fountain in Jezreel, but the other lords of the Philistines, saying David may reconcile himself with his master, ask Achish why the Hebrews are there. So Achish, while telling David he's like an angel of God to him, sends him away.

In the thirtieth chapter David returns to Ziklag and finds that Amalekites have burned the city and taken his two wives and the other women captive, and, with help from an Egyptian they find and feed, David and four hundred of his six hundred men find the Amalekites.

And, as for other battles, David tells Abiathar to bring the ephod, and David and the four hundred men recover all the women and all the other spoil. But sons of Belial among the four hundred say that, because the other two hundred were too faint to help and stayed behind, they shouldn't share the spoil. So David establishes a statute that those who stay with the stuff shall share the spoil, and he also sends shares of the spoil to the elders of Judah, from Beth-El to Hebron.

In the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter the Philistines fight Israelites at Gilboa and slay them. Archers hit Saul, and he asks his armorbearer to kill him, to keep the uncircumcised Philistines from thrusting him through and abusing him, but his armorbearer is afraid to comply. So Saul falls on a sword, and the armorbearer falls on his.

And, while the Philistines are stripping the slain, they find Saul and his three sons among them and behead Saul. And they publish what they've done in the surrounding Philistine land and in the houses of their idols, put Saul's armor in the house of Ashteroth, and fasten his body to a wall. But, when the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead hear what the Philistines did to Saul, the valiant men among them arise, take the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall, burn them in Jabesh, bury the bones beneath a tree, and fast seven days.

Because Christians divide the Book of Samuel into two books, and Christianity is about 150 times more popular than Judaism, and the *Miqra* is most of Christian scripture, most translations of the Book of Samuel divide it into two books, and the first chapter of the second book begins two days after David returns from the slaughter of the Amalekites.

And, in that chapter, on the next day, an Amalekite goes to Ziklag and tells David Saul and Jonathan are dead. David asks him how he knows, and, replying that he found Saul dying, he says Saul asked him to kill him, that he did, and that he's brought David his crown and a bracelet that were on him. So David orders another man to kill the Amalekite for killing God's anointed, and, saying Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in life, were together in death, and were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions, he laments their death, saying that daughters of Israel weep over Saul and that Jonathan's love to him passed the love of women, and this chapter closes with him exclaiming how the mighty are fallen and that the weapons of war have perished.

And the second chapter of this division of the Book of Samuel begins with David asking God whether he should go into the cities of Judah.

And God tells him he should, and David asks God where he should go, and God tells him to go to Hebron. So he goes, with his wives and his six hundred men and their households, and there the men of Judah anoint him king of Judah, and he sends messengers to the men of Jabesh-Gilead. And, blessing them for their kindness to Saul, he says he'll requite it, but Abner makes Saul's son Ish-Bosheth king over Gilead, the Asurites, Jezreel, Ephraim, and Benjamin, over all Israel.

And Abner meets David's servant Joab at Gibeon and asks that the young men play, and twelve Benjamites and twelve servants of David's kill each other with their swords, and a battle follows in which Joab's brother Asahel pursues Abner. Abner recognizes Asahel and tells him to turn aside and take a young man's armor, but Asahel persists in his pursuit until Abner kills him, and Joab and his brother Abishai pursue Abner. And so do all the Benjamites, and they become one troop and stand on a hill.

But Abner asks whether the sword will devour forever, and Joab replies that the killing would have continued until morning if Abner hadn't spoken, and that ends the battle. But Asahel and nineteen of David's servants died in it, and David smote 360 of Abner's men and the Benjamites. And Joab's men bury Asahel in his father's sepulcher and return to Hebron.

The third chapter begins by saying long war was between the house of Saul and the house of David. And it says David had many children and acquired more wives, and in it Ish-Bosheth rebukes Abner for going into one of Saul's concubines. So Abner threatens to deliver Ish-Bosheth to David, and Ish-Bosheth is afraid to reply.

So Abner sends messengers to David to ask for a league with him, and David replies that Abner will see his face only if he brings him Michal. So Abner sends Michal, with her husband weeping behind her, and he also communicates with the elders of Israel, speaks to the Benjamites, goes to David in Hebron with twenty men, and promises to gather all Israel into a league, for David to rule over all he desires. And then he and twenty men go to David, and David makes them a feast.

But Joab is pursuing a troop and doesn't hear of that. And, when he hears Abner was with David and that David let him go in peace, he tells David Abner came to deceive him, and he sends messengers to ask Abner to return, takes him aside at the gate of Hebron, and kills him for killing Asahel. And David follows the bier and tells the people with him to mourn Abner, and the people bury him in Hebron, and David, saying Abner died a fool, as a man falls before wicked men with no binding on his hands or fetters on his feet, refuses to eat that day. And that pleases the people, as all David does pleases them.

And the fourth chapter begins with Ish-Bosheth hearing of Abner's death. So his hands are feeble, and all the Israelites are troubled, and some of them flee, and the nurse of Jonathan's son Mephibosheth flees so hastily with Mephibosheth that he falls and becomes lame. And, as though they're fetching wheat, two of Saul's men who were captains of bands come into Ish-Bosheth's house, behead him in his bed, and take his head to David.

But David, telling the captains what he did to the Amalekite who told him of Saul's death, orders his men to kill them for killing a righteous person in his own house and in his bed. So the men kill the captains, cut off their hands and feet, and hang them over the pool in Hebron. And they bury Ish-Bosheth's head in Abner's sepulcher.

And, in the fifth chapter, the elders of Israel come to Hebron, make a league with David, and anoint him king over Israel. In Jerusalem, the Jebusites tell him that, if he doesn't take away the blind and the lame, he can't come in, but David takes the stronghold Zion and dwells in it and calls it the city of David, and he says that whoever smites the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind his soul hates, shall be chief and captain. And this chapter says that's why they say the lame and the blind won't come into the house.

And Hiram, the king of Tyre, sends messengers to David and also sends cedar trees, carpenters, and masons, and they build a house for him. And this chapter says David was thirty years old when he began to reign and that he reigned forty years, seven years and six months over Judah and 33 years over all of Israel. And it also says he took more concubines from Jerusalem and had more sons and daughters, and it names some of them and says he smote the Philistines and burned their images and that God, using mulberry trees to tell him when he would, helped him.

And, in the sixth chapter, to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem on a new cart, David goes with his people to the house of Abinadab in Gibeah. But Uzzah, one of the drivers, touches the ark to steady it when the oxen shake it, and that kindles God's anger against Uzzah, and he kills him. So David, fearing God, carries the ark into the house of the Gittite Obed-Edom and leaves it there three months.

But God blesses Obed-Edom and all his household. So, with shouts and trumpeting, David and all the house of Israel bring the ark from the house of Obed-Edom to the city of David and put it in its place in the tabernacle. And David leaps and dances in a linen ephod before God, offers burnt offerings and peace offerings, blesses the people, and gives each man and woman a cake of bread, a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.

But Michal, from a window, sees David leaping and dancing in the ephod and despises him. So, when he returns to bless his household, she mocks

him for uncovering himself in the eyes of his servants' handmaids as might one of his vain fellows. So, telling her he did it before God, who, over her father and all his household, chose him to rule Israel, David says he'll be more vile than that and base in his own eyes and that the maidservants she mentioned shall hold him in honor. And this chapter closes by saying that, because of that, Michal died childless.

The seventh chapter begins with David sitting in his house after God gives him rest from his enemies. He tells the prophet Nathan that he dwells in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in curtains. And Nathan tells him to do what's in his heart.

But that night God tells Nathan to tell David that, since God took Israel out of Egypt, he's walked only in a tabernacle, and he tells him to ask David when God has asked him to build him a house of cedar. But he also tells Nathan to tell David that, when David's sleeping with his fathers, God will set up David's seed, that his seed will build a house for God's name, and that God will establish the throne of the kingdom of David's seed forever. But he tells him to tell him that, if he commits iniquity, he'll chasten him with a rod, but that his mercy won't depart from him as he took it from Saul. And Nathan complies, and David tells God he accepts his will, and this chapter closes with David asking God to bless his house forever.

The eighth chapter says David smote Moab, Syrians, Ammonites, and others, houghed horses, took chariots and other spoil, and enslaved Moab and Edom. It says he executed judgement and justice to his people, that Joab was over the host, and that Zadok and Abiathar's son Ahimilech were the priests. And it says Benaiah was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites and that David's sons were chief rulers.

The ninth chapter begins with David, to show kindness for Jonathan's sake, asking whether any of Saul's house remain. So David's servant Ziba tells him Jonathan's lame son Mephibosheth remains, and David sends to fetch him and tells Ziba that Mephibosheth shall have all that pertains to Saul, that Ziba and his fifteen sons and twenty servants shall till the land for Mephibosheth, and that Mephibosheth shall eat at David's table as one of the king's sons. And this chapter closes by saying Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, ate continually at the king's table, and was lame on both his feet.

And, in the tenth chapter, David decides to show kindness to the king of Ammon for kindness his father showed to David. So he sends messengers to tell him that, but the king's servants tell him David's servants are spies there to learn how to overthrow the city, and they shave half of the beard of each of the messengers, cut their garments to their buttocks, and send them away. So, when David hears of that, he sends to meet the messengers at Jericho and tell them to



stay there until their beards grow, and the Ammonites see that they stink before David and hire Syrians to help them against him.

So David sends Joab and his host of mighty men, and Joab, for Abishai to fight the Ammonites while Joab fights the Syrians, divides the host between himself and Abishai, and both the Ammonites and the Syrians flee. But other Syrians have gathered beyond the Jordan, and they gather with the fleeing Syrians the Ammonites hired, but David gathers all of Israel to smite them. So the king of Syria and the kings serving him see that smiting and make peace with Israel, and the Syrians fear helping the Ammonites anymore.

So the eleventh chapter begins with David sending Joab and all of Israel out to fight the Ammonites while he remains in Jerusalem. And, while Joab and his forces are destroying the Ammonites and besieging their city Rabbah, David walks on the roof of his house in the evening, sees a beautiful woman, sends to know who she is, and learns she's the wife of the Hittite Uriah. Her name is Bath-Sheba, and Uriah is fighting with Joab, and David lies with her and impregnates her.

And he sends for Uriah, asks him how Joab and the war are prospering, tells him to go to his house and wash his feet, and sends a mess of food after him, but Uriah instead sleeps with David's servants at the gate of David's house.

David hears of that, sends for Uriah, and asks him why. And, replying that the ark and Israel and Judah are abiding in tents while Joab and the troops are in camp in the open field, Uriah asks whether, in those circumstance, he should go to his house, eat and drink, and lie with his wife. And he says that, while David and David's soul are living, he won't do that.

David makes him eat and drink and makes him drunk, but, instead of going home, he goes out and lies on his bed with the servants again. And David writes a letter telling Joab to send Uriah to the front of the hottest battle and leave him there to die. And he has Uriah take the letter to Joab, and Joab obeys and sends a messenger to David.

He tells the messenger to tell David, if David's wrath arises after he's told him of the matters of the war, and David asks him why he fought so near to the city, whether he didn't expect shooting from the wall, and whether a woman didn't kill Abimelech by throwing a piece of a millstone onto him from a wall, to tell him Uriah died also, and the messenger complies.

So Bath-Sheba mourns for her husband. But, when the mourning passes, David sends to fetch her to his house, and she becomes his wife and bears him a son. And this chapter closes by saying that what David did displeased God.

So the twelfth chapter begins with God sending Nathan to David again. And Nathan tells David of a rich man with many flocks and of a poor man with

one lamb he treats as though it's his daughter. And, in the story, the rich man takes the poor man's lamb and dresses it to feed a traveler.

The story kindles David's anger, and he tells Nathan the rich man should restore the lamb to the poor man fourfold, and Nathan, telling David that David is the rich man, asks him why he despised the commandment of God by killing Uriah with the sword of Ammon and taking his wife. And he tells him the sword shall never depart from his house, that God said he'll raise up evil out of his house, take his wives before his eyes, and give them to his neighbor, and that David did what he did secretly but that God will do it in the sun before all of Israel. But David confesses his sin to Nathan, and Nathan says God has put aside David's sin and that he won't die, but that the child he conceived with Bath-Sheba shall die. And God sickens the child, and David fasts and prays for seven days, until he sees his servants whispering and asks them whether the child is dead. They're afraid to tell him before he asks.

And, when they tell him, he washes and anoints himself, changes his apparel, goes to the tabernacle to worship, and goes to his house to eat, and the servants asked him why he fasted and wept while the child was alive but rose and ate when the child was dead. So David tells them he fasted and wept because then God might have been gracious to him and kept the child from dying, and, asking whether he can bring the child back, he asks why he should fast when the child is dead. And he comforts Bath-Sheba, and Bath-Sheba conceives again and bears a son David calls Solomon, and God loves Solomon.

And Joab takes Rabbah and sends messengers asking David, to keep people from naming it for Joab, to come and take the city. So David does, and, setting the king of Ammon's crown on his own head, he takes other spoil, puts the people in the city under saws, harrows, and axes, and makes them pass through the brick kiln. And he does that to all the cities of Ammon and then returns to Jerusalem.

The thirteenth chapter begins by saying David's son Absalom had a fair sister whose name was Tamar. It says David's son Amnon loved her and was so vexed that he fell sick for her and that David's brother Shimeah's son Jonadab advised Amnon to feign sickness and ask David, when he comes to Amnon, to send Tamar to him, to feed him. David complies with the request, and Amnon sends the others from the room and, instead of eating, rapes her.

Before the rape, Tamar tells Amnon that David won't withhold her from him if he speaks to him, and, after the rape, Amnon hates her more than he loved her before the rape. And David's angry but does nothing, and Absalom stops speaking to Amnon but does nothing until two years later, when he asks David to come with Amnon to a sheep shearing. And, though he declines and

asks Absalom why he asked that Amnon go, David lets Amnon go. So Absalom has his servants kill Amnon while his heart's merry with wine.

David hears that Absalom killed all of David's sons, but Jonadab tells him Absalom has killed only Amnon and not to take it to heart, and Absalom flees to Geshur and stays there three years.

And this chapter closes by saying that, because seeing Amnon was dead comforted David concerning Amnon, he longed to go to Absalom.

So, in the fourteenth chapter, Joab sends a wise woman to David with a story. She tells him one of her sons killed the other, and the story also has other details comparable to the situation with David and Absalom and Amnon, and David discerns that Joab sent her. So she tells him he's as wise as an angel of God, and he tells Joab to bring Absalom to his house but not let him see his face.

And this chapter also says no one in Israel was more praised for his beauty than was Absalom, but two more years pass with him not seeing David's face, and so he sends for Joab. But Joab doesn't go to him, and Absalom sends for him again, and still he doesn't go. So Absalom tells his servants to burn Joab's barley field.

So then Joab goes to him and asks him why he did that. And Absalom replies by asking Joab why he's come from Geshur and not seen David's face. And he asks Joab, if any iniquity's in him, to let David kill him, and Joab tells that to David, and David relents. And Absalom bows to the ground before David, and David kisses him.

So the fifteenth chapter begins with Absalom preparing chariots, horses, and fifty men to run before him. And he sits at the gate, and, asking people who come to David for judgement what their matters are, he tells them their matters are good and right but that David hasn't deputized anyone to hear them. And, saying he wishes he were made judge in the land, he says he'd do justice to anyone bringing him a suit.

So, kissing everyone who does him obeisance, he steals the hearts of the men of Israel. And, after forty years, he goes to David and tells him that in Geshur he vowed to God that he'd serve God if God brought him back to Jerusalem. And he asks David to let him pay the vow in Hebron.

David tells him to go in peace, but in Hebron Absalom sends spies to all the tribes of Israel and tells them to say when they hear the sound of a trumpet that Absalom reigns in Hebron, and two hundred men from Jerusalem who don't know any of that go with him, and he sends for David's counselor Ahithophel, and his people increase continually.

And a messenger tells David the hearts of Israel are with Absalom. So David tells his servants with him in Jerusalem to flee speedily before Absalom smites the city with the edge of the sword. And, leaving ten concubines to keep

his house, he leaves Jerusalem with his household and all the Cherethites, Pelethites, and Gittites, and six hundred men from Gath pass before him, and Zadok and the Levites bearing the ark go with him.

But David tells Zadok and his sons Ahimaaz and Abiathar and Abiathar's son Jonathan to return to Jerusalem with the ark. He says that, if God favors him, he'll return him to Jerusalem and show him both the ark and his habitation. And he tells Zadok he'll wait in the plain in the wilderness until word comes from Zadok to certify him.

And he crosses the brook Kidron with his people. So, weeping and barefoot with their heads covered, David and his people ascend Mount Olivet, and one of them tells him Ahithophel's among the conspirators. So, praying to God to turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness, he makes a conspiracy to do that.

His friend Hushai comes to him with his coat rent and earth on his head, and David tells him he'll be a burden to him if he goes with him but that he can help David if he returns to the city and tells Absalom he'll be his servant, and he tells him to tell what he learns to Zadok and Abiathar, for them to send their sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan to him, with everything they hear.

The sixteenth chapter begins with Ziba bringing David two asses with food on them. He tells David Mephibosheth has remained in the city and has said the children of Israel shall restore Saul's kingdom to him that day. And next Shimei, a man of the house of Saul, cursing and calling David a bloody man and a son of Belial, says that, by delivering the kingdom into the hands of David's son, God has returned the blood of the house of Saul on David. And he also throws stones and dust at David.

So Joab's brother Abishai asks David to let him behead Shimei. But David, asking Abishai what he has to do with Abishai's father's sons, tells him to let Shimei curse because God told him to curse. And, asking how much more the Benjamite Shimei can do to him, he tells all his servants to look that his son seeks his life and to let Shimei alone.

But, in Jerusalem, Hushai, in David's conspiracy against Ahithophel, goes to Absalom and asks that God save the king, and Absalom asks him whether that's the way to treat a friend and why he didn't go with his friend, and Hushai replies that he'll stay with whomever God and the people of Israel choose.

But next, by accepting counsel of Ahithophel, Absalom fulfils part of Nathan's prophesy concerning Uriah. He asks Ahithophel what to do next, and Ahithophel tells him to strengthen his hand by going into the concubines David left to keep his house, letting all Israel see how abhorrent he is to his father. And they spread a tent on the roof of the house for him to do that, and this

chapter closes by saying that in those days the counsel of Ahithophel, both to David and to Absalom, was as though one had inquired at the oracle of God.

And the seventeenth chapter begins with Ahithophel advising Absalom to let him have twelve thousand men to pursue David, but Absalom also asks counsel of Hushai. And Ahithophel says David is weak, but Hushai says David and his men are mighty and will respond as does a bear robbed of her whelps, and Ahithophel says he'll smite only David and that the people with him will come to Absalom, but Hushai advises waiting until David comes out of hiding and then gathering all of Israel against him. And Absalom and the men of Israel prefer Hushai's advice, and Jonathan and Ahimaaz go to tell David that.

A boy sees them and tells Absalom, and servants of Absalom's pursue them, but a woman hides them in a well and tells the pursuers they've passed over the brook, and Ahithophel goes home, puts his house in order, and hangs himself. And Absalom and Israel pitch in Gilead, and the Ammonite Shobi and the Gileadite Barzillai take food and beds and other provisions to David in Mahanaim. And Absalom puts Joab's uncle Amasa over his forces.

And the eighteenth chapter begins with David organizing his thousands. He divides the command of them among Joab, Abishai, and the Gittite Ittai and tells them he'll go with them also, but the people say he's more important than they and that they need him alive, and he tells them to do what seems right to them. But he tells them not to harm Absalom.

The battle is in the wood of Ephraim, and twenty thousand of the people of Israel fall before David's servants. But the wood devours more than the swords do, and an oak catches Absalom as he's riding beneath it on a mule, and a man tells Joab he saw Absalom hanging in an oak. Joab, asking him why he didn't kill him, tells him that, if he had, he would have given him ten shekels of silver and a girdle, but, reminding Joab of David's directive concerning Absalom, the man replies that no matter is hidden from the king and that he wouldn't have killed him for a thousand shekels of silver.

So Joab thrusts three darts through Absalom's heart as he hangs alive, and ten of Joab's armourbearers surround Absalom and kill him. And Joab blows a trumpet to stop the pursuit of Israel, and they take Absalom and throw him into a great pit in the woods and lay a great heap of stones on him, and Ahimaaz asks permission to go and tell David. But Joab, telling him he'll bear tidings another day, says that, because the king's son is dead, no one should that day.

But he sends another runner and tells him to tell David what he's seen, and he also accedes to Ahimaaz' request to run also, and Ahimaaz reaches David ahead of the other runner. David asks each runner whether Absalom is safe, and Ahimaaz replies that he saw a great tumult but didn't know what it

was, but the other runner replies that all the enemies of the king should be as Absalom is. And this chapter closes with David going to his chamber and weeping as he goes, saying he wishes to God that he'd died for Absalom.

But the nineteenth chapter begins with Joab hearing of David's mourning Absalom and telling David he loves his enemies more than his friends. And, telling him no one will stay with him that night, he says that, if he doesn't speak comfortably to his servants, the desertion will be worse than anything that's happened to David since his youth, and David rises. But he appoints Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab.

And he reconciles with all Israel. And also in this chapter Shimei begs forgiveness, and, telling Shimei he won't die, David again keeps Abishai from killing him. And Mephibosheth tells David that Ziba slandered him, but David tells Mephibosheth to divide the land with Ziba, and Mephibosheth tells David to let Ziba have all of it. And David asks the Gileadite Barzillai to go to Jerusalem with him, but Barzillai's eighty years old and asks David to let him return to his own land but take his servant Chimham to Jerusalem, and David kisses Barzillai and returns to Jerusalem with Chimham.

But at the end of this chapter strife resumes between Judah and the other tribes of Israel. The other tribes tell David that Judah has stolen him from them, and, replying that David's their kindred, the men of Judah ask whether they've eaten at the king's cost, and the men of the other tribes say they have ten parts in the king. And this chapter closes by saying the words of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

And the twentieth chapter begins with a Benjamite son of Belial whose name is Sheba beginning a rebellion by blowing a trumpet and ordering all the Israelites to their tents. And, saying they have no part in David, all the men of Israel follow Sheba. But the men of Judah cleave to their king.

And David imprisons the ten concubines he left to keep his house, and this chapter says he didn't go into them and that they lived in widowhood until the day of their death.

And next David tells Amasa to assemble the men of Judah and return to him in three days, but Amasa doesn't return. So David tells Abishai to pursue Sheba, and Abishai, with Joab's men, the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and all the mighty men, pursues him. But Joab finds Amasa and kills him.

And, as Amasa wallows in his blood in the middle of a highway, one of Joab's men stands beside the body and tells people who favor Joab and are for David to follow Joab. The people stop when they see the body, but the man throws a cloth over the body and moves it into a field, and then all the people follow Joab in pursuit of Sheba and besiege him in Abel. So a woman of the city cries to Joab that she's faithful to Israel and will throw Sheba's head down

from the city's wall. And she does, and Joab blows a trumpet, and the people with him leave the city and return to their tents. And Joab returns to David in Jerusalem.

And, closing by naming some of David's chain of command, this chapter says Joab was again over all the host of Israel, says again that Benaiah was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and says Zadok and Abiathar were the priests.

But the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter begins by saying a three-year famine was in the days of David. So, in this chapter, David inquires of God, and God tells him the famine's because Saul killed the Gibeonites, and David asks the Gibeonites what he can do for them. And they ask him to let them hang seven of Saul's sons.

For the sake of God's oath between him and Jonathan, David spares Mephibosheth. But he lets them hang two sons of Saul's concubine Rizpah and five this chapter calls the sons of Michal she brought up for Adriel, the son of the Meholathite Barzillai. And, in the first days of the barley harvest, the Gibeonites hang the seven.

And, for the dead, Rizpah spreads sackcloth on a rock and keeps birds and beasts from them until water drops on them from heaven, and David hears of that and brings the bones of Saul and Jonathon from Jabesh-Gilead and buries them in the sepulcher of Saul's father in the land of Benjamin, and that entreats God.

And the remainder of this chapter is war with the Philistines in which David and others kill giants. One of the giants is a brother of Goliath's, and Abishai kills one of them whose thinking of killing David. And David's men, saying it's to keep David from quenching the light of Israel, swear to him that he'll stop going into battle.

The *Miqra* doesn't say how Michal had five sons if, because she mocked David, she died childless. And, if the meaning is that they were foster sons, it doesn't make that clear, and it doesn't make clear whether the Meholathite Barzillai was the Giliadite Barzillai. But, in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter, David speaks to God a song praising and thanking him for rewarding his righteousness by helping him defeat his enemies. And the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins by saying it's the last words of David.

But most of the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter is a list of his mighty men and some of their deeds. It says that, when David was hiding and said he wished to drink of the water of the well at the gate of Bethlehem, three of the thirty mightiest broke through the Philistine host and brought him some. But it says that, asking whether it wasn't the blood of the mighty men who went in jeopardy of their lives, he didn't drink it but poured it out to God. And it says Abishai was chief among those three mighty men.

And it also names Joab and Joab's other brother. And it names Benaiah and says he killed three lionlike men of Moab, that he killed a lion in a pit in time of snow, and that he was more honorable than the thirty, but it says he didn't attain to the first three. And this chapter closes by naming the Hittite Uriah and saying the total number of David's mighty men was 37.

But the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter begins by saying God's anger was again kindled against Israel and that he moved David to number Israel and Judah, and in it David tells Joab to do it. Joab, asking that God add a hundredfold to the number, asks David why he delights in numbering them. But he obeys and goes with captains to both sides of the Jordan.

And, after nine months and twenty days, he returns and tells David the numbers are 800 thousand valiant men of Israel who draw sword and 500 thousand men of Judah, but David's heart smites him, and, telling God he's sinned and done foolishly, he asks God to take away his iniquity.

So God sends the prophet Gad to him to offer him the choice of seven years of famine in the land, David's fleeing three months from his enemies while they pursue him, or three days of pestilence in the land. And David, asking that he not fall into the hand of man, asks that instead, because God's mercy is great, the people fall into the hand of God. So God sends a pestilence, and 70 thousand of the people, from Dan to Beer-Sheba, die.

But, when the angel stretches his hand on Jerusalem to destroy it, God repents and stops him. And David, seeing the angel, tells God he's sinned and done wickedly, and, asking what the sheep have done, he asks that God's hand be against him and his father's house. So God tells him to rear an altar on the threshing floor of the Jebusite Araunah.

Araunah offers to give David the threshing floor, the oxen, and the wood of the threshing implements, for the burnt offering. But David says he won't offer to God offerings costing him nothing, and, paying Araunah fifty shekels of silver for the threshing floor and the oxen, he builds the altar and offers the burnt offerings and peace offerings. And this chapter, the final chapter of the Book of Samuel, closes with the plague, by God being entreated for the land, staying from Israel.

The first chapter of the Book of Kings begins by saying David was old. It says that covered with clothes he received no heat, and in this chapter his servants ask him to let them find a young virgin to stand before him, cherish him, and lie in his bosom to give him heat. So they search all of Israel and bring him the fair Shunamite girl Abishag, and she cherishes him and administers to him, but he doesn't know her.



And, saying he'll be king, Absalom's younger brother Adonijah prepares chariots, horsemen, and fifty men to run before him, and Joab and Abiathar follow him. And he kills sheep and oxen and calls his brothers who were the king's sons and all the men of the Judah who were the king's servants. But he doesn't call Zadok, Benaiah, or Nathan. They remain with David.

And neither does he call Solomon. And Nathan goes to Bath-Sheba, asks her whether she knows Adonijah reigns, advises her to go to David and tell him he swore to her that Solomon would reign, and says he'll go into David's chamber after her and confirm her words. So she goes to David and tells him of the feast and of Abiathar's and Joab's attendance, and Nathan tells him that he, Zadok, and Benaiah remain with him, and David tells them to put Solomon on David's own mule and anoint him king. And the sound of people piping and rejoicing rends the earth

And Adonijah and his guests hear it as they finish eating. So Adonijah asks what it is, and Abiathar's son Jonathan arrives and tells him. So Adonijah's guests fear and go away, and Adonijah goes to the altar and holds its horns.

Solomon, hearing that Adonijah did that and prayed for Solomon to swear that day that he'd not kill him with the sword, says that, if Adonijah shows himself worthy, not a hair of his head shall fall to earth, but that, if any wickedness is found in him, he'll die, and he sends for him, and Adonijah comes and bows to King Solomon, and this chapter closes with Solomon telling him to go to his house.

The second chapter begins with David's death drawing near. And in it he tells Solomon to be strong, show himself to be a man, and keep God's statutes, commandments, and judgements. And he also tells him he knows what Joab did to Abner and Amasa and that Joab's killing those captains of the host shed the blood of war in peace, and he tells him not to let Joab's gray head go to the grave in peace. But he also tells him to show kindness to the sons of the Gileadite Barzillai and, because they came to him when he fled Solomon's brother Absalom, let them eat at his table.

And he tells him he swore not to kill Shimei with the sword for cursing him. But he also tells him he's a wise man and knows what he should do to Shimei. And he tells him to bring his head down to the grave with blood.

And next this chapter says David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David, that he reigned seven years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem, and that the days he reigned over Israel were forty years.

But next Adonijah asks Bath-Sheba to ask Solomon to give him the Shunammite Abishag to wife, and she tells Solomon she has a petition. He tells her he won't deny it, but, after telling her Adonijah has spoken against his own

life, he sends Benaiah to kill him. And next he removes Abiathar from the priesthood.

And Joab hears of that, flees into God's tabernacle, and holds the horns of the altar. And Solomon sends Benaiah to kill him also, and Joab says he'll die there, and Benaiah returns to Solomon and tells him what Joab said, and Solomon tells him to kill him there and bury him. He says that, by doing that, Benaiah may take away the innocent blood Joab shed by killing two men who were better and more righteous than he. And, saying God will return that onto Joab's head, he put's Benaiah in Joab's place over the host.

And he sends for Shimei. Telling him to go to his house and stay there, he says his blood shall be on his head and that he'll die on the day he passes over the brook Kidron, and Shimei swears by God that he'll comply. But three years later two of Shimei's servants run away, and he saddles his ass and goes to Achish in Gath to retrieve them.

So Solomon reminds him of the oath he'd made him make. And, telling him what he did to David, he says Shimei knows wickedness is in Shimei's heart, that God shall return it on his head, that king Solomon shall be blessed, and that the throne of David shall be established before God forever. And he commands Benaiah to kill Shimei also.

And this chapter closes by saying the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

But the third chapter begins by saying Solomon made affinity with the king of Egypt and brought Pharaoh's daughter to the city of David. And it says that, because no house had been built for God, the people worshiped in high places, and it says that, while Solomon loved God and walked in the statutes of David, he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. It says he offered a thousand burnt offering on the altar at the great high place in Gibeon.

But, in Gibeon in this chapter, God asks Solomon in a dream what he should give him, and Solomon asks for a wise and understanding heart to discern between good and bad and judge the people, and God promises him that. And he also promises that, because Solomon didn't ask for riches and honor, he'll also give him riches and honor for no king to be like him all his days. And he tells him that, if he keeps his statutes and commandments as David did, he'll lengthen his days.

Solomon awakens and sees that's a dream, but he returns to Jerusalem, stands before the ark of God's covenant, and makes peace and burnt offerings and a feast to all his servants.

And next in this chapter two harlots come and stand before him. One of them says they dwelled together, that each of them had a child, that the other harlot overlaid her child in the night, that the child died, and that the mother of

the dead child laid it in the bosom of the complaining harlot and took the living child. And Solomon calls for a sword and commands cutting the living child in two and giving half of it to each harlot.

One of the harlots agrees with the command, but the other, the complaining one, tells Solomon not to kill the child but give it to the other harlot, and Solomon revokes the command to kill it, commands giving it to the complaining harlot, and says she's its mother.

And this chapter ends with all Israel hearing of that judgement and, because they see that the wisdom of God to do judgement is in Solomon, fearing him.

The fourth chapter begins by saying Solomon was king over all of Israel. It lists people he appointed to various positions and says Judah and Israel were as many as the sand beside the sea and were eating and drinking and making merry, that he reigned over all kingdoms from the river to the land of the Philistines and the border of Egypt, and that they brought him presents and served him all the days of his life. And, describing his wealth, it says he had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots and had twelve thousand horsemen.

And it says God gave him wisdom and largeness of heart exceeding the sand of the seashore, that his wisdom exceeded the wisdom of the children of the east country, Egypt, and of some other people it names, and that his fame was in the surrounding nations, and it says he spoke three thousand proverbs, that his songs were 1005, that he spoke of trees, beasts, birds, creeping things, and fish, and that people from all kings of the earth heard of his wisdom and came to hear it.

And the fifth chapter begins with Hiram, the king of Tyre, hearing Solomon was king and, because he loved David, sending servants to Solomon. So Solomon sends to Hiram saying Hiram knows war kept David from building a house to God but that God has given Solomon rest on all sides, and he asks him to send him cedars from Lebanon. So Hiram asks for food for his household in exchange, and Solomon provides about 200 thousand workers to work with Hiram's workers, and the workers also hew great stones.

And the sixth chapter begins by saying the building of the house began in the second month of the 480<sup>th</sup> year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt. It says that, concerning the house, God told Solomon he'd keep his promise to David that, if Solomon would walk in his statutes, execute his judgements, keep all his commandments, and walk in them, he'd dwell among the children of Israel forever and not forget them. And it describes the house.

It says it was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, that it had windows of narrow lights, that the cedar in it had carvings of

knops and flowers, that Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with gold, including the altar and two ten-cubit cherubim, that he built the inner court of three rows of hewed stone and one row of cedar beams, and that its construction also included olive wood.

And this chapter closes by saying the laying of the foundation was in the fourth year, that the finishing of it was in the eleventh year, and that Solomon was seven years in building it.

But the seventh chapter begins by saying he was thirteen years in building his own house and that he also built a house for Pharaoh's daughter he'd taken to wife.

And it also says he brought Hiram from Tyre, that Hiram was a son of a widow of Naphtali, and that Hiram's father was a man of Tyre with wisdom in working all works of brass. And it says Hiram made a molten sea ten cubits wide standing on twelve oxen and that he also made images of other animals and of cherubim and pomegranates. And it says he also made brass implements.

But it says Solomon made all the vessels for the house of God, including a candlestick of gold with five flowers and lamps on each side, and that he brought the silver, gold, and vessels David had dedicated, and it closes by saying he put them among the treasures of the house of God.

And, in the eighth chapter, Solomon assembles the chief people of the children of Israel to bring the ark of the covenant from the city of David, and all the men of Israel assemble. And, other than the two stone tablets Moses put there at Horeb, nothing is in the ark, and the men remove the staves for carrying it, and the cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark. And, when the priests leave the holy place, the cloud fills the house, and, because the glory of God fills that house of God, the priests can't minister.

But the people sacrifice more than a hundred thousand animals, and Solomon, speaking of God's telling David to have him build the house, praises God and summarizes God's promises to Israel, and, in his dedication prayer, he asks of God that, if he sends the people into captivity because they've sinned because all men sin, and they repent, he return them to the city he's chosen.

And, in the eighth day of feasting, he sends the people away. And they bless him and return to their tents joyful and glad of heart for the goodness God did for David, Israel, and his people. But Solomon, asking whether God indeed will dwell on earth, and saying heaven and the heaven of heavens can't contain God, asks how much less can the house he's built.

And the ninth chapter begins with God coming to Solomon again as he did in Gibeon and repeating some of his promises. And it adds to his threats that, if Solomon or his children don't keep his commandments and statutes,

people will hiss at the house. And this chapter says the children of Israel weren't Solomon's slaves but were his servants, men of war, and princes.

And it says that, after twenty years, Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in Galilee, that the cities didn't please Hiram but that he sent Solomon 120 talents of gold and sent men to serve in a navy Solomon built, and that the navy brought 420 talents of gold to Solomon from Ophir. And, also in this chapter, Pharaoh burns Gezer, kills the Canaanites dwelling there, and gives the city to his daughter who's Solomon's wife, and Solomon builds Gezer and other cities for storage, his chariots, and what he desires to build in Jerusalem and Lebanon and all the other cities of his dominion. And he enslaves the inhabitants of the land of Canaan the Israelites couldn't destroy.

And, in the tenth chapter, the Queen of Sheba, hearing of Solomon's fame concerning God, comes to prove him with questions. She brings a great train of camels bearing gifts, and he answers all her questions and gives her gifts besides what she gives him, and she says the servants standing before him hearing his wisdom are happy. And this chapter says all the kings of Earth did the same.

And Solomon, by means including that, his navy, and help from Hiram, acquires an annual income of 666 talents of gold and other wealth, including horses from Egypt and fourteen hundred chariots, and in Jerusalem he makes silver as plentiful as stones and makes cedars as plentiful as sycamores.

But the eleventh chapter begins by saying Solomon loved many strange women besides Pharaoh's daughter. It says he had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, that when he was old they turned his heart to worshiping gods of Ammon, Moab, and others, and again that he worshiped in high places. And in it God tells Solomon that, for the sake of David and Jerusalem, he won't take the kingdom from Solomon during his life and that he'll leave one tribe to Solomon's son, but that he'll raise adversaries against Solomon and give the kingdom to one of his servants.

And this chapter specifies some adversaries. It says Hadad, one of the adversaries, was an Edomite who fled with some of his father's servants when Joab killed the other males in his city when he was a child, and it says Pharaoh took him in and gave him land and one of his daughters to wife. And it says Rezon, another of the adversaries, escaped David's slaughtering the people of his city, formed a band, and reigned in Damascus.

And, in this chapter, Jeroboam, another of the adversaries, is a mighty Ephrathite of valor Solomon saw to be industrious and, before Jeroboam lifted his hand against Solomon because Solomon built Millo and repaired the breaches of the city of David, made ruler over the house of Joseph. This chapter doesn't say how building Millo and repairing the breaches is relevant, but it says

the prophet Ahijah found Jeroboam in a new garment outside Jerusalem, rent the garment into twelve pieces, and told him he'd be king of ten tribes of Israel but, because of what God told Solomon, not of all of them. And it says Solomon sought to kill him but that he fled to Egypt and stayed there until Solomon died.

And next this chapter asks whether the rest of the acts of Solomon aren't written with Solomon's wisdom in the book of the acts of Solomon, and it says he reigned over Israel forty years, slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David, and it closes by saying his son Rehoboam reigned in his stead.

So the twelfth chapter begins with Rehoboam going to Shechem because all of Israel went there to make him king. And in it Jeroboam hears of that and returns from Egypt, and he and all the congregation of Israel tell Rehoboam that Solomon made their yoke grievous and that they'll serve him if he makes it lighter. And Rehoboam tells them to return in three days.

He consults with the old men who stood before Solomon, and they tell him that, if he speaks good words to the people, they'll serve him forever. But he also consults with the young men who grew up with him, and they tell him to answer that his little finger will be thicker than Solomon's loins and that he'll chastise them with scorpions after his father chastised them with whips. And, when Jeroboam and the people return, Rehoboam delivers those words to them.

So they return to their tents and leave him to rule only the cities of Judah, and the people stone the tribute collector Rehoboam sends to them, and Rehoboam hurries into his chariot and flees to Jerusalem, and the congregation makes Jeroboam king of Israel, and that fulfils God's promise that he'd give the kingdom to a servant of Solomon's but leave one tribe to Solomon's son.

Rehoboam assembles the house of Judah with the tribe of Benjamin with 180 thousand chosen men to fight the house of Israel. But God tells the man of God Shemiah to tell Rehoboam, Judah, and Benjamin to return to their houses and not fight their brothers Israel. The *Miqra* doesn't say how Saul's tribe Benjamin became an exception to God's promise of leaving but one tribe to Solomon's son. But Rehoboam, Judah, and Benjamin comply.

And Jeroboam dwells in Shechem, builds Penuel, says in his heart that Israel will return to the house of David to worship in the house of God at Jerusalem, makes two golden calves, and tells the people they're their gods and that going to Jerusalem is too much for them. And, putting one calf in Beth-El and one in Dan, he makes a house of high places and makes priests of the lowest people and not of the sons of Levi. And, to sacrifice, he ordains a feast like feasts in Judah and burns incense to the calves. And he puts in Beth-El the priests of his high places he's made.

But the thirteenth chapter begins with a man of God going from Judah to Beth-El, and, as Jeroboam stands by the altar there, the man of God,

prophesying the birth to the house of David of a child whose name shall be Josiah, says he'll offer on that altar the priests of the high places, and, prophesying burning men's bones on it, he says a sign shall be that the altar shall rend and that its ashes shall pour out.

So Jeroboam puts forth a hand from the altar and commands laying hands on the man of God, but the hand he's put forth dries up, and he can't pull it back. And then the sign occurs, and Jeroboam begs the man of God to ask God to restore the hand, and the man of God beseeches God. So, after the restoration of the hand, Jeroboam asks the man of God to go home with him,

And he offers him refreshment and a reward. But the man of God says God told him not to eat or drink water in that place and not to return the way from which he came, and he says he wouldn't if Jeroboam gave him half of his house. But the sons of an old prophet in Beth-El tell their father of the man of God, and he asks them where the man of God went and tells them to saddle their ass. And he goes and finds the man of God and asks him to return to his house.

The man of God tells him why he can't, but the old prophet tells him he's also a prophet and that an angel told him to bring him back, and the man of God goes with him and eats and drinks, but then the word of God comes to the old prophet. So, telling the man of God his carcass won't come to the sepulcher of his fathers, the old prophet saddles the ass for the man of God. And, as the man of God goes, a lion kills him.

The old prophet hears of that and finds the lion and the ass standing by the carcass, and the lion hasn't torn the ass or eaten the carcass. So the old prophet brings the carcass back, buries it in his own grave, mourns the man of God, calls him his brother, and, because what the man of God said against the altar in Beth-El and against all the high places in the cities of Samaria surely shall come to pass, asks his sons to bury his bones beside the bones of the man of God, when he dies. But Jeroboam continues his evil ways, and this chapter closes by saying his evil ways became sin to the house of Jeroboam to destroy it from the face of the earth.

And the fourteenth chapter begins with Jeroboam's son Abijah falling sick and Jeroboam telling his wife to disguise herself and go to the prophet Ahijah. Ahijah's old and blind, but God tells him she's coming and tells him to tell her of Jeroboam's evil and to tell her God will bring evil on his house and cut off from him all that pisses against the wall, that dogs shall eat those of Jeroboam who die in the city, that birds shall eat those who die in a field, and that Abijah shall die as soon as her feet enter the city. He also tells him to tell her all Israel shall mourn him and to tell her, because some good is in Abijah, to bury him, but he tells him to tell her no one else of Jeroboam shall come to the

grave and that, for the sins of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, God will shake Israel as a reed in water, root it from the land, and scatter it across the river.

But this chapter says Jeroboam reigned 22 years and that his son Nadab reigned in his stead. And it says Rehoboam reigned in Judah 41 years and that Judah did evil, including sodomy and building high places and groves, that, in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, a king of Egypt took the treasures from the house of God, and that war was between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. And it closes by saying Rehoboam's burial was in the city of David and that his son Abijam reigned in his stead.

The 15<sup>th</sup> chapter says Abijam reigned but three years, that Asa succeeded him, that Asa did what's right in God's eyes, and that, because David did what was right in the eyes of God, excepting in the matter of the Hittite Uriah, God kept a light in Jerusalem. But it says that, to break a league between Jeroboam's successor's successor and the king of Syria, Asa gave treasures from his house and God's house to the king of Syria. And it says that, while ridding the land of sodomites and idols, he didn't rid it of the high places.

And this chapter also says the king of Syria was Ben-Hadad, repeats that Jeroboam's successor was his son Nadab, and says Nadab's successor was of the House of Issachar and that his name was Baasha. And it says that, fulfilling part of Ahijah's prophesy, he succeeded Nadab by killing him and all the other remaining descendants of Jeroboam. And it says war was also between Asa and Baasha all their days.

The sixteenth chapter begins with the prophet Jehu prophesying against Baasha as Ahijah prophesied against Jeroboam. And, after Baasha's death, while Baasha's son Elah reigns, the captain of half of his chariots fulfils Jehu's prophesy, as Baasha filled Ahijah's, and Zimri, the captain, reigns in Tirzah, but his reign is but seven days. People of Israel attacking the Philistines' city Gibethon hear he killed the king and appoint another king, Omri, and Omri and all Israel leave Gebethon and besiege Tirzah, and Zimri, seeing that they've taken Tirzah, goes into his house, sets it afire, and dies in it. And then half of the people follow someone whose name is Tibni, but the half following Omri prevail, and Tibni dies.

The Miqra doesn't say how Tibni dies, but it says Omri reigned twelve years, and, in this chapter, after reigning six years in Tirzah, he moves his capital. He buys a hill, names it Samaria, for Shemer, the person from whom he buys it, and reigns there. And, when he dies, his burial is in Samaria.

And his son Ahab reigns in his stead, and Ahab does more evil in the eyes of God than did all before him. Including making a grove and rearing an altar for Baal in a house of Baal he builds in Samaria, he does more to provoke



God to anger than had all the previous kings of Israel. And he takes to wife the Zidonian king Ethbaal's daughter Jezebel.

But, not saying how it's significant, this chapter closes by saying the Bethelite Hiel built Jericho according to the word God spoke by Joshua, that he laid its foundation in his firstborn and set up its gates in his youngest son, and that those sons' names were Abiram and Segub.

And then, returning to the story of Ahab, the seventeenth chapter begins with the Tishbite Elijah speaking to him. He tells Ahab that, as the god of Israel before whom he stands lives, any rain or dew for years will be but by his word. And then, telling Elijah to go east to the brook Cherish near Jordan, God says he's commanded the ravens to feed him.

And there the ravens bring him bread and flesh morning and evening, and he drinks from the brook, until it dries up, and then, telling him to go to the Zidonian city Zarepath, God says he's commanded a widow there to sustain him, and Elijah finds her gathering sticks and asks her to bring him some water.

She goes to fetch it, but he calls after her for some bread, and, saying she has but a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse, she says she's gathering sticks to dress it, for her and her son to eat and die. But, telling her not to fear and to bring him a little cake and make for her and her son after she does that, he tells her the barrel of meal and cruse of oil won't fail until the day God sends rain. And he and she and her household eat many days.

The widow's son falls so sick that his breath leaves him, and, calling Elijah a man of God, she asks him whether he came to remind her of her sin and kill her son. But, asking her to give him her son, he takes her son from her bosom, carries him up to the loft where he stays, lays him on his bed, and cries to God the question of whether he's brought evil on the widow by killing her son. And he stretches himself on the son three times and prays to God to let the child's soul come to him again.

And God hears Elijah, and the child's soul returns to him, and he revives. So Elijah takes him down, delivers him to his mother, and tells her to see that he's alive. And this chapter closes with the widow telling Elijah that then she knows he's a man of God and that the word of God that's in his mouth is truth.

But the eighteenth chapter begins with God telling Elijah to show himself to Ahab. It says Jezebel has cut off God's prophets, but that the governor of Ahab's house is Obadiah, and that he fears God. And it says Obadiah hid a hundred of the prophets in a cave and fed them with bread and water.

And in it Ahab responds to the famine by telling Obadiah to look in the land for grass to save the mules and horses. For the search he divides the land

between himself and Obadiah, and during the search Elijah finds Obadiah and tells him to tell Ahab to come to him, and Obadiah recognizes Elijah and tells him Ahab has sought him in every land. And he tells him that, if he doesn't find Elijah where he says he is, Ahab will kill him, but Elijah says that won't happen.

So Obadiah tells Ahab to go to Elijah, and Ahab goes to him and asks him whether he's who's troubling the land, and Elijah, replying that Ahab and his father's house are troubling the land, tells Ahab to gather to him at Mount Carmel all of Israel and the 950 prophets of Baal who eat at Jezebel's table, and there he asks them how long they'll divide their opinions between God and Baal.

And, telling them God will answer them by fire, he tells them to bring two bullocks and tells the prophets of Baal to select one of the bullocks, cut it into pieces, and lay it on wood but put no fire under it. And they do that, cry to Baal all morning, leap on the alter they've made, and cut themselves until blood gushes, but Baal doesn't answer. So Elijah mocks them, dresses the other bullock, and repairs an altar of God there that was broken down.

He takes a stone for each of the twelve tribes of Israel and builds an altar to God. And, directing the people to dig trenches and three times to pour barrels of water on the sacrifice and the wood, he tells the altar Israel shall be its name and asks God to let the people know he's God. And God's fire consumes the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the dust and licks up the water, and the people fall on their faces and say God's the lord and the god.

And, telling them to take the prophets of Baal and let none of them escape, Elijah takes them to the brook Kishon and kills them there. And he tells Ahab to get up and eat and drink because of a sound of an abundance of rain there, and Ahab does, and Elijah goes to the top of Mount Carmel, throws himself onto the ground, puts his face between his knees, and tells his servant to go and look toward the sea. The servant says nothing's there, but Elijah tells him to do that seven more times, and the servant says the second time that a cloud the size of a man's hand is rising from the sea, and in a while the heaven's black with clouds, and a great rain is there. And Ahab rides to Jezreel, and the hand of God is on Elijah, and this chapter closes with Elijah girding up his loins and running before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

But the nineteenth chapter begins with Ahab telling Jezebel what Elijah did. And Jezebel sends a message to Elijah, asking that the gods do more to her if she doesn't make Elijah's life as the life of one of the prophets he killed. And Elijah goes a day's journey into the wilderness, sits beneath a juniper tree, and asks that he might die because he isn't better than his fathers.

But, as he sleeps beneath the juniper, an angel touches him and tells him to arise and eat, and, seeing a cake baked on coals and a cruse of water at his head, he eats and drinks and lies down again. And the angel comes and

touches him again and tells him to arise and eat because the journey's long, and he rises and eats and drinks, goes on the strength of the food forty days to Mount Horeb, and lodges in a cave, and God asks him what he'd doing there. He replies that, because the people have forsaken God's covenant, he's jealous for God, and God tells him to go and stand on the mountain before him. And then God passes by, and a strong wind, an earthquake, and fire occur in turn.

God isn't in them, but after the fire is a still small voice. And Elijah hears it, wraps his face in his mantle, and goes out of the cave, and a voice asks him again what he's doing there, and he repeats his earlier answer. And God, telling him to return by way of the wilderness of Damascus and anoint Hazael king of Syria and anoint Jehu king of Israel, tells him Jehu shall slay those who escape Hazael's sword and that Elisha shall slay those who escape Jehu's sword.

And, also telling Elijah to anoint Elisha to be prophet in his place, he says he's left seven thousand in Israel who haven't bowed to Baal or kissed Baal's mouth, and Elijah finds Elisha plowing behind twelve yoke of oxen and casts his mantle on him, and Elisha runs after Elijah, asks permission to kiss his parents, says that then he'll follow Elijah, kills a yoke of oxen, gives it to the people, and, when they've eaten, rises, goes after Elijah, and ministers to him.

And the twentieth chapter begins with the king of Syria Ben-Hadad gathering his host with thirty kings and horses and chariots and besieging Samaria. And he sends Ahab messengers telling him his silver and gold and wives and children are Ben-Hadad's. And Ahab agrees.

But he demands more, and Ahab consults with the elders of Israel and refuses, and a prophet comes to him and says God will deliver Ben-Hadad's host to him and that Ahab will know God's the lord. And, while Ben-Hadad and his kings are drunk in their pavilions, Ahab numbers 232 princes and seven thousand other Israelites, inflicts a great slaughter on their host, and puts it to flight. So, telling Ben-Hadad that Israel's god is a god of the hills, one of Ben-Hadad's servants advises fighting them in the plain.

But a man of God tells Ahab that, because the Syrians said God's a god of the hills and not of the valleys, God will help Israel again, and then Israel kills a hundred thousand Syrian footmen in one day. So Ben-Hadad promises to give Ahab Damascus and cities his father took from Ahab's father. And Ahab makes a covenant with him and sends him away.

But a man of the sons of the prophets tells his neighbor in God's word a story of God smiting people for not smiting people he tells them to smite, and the son of the prophets or perhaps the neighbor disguises himself and tells Ahab someone brought him a captive and told him to guard him, lose his life, or pay a talent of silver, and that the captive escaped while he was otherwise busy.

So Ahab tells the person he's decided his own judgement, and the person takes the ashes from his face, and Ahab discerns that he's one of the prophets. And the person tells Ahab that God says Ahab's life shall go for the captive's life and that, because he let go from his hand a man God had appointed to utter destruction, Ahab's people shall go for the captive's people. And this chapter closes with Ahab going heavy and displeased to his house in Samaria.

The 21<sup>st</sup> chapter begins by saying the Jezreelite Naboth had a vineyard in Jezreel beside Ahab's palace. Ahab asks Naboth to give him the vineyard, for Ahab to have it for an herb garden, and he offers to pay for it by giving Naboth both a better vineyard and the worth in money of Naboth's vineyard, but Naboth says God forbids that he give Ahab the inheritance of Naboth's fathers. And Ahab goes despondent to his house.

But Jezebel, asking him why he isn't eating, replies to his telling her by telling him he'll have the vineyard. And she invites people to a feast, sets Naboth high among the people, and has two sons of Belial bear false witness against him that he blasphemed God and the king. So they carry him out of the city and stone him to death, and Jezebel tells Ahab to take the vineyard because Naboth is dead.

So God, telling Elijah to go to Ahab, prophesies that Ahab's house shall be as Jeroboam's, Baasha's, and Alijah's, that dogs will lick Ahab's blood in the place in which they licked Naboth's, and that they'll eat Jezebel beside the wall of Jezreel.

But Ahab rends his clothes, dresses in sackcloth, fasts, and goes softly. So God says the evil against Ahab's house won't be in Ahab's days, that instead it'll be in the days of his son. So this is one of many instances of the *Miqra* saying God contradicted his saying men shall die only for their own sins.

In the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter, in the fourth year of Ahab's reign over Israel, Jehoshaphat begins to reign over Judah. And, in the third year of Jehoshaphat's reign, after three years with new war between Syria and Israel, Ahab, saying Ramoth-Gilead is Israel's, tells his servants they haven't taken it back from the hand of the king of Syria. And then Jehoshaphat comes to Ahab, and Ahab asks him to help take Ramoth-Gilead, and Jehoshaphat replies that his horses and chariots are Ahab's. But he asks Ahab to ask God.

So Ahab gathers four hundred prophets, and they tell him God shall deliver Ramoth-Gilead to him, but Jehoshaphat asks whether a prophet of God isn't there. Ahab replies that Micaiah is there but that, because Micaiah always prophesies against him, he hates him. But Jehoshaphat tells Ahab he shouldn't say that. So Ahab sends for Micaiah.

And Micaiah agrees with the other prophets, but Ahab asks him how many times he's told him not to tell him anything other than what's true in

God's name. And then Micaiah tells him God sent a lying spirit to the other prophets and that he's seen all of Israel on the hills as a sheep with no shepherd. So Ahab orders Micaiah imprisoned until he returns in peace.

But Micaiah says that, if Ahab returns in peace, God hasn't spoken to him. So Ahab fights the Syrians with Jehoshaphat but disguises himself, and the king of Syria orders his captains to fight only the king of Israel, but a man draws a bow and accidentally kills Ahab, and someone washes his blood from his chariot, and dogs lick it. And his burial is in Samaria, and he sleeps with his fathers, and his son Ahaziah reigns in his stead.

And Ahaziah walks in the ways of Ahab and Jezebel, and Jehoshaphat makes ships to go to Ophir for gold. And Ahaziah offers to send servants in the ships with Jehoshaphat's servants, but Jehoshaphat walks in the ways of Asa. So he refuses the offer.

And, after Jehoshaphat's burial in the city of David, his son Jehoram reigns.

Most translations of the *Miqra* also divide the Book of Kings into two books, and the first chapter of the second begins with Moab rebelling against Israel, and next in it Ahaziah falls through a lattice of his chamber and sends messengers to Baal-Zebub to ask whether he'll recover.

So God tells Elijah to meet the messengers, ask them whether they're going to the God of Ekron because no god is in Israel, and tell them Ahaziah won't come down from his bed and shall die. So he does, and the messengers return and tell Ahaziah what happened, and Ahaziah asks them what manner of man met them and replies to their description by saying it's Elijah. And he sends three groups of fifty with their captains to meet him.

The first captain calls Elijah a man of God, and Elijah says fire will come down from heaven if he's a man of God, and fire of God comes down from heaven and consumes that group, and the same happens to the second group, but the third captain bows to Elijah. So Elijah goes to Ahaziah with that captain and tells him what he told the messengers. And Ahaziah dies.

In the second chapter Elisha travel from Gilgal to Beth-El and from Beth-El to Jericho. At Beth-El, the sons of the prophets ask Elisha whether he knows God will take Elijah from him that day, and Elisha, replying that he does, tells them not to speak of it. And, at Jericho, as fifty of the sons of the prophets watch, Elijah divides the water of Jordan by smiting it with his mantle.

So Elijah and Elisha cross it on dry land, and Elijah asks Elisha what he can do for him, and Elisha asks Elijah to give him a double portion of his spirit, and Elijah replies that he'll have it if he sees him being taken from him. And, as they talk, a chariot and horses of fire separate them, and Elijah goes up to heaven in a whirlwind. And, as Elisha watches that, Elijah's mantle falls to him.

So Elisha smites the Jordan with the mantle and again crosses it on dry land. But the sons of the prophets ask him to let them go see whether God has thrown Elijah onto a mountain or into a valley. Elisha tells them not to go, but they search three days and don't find him. So Elisha asks them whether he didn't tell them not to go.

And next the sons of the prophets tell Elisha the city there is pleasant but that the water's nothing and that the ground's barren. So Elisha asks them to bring him a cruse of water and put salt in it, and he pours it into the spring there and says God has healed the water and that no more death or barren land will be because of it, and the waters are healed in accordance with his word. And he goes from there back to Beth-El.

There some children call him baldhead, and he curses them in the name of God, and two female bears come from the wood and tear 42 of the children, and Elisha goes from there to Mount Carmel, and from there back to Samaria.

The third chapter begins by saying that, in the eighteenth year in which Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Ahab's son Jehoram began to reign over Israel and that Jehoram clove to the sins of Jeroboam but wasn't as evil as Ahab and Jezebel. And in this chapter Jehoram forms an alliance with Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom to defend Israel from the king of Moab, and, after telling Jehoram that, were Jehoshaphat not present, he'd neither look at him nor see him, Elisha helps them. So, with help from God and a minstrel, Elisha and the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom smite the Moabites, destroy their cities, cast stones on their land, and stop up their wells. And the king of Moab takes his oldest son, who otherwise would have reigned in his stead, and offers him as a burnt offering.

The fourth chapter begins with Elisha, as Elijah saved the widow and her son from the famine, relieving from debt a woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets. And in it, as the widow took in Elijah, a barren Shunamite woman and her husband take Elisha in, and he prophesies that the Shunamite woman shall have a son. And, as Elijah resurrected from death the widow's son, Elisha resurrects the Shunamite woman's son. And Elisha also removes harm from a pot of pottage.

The fifth chapter begins by saying the captain of the host of Syria was great and honorable and that God had delivered Syria because of him but that he was a leper. And in this chapter a little captive Israelite maid tells the king about Elisha, and the King sends a letter to the king of Israel, telling him he can cure the captain. And, with gold and silver, the captain takes the letter.

The king of Israel asks whether he's God, to kill and make alive, but Elisha hears of that, says he can cure the captain, and tells the captain to wash in the Jordan. The captain's angry and asks whether the Damascus rivers Albana

and Pharpar aren't better than all the rivers of Israel, but his servants ask him whether he wouldn't have tried a more difficult cure. And, saying after the cure that then he knows the only god is in Israel, he offers Elisha a blessing and a reward.

Elisha refuses the offer, but his servant follows the captain and asks him for a talent of silver and two changes of raiment for the sons of the prophets, but he keeps them for himself, and Elisha, asking the servant whether his heart didn't go with the servant when the captain turned from his chariot to meet him, gives the servant the captain's leprosy.

In the sixth chapter the sons of the prophets tell Elisha their dwelling place is too narrow, and one of them loses in the Jordan the head of an ax he borrowed for building another dwelling place. So Elisha, telling the sons of the prophets to cut down a stick, directs them to throw the stick into the river where the one of them lost the ax head. And the ax head swims.

And also in this chapter, telling the king of Israel the Syrians are coming, Elisha asks God to blind the Syrians and leads them to Samaria. So the king of Israel asks Elisha whether he should smite them, but Elisha asks him whether he'd smite people he's taken captive. So the king of Israel feeds the Syrians and sends them away.

But next in this chapter Ben-Hadad gathers all his host and besieges Samaria. So next a great famine is in Samaria, and a woman, crying from the wall of Samaria to the king of Israel and telling him she and another woman agreed to eat her son one day and eat the other woman's son the next, says she boiled her son but that the other woman refused to boil hers. So the king of Israel rends his clothes, and the people see that he has sackcloth on his flesh.

But next he asks that God not let his head stand on him if Elisha's head stands on Elisha that day. And Elisha, in his house with the elders, tells them to see how that son of a murderer has sent to take his head, and, asking whether the sound of the messenger's master's feet isn't behind the messenger, tells the elders to shut the door and hold the messenger at it. And, when the messenger arrives, Elisha says the evil of that is with God, and this chapter ends with Elisha asking what of God he should longer await.

The seventh chapter begins with Elisha prophesying that the monetary inflation from the famine will reverse the next day. And a lord on whose hand the king leans asks that the prophesy might be as though God would make windows in heaven. So Elisha tells him he'll see it but not eat of it.

And God makes the Syrians hear sounds of a great host and, leaving their belongings behind, flee for their life. And two lepers, deciding that they'll surely starve in Samaria but may survive with the Syrians, go to the Syrian camp, find it empty of people but full of wealth, and carry some of the wealth

away and hide it. But they decide the light of day may bring trouble to them and that they should tell the king's household.

So the king sends to know whether what they said is true, and the wealth from the camp fulfills Elisha's prophesy that the monetary inflation would reverse. And the people go out to spoil the Syrian's camp, and the king puts in charge of the gate the servant who doubted Elisha's prophesy. And the people trample him to death and fulfill that prophesy also.

The eighth chapter begins with Elisha telling the woman whose son he resurrected to go with her household wherever she can to survive the famine. So she goes to the land of the Philistines, sojourns there seven years, and returns and cries to the king for her house and her land. And the king talks with Gehazi, the servant Elisha made leprous, and Gehazi tells the king of the resurrection of the woman's son. So the king restores her property to her and also restores the fruits of her field from the time of her absence. But Elisha goes to Damascus.

Ben-Hadad's sick and asks his servant Hazael to ask Elisha whether he'll recover. And Elisha tells the servant to tell Ben-Hadad he'll recover but that God has said he'll die, and Elisha begins to weep, and Hazael asks him why he's weeping. And Elisha tells him he's seen what Hazael will do to the children of Israel, that he'll set their holds afire, kill their young men with the sword, dash their children, and rip up their pregnant women.

Hazael asks Elisha whether he's a dog to do such a great thing. But Elisha tells Hazael that God has shown him he'll be king of Syria, and Hazael tells Ben-Hadad that Elisha said he'll recover, but he kills him the next day. He spreads a thick wet cloth on his face and reigns in his stead, and next this chapter tells more of Ahab's son Jehoram, but it calls him Joram.

Edom, in this chapter, rebels and sets up a king over itself. So Joram smites Edom, but Edom continues its revolt against him. And also Joram and Ahaziah fight together against Hazael, and Joram, because the Syrians wound him, returns to Jezreel. And Ahaziah visits him while he's sick.

The ninth chapter begins with Elisha telling one of the children of the prophets to go to Ramoth-Gilead and take Jehoshaphat's son Jehu into an inner chamber away from the captains of his host, anoint him king of Israel, and tell him he'll fulfill some of Elijah's prophesies against Ahab and Jezebel.

So Jehu tells the captains what that child of the prophets told him, and they blow trumpets and proclaim him king, and some of Joram's servants defect to him. But Joram leads an attack against Jehu on the land of Naboth, the Jesreelite whose vineyard Ahab and Jezebel took, and Jehu kills him with an arrow. And he tells the captain of his host to throw the body into Naboth's field.

Ahaziah flees, but Jehu follows him and orders smiting him also, and Ahaziah's servants carry him in his chariot to Jerusalem for burial in the city of



David. And Jehu goes to Jezreel, and Jezebel hears of that and paints her face and looks from a window, and Jehu asks who's on his side. And he tells two or three eunuchs who look from the window to throw Jezebel down.

And some of her blood sprinkles on the wall and the horses, and Jehu tramples her and goes into the house, where he eats and drinks. Because she's a king's daughter, he orders her burial, but, in accordance with Elijah's prophesy that dogs would eat her, those who go to bury her find only her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands. And this chapter closes by saying God's word was that her carcass should be as dung on the face of the field in that portion of Jezreel, for people not to say it's Jezebel.

The tenth chapter begins with Jehu sending a letter to the rulers of Jezreel and the people who raised Ahab's children. The letter tells them to set the best of Ahab's seventy sons on his throne, but they're afraid and reply to Jehu that two kings couldn't stand against him, and, on the condition that they bring him the heads of Ahab's seventy sons, Jehu accepts their pledge of allegiance. So they send the heads in baskets, and Jehu kills the remainder of the house of Ahab, his kin, great men, and the priests, and he also orders the killing of Ahaziah's 42 brothers.

And, saying he'll worship Baal more than Ahab did, he invites the prophets and priests of Baal to a great sacrifice, but he appoints eighty men to kill them in the house of Baal during the offering. So he destroys Baal from Israel, but he doesn't depart from worshipping the golden calves in Beth-El and Dan, or from the other sins of Jeroboam. So God begins to cut Israel short.

He tells Jehu that, because he did what was in God's heart concerning the house of Ahab, his children shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation. But, before Jehu's burial in Samaria after his 28 years of ruling Israel, Hazael smites the coasts of Israel from the Jordan eastward. And Jehu never rules Judah.

The eleventh chapter begins with Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, who rules in his stead after his death, rising to destroy all the royal seed. But Jehosheba, a sister of Ahaziah's and daughter of Jehoshaphat's son Joram or Jehoram, saves Ahaziah's son Joash from the destruction. And, with help from the priest Jehoiada, she hides him in the house of God six years.

So, at the end of the six years, Jehoiada, giving the captains of the host the spears and shields of David's that are in the temple, tells them to anoint Joash king. And Athaliah hears of that and, crying treason, comes to the temple, and Jehoiada tells the captains of the host to take her out and not kill her in the house of God, and they kill her where the horses enter the king's house. And the people rejoice, go into the house of Baal, break down the house and its altars,

and kill the priest of Baal before the altars. And this chapter closes by calling Joash Jehoash and saying he was seven years old when he began to reign.

And the twelfth chapter begins by saying Jehoash began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu and reigned forty years in Jerusalem. It says he did what was right in the sight of God in accordance with Jehoiada's instruction but that the people continued to burn incense in the high places but that he told the priests to use all the wealth that comes into the temple to repair the temple. It says that in the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of his reign they hadn't repaired it, but it says he asked them why they hadn't, and it says they collected more money and gave it to workers who oversaw the repair.

But also in this chapter Hazael takes Gath and sets his face toward Jerusalem, and, for Hazael to go away, Jehoash gives him the treasures from the house of God. Hazael goes away, but some of Jehoash's servants conspire against Jehoash and kill him. And his son Amaziah reigns in his stead.

The thirteenth chapter begins by saying that, in the twentieth year of Ahaziah's son Joash, Jehu's son Jehoahaz began to reign and did evil in the sight of God. It says God's anger kindled and that he delivered Israel into the hand of Hazael and into the hand of his son Ben-Hadad but that he gave Israel a savior and that Israel went from beneath the hand of Syria and dwelt in Israel's tents. And it says Israel didn't depart from the sins of Jeroboam but that the savior left Israel fifty horsemen and ten chariots and ten thousand footmen.

It doesn't say who the savior was, but it says Jehoahaz' burial was in Samaria, that his son Jehoash began to reign in the 37<sup>th</sup> year of the king of Judah Joash, that Joash's burial was in Samaria, and that Jeroboam sat on his throne.

But, in this chapter, Elisha falls sick of the sickness from which he died, and Joash goes to him, weeps over his face, and calls him the chariot of Israel and its horsemen. And Elisha, telling Joash to take a bow and arrows, puts his hands on Joash's hands on the bow, tells him to shoot east from a window, says the arrow is the arrow of deliverance from Syria and that Joash shall smite Syria until he's consumed it, and tells him to smite the ground with arrows. So Joash smites three times, but Elisha's angry and tells him he'll smite Syria thrice and should have smitten the ground five or six times.

And bands of Moabites invade the land at the beginning of the year, and men burying a man see a band and throw the man into Elisha's sepulcher, and the man touches Elisha's bones and revives, and next this chapter says Hazael oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoaz.

But it says God was gracious to Israel. It says that, because of God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he wouldn't destroy Israel or yet cast it from his presence. And next it says Hazael died and that Ben-Hadad reigned in his stead, and next it says Jehoahaz's son Jehoash took from Ben-Hadad the

cities Hazael had taken from Jehoash's father, Jehoahaz. And this chapter closes by saying Joash beat Ben-Hadad three times and recovered the cities of Israel.

Which Joash or Jehoash does what is often unclear in that chapter, but the fourteenth chapter begins by saying that, in the second year of the Joash who was son of the king of Israel Jehoahaz, the Amaziah who was son of the Joash who was king of Judah reigned.

And it says Amaziah did what was right in God's sight but didn't take away the high places. And, in this chapter, after smiting some Edomites, he challenges Jehoash, and Jehoash, telling Amaziah that smiting the Edomites lifted up his heart but that he should stay at home, asks him why he should meddle to his hurt for Israel to fall with him. But Amaziah rejects the rejection of his challenge, and Jehoash breaks down the wall of Jerusalem and takes the treasures from the house of God

But, before his burial in the City David after conspirators kill him, Amaziah lives fifteen years after the burial of Jehoash in Samaria, and, before Jeroboam's son Zachariah reigns in the stead of the second Jeroboam, Jehoash's son Jeroboam evilly reigns 41 years in the stead of Jehoash.

In the fifteenth chapter, behaving in various ways as their predecessors did, more kings of Israel and Judah come and go. And, while the king of Judah Azariah does what's right in God's eyes other than not taking down the high places, God smites him with leprosy. And, because some cities don't open to the king of Judah Menahem, Menahem smites them and rips open all the pregnant women in them.

In the sixteenth chapter, in accordance with the abominations of the heathens God cast from before Israel, the king of Judah Pekah makes his son pass through fire and orders one of his priests to build an altar like one he sees in Damascus, and he offers sacrifices on it, removes the brass bath from the brass oxen in the temple, and sets the bath on the pavement.

In the seventeenth chapter, the king of Israel Hoshea becomes a servant of the king of Assyria Shalmaneser, and Shalmaneser finds conspiracy in Hoshea and besieges Samaria, imprisons Hoshea, and carries Israel away to Assyria. And Israel walks in the statutes of the heathens God carried away before them and hardens its necks against the prophets and seers by whom God testifies against both Israel and Judah for rejecting his statutes. So, angry, God removes Israel from his sight.

And Judah walks in the statutes Israel makes. So God rejects all the seed of Israel and delivers Judah into the hand of spoilers until, as he said he would by the prophets, he casts all the seed of Israel from his sight. And the king of Assyria replaces the people of Samaria with people from cities of Babylon.

But, because the Babylonians don't fear God, God sends lions among them, and the lions slay some of them. So the king of Assyria commands sending back to Samaria one of the priests he's carried away, and the priest dwells in Beth-El. But each nation worships its own gods and places them in the high places Israel made, and their children and their children's children fear God but serve their graven images as did their fathers, and this chapter closes by saying they do that to this day.

But the eighteenth chapter says the king of Judah Hezekiah did right in God's sight in accordance with all David did. It says he trusted God, that no one was like him among all the kings of Judah before him, and that he not only removed the high places, broke apart the images, and cut down the groves, but also broke apart the brass serpent Moses made. It says the people were burning incense to it and calling it Nehushtan.

And also in this chapter Hezekiah rebels against the king of Assyria and smites the Philistines to Gaza. But, in the seventh year after Shalmaneser takes Israel captive, Shalmaneser's successor Sennacherib takes all the fenced cities of Judah. And Hezekiah offers to pay him to go away.

Sennacherib demands three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold, and Hezekiah gives him all the silver from the house of God and the king's house and cuts the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple, but Sennacherib sends a host to subjugate Judah. And leaders of Sennacherib's host call to Hezekiah from outside the walls of the city, and Hezekiah sends out Eliakim, the head of Hezekiah's household and a son of the high priest Hilkiyah, with a delegation. And Rab-Shakah, the leader of the Assyrian host, speaks to the delegation in Hebrew while people sit on the wall.

Telling the delegation what to say to Hezekiah, he calls Egypt a bruised reed and says leaning on it will pierce one's hand, and, asking whether any nation's god has been able to deliver land from the hand of the king of Syria, he promises to provide two thousand horses if Hezekiah pays tribute and can ride the horses.

The delegation tells Rab-Shakah not to speak in Hebrew. But, shouting his threats and demands to the people on the wall, he tells them the king says not to let Hezekiah deceive them and that, if they make the king a present, he'll let them enjoy their crops and water until he takes them to live in another land like theirs. But, while the delegation tells Hezekiah what Rab-Shakah said, the people hold their peace.

In the nineteenth chapter, when Hezekiah hears what Rab-Shakah said, he rends his clothes, covers himself with sackcloth, goes into the house of God, and sends his delegation to the prophet Isaiah. So Isaiah tells the delegation to

tell Hezekiah that God said not to fear and that he'll send a blast on the king of Syria. And Rab-Shakah returns to Syria and finds Sennacherib in another war.

He sends a messenger to Hezekiah with more threats, but Hezekiah prays and receives from God an answer similar to what Isaiah said, and Isaiah provides prophecies similar to his earlier prophecies but more metaphorical, and an angel of God kills 185 thousand Assyrians, and Sennacherib returns to Nineveh, and, as he worships in the house of his god Nisroch, two of his sons kill him with the sword.

But the twentieth chapter begins with Hezekiah sick to death. Isaiah comes to him, tells him he's going to die, and leaves him, but Hezekiah weeps and tells God he's walked before him in truth with a perfect heart. So, before Isaiah leaves the courtyard, God sends him back and says he'll add fifteen years to Hezekiah's days.

But Hezekiah asks for a sign that God will heal him, and Isaiah asks him whether the shadow should go forward or backward ten degrees, and Hezekiah says the shadow's going down ten degrees is a light thing. So Isaiah cries to God, and God brings the shadow back ten degrees from where it had gone down on the dial of Ahaz, and Isaiah orders placement of a lump of figs on Hezekiah's boil. And Hezekiah recovers.

And next the king of Babylon hears of Hezekiah's sickness and sends him letters and a present. But Hezekiah shows the messengers all his treasures, and Isaiah asks him who they were, whence they came, and what they saw in his house, and Hezekiah tells him. And Isaiah tells Hezekiah that God said days will come when all that's in Hezekiah's house and all that his fathers stored will be carried to Babylon, and that Hezekiah's sons shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

And Hezekiah says that, if peace and truth are in his days, God's word is good. And this chapter also says Hezekiah made a pool and a conduit and brought water into the city. And it closes by saying he slept with his fathers and that his son Manasseh reigned in his stead.

But the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter says Manasseh seduced Israel to do more evil than had the nations God destroyed before the children of Israel. It says God said that, because of the evil the children of Israel had done in his sight since their fathers came from evil, he'd wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish. And it says Manasseh's son who ruled in his stead behaved as Manasseh had, that his servants killed him, that the people killed the servants, and that Manasseh's son Josiah reigned next.

But the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter says Josiah did what was right in God's sight and turned neither left nor right from David's way. And in this chapter he tells the high priest Hilkiah to sum the silver coming into the temple and deliver it to

workers to repair the house of God. And Hilkiah tells the scribe Shapham he found the book of the law in the house of God.

And he gives it to Shapham, and Shapham reads it and shows it to Josiah, and Josiah tells Hilkiah and others to inquire of God concerning it. So they go to the prophetess Huldah, and she tells them to tell Josiah God will do to Jerusalem what he said he'd do and why he'll do it but that, because Josiah's heart is tender and because he humbled himself before God, he'll gather Josiah to the grave in peace, and she says Josiah's eyes won't see the evil God will bring on Jerusalem. And Hilkiah and the others take Huldah's words to Josiah.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter Josiah goes to the house of God, reads the words of the book of the covenant to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and orders the priests and others to remove from the temple and from other places ways to worship and otherwise behave other than by God's commandment. And, while he's destroying sepulchers, he finds the sepulcher of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed against the altar Jeroboam built at Beth-El, and he orders that his bones be left alone. And the priests with him leave them alone with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.

And Josiah holds a Passover unlike any since the days of the Judges. But God doesn't turn from his promise to remove Judah from his sight as he'd removed Israel. And Pharaoh-Nechoh goes against the king of Assyria, and Josiah goes against Pharaoh-Nechoh, and Pharaoh-Nechoh kills Josiah.

Then Josiah's servants carry him in his chariot to Jerusalem and bury him in his own sepulcher, and his son Jehoahaz reigns in his stead, but Jehoahaz is evil. And Pharaoh-Nechoh puts him in bands, puts the land to a tribute of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold, makes Josiah's son Eliakim king, changes Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim, and he takes him to Egypt. And Jehoiakim is also evil, gives silver and gold to Pharaoh-Nechoh, taxes the land in accordance with Pharaoh-Nechoh's commandment, and dies in Egypt.

But the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter says that before he died God sent against him bands of Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, as he'd said by the prophets he would because of the sins of Manassah, and this chapter says the king of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar came against Jehoiakim and that he became Nebuchadnezzar's servant three years. But it says he rebelled against him.

But it also says that, upon Jehoiakim's sleeping with his fathers, his son Jehoiachin ruled in his stead and was also evil, and it also says that, because Nebuchadnezzar took land from the river of the Egypt to the Euphrates, Pharaoh came no more out of his land.

But, in this chapter, in the eighth year of Jehoiachin's reign, Nebuchadnezzar takes captive Jehoiachin, his mother, his wives, and his servants, princes, and officers and carries them to Babylon with men of valor,

the craftsmen and smiths, and the treasures of the house of God and of the king's house. Leaving only the poorest people, he makes Jehoiakim's brother Mattaniah king in Jehoiachin's stead and changes Mattaniah's name to Zedekiah. And Zedekiah's also evil and also rebels against Nebuchadnezzar.

And the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter begins in the tenth year of Zedekiah's reign with Nebuchadnezzar and all his host pitching against Jerusalem and building forts around it. They besiege it until the next year and then break it up, and Zedekiah and the men of war flee until the army of the Chaldees overtakes them, scatters the armies of Judah, kills Zedekiah's sons before his eyes, puts out his eyes, binds him with brass fetters, and carries him to Babylon. And Nebuzar-Adan, the captain of Nebuchadnezzar's host, comes to Jerusalem, burns the house of God, the king's house, and every other great house, and breaks down the city's walls.

And, breaking up the brass bath and the other brass in the house of God, he takes that also. And he also takes to Babylon the chief priest, the second priest, the three keepers of the door of the house, the scribe of the house, an officer of the men of war, and the principal scribe of the host. And, in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar kills them.

But the captain of the guard leaves behind poor people to be vinedressers and husbandmen, and Nebuchadnezzar appoints over them a governor, Gedaliah. And Gedaliah, telling them not to fear being servants of the Chaldees, tells them dwelling in the land and serving Nebuchadnezzar will be well for them. But ten men with Ishmael, a man of the royal seed, kill Gedaliah and the Babylonians and men of Judah who are with him. And, for fear of the Chaldees, the remaining people flee to Egypt with the captains of their armies.

But, in the 37<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Jehoiachin, Evil-Merodoch begins to reign in Babylon, lift's Jehoiachin's head from prison, speaks kindly to him, changes his prison garments, and sets him on a throne above the other kings in Babylon.

And this chapter, the final chapter of the Book of Kings, closes by saying Jehoiachin ate bread before Evil-Merodoch and that Evil-Merodoch gave him an allowance at a daily rate every day of all the days of his life.

The first chapter of the Book of Isaiah begins by saying it's the vision of Isaiah concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Next in it, presumably speaking for God, Isaiah says that, if God hadn't left a remnant of the people, Jerusalem would be like Sodom and Gomorrah. And, saying God's soul hates the feasts and is weary to bear them, he asks what good are the multitude of sacrifices.

And, rebuking Judah for disobedience to God in various ways, he promises to destroy Judah with the sword for its rebellion, but next he promises

restoration for repentance. And that's the basic tenor of the prophesies of Isaiah and of the prophesies of each of the other major prophets. They suggest that retribution and redemption is an eternal cycle.

The second chapter says people shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more, but it continues the cycle of prophesies suggesting that the people never shall stop learning war, and it promises more punishment.

And so does the third chapter, and a punishment it prophesies is children oppressing the people and women ruling over them, and a crime it designates is women having tinkling ornaments, and a punishment for embellishment of women is that they'll eventually stink. And this chapter closes by saying Jerusalem's men shall fall by the sword, that her mighty shall fall in war, and that she'll sit desolate on the ground. And a metaphor frequent in Isaiah's and other prophets' prophesies is calling Jerusalem a whore.

The fourth chapter begins by saying that, on the day on which Jerusalem sits desolate on the ground, seven women shall take hold of one man and say that, if, to take away their reproach, he'll let them be called by his name, they'll eat their own bread and wear their own apparel, but, making that washing away of the filth of the daughters of Zion a metaphor for purification of Jerusalem, it says God will create over Jerusalem clouds of smoke by day and a flaming fire by night, but that a tabernacle shall be there for shelter.

And, in the fifth chapter, God sings a song of his beloved having a vineyard on a fruitful hill. And the song says the vineyard of God is the hosts of the house of Israel and that the men of Judah are his pleasant plant. But the song also designates woes for various sorts of wickedness.

In the sixth chapter Isaiah says that, on the day of the death of the king of Judah Uzziah, he saw seraphim and heard God referring to the cycle of retribution and redemption. And the seventh chapter begins a similar but more metaphorical version of the reign and fall of the king of Israel Ahaz. And less explicit metaphors are also in the seventh and eighth chapters.

The seventh chapter says God will give a sign, that the sign will be a virgin conceiving and bearing a son and naming him Emanuel, and that he'll eat butter and honey, know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

In the eighth chapter Isaiah says he went into a prophet, that she conceived and bore a son, and that, because the son will have the knowledge to cry to his parents that the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria, God told him to name the son Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.

And in the ninth chapter are more prophesies of war and destruction but also a prophesy of eternal peace. It says a son is to be born to us, that the



governance shall be on his shoulders, and that his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. And it says the increase of his governance on the throne of David shall be of no end, that the governance shall be to establish the throne of David with judgement and justice forever, and that the zeal of God's hosts shall perform that.

But it says that, because God's hand remains stretched out, Ephraim and Manasseh shall be against Judah. Of course that's a reference to the contention between Ephraim and Judah earlier in the *Miqra*, and other factors are that the *Miqra* says earlier that Manasseh was the most evil of the kings of Judah, that Ephraim and Manasseh were Joseph's sons, and that Joseph was the most beneficial of Israel's sons, not only because he saved Israel from the famine but also because the Ephraimite Joshua led the conquest of Canaan. But the theme of rivalry among brothers in the *Miqra* begins with Cain and Abel, and this chapter also refers to breaking the rod of the oppressor in the day of Midian, and it doesn't say whether Midian or Israel was the oppressor.

The tenth chapter begins by promising woe to those who decree unrighteousness to turn aside the need for judgement, take away the right from the poor of God's people, rob the fatherless, and make widows prey, and most of the remainder of this chapter is prophesies of punishment of Jerusalem, Samaria, and Assyria, but it also refers to the slaughter of Midian.

The eleventh chapter says a rod shall come forth from the stem of Jesse, that the spirit of God, the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, and the might and fear of God, shall rest on him, that he won't judge by what he sees with his eyes or hears with his ears but will judge the poor with righteousness and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth, and that he'll smite the earth with the rod of his mouth and slay the wicked with the breath of his lips, and it says the wolf shall lie down with the lamb, that the lion shall eat straw as the ox, and that the suckling child shall play on the asp.

And, in another redemption prophesy, it says God will recover the remnant of his people from the places to which he's scattered them, that a highway for that will be from Syria as one was from Egypt, that Ephraim won't envy Judah, that Judah won't vex Ephraim, that together they'll fly on the Philistines and lay their hands on Edom and Moab, and that the children of Ammon shall obey them.

And, while the twelfth chapter tells of the joy and praise for God at the completion of that repetition of the cycle of crime and punishment and retribution and redemption, no prophesy in the *Miqra* says how many times the cycle shall recur.

The thirteenth chapter begins by continuing the theme of retribution by saying it's the burden of Babylon Isaiah saw, and, describing complete destruction, it says God says he'll punish the world for evil and the wicked for iniquity.

The word "burden", in English translations of the *Nevi'im*, ordinarily refers to punishment, and the description of details of that burden and its accordant rebuke continues into the fourteenth chapter. And hell, in English translations of the *Miqra*, is the grave, and this chapter says it shall have moved to meet Babylon, stirred the chief dead of Earth, and raised the kings of the nations from their thrones to tell the Babylonian oppressors they've become as weak as they are, and this chapter calls Lucifer the son of morning. It doesn't otherwise identify him, but it tells him he's falling from heaven for saying he'll ascend to heaven and exalt his throne above the stars of God to be like the most high. And it briefly describes the burdens of Assyria and Palestina.

The fifteenth and sixteenth chapters describe the burden of Moab. The seventeenth chapter describes the burden of Damascus, and the eighteenth chapter prophesies woe to the land beyond the rivers of Ethiopia. And the nineteenth describes the burden of Egypt.

The nineteenth says five cities in Egypt shall speak the language of Canaan, that an altar to God shall be in the middle of Egypt, that a pillar to God shall be at its border, that a highway shall be from Egypt to Assyria, that the Assyrians shall come to Egypt, and that God shall smite Egypt. But it also prophesies that, when Egypt repents and cries to him, God will send a savior and heal Egypt, and it prophesies that the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. And it says Israel will be a third with Egypt and Assyria and be a blessing in the midst of the land.

But the twentieth chapter says the king of Assyria shall imprison the Egyptians and capture the Ethiopians and that they'll be ashamed of the expectations of Ethiopia and the glory of Egypt. And the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter describes the burden of the desert of the sea and refers to Babylon and to the burdens of Dumah and Arabia. And the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter describes the burden of the valley of vision and refers to the city of David and to Eliakim.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter describes the burden of Tyre and tells the ships of Tarshish to howl because their strength is laid to waste. The 24<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning by saying God makes the earth a waste, describes ways it's a waste and says the reason is that its inhabitants broke the everlasting covenant. The 25<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning with Isaiah telling God he's Isaiah's god and will exalt him for destroying cities and for having been a strength to the poor, says God will swallow death in victory, wipe tears from all faces, and take the rebuke of his people from all the earth, and that Moab shall be trodden down for the

dunghill. And the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter, saying it's a song to be sung that day in the land of Judah, promises both destruction and war and compassion and peace.

The 27<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning by saying that in that day God shall punish leviathan with his great and strong sword, calls leviathan a piercing crooked serpent and a dragon in the sea, and, in conjunction with other burdens and imagery it doesn't make clear, it refers to iniquity and the purgation, atonement, and blooming of Jacob.

The 28<sup>th</sup> chapter, after calling for woe to the drunkards of Ephraim, contains more metaphors and references to hell. And the 29<sup>th</sup> through 35<sup>th</sup> chapters are more rebukes and promises metaphorical and literal with references to secrecy and chaos and confusion and clarity. And all of that elaborates on the general prophesy of the cycle of destruction and redemption.

The 36<sup>th</sup> chapter is a version of the story of Hezekiah and Rab-Shakah through Eliakim and his delegation telling Hezekiah what Rab-Shakah said. And the 37<sup>th</sup>, 38<sup>th</sup>, and 39<sup>th</sup> chapters are a version of the story of Hezekiah from that through Isaiah's prophesy, in response to Hezekiah's showing the messengers from Babylon his treasures, of the Babylonian captivity. But Isaiah's prophesies in these versions are more elaborate, and a difference is that, before God sets back the dial, he doesn't ask Hezekiah in what direction to set it.

In the fortieth chapter, saying God told him to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, Isaiah prophesies a voice crying in the wilderness that God shall feed his flock as a shepherd, gather the lambs with his arm, carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are young, but he also says God will come with a strong hand and that all nations before him are as nothing.

And the 41<sup>st</sup> chapter continues similarly. In it Isaiah says God called Jacob a worm but will make him a sharp new threshing machine with teeth. And, calling God the god of Israel, he says he won't forsake the poor and needy seeking water.

In the 42<sup>nd</sup> chapter Isaiah says God directs beholding his servant he upholds and in whose soul delights. He says God says he'll put his spirit on the servant and that the servant won't be discouraged until he brings judgement on the gentiles and brings it to truth. And he says God elaborated further on that, but he doesn't say who the servant is, or that God does.

And the 42<sup>nd</sup> chapter also says God will bring judgement to the gentiles, that he'll give those in whom his soul delights a covenant for light to the gentiles, that he'll make waste mountains and hills, and that he's given Israel to the robbers.

But the 43<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins by telling Israel not to fear, and such vacillation is a component both of the promise of the cycle of retribution and

redemption throughout the Book of Isaiah and of its prophesies for and against Israel and various other entities.

But an especially broad example of the difficulty of interpreting the Book of Isaiah is Isaiah's saying in the 49<sup>th</sup> chapter, while not making clear whether the people to whom he's referring are the gentiles or the children of Israel or whether God will lift his hand to help or to harm them, that God says he'll lift up his hand to the gentiles and set his standard to the people.

And next, while not specifying the antecedent of the pronoun "they", he says God says they'll bring their sons in their arms, that their daughters shall be carried on their shoulders, and that kings and queens shall be their nursing fathers and mothers and shall bow down to them, lick up the dust of their feet, and know he's God.

And so goes much of the remainder of the Book of Isaiah. In the 54<sup>th</sup> chapter, while not saying to whom the cities belong or who's barren, Isaiah says God tells the barren that their seed shall inherit the gentiles and make the desolate cities inhabited. And, in the 56<sup>th</sup> chapter, he says God commands not letting the sons of the stranger who've joined themselves to God say God has separated them from his people and that he commands not letting the eunuch call himself a dry tree.

But, in the 65<sup>th</sup> chapter, he says God says he'll bring from Judah an inheritor of his mountains, and, while the 66<sup>th</sup> chapter also rambles, it returns to more direct expression of the cycle of retribution and retribution.

In it, Isaiah says God says that heaven's his throne and that earth is his footstool and asks where's the house built to him, the place of his rest. And he says killing an Ox is like killing a man and that sacrificing a lamb is like cutting off a dog's neck and offering pig blood. And he says God will choose the delusions of people who do that and that he'll bring their fears upon them.

He says God says those who sanctify themselves in a garden behind a tree in its midst while eating swine flesh, the abomination, and the mouse shall be consumed together, that he'll gather all the nations and tongues to see his glory, that he'll send those who escape to nations that draw the bow and haven't seen his glory, and that those who escape shall declare God's glory to the gentiles.

And he says God says they'll bring the brothers of Isaiah's audience from all those nations to God's holy mountain Jerusalem as an offering to God and that he'll take of them for priests and for Levites, that God says the new heavens and earth God will make shall remain before him, that the seed and name of Isaiah and his audience shall remain, and that all flesh shall worship them.

And this chapter, the final Chapter of the Book of Isaiah, closes by saying they'll look upon the carcasses of the men that transgressed, that their worm shall not die, that their fire won't be quenched, and that they'll be abhorrent to all flesh.

The first chapter of the Book of Jeremiah begins by saying it's the words of Hilkiah's son Jeremiah that came to him in the days of the kings of Judah Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, until the captivity of Jerusalem, and in this chapter God tells Jeremiah he's ordained him to be a prophet to the nations.

Jeremiah says he's a child and can't speak, but God, telling him not to say he's a child and not to fear, touches his mouth, tells him he's put words into it and will deliver him, and tells him to see that he's set him that day over nations and kingdoms, to root out, pull down, destroy, throw down, build, and plant, and next, showing Jeremiah a rod of an almond tree, God begins delivering to him prophesies like Isaiah's and rebukes for Israel's past behavior.

The prophesies and rebukes extend throughout the second chapter, and the third chapter, reminding both Israel and Judah of their behavior, extends into more rebukes the metaphor of calling Israel and Judah prostitutes and adulterers, and the fourth chapter further elaborates on the cycle of retribution by destruction and redemption by repentance.

Beginning with words from Jeremiah's mouth telling people to run through the streets of Jerusalem to see if they can find a man who executes judgement and seeks truth and telling them Jeremiah or God will pardon Jerusalem if they find such a man, such continues through the fifth chapter. And the sixth chapter tells Benjamin to flee Jerusalem because evil is appearing from the north, but it doesn't say how Benjamin can stop the destruction, and it doesn't say Benjamin shall escape it. And such vagueness, metaphorical or literal, continues throughout the Book of Jeremiah, and futilely crying for peace is a motif setting its theme.

In the ninth chapter God tells Jeremiah to see that days will come when he'll punish the circumcised with the uncircumcised. It lists in that context Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, and Moab, and it includes all that are in the utmost corners, dwelling in the wilderness. And it closes by saying all of the house of Israel are uncircumcised in their hearts.

The tenth chapter, elaborating on futility and emphasizing fearing God, says man is brutish in his knowledge, and, while excepting Jacob and saying his name is the lord of hosts, God's rebuking Israel continues on throughout this book. In its thirteenth chapter, God says he'll fill all the inhabitants of the land with wine and drunkenness, and, not excepting the kings on David's throne, the priests or the prophets, or the inhabitants of Jerusalem, he says he'll dash fathers

and sons against one another and destroy them with neither mercy nor pity. And the fifteenth chapter contradicts Isaiah's telling Hezekiah in the Book of Kings that God will destroy Jerusalem because of earlier kings' behavior, and it does it by repeating Isaiah's contradicting himself in the Book of Isaiah by saying he'll destroy Jerusalem because of the behavior of Manasseh, Hezekiah's son.

In the sixteenth chapter Jeremiah says God forbade him, because of events he prophesies, to take a wife or beget children. In the eighteenth chapter inhabitants of Jerusalem plot against him for prophesying in the gate of the city as God directed. And in the twentieth chapter the governor of God's house puts him in stocks.

And then, also in the twentieth chapter, Jeremiah prophesies the Babylonian captivity. And Pashur, the governor, is a son of a priest, and Jeremiah specifies in the prophesy Pashur's family and all his friends. He says Pashur's friends shall fall by the sword of their enemies and that Pashur and all his house shall go into captivity in Babylon and die there.

But next Jeremiah complains to God. He tells him he's deceived him, and, saying he'll make no more mention of God, he complains that God's word is a reproach and a daily derision. And, after next saying God's with him and that his persecutors shall stumble and not prevail, this chapter closes with his asking why he came from the womb to see labor and sorrow and his days consumed with shame.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter Pashur asks Jeremiah to ask God to help against Nebuchadnezzar, and Jeremiah tells him to tell Zedekiah God said he'll turn the weapons in Pashur's hand against Pashur and assemble the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans in the midst of the city, and, telling Pashur to tell the people that, he says both he and God will fight against Pashur, and presumably also against Zedekiah and Jerusalem.

And in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter he tells Pashur that God says that, if the kings who sit on David's throne were righteous and just, they'd ride through gates and save the people, but that God says to the kings that people seeing the destruction of the city will say it's because of people forsaking God's covenant.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter he prophesies against false prophets, and the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with his saying that, when Nebuchadnezzar carried away the officers, princes, carpenters, and smith's from Jerusalem, God showed him a basket of figs and said they were like good figs and that he sent them to the land of the Chaldeans for good, but that Zedekiah and his princes are like bad figs and that he'd give them away with the residue of Jerusalem remaining in the land and dwelling in Egypt.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter Jeremiah says God says the captivity in Babylon shall last seventy years and that at the end of those years he'll punish the king of Babylon.

And, in the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter, he says God says the treasures of the house of God and the house of the king will be carried to Babylon but that he'll bring them back, and he says God told him to make bonds and yokes and put them on his neck and send them to the kings of Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, Tyrus, and Zidon, with prophesies that God will punish anyone who doesn't serve Nebuchadnezzar.

In the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter the prophet Hananiah prophesies the end of the captivity. And he breaks the yoke from Jeremiah's neck, and Jeremiah concurs before the priests and the people, but God tells him to tell Hananiah he's broken wooden yokes but that God will replace them with iron ones. And, telling Hananiah that God didn't send Hananiah, Jeremiah prophesies that Hananiah will die that year. And, in the seventh month of that year, Hananiah dies.

In the 29<sup>th</sup> chapter Jeremiah sends a letter to the captives, telling them to dwell in their houses, plant gardens, eat the fruit of them, take wives, beget sons and daughters, take wives for their sons, and give their daughters husbands, for them to increase in Babylon and not be diminished. And he warns them against false prophets and tells them God said they'll pray to God and that he'll listen to them and turn away their captivity. And he prophesies the burden of Babylon and tells the captives that the curse of the kings is why they're there.

In the thirtieth chapter God tells Jeremiah to write in a book all he's told him. And, in the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter, God says he'll make a new covenant with the houses of Israel and Judah, that it won't be like the covenant he made with their fathers, that he'll put it in their inward parts, that they'll obey it, that the city shall be built to him, and that the valley of dead bodies and the fields to the brook Kidron shall be holy to him. And in the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter Zedekiah, asking Jeremiah why he prophesied that God said he'd deliver Jerusalem and Zedekiah into the hand of the king of Babylon, shuts him up in the court of the prison in the house of the king of Judah. But Jeremiah's prophesies, of the threats, punishment, and iniquity, continue.

In the 36<sup>th</sup> chapter God again tells Jeremiah to write his words in a book, and Jeremiah dictates the words to the scribe Baruch and tells Baruch to read it to the people. And Jehoiakim sends a servant to destroy the book, and he cuts it with a pen knife and throws it into a fire. But Jeremiah dictates it to Baruch again.

Jeremiah isn't in prison at the beginning of the 37<sup>th</sup> chapter, but a captain of the prison accuses him of being for the Chaldees, and Zedekiah, imprisons him again. But he talks with him, moves him from the dungeon to the

court of the prison, and orders that he receive a piece of bread daily. And Jeremiah continues to prophesy.

In the 38<sup>th</sup> chapter the princes of Judah demand that Zedekiah kill him, and Zedekiah returns him to the dungeon. But he talks with him again and returns him to the court of the prison, and the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter tells of the blinding of Zedekiah, and in it Nebuchadnezzar orders Jeremiah's release from prison. And in the fortieth chapter Nebuchadnezzar puts Jeremiah into the care of Gedaliah.

The 41<sup>st</sup> chapter begins with Ishmael killing Gedaliah and killing and capturing Jews who've obeyed him, but, also in this chapter, a counter-rebellion develops, and in the 42<sup>nd</sup> chapter Jeremiah prophesies that God will help the counter-rebels, but in the 43<sup>rd</sup> chapter, before Jeremiah prophies against it in the 44<sup>th</sup> chapter, the counter-rebels ignore Jeremiah's prophesies and flee to Egypt, and a question in all of that is why the version of that rebellion in the Book of Kings doesn't mention Jeremiah.

But, in the 45<sup>th</sup> chapter, Jeremiah tells Baruch that, because God will bring evil on all flesh, God told him not to seek great things for himself. And, in the 46<sup>th</sup> chapter, Jeremiah prophesies against the gentiles and especially against Egypt. And, in the 47<sup>th</sup> chapter, he prophesies against the Philistines.

In the 48<sup>th</sup> chapter he prophesies more against Moab. And in the 49<sup>th</sup> chapter he prophesies more against the Ammonites, the Edomites, and the Syrians. And in the 50<sup>th</sup> chapter, saying a great nation shall come from the north against Babylon and make her land desolate, he prophesies more against Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans.

And the prophesies concerning Babylon continue through the 51<sup>st</sup> chapter. In it, saying Babylon shall sink and not rise from the evil he'll bring on her, God tells Jeremiah to write the prophesies in a book, tie a stone to the book when he finishes reading it, and throw it into the Euphrates. And this chapter closes by saying that thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

And the 52<sup>nd</sup> and final chapter of the book of Jeremiah begins by summarizing Zedekiah's reign, tells of the destruction and spoiling of the temple and of the murderous beginning of the captivity in Babylon, and closes by repeating the closing of the Book of Kings.

The first chapter of the book of Ezekiel begins with its author saying that, on the fifth day of the fourth month of the thirtieth year, he saw visions of God. It doesn't say who the author is or what occurred during those thirty years, but it says the word of God came to the priest Ezekiel on the fifth day of the month that was the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, and it says it came by the river of Chebar in the land of the Chaldeans and that the hand of God was on



Ezekiel. And, in this chapter, Ezekiel describes a vision that presumably was or brought the word.

He says a whirlwind came from the north with a great cloud and fire, that a brightness the color of amber with the likeness of four living creatures was in the middle of the fire, and that the likenesses of the living creatures were of a man with four faces and four wings. He says the faces were of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle, that they had wheels, that their spirit was in the wheels, and that the likeness of the firmament on their heads was like terrible crystal. And, saying the likeness of a throne was above the firmament, he says with other details that he saw the likeness of the glory of God and fell on his face.

The second chapter begins with God or the glory of God calling Ezekiel the son of man and telling him to stand on his feet for him to speak to him. Then the spirit enters him and sets him on his feet, and God begins talking to him as the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah say God spoke to them, but God also sends Ezekiel a hand with a book in it and spreads the book before him. And in the book are lamentation, mourning, and woe.

The third chapter begins with God telling Ezekiel to eat what's in the book and speak to the house of Israel. He tells him he isn't sending him to a people of strange speech, but that people of strange speech would have listened to him, while the house of Israel won't. And the spirit takes him up and to the people in captivity dwelling by the river of Chebar, leaves him there seven days, and tells him at the end of the seven days that he's made him watchman over the house of Israel. And such interaction of visions and metaphors continues throughout this book

Also in this chapter, saying the house of Israel is impudent and hard-hearted, God tells Ezekiel his responsibility as a prophet, for his soul and for others'. He says that, if either the wicked don't turn from their wickedness after Ezekiel warns them or the righteous turn to iniquity after he warns them, Ezekiel has delivered his soul. And he says that, if either the wicked or the righteous heed him, he's saved them from dying of iniquity.

In the fourth chapter God directs Ezekiel to enact metaphorical rebukes of Israel and Judah. In the fifth chapter he tells him that, besides his judgement of scattering the remnant of Israel to the wind, a judgement he'll inflict on Israel is that fathers and sons shall eat one another. And such literal and metaphorical rebukes and prophesies of judgements for and against Israel and other people continue through the thirteenth chapter.

And, in the thirteenth chapter, prophesying against the prophets who prophesy vanity and lies from their hearts, God says that, by promising life to the righteous for not turning from their wickedness, they make sad the hearts of

the righteous, and he says they'll neither enter the land of Israel nor be written in the writing of the house of Israel.

In the fourteenth chapter the elders of Israel come to Ezekiel, and God tells him to tell them God said that, were they in the land when it grievously trespasses against him, he'd save no souls other than the souls of Noah, Daniel, and Job, and not their sons or daughters,. But he also says he'll leave a remnant of Jerusalem to bring forth sons and daughters. And so continue the prophesies of the cycle of rebukes and redemption.

In the Sixteenth chapter God calls Jerusalem a harlot and says Samaria and Sodom are her older and younger sisters. In the eighteenth chapter he tells Israel to turn from transgressions and live in righteousness because he has no pleasure in the death of those who die, and he says that, whether or not either follows righteousness, a son won't die for his father's transgressions, but that the father will die for his own. And in the twentieth chapter he tells Ezekiel to tell the elders of Israel he's wrought for his name's sake and not according to their wicked ways or corrupt doings.

And, in the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter, he tells Ezekiel he's drawn his sword from its sheath against Jerusalem and that it'll no more return to its sheath. And, in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter, he tells him to tell the people of Jerusalem he'll scatter them among the heathens, disperse them in the countries, and consume their filth from them, and he tells him to tell them they're the land and that the people of the land have used oppression, exercised robbery, vexed the poor and needy, and oppressed strangers, wrongfully. But the 25<sup>th</sup> through the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapters rebuke and prophesy against nations other than Israel, Judah, and Babylon.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter, as though God hasn't punished Judah for being like heathens, God tells Ezekiel he'll punish Moab and Seir because they say the house of Judah's like the heathen. And, in the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter, God tells Ezekiel that, because Tyrus has laughed at the destruction of Jerusalem, he'll, by causing nations to go against Tyrus as the sea causes waves to rise, destroy Tyrus' international shipping trade, and that continues through the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter. And, in the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter, God tells Ezekiel to tell the king of Tyrus he was wiser than Daniel and saw the garden of Eden and that, because of that, he'll bring fire to devour him.

In the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter God tells Ezekiel to tell Pharaoh of the greatness of Assyria and ask him whom he resembles in the greatness of the trees of Eden. And, to describe what he'll do to Pharaoh, he uses a metaphor of his destroying a cedar from jealousy of its height and its being a haven for birds and beasts. And, in the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter, elaborately describing hell as a grave in the ground, he tells Pharaoh he'll bury the Egyptians as he did the Assyrians.

The 34<sup>th</sup> chapter, after the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter returns to prophesying against Israel, prophesies for Israel but says neither the wicked who turn from their wicked ways nor the righteous who disobey shall save themselves, and it repeats prophesies of salvation by a descendent of David, and the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter prophesies further against Mount Seir.

And the 36<sup>th</sup> through 38<sup>th</sup> chapters raise some questions fundamental to Judaism. In the 36<sup>th</sup> chapter, raising the question of why God didn't do it before they walked contrary to his statutes, God tells Ezekiel to tell the people that, after he punishes them for walking contrary to his statutes, he'll put his spirit within them and cause them to walk in his statutes. In the 37<sup>th</sup> chapter, returning life and flesh to some dry bones and saying he'll reunite the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, he raises the question of why, if he can do that and could have prevented the evil the *Miqra* says originated death and the division of the house of Israel, he permitted both. And in the 38<sup>th</sup> chapter, essentially calling peace subjection by war, as the *Miqra* generally does, God promises war after promising peace. So those three chapters together, suggesting that God created life to create trouble, add to the question of why God would be jealous. And, of course, all of that raises the question of whether the *Miqra* is true.

And, in the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter, God, telling Ezekiel to prophesy against Gog, calls Gog the chief priest of Meshech and Tubal. The *Miqra* doesn't otherwise identify Gog or Meshech or Tubal, but this chapter prophesies that they'll fall upon Israel and that Israel will destroy them and also burn someone it calls Magog, and neither does it otherwise identify Magog. And it says that, to bury the dead in the valley of Hamon-Gog to cleanse the land, Israel shall recruit people passing through the land.

And also in this chapter God tells Ezekiel to tell every feathered fowl and every beast of the field to gather to his great sacrifice to eat flesh and drink blood on the mountains of Israel. He tells him to tell them they'll drink of his sacrifice for them of the blood of the princes of the earth and of various beasts and that they'll eat fat and be full and drink blood until they're drunk. And he says he'll set his glory among the heathens for them to see his judgement and the hand he's laid upon them and for Israel to know he's their lord and God from that day forward.

And he says the heathen shall know Israel went into their captivity for Israel's iniquity but that then he'll return the captivity of Jacob, have mercy on the house of Israel, and be jealous for his holy name.

And, in the fortieth chapter, in the 25<sup>th</sup> year of the captivity, God takes Ezekiel to the land of Israel, sets him on a high mountain framing a city to its south, takes him from the mountain to the city, shows him a building with tables

for sacrifices, tells him it's for the priests, and tells a man of brass there to measure it, and Ezekiel describes it.

In the 41<sup>st</sup> chapter God takes Ezekiel to a building he calls the temple and the most holy place, and such, with prophecies and ritual descriptions and directions, continues through the 44<sup>th</sup> chapter, and in the 44<sup>th</sup>, when the glory of God fills the house of God, Ezekiel again falls on his face.

In the 45<sup>th</sup> chapter, the description of the city becomes a metaphor for Israel in the land God has promised, and that metaphor extends into ritual instructions that continue through the 46<sup>th</sup> chapter, and the 47<sup>th</sup> chapter, telling the borders of the land, extends that metaphorical vision beyond the city.

And, designating the allocation of the land to the tribes of Israel, the 48<sup>th</sup> and final chapter of the Book of Ezekiel tells some of the land's uses and closes by saying that from then the name of the city shall be The Lord is There.

Most translations of the Book of the Twelve separate it into a section for each of the twelve minor prophets to whom its title refers. The first section is for Hosea, and, in its first chapter, God tells Hosea to take a wife and children of whoredoms. And the metaphor of Israel as a prostitute dominates the next several chapters and extends into several more.

Hosea's section also rebukes Judah and prophecies both for and against Judah, but most of it rebukes Israel and prophecies against Samaria and Ephraim. It's twelfth chapter says God has a controversy with Judah also and will punish Jacob according to his ways, but then it shifts to a summary of Jacob's life. It says that, in the womb, Jacob took his brother by the heel, that, by his strength, Jacob had the power of God over the angel, and that he tended sheep for a wife. And it says God will destroy him.

But its fourteenth and final chapter returns generally to the theme of repentance and recompense.

The section for Joel addresses all who live in the land, and its first chapter calls them drunkards and tells them to awaken and weep. But its second chapter tells them that, because deliverance shall be in Mount Zion and Jerusalem, whoever calls on the name of God shall be delivered. And its third chapter tells them to gather to beat their plowshares into swords and their pruning hooks into spears.

But its third chapter also tells them they've sold children of Jerusalem to the Greeks, that God says he'll raise the children from wherever they've sold them and will return recompense on their heads, that, because Egypt and Edom have shed innocent blood in their land, they'll be desolate for the violence against Judah, and that, because he'll cleanse the blood of Judah and Jerusalem he hasn't cleansed, they'll dwell from generation to generation forever, and the

final chapter of Joel's section closes with God saying the reason for that is that God dwells in Zion.

The nine chapters of the section for Amos continue the rebukes and prophecies, but Amos is less elaborate than other prophets, and less visionary. But he says in his first chapter that God said that, because Gaza carried away the whole captivity to deliver it to Edom, he won't turn away the punishment of Gaza, and his second chapter says God said that, because Moab burned the bones of the King of Edom into lime, he won't turn away the punishment of Moab, and his ninth chapter says a purpose of rebuilding Jerusalem would be for the children of Israel to possess the remnant of Edom. And no other book of the *Miqra* suggests any of that concerning Edom or Moab or Gaza.

And, while the one chapter of the section for Obadiah begins by calling it his vision, it's no more visionary than the section for Amos. Most of it's a judgement against Edom in which God directs gathering to destroy Edom for betraying Judah and helping the heathens capture Israel, and it says the house of Jacob shall possess the mount of Esau and the fields of Ephraim and Samaria and that Benjamin shall possess Gilead. And it closes by saying saviors it doesn't identify shall come upon Mount Zion to Judge the mount of Esau, and that the kingdom shall be God's.

The four chapters of the section for Jonah describe a journey and treat it as though it's actual and not a dream.

Its first chapter begins with God telling Jonah to go to Nineveh and prophesy against it. But in it Jonah tries to flee from God on a ship to Tarshish, and God sends a great wind and tempest that's likely to break the ship. Jonah's sleeping, but the shipmaster awakens him and asks him to pray to God, and the others on the ship cast lots to know who brought the evil on them.

The lot falls to Jonah, and the others ask him what to do to him for their salvation, and he tells them to throw him overboard. They're reluctant and try to row out of the storm, but the storm continues with them. So they throw Jonah into the sea, and then the sea stops raging.

So the men sacrifice to God and make vows, and God prepares a great fish to swallow Jonah, and this chapter ends by saying Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

But the second chapter begins with Jonah praying to God from the fish's belly. And God hears him from the belly of hell, and this chapter ends with the fish vomiting Jonah onto dry land, after God speaks to it. And, in the third chapter, God again tells Jonah to go to go to Nineveh.

He tells him to preach to the city, and Jonah goes there and cries that the city will be overthrown in forty days. But the king of Nineveh dresses in sackcloth and sits in ashes, and, telling the others of the city to dress in

sackcloth, he asks who can tell whether God will repent. So this chapter ends with God repenting from the evil he said he'd do to them.

But the fourth and final chapter begins by saying the repentance displeased Jonah. He's exceedingly angry in it and complains to God, and God asks him whether he's doing well to be angry, and Jonah goes outside the city, makes a booth, and sits in its shadow to see what will become of the city. And God prepares a gourd and makes it go over Jonah to be a shadow over his head to deliver him of his grief.

Jonah's exceedingly glad of the gourd, but the next morning God prepares a worm that smites the gourd to wither it. And he also prepares a vehement east wind, and the sun beats on Jonah's head, and Jonah faints and wishes he were dead. So God asks Jonah whether he's doing well to be angry for the gourd, and Jonah replies that he's doing well to be angry to death, and God tells him he'd had pity on the gourd. And he reminds him that he didn't made it grow and that it came up and perished in one night.

And, calling Nineveh a city of much cattle and more than 120 thousand persons who can't discern their right hands from their left, God asks Jonah why he shouldn't spare it.

The seven chapters of the section for Micah add nothing substantial to the sections for the other eleven minor prophets, but the fourth chapter, repeating what Isaiah says of plowshares and pruning hooks, also prophesies distrust among Israelites, and, by saying Israel shall beat many people into pieces, it expresses the Judaic notion of peace.

The section for Nahum, saying nothing of God's repentance in Jonah's section, begins by saying it's the burden of Nineveh and continues through three chapters of describing a burden that isn't light.

The first chapter of the section for Habakkuk begins by saying it's the burden the prophet Habakkuk saw, and the second of its three chapters describes that burden but doesn't say whose burden it is, and its third and final chapter, saying it's a prayer of Habakkuk's, doesn't say for whom.

The first chapter of the section for Zephaniah begins by saying he's a grandson of Gedaliah's, and, prophesying against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, it says that neither their silver nor their gold can deliver them from the day of God's wrath, and it says the great day of God is near. But its second chapter prophesies against the Philistines, Moab, the Ethiopians, and Nineveh and says the seacoast of the Philistines shall be dwellings for shepherds and folds for flocks of the remnant of Judah. And its third and final chapter elaborates on prophesies for Israel and Jerusalem and against others.

The first chapter of the section for Haggai begins by saying it's in the second year of the king Darius. That's the *Miqra*'s first mention of the Persian

king Darius, and this chapter also tells of the beginning of rebuilding of the temple, and the second and final chapter of Haggai's section says God said the glory of the latter house shall be greater than that of the former. And it says God said he'll destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen.

The first chapter of the section for Zechariah also begins in the second year of Darius, and in it Zechariah talks with an angel who speaks with God and tells Zechariah that God says he's returned to Jerusalem with mercies and that his house shall be built there. And, after rebukes and prophesies, the angel tells Zechariah to cry that God said a line shall be stretched forth from Jerusalem and that his cities shall be spread abroad through prosperity. And he shows Zechariah horns he says scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

And Zechariah's second chapter begins with Zechariah seeing a man with a measuring line. He asks the man where he's going, and the man tells him he's going to measure Jerusalem, and another angel joins the first angel and tells him to run and tell Zechariah, or the man with the measuring line, that Jerusalem, for the multitude of men and cattle in it, will be like towns with no walls. And the prophesy of rebuilding Jerusalem continues, with God saying he'll be a fire around her, commanding fleeing the land of the north, and telling Zion, who it says is dwelling with the daughters of Babylon, to deliver itself.

And the third chapter begins with the angel showing Zechariah the high priest Joshua standing in filthy garments before the angel of God with Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And, after God rebukes Satan, the angel tells the people before him to take away the filthy garments. And Zechariah requests setting a fair miter on Joshua's head.

In the fourth chapter, Zechariah sees the gold candlestick with the seven branches, and God tells him he's laid the foundation of the temple in the hands of Zerubbabel and will finish it. But he doesn't say who Zerubbabel is, and the vision is less specific through the fifth chapter and ends in the sixth chapter. But the seventh chapter begins in Darius' fourth year.

In it God tells Zachariah to ask the people and priests of the land when they've fasted to him in the seventy years of the captivity and when their eating and drinking wasn't for themselves.

Were that question in the *Upanishads*, it'd be the question of when they didn't fail to recognize that the *atman* is *Brahman*, and, in the eighth chapter, Zechariah calls God the lord of hosts, and, with a host being an army in the *Miqra*, putting that diction into the *Upanishad*'s would point to *Brahman* imagining the disparity of the *atman*.

And, in this chapter and the ninth, are more rebukes and reminders and prophesies. And the ninth enjoins a daughter of Jerusalem to shout and see that

her king is coming, and it says he's just, has salvation, and is lowly, riding on an ass. And less explicit references are in the tenth and eleventh chapters.

In the twelfth chapter God says Jerusalem shall be a burdensome stone for all people, that he'll pour upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication, and that they'll look upon God whom they've pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for one's only son, and in the thirteenth chapter God says he'll remove the memory of the names of the idols from the land and cause the prophets and unclean spirits to pass from it.

The fourteenth chapter begins with God telling Jerusalem his day is coming and that Jerusalem's spoil shall be divided in its midst. He says he'll gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle and that the city shall be taken, its houses rifled, and the women ravished. And he says half of the city shall go into captivity and that the other half shall be cut off from the city.

But he also says Jerusalem shall be inhabited safely and that a plague shall consume the flesh of the people who fought against Jerusalem. And God says in this final chapter of the section for Zechariah that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem. But it closes with God saying that in that day no more Canaanites shall be in the house of the lord of hosts.

The first chapter of the section for Malachi begins by saying it's the burden of the word of God to Israel by Malachi. And in it God asks the Israelites whether he's loved them, and they reply by asking wherein he's loved them, and he asks whether Esau wasn't Jacob's brother. He says he loved Jacob and hated Esau and laid Esau's mountains and heritage to waste for the dragons of the wilderness. And Edom replies that the Edomites are impoverished but will rebuild the desolate places. And God replies that he'll throw down what they rebuild.

But the remainder of the first chapter rebukes Israel. And, beginning by admonishing the priests, all of the second chapter rebukes Israel. But, in the third chapter, in addition to further rebuking Israel, God tells the Israelites he'll send his messenger to prepare the way before them and that the lord in whom they delight and whom they're seeking shall come to the temple.

And he says the lord he'll send is like a refiner's fire and fullers' soap and shall purify the sons of Levi. And he says that then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasant to the lord as it was in days of old and former years. And he says that, because he's the lord and doesn't change, the sons of Jacob aren't consumed.

And all of that raises questions of whether God's the lord he'll send, why God made the descendants of Levi the priests of Israel after Jacob's dying demeaning blessing of Levi regarding his murderous deceit at Shechem, and



why God reneged on his promise to Abraham and preferred the deceitful Jacob to his brother whose burden Malachi's prophesying.

And the fourth and final chapter of Malachi's section begins by saying the day shall come when all the proud and all those who do wickedly shall be stubble, that the day that comes shall burn them up and leave them neither a root nor a branch, and that the lord of hosts says that.

And this chapter and the *Nevi'im* close with God saying he'll send the prophet Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the lord and that, if Elijah doesn't turn the hearts of the fathers and the children to one another, God will come and smite the earth with a curse.

## Chapter 9

### Ketuvim

The *Ketuvim* is the books of Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, the Song of Songs, and the books of Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles, ordinarily in that order.

Psalms are songs, and the Book of Psalms attributes most of the songs in it to David, but it attributes many of them to Asaph and some of them to others or to no one.

The first psalm says the man who doesn't walk in the counsel of the ungodly is blessed while the ungodly are like the chaff the wind drives away, and it closes by saying God knows the way of the righteous, while the way of the ungodly shall perish.

The second asks why heathens rage and why the people imagine a vain thing. And, asking God to break the bands of the kings who counsel together, it says God will hold them in derision. And in it God says he's set his king on the holy hill of Zion.

Those two psalms express two the main themes of the Book of Psalms, one being praise for the god of Israel and the righteousness of the people who worship and obey him, and the other being disdain for the evil of the people who don't, people the *Miqra* calls the heathens. And, expressing two more themes, David begins the third psalm by telling God that many are the people who rise against him and that they increase in trouble, and, saying salvation belongs to God and asking God for blessing on his people, he ends it by asking God to save him because God has smitten his enemies on the cheek and broken the teeth of the ungodly. That is, he bemoans what God is letting happen to him, and he asks God for help.

And, by beginning the fourth psalm by calling God the god of his righteousness, he adds the theme of his claim to righteousness. And in the seventh psalm he asks that the congregation gather around God and that God return on high to judge the people and judge him according to his righteousness.

And in the eighth psalm, telling God that God has made man a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor, he effectually repeats the assertion in Genesis that man shall have dominion over God's creation.

In the eleventh psalm he says he puts his trust in God, but he asks God why God tells his soul to flee as a bird to God's mountain, and in the fourteenth psalm he says all the children of men have gone aside and become filthy, but in the sixteenth psalm, telling God that God won't leave his soul in hell or suffer God's holy one to see corruption, he says God will show him the path of life.

And he begins the 22<sup>nd</sup> psalm by asking God why God has forsaken him, but he begins the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm by saying God is his shepherd and that he'll not want, and he also says in the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm that God's with him, that he'll fear no evil while walking through the valley of the shadow of death, that goodness and mercy surely shall follow him all the days of his life, and that he'll dwell in the house of God forever.

And in the 25<sup>th</sup> psalm, asking God to forget his transgressions, he says that, because God is good and upright, he'll teach sinners the way, and in the 35<sup>th</sup> psalm, asking that his adversaries' way be dark and slippery, he asks that the angel of God persecute them and that those who rejoice in his hurt be brought to shame and confusion.

In the 37<sup>th</sup> psalm he says the meek shall inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace. But, excepting when he's begging God for forgiveness or help, nothing in any of the psalms indicates that he's meek in any way. And he says in the 39<sup>th</sup> psalm that surely every man walks in a vain show.

Headings of the 42<sup>nd</sup> psalm and the 44<sup>th</sup> through the 49<sup>th</sup> say they're for the sons of Korah. And the book of Psalms doesn't name their composer or say why anyone would compose psalms for Korah's sons. But neither does it suggest that they descended from the Korah the Book of Numbers says led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron.

The composer of the 44<sup>th</sup> psalm tells God the composer and his host haven't forgotten God or dealt falsely in his covenant but that God has made them turn back from the enemy who hates and spoils them, and, telling God that God has made them a byword among the heathens and a shaking of the head among the people, he says that all day long, for God's sake, they're counted as sheep for the slaughter.

And the composer of the 45<sup>th</sup> psalm closes it by telling God that, for the people to praise God forever, he'll make God's name remembered in all generations, and the composer of the 49<sup>th</sup> psalm says God will redeem his soul from the power of the grave.

In the fiftieth psalm Asaph tells of God calling the saints to him who's made a covenant with God by sacrifice, telling people of Israel he'll testify against them but won't reprove them for their burnt sacrifices being continually before him while he knows that every beast of the forest, the cattle on a thousand hills, the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the fields, are his, and telling them that, because the world and its fulness are his, he wouldn't tell them if he were hungry.

And David begins the sixtieth psalm by telling God that God has cast off and scattered him and his host. And, telling God that God has been pleased, he asks him to turn himself to him and his host again. And, calling Moab his wash pot, he says he'll cast out his shoe over Edom. But he tells Philistia to triumph because of him.

In the 69<sup>th</sup> psalm he says he's become a stranger to his brothers and an alien to his mother's children, and complaints of everyone being against him are in several of his psalms as are pleas for salvation from hell, which he variously calls the depths, the grave, and the pit. And with its caption saying its for Solomon, the 72<sup>nd</sup> psalm ends by saying the prayers of Jesse's son David are ended. And the next eleven psalms are Asaph's.

In the 78<sup>th</sup> psalm Asaph summarizes events of the *Miqra* from God's preferring Jacob to God's preferring David. But, generally, the themes of Asaph's psalms and the other psalms the Book of Psalms doesn't attribute to David are themes of the psalms it attributes to David. And, next after those eleven psalms of Asaph's, the captions of the 84<sup>th</sup> and 85<sup>th</sup> psalms say they're for the sons of Korah and provide no attribution.

The 86<sup>th</sup> psalm is a prayer of David's, but the captions of the 87<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> psalms say they're also for the sons of Korah, and the composer of the 87<sup>th</sup> psalm says he'll make mention of Babylon and Rahab to those who know, but it doesn't say the Rahab to whom it refers was the harlot who helped the spies at Jericho.

And the captions of the 88<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> psalms attribute them to the Ezrahites Heman and Ethan, and in the 89<sup>th</sup> psalm the Ezrahite Ethan tells God he's broken Rahab in pieces as one who's slain, but he also tells God that God has spoken to his holy one in a vision and told him he won't lie to David after he's sworn by his holiness, that he won't break his covenant, that he'll make his seed endure forever, and that he'll make his throne as the days of heaven.

The caption of the ninetieth psalm attributes it to the man of God Moses. In it, its composer, speaking of the power of God and the evil of humanity, says the days of our years are seventy and that, because, if they're eighty, it's soon cut off, that we fly away, and that their strength is labor and

sorrow. But, asking God to establish the work of our hands on us, he closes this psalm by asking that the beauty of God be on us.

The hundredth psalm tells all the lands to make a joyful noise to God, serve him with gladness, and come before him with singing. It tells the lands to know God is the lord, that he and not we has made us, and that we're his people and the sheep of his pasture. It tells us to enter his gates and courts with thanksgiving, praise him and be thankful to him, and bless his name, because he's good. And it says his mercy is everlasting and that his truth endures to all generations.

But the next four psalms mix praise with complaints, and the 105<sup>th</sup> psalm, referring to God's covenant with Abraham, adds details to events of the *Miqra*. It says of the Exodus that, because fear of the Israelites fell on the Egyptians, Egypt was glad when Israel departed, and it says that, when the people asked, God brought quails and satisfied the Israelites with the bread of heaven. And it says that, because he remembered his holy promise and his servant Abraham, he opened the rock, and that the waters gushed out and ran in dry places like a river.

The 106<sup>th</sup> psalm adds more details to the exodus, and the 107<sup>th</sup> psalm is a vague summary of other events in the *Miqra*. And, in the 108<sup>th</sup> psalm, David says Manasseh's his, that Ephraim's the strength of his head, and that Judah's his lawgiver, and he again calls Moab his wash pot and say he'll cast his shoe over Edom, but, in this psalm, he says he'll triumph over Philistia. And in the 109<sup>th</sup> psalm he further curses his enemies.

And he begins the 110<sup>th</sup> psalm by saying God told his lord to sit at his right hand until he makes his enemies his footstool. He doesn't make clear whether he's that lord or say how anyone can be God's lord, but he also says in this psalm that God told that lord that he's a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Presumably that's a reference to the king of Salem and priest of the highest god the Book of Genesis says brought bread and wine and collected tithes from Abram when Abram saved Lot and the other inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah from kings who invaded them.

The 115<sup>th</sup> psalm says the heathens' idols are of silver and gold and are the work of men's hands. It says they have mouths, eyes, ears, noses, hands, and feet but don't speak, see, hear, smell, handle, or walk. And, particularly saying they don't speak through their throats, it says those who make them are like them and that so is everyone who trusts in them.

The Book of Psalms attributes the 116<sup>th</sup> psalm to no one, but its composer begins it by saying the reason he loves God is that God heard his supplications, and he says that, because of that, he'll call on God all his life.

The 117<sup>th</sup> psalm is the shortest, tells all nations and people to praise God because his merciful kindness is great, and says the truth of God is forever.

And, with eight verses in each of its 22 sections, the 119<sup>th</sup> psalm is the longest and designates one section for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Each of the 26 verses of the 136<sup>th</sup> psalm ends by saying it's because God's mercy endures forever. Its first verse begins by directing thanking God because he's good, and its last begins by directing giving thanks to the god of heaven, but most of its other verses refer to a deed of God's. One is making the heavens by his wisdom, and several are killing various kings.

The 137<sup>th</sup> psalm refers to the Babylonian captivity and tells the daughter of Babylon that those who reward her, as, taking and dashing little ones against stones, she served the captives, shall be happy. The Book of Psalms doesn't say how a psalm in a book that's mainly David's psalms refers to an event fourteen generations after David's life. But neither does it attributes this psalm to anyone.

The six verses of the 150<sup>th</sup> and final psalm only direct praising God. Its first two verses direct praising him for his mighty acts in the firmament of his power. And the next three direct praising him with musical instruments.

And its final verse asks that everything having breath praise God.

The first chapter of the Book of Proverbs begins by saying it's the proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel. Next it says the proverbs are for knowing wisdom, receiving instruction, and perceiving words of understanding. And it also says they're for receiving the instruction of justice, judgement, and equity.

It says fear of God is the beginning of knowledge and that fools despise wisdom and instruction, and the author, presumably Solomon, addresses it to his son and tells him that, if he hears the instruction of his father and doesn't forsake the law of his mother, they'll be ornaments to his head and chains about his neck, and next he advises the son against consorting with criminally oppressive people.

But, not naming the son, it leaves the question of whether the son was Rehoboam, the son the Book of Kings says succeeded Solomon and rejected the advice of elders and, by instead accepting the advice of men his age who advised him to be more oppressive than Solomon, prompted the division of the house of Israel against itself and against Rehoboam in ways the first three chapters of this book, with both more detail and more abstract generalization in the second and third chapters, suggest are the wages of foolish rejection of instruction.

In the fourth chapter, addressing his children in general and giving them similar advice, he says he was his father's son and that his father taught him also and told him to let his heart retain his words, keep his commandments, and live. He doesn't mention in this chapter his disobedience to God that included his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter. But he indirectly does in the fifth chapter.

In the fifth chapter he warns the son against strange women, tells him to keep himself from them, and says it's to keep himself from asking himself how he's hated instruction and how his heart has despised reproof.

In the sixth chapter he warns the son to speak humbly to his friends but to watch them, and he advises him against sloth and lists seven things he says God hates. The seven things are a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness, and one who sows discord among brothers. And, also in this chapter, he warns the son against adultery and again warns him against strange women. And, through the seventh chapter, he elaborates on his warning against strange women.

But, in the eighth chapter, elaborating on the importance of wisdom, he personifies wisdom as a woman. And he speaks for her and says she says God possessed her in the beginning of his way. And he continues that personification into the ninth chapter.

But also in the ninth chapter he says a foolish woman is clamorous, knows nothing, sits at the door of her house and in the high places of the city to call people passing rightly on their ways, and tells those wanting understanding that stolen waters are sweet and that bread eaten in secret is pleasant, and, saying the passing people don't know the dead are there, he says her guests are in the depths of hell.

The tenth chapter also begins by saying it's the proverbs of Solomon, and its first verse says a wise son makes a glad father while a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother, and nearly every verse of the book of Proverbs from the tenth chapter into the 22<sup>nd</sup> is a similarly sententious proverb, and most of them contrast two clauses, as does that first one.

But they're diverse homilies. The first in the eleventh chapter says a false balance is abomination to God while a just weight is his delight. The 22<sup>nd</sup> in that chapter says a fair woman with no discretion is like a jewel of gold in a pig's snout. And the 29<sup>th</sup> in that chapter says that one who troubles his house shall inherit the wind but that the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.

And the 24<sup>th</sup> proverb in the thirteenth chapter says that one who spares his rod hates his son while one who loves his son chastises him. That, whether or not Rehoboam is the son to whom Solomon addressed the Book of Proverbs,

raises the question of how he treated Rehoboam. And several versions of that proverb are in the Book of Proverbs.

And, including the first proverb in the fourteenth chapter saying a wise woman builds her house while a foolish one plucks it down with her hands, many of the proverbs are extensions of what the eighth and ninth chapters say of women. But, including the eighteenth proverb in that chapter saying the simple inherit folly while the prudent are crowned with knowledge, many of them refer to wisdom more generally. And the 32<sup>nd</sup> in that chapter says the wicked person is driven away in his wickedness while the righteous have hope in his death.

And the sixteenth proverb of the sixteenth chapter says getting wisdom and understanding is better than getting gold and choosing silver, and the eighteenth proverb of that chapter says pride and a haughty spirit go before destruction and a fall, and those are but two of Solomon's proverbs the Book of Kings says he ignored while idealizing them.

But the first proverb in the eighteenth chapter departs from the general tenor of this book. It says that, through desire, having separated himself, a man intermeddles with all wisdom while seeking it. And that accords with the fundamental premise of Hinduism and Buddhism.

It's a succinct literal expression of the Hindu metaphor of one's head shattering apart. And, in its context, it raises questions of what it says of the wisdom of Solomon and the *Miqra* in general, and of Judaism in general. One question is whether the authors intended irony in calling Solomon wise, and another is whether they intended the *Miqra* to be an ironic metaphor suggesting that no merciful God would choose the Israelites for any purpose other than to exemplify how not to behave.

And the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter returns to advising the son. Its fifteenth proverb says foolishness is bound in the heart of a child but that the rod of correction shall drive it far from him. And its seventeenth verse, with Solomon telling him to bow his ear and listen to the words of the wise and apply his heart to Solomon's knowledge, returns to less sententious advice to the son. And, in its twentieth verse, Solomon asks the son whether he hasn't written to him excellent things in counsels and knowledge.

And the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins with Solomon telling the son, when he sits to eat with a ruler, to consider diligently what's before him. Telling him, if he's a man given to appetite, to put a knife to his throat, he tells him, because they're deceitful meat, not to be desirous of the ruler's dainties. And in the remainder of this chapter he repeats advice he's given the son in earlier proverbs.

He tells him riches make themselves wings and fly away as an eagle toward heaven. Telling him not to withhold correction from a child, he says the child won't die if he beats him with a rod. And he tells him the drunkard and



the glutton shall come to poverty and that a whore and a strange woman are a deep ditch and a narrow pit.

And such continues through the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter. But the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning by saying they're also Solomon's but that Hezekiah copied them out, returns to sententious proverbs. And, while the first proverb in this chapter says the glory of God is to conceal things while the honor of kings is to search out a matter, the second says heaven's for height and earth for depth while the heart of a king is unsearchable. And this chapter also contains more proverbs concerning how to behave toward kings.

Continuing through the 29<sup>th</sup> chapter, some of the proverbs in Hezekiah's selection are less sententious than the previous proverbs in this book generally are, and many of them deviate from the formula of contrasting clauses, but they repeat much of the advice that's in the previous proverbs.

The 30<sup>th</sup> chapter begins by saying it's the words of Jakeh's son Agur. It says it's the prophesy of Agur, and in it Agur says he's more brutish than any man, that he hasn't the understanding of a man, and that, while every word of God is pure, he neither learned wisdom nor has the knowledge of the holy. And he advises keeping from being reproved by God and from, by adding to God's words, being found a liar.

And he says he's required that God not deny him two things before his death. One is to remove him from vanity and lies and give him neither poverty nor riches, and the other is to keep him from either being full and denying God or being poor and stealing and taking God's name in vain. But the remainder of this chapter is proverbs similar to Solomon's, and Agur closes it by saying that forcing wrath brings strife.

And the 31<sup>st</sup> and final chapter of the book of Proverbs begins by saying it's the words of the king Lemuel. It says it's the prophesy his mother taught him and that she told him not to give his strength to women and not to give his ways to what destroys kings, and the ways she lists are drinking and forgetting the law and perverting judgement of the afflicted. But she advises giving drink to one who's ready to perish and wine to those of heavy hearts, and she advises letting one drink to forget poverty and misery.

And she asks who can find a virtuous woman. And, after saying a virtuous woman's price is far above rubies, she describes the virtuous woman. And, of the virtuous woman's responsibilities for the honor of her husband, her community, and her children, she says favor's deceitful and beauty vain but that a woman who fears God shall be praised,

And she closes the book of Proverbs by telling us to give the virtuous woman the fruit of her hands and let her works praise her in the gates.

The first chapter of the Book of Job begins by saying Job was a man in the land of Uz, that he was perfect and upright, and that he feared God and eschewed evil. Saying seven sons and three daughters were born to him, it lists his wealth of many thousands of various kinds of animals and says his children feasted together in his sons' houses. And it says that, saying his children may have sinned and cursed God in their hearts, he continually offered burnt offerings for them.

And next in this chapter the sons of God come to present themselves before God one day. And Satan comes among them, and God asks Satan whence he's come, and Satan replies that he's come from going to and fro in the earth, and God, calling Job his servant and saying no one's like him, asks Satan whether he's considered him. And Satan, asking God whether God hasn't protected and blessed Job, tells God that, were he to put a hand to him and touch what he has, Job would curse God to his face.

So, forbidding only that Satan put his hand upon Job, God puts into Satan's power all Job has. So then Satan leaves God's presence, and next various messengers come to Job and tell him his livestock's been taken and that his servants and children have died of various causes, and Job rises, shaves his head, falls to the ground, and, saying he's come from his mother's womb naked and will return to it naked, he worships, and, saying God has given and taken, he asks that God's name be blessed. And this chapter closes by saying that, in all of that, Job neither sinned nor charged God foolishly.

But the second chapter begins with the sons of God again presenting themselves to God with Satan among them, and a conversation between God and Satan begins as the conversation at the other presentation did, and in this one Satan tells God a man will give all he has for his life.

He tells God that, if he puts forth his hand and touches Job's bone and his flesh, Job will curse God to his face, and, requiring only that Satan save Job's life, God tells Satan that Job's in his hands. So then Satan leaves God's presence and smites Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And Job, taking a potshard to scrape his flesh, sits in ashes.

His wife, asking him whether he still retains his integrity, tells him to curse God and die. But Job asks her whether they should receive good at the hand of God and not receive evil. And yet, in all of that, Job doesn't sin with his lips.

And then three of Job's friends hear of the evil that's come upon him and come to mourn with him. Seeing him from a distance and not knowing him, they rend their mantles and sprinkle dust on their heads toward heaven. And this chapter closes with their sitting on the ground with him for seven days in which, because they see that Job's grief is great, they don't speak.

But most of the remainder of the Book of Job is a conversation between Job and the three friends, and, in the third chapter, Job opens the conversation by asking that the day of his birth perish, and he argues for that throughout the remainder of this chapter.

In the fourth chapter Job's friend Eliphaz tells Job that Job has instructed many and strengthened the weak. But, by asking him who's ever perished by being innocent, he sets the theme for his and the other two friends' arguments against Job. And in the fifth chapter Eliphaz says Eliphaz would commit his cause to God, that the man God corrects is happy, and that God both wounds and heals.

But in the sixth chapter, replying that he wishes God would grant his request and cut him off, Job asks Eliphaz to cause him to understand in what he's erred, and he says he'll hold his tongue while Eliphaz does that. But, through the seventh chapter, he continues complaining of his situation, and, in the eighth chapter, his friend Bildad asks him how long he'll speak of such, and Bildad further argues Eliphaz's point. And, throughout the conversation, Job and all three of his friends describe evidence of God's omnipotence.

In the ninth chapter Job says he'd prove himself perverse if he called himself perfect. But in the tenth chapter, saying he wishes to tell God not to condemn him and to show him why he's contending with him, he says he'd tell God he knows both that he's not wicked and that no one can deliver him from God's hand. And in the eleventh chapter Job's friend Zophar elaborates on the arguments of Bildad and Eliphaz.

In the twelfth chapter, beginning by telling his friends that no doubt is in that they're the people with whom wisdom shall die but that he also has understanding and isn't inferior to them, Job elaborates on his rejection of their arguments and asks them who doesn't know such things.

And in the thirteenth chapter, calling them forgers of lies and physicians of no value and asking them whether they'll speak wickedly and talk deceitfully for God, he tells them to hold their peace. But the conversation continues, and in the fourteenth chapter Job asks whether a man can live if he dies, and in the fifteenth chapter Eliphaz asks whether a man should utter vain knowledge and fill his belly with the east wind. And in the sixteenth chapter, calling his friends miserable comforters, Job says God has delivered him to the ungodly and turned him over into the hands of the wicked and that his friends scorn him while his eye pours out to God.

And he continues his complaints in the seventeenth chapter. And, in the eighteenth chapter, Bildad continues his friends' rebuttal. But, in the nineteenth chapter, after saying his friends and his kin have forgotten him, Job says his redeemer lives and shall stand on the earth at the last day.

His friends continue saying that, because he wouldn't be in his situation if he hadn't, he must have sinned, and Job continues saying he hasn't. But both Job and his friends say God can do what he wishes and that God's behavior is inexplicable. So the most fundamental difference is in the question of whether Job sinned.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter Job says he hasn't gone back from the commandment of God's lips but that, wherever he goes, he doesn't find God, and in the 29<sup>th</sup> he says people have honored him and that he's been an aid to the poor, the sick, and the blind, and in the thirtieth he says people who honored him have come to have him in derision.

In the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter, asking that, for God to know his integrity, he be weighed in an even balance, he asks that, if his heart has been deceived by a woman or if he's lain in wait at his neighbor's door, others grind to his wife and bow down upon her, and he proclaims his righteousness in other ways, and he closes the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter by saying his words are ended.

And the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins with his three friends, because he's righteous in his own eyes, ceasing to answer him. But another person is present, and he's angry both at Job for justifying himself rather than God and at Job's three friends for not convincing him. His name's Elihu, and he's younger than the others and has waited to speak because of that, and he tells the others that, but, also saying great men aren't always wise, he says his belly's like wine with no vent and is ready to burst like new bottles. And he says he'll show his opinion.

In the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter, asking Job to hear his speeches, he tells him that, according to Job's wish, he's in God's stead, that he's clean with no transgression, and that no iniquity is in him, and through five chapters he argues arguments of Job's three friends.

But in the 38<sup>th</sup> chapter God stops the conversation. With no reply to Elihu from God or Job or any of Job's three friends, God answers Job from a whirlwind and asks who's darkening counsel by words with no knowledge, and he tells Job to gird up his loins to answer what he demands of him. And, reminding Job of what God is and asking him where he was when God laid the foundation of the earth, he asks Job whether he's done or could do a long list of things God has done and does, and that continues through the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter.

And the fortieth chapter begins with God asking Job whether those who contend with the almighty shall instruct him. He tells Job to let those who reprove God answer that, and, answering God by calling himself vile and asking what he should answer, Job says he'll lay his hand on his mouth. He says he's spoken but won't proceed further.

But, again answering Job from the whirlwind, God again tells him to gird up his loins like a man. And, telling him to declare to him what he demands of him, he interrogates him further as he did in the previous two chapters. And that continues through the 41<sup>st</sup> chapter.

And the 42<sup>nd</sup> and final chapter of the Book of Job begins with Job telling God he knows God can do all. And he says he knows no thought can be withheld from God, but he says God's question of who hides counsel with no knowledge is why he uttered things he didn't understand and things he didn't know, things too wonderful for him. And, telling God to declare to him what he demands of him, he tells God he'd heard of him by ear but hadn't seen him by eye until then and that, because of that, he abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes.

And, replying by telling Eliphaz his wrath is against him and his two friends for their not speaking of him what's right as has Job, God tells Eliphaz and his two friends to take seven bullocks and seven rams, go to Job, and offer a burnt offering. He tells Eliphaz Job will pray for him and that he'll accept the prayer for Job but that otherwise he'd deal with Eliphaz for his folly. And Job's three friends do what God commanded them.

And, when Job prays for his friends, God accepts him, turns his captivity, and gives him twice as much as he had before, and his brothers and sisters eat bread with him in his house, bemoan him, and comfort him for the evil God brought on him, and each man gives Job a piece of money and a gold earring.

And next this chapter says Job then had twice as much livestock as the first chapter lists. It lists the same number of sons and daughters, but it tells the names of the second three daughters, and it says no women as fair as the daughters of Job were found in all the land. And it says their father gave them inheritance among their brothers.

And the book of Job ends by saying Job lived 140 years after that, that he saw four generations of his sons and his sons' sons, and that he died old and full of age.

The first chapter of the Song of Songs begins by saying it's Solomon's, and next in it someone asks that someone in it kiss her with the kisses of his lips because they're better than wine.

Other than Solomon, the identity of no one in this song is clear, and neither is some's gender. But the first speaker in the song tells the daughters of Jerusalem that she's black but comely as the tents of Kedar and the curtains of Solomon. And she asks another person the song doesn't name that, because she's black because the sun has looked on her, he or she not look on her.

And, saying her mother's children were angry with her, she says they made her the keeper of the vineyards but that she hasn't kept her own vineyards. And next, calling her the person his soul loves, a person this chapter doesn't name asks her where she feeds and where she makes her flocks rest at noon. And he says he's compared her to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

So a question is whether the two speakers are Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, and such continues through the second chapter, but the situation changes in the third chapter. The third chapter begins with a person it doesn't name saying she sought the person she loves on her bed at night and didn't find him. And she says she'll seek him in the city streets.

Watchmen find her in the streets, and she asks them whether they've seen him, and a little more time passes before she finds him and holds him and won't let him go until she takes him to her mother's house and into her mother's chamber. And, telling the daughters of Jerusalem not to awaken him until he pleases, she asks who's coming from the wilderness like pillars of smoke perfumed with myrrh, frankincense, and merchants' powders. And she asks that we or that person behold Solomon's bed with sixty of the valiant men of Israel expert in war about it holding swords on their thighs because of fear in the night.

So a question is whether this song's a love song, a dirge, or both, and the remaining chapters further suggest that it's one or the other or both, and the eighth and final chapter suggests that it's both. Repeating the question of who's coming from the wilderness, it says many waters can't quench love and that neither can floods drown it. But it says a man's house would be condemned if he gave all of its substance for love.

And, while identifying neither the speaker nor the person about whom the speaker is speaking, the speaker says we have a little sister who has no breasts. And he or she asks what to do with her on the day of her betrothal, and she or he replies that, if she's a wall, others he or she doesn't identify shall build a palace of silver on the little sister, but that, if she's a door, they'll enclose her with boards of cedar. And then that speaker or another the song doesn't identify refers to another person it doesn't identify and says that, when she was in his eyes as one who finds favor, she was a wall with breasts like towers. And then, suggesting that she's the person who kept vineyards while not keeping her own, she refers to a vineyard of Solomon's and to hers.

Saying Solomon let out his vineyard to keepers who were to pay him a thousand pieces of silver for its fruit, she says Solomon should have a thousand for the fruit of her vineyard, while its keepers have two hundred.

A question may be whether that refers to Solomon's wasting his life with strange women, but next the speaker tells those who dwell in the gardens that the companions listen to their voice and asks them to cause her to hear it,

and the song closes with the speaker telling her beloved to hurry and be like a roe or a young hart on the mountains of spices.

So, whatever the identity of the persons in the song, it's a song of life and death and the fullness of everything and love of it all. Or it may be an extension and glorification of the metaphor in Isaiah's fifth chapter of a vineyard of God on a fruitful hill being the hosts of the house of Israel and the men of Judah being God's pleasant plant. People interpret it as variously as they interpret the prophesies of the *Nevi'im*.

The first chapter of the book of Ruth begins by saying that, when the judges ruled, a famine was in the land. It says that, to leave the famine, an Ephrathite of Bethlehem took his wife and sons to the country of Moab, that the two sons married women of Moab, and that the sons and the father died. And it says the wife's name was Naomi.

And in this chapter, hearing God has ended the famine and telling her daughters-in-law to return to their mothers' house, Naomi returns to the land of Judah. The daughters-in-law demur, but, saying she's too old to have a husband, she asks them whether any more sons are in her womb, and one of the daughters-in-law returns to her mother. But the other, whose name is Ruth, cleaves to her mother-in-law and comes with her to Bethlehem. And they arrive in the beginning of the barley harvest.

The second chapter begins by saying a kinsman of Naomi and her husband was a mighty man of wealth whose name was Boaz. And in it Ruth asks Naomi to let her go and glean in the field of the person in whose sight she finds grace. And she happens to glean all day in the part of the field belonging to Boaz.

And Boaz comes to Bethlehem and asks the servant who's over the reapers whose girl Ruth is, and the servant replies that she's the Moabite girl who returned with Naomi, and Ruth asks Boaz to let her glean among the sheaves after the reapers. Boaz tells her to stay near her maidens and go to no other field, and, asking her whether he hasn't told the young men not to touch her, he tells her to drink when she's thirsty what the young men have drawn. And, telling her to eat of the bread there and dip her morsel in the vinegar, he tells the young men not to reproach her for gleaning among the sheaves. And he tells them to drop some handfuls for her purposefully.

So, falling on her face and bowing to the ground, she asks Boaz why she's found grace in his eyes, and, telling her that what she's done for her mother-in-law in leaving the land of her birth and coming to a people she didn't know has been shown to him, he asks that the god under whose wings she's come to trust recompense her work. And, when she returns to Naomi with her

gleanings, Naomi asks her where she's gleaned, and Ruth tells her she's wrought with Boaz, and then Naomi tells her he's near kin to them, and Ruth says he told her to stay near his young men until they end his harvest, and Naomi tells her that going out with his maidens is good. So, dwelling with Naomi, Ruth does that through the end of both the barley harvest and the wheat harvest.

And, in the third chapter, Naomi tells Ruth to anoint herself, go to Boaz while he's winnowing barley, wait until he has eaten and drunk, watch where he goes for sleep, and lie at his feet. And Ruth does, and Boaz awakens and finds her there, but, telling her all the city knows she's a virtuous woman, he says she has a nearer kinsman but that, if the other kinsman doesn't perform the duty of a kinsman, he shall. And he tells her to lie down until morning.

So, until morning, she lies at his feet. And then, telling her to tell no one she was there, he gives her six measures of barley. And she takes it home to Naomi and tells her Boaz told her not to go empty to her mother-in-law. And Naomi, telling her to sit still until she knows how the matter will fall, says Boaz won't rest until he's finished the thing that day.

And, in the fourth and final chapter of the Book of Ruth, Boaz settles the thing at the gate of the city. In the presence of the elders of the city, he tells the other kinsman of the opportunity, and the other kinsman says he prefers not to mar his inheritance. So Boaz tells the elders they're witnesses to his purchase of Ruth to raise the name of her husband to keep him from being cut off from his brothers, and the elders ask that God make the woman who's come into Boaz' house like Rachel and Leah who built the house of Israel and like the house of Pharez Tamar bore to Judah. And Boaz takes Ruth to be his wife, and he goes into her, and she bears a son.

And the people tell Naomi that blessed is the god who, for the son's name to be famous in Israel, didn't leave her with no kinsman. And they tell her that, because her daughter in law, who loves her and has been better to her than seven sons, has born him, the son will be a restorer of her life and a nourisher in her old age. And Naomi takes him, lays him to her bosom, and nurses him. And the women, Naomi's neighbors, call him Obed.

And this chapter, saying Obed was the father of Jesse and that Jesse was the father of David, closes by listing genealogy from Pharez to David.

So a question is why David called Moab his washpot.

The five chapters of the Book of Lamentations are Jeremiah's lamenting what God did to Jerusalem for the wickedness of her people. The first chapter begins by asking how the city that was full of people sits solitary and, after having been great among the nations and a princess among the provinces, has become as a widow and a tributary. The other chapters,



indicating reasons for God to do what he did to Judah and Israel and describing some of it, lament in similar and different ways but also tell ways to show repentance. And the fifth chapter, asking God to remember what's come upon the people, consider and behold their reproach and turn to them, promises repentance. But Jeremiah ends his lamentation by telling God that God has utterly rejected the people and is wrath against them.

The first chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes begins by saying it's the words of the preacher, the king in Jerusalem, the son of David. And in it, asking what profit a man has from all the labor he takes under the sun, the preacher says that all is vanity and that generations come and go while the earth remains forever. And he says that all is like that, that everything goes whence it came and comes again, that nothing's new under the sun, and that no memory is of things past or of things to come.

And, saying he gave his heart to seek wisdom and knowledge of all under heaven, he says he's seen all the works done under the sun. But he says he also gave his heart to know madness and folly and that all of that, both the wisdom and knowledge and the folly, is vexation of spirit. And he says what's crooked can't be made straight, that what's wanting can't be numbered, that much grief is in much wisdom, and that increasing knowledge increases sorrow.

And in the second chapter he says how his life has shown him that. He says he's seen that wisdom excels folly as far as light excels darkness but that what happens to the wise man also happens to the fool, that nothing's better than eating, drinking, and making one's soul enjoy the good in one's labor, that he saw that all of that's from the hand of God, that God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to a man who's good in God's sight, and that he gives travail to the sinner. But he says all of that's also vanity and vexation of spirit and that for that he hated life.

He begins the third chapter by saying a time is for every purpose under heaven. And, listing pairs of opposing purposes, comparing the wise man to the fool, and again asking what profit one has in one's labor, he says he's seen under the sun wickedness in the place of judgement and iniquity in the place of righteousness. And he says all go to one place, that all are of dust and return to dust.

In the fourth chapter he says that, because he's considered all to be oppression and seen neither the oppressed nor the oppressors to have a comforter, he praised the dead more than the living, but he says that better than both are those who've never lived to see the evil work done under the sun.

And he says the fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh, that a handful of quietness is better than two handfuls of travail and vexation of spirit,

and that, by helping one another, two are better than one. But he says that, because those who are born in his kingdom become poor while he came from prison to reign, a poor and wise child is better than an old and foolish king who won't be admonished. And he says he considered that all who live and walk under the sun are like the children who shall stand in their stead.

He says that no end is of either all the people or all that have come before them, that those who come after them shall not rejoice in them, and that surely that's also vanity and vexation of spirit.

But he begins the fifth chapter by saying one should be direct and honest in the house of God and be ready to hear and not give the sacrifice of fools who don't consider that they do evil. And he says one shouldn't be rash with one's mouth, that making no vow is better than making a vow and not keeping it, and that one shouldn't let one's mouth cause one's flesh to sin or say before an angel that it was an error. And, asking why God should be an angry voice destroying the work of one's hands, he says riches are also vanity, that the profit of earth is for all, that the king also eats from the field, and that the sleep of the laboring man is sweet while the abundance of the rich doesn't suffer them to sleep.

So, while he repeats some of the ethics of the books of Exodus and Leviticus, more of what he preaches is essentially what Job and his three friends say in the Book of Job.

And in the sixth chapter he says he's seen an evil under the sun that's common among men and perpetrates it. He says it's that God gives a man so much riches, wealth, and honor that he wants nothing for his soul and desires nothing, while God doesn't give the man power to eat of it, while a stranger eats of it. And he calls that behavior he attributes to God vanity and an evil disease.

And in the seventh chapter, as he does in the Book of Proverbs, he complains of women. He says a woman's more bitter than death, that a woman's heart is snares and nets, and that her hands are bands. And he says that one who pleases God shall escape from her but that she'll take a sinner, that, by taking account of men one by one, he's found but one man in a thousand whom his soul seeks, and that he's found no woman among them. And he closes this chapter by saying God has made men upright while they've sought many inventions.

And in the eighth chapter he says no man has power over the spirit to retain the spirit. And in the ninth chapter he says that, because the living know they'll die, while the dead know nothing, a living dog is better than a dead lion, and he advises living joyfully, all the days of the life of one's vanity, with the wife one loves. And more preaching of futility and vanity is in the remaining three chapters, but in the twelfth and final chapter he says he taught the people

knowledge, gave good heed, and sought out and set in order many proverbs. And he tells his son to be admonished by them.

And, asking that we hear the conclusion of the matter, he tells us to fear God and keep his commandments because that's the whole duty of man, because God shall bring every work to judgement, with every secret thing, good or evil.

The first chapter of the book of Esther begins with Ahasuerus, who it says reigned from India to Ethiopia, making a feast in the Shushan palace in the third year of his reign. The feast is to all his princes and servants who are the power of Persia and Media, but in this chapter, after that feast of 180 days, he also makes a feast of seven days to the people of the palace. And Vashti, his queen, on the seventh day of Ahasuerus' feast, also makes a feast, for the women in the royal house belonging to Ahasuerus. And, when his heart's merry with wine, Ahasuerus calls for Vashti, to show her beauty.

But she refuses to come, and Ahasuerus is angry and asks his advisors what, according to the law, to do to her. The advisors, telling him other women might hear of what she did and despise their husbands, advise him to publish throughout his empire a decree that women should give honor to their husbands. So Ahasuerus decrees to all people that all men should bear rule in their own house, and that appeases him.

But, in the second chapter, his servants ask that fair virgins be sought, from whom he might select a queen to replace Vashti. They ask that the virgins be gathered to the house of the women in the Shushan palace, into the custody of Ahasuerus' chamberlain and keeper of the women, Hegai. And Esther, a daughter of an uncle of the Benjamite Mordecai, is one of the virgins.

Mordecai was carried from Jerusalem with the captivity and has raised Esther because she has no parents. And he advises her to let no one know who her people are, and, requiring nothing Hegai doesn't appoint, she completes a year of purification, with oil of myrrh, sweet odors, and other things for the purification of woman. And Ahasuerus loves her above the other women, sets the royal crown on her head, makes for her a feast to all the princes, and releases gifts to the provinces. And, to know what's happening to her, Mordecai sits in Ahasuerus's gate.

And while he's sitting there he hears of two of Ahasuerus' chamberlains seeking to lay hands on Ahasuerus. So he tells Esther, and Esther certifies that to Ahasuerus in Mordecai's name, and the two chamberlains are hung on a tree. And this chapter closes by saying the certification was written in the book of the chronicles that was before Ahasuerus.

The third chapter begins with Ahasuerus setting a man on a seat above the princes with him. The man's name is Haman, and Ahasuerus commands all

to bow to him, but Mordecai doesn't comply with the commandment. So Haman, thinking to lay hands on Mordecai and learning he's a Jew, seeks to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom.

The lottery Pur is occurring then before Haman. And he tells Ahasuerus that Jews are in all the provinces of the kingdom and that they don't obey the king's laws. And, asking for writing for their destruction, he says he'll pay ten thousand talents of silver for those who do it and that they'll bring it to the king's treasury.

The *Miqra* doesn't explain how Haman would manage that or how it's relevant to the lottery, but Ahasuerus accedes to Haman's request. And, in the fourth chapter, Mordecai responds to the resulting decree by putting on sackcloth and ashes and crying bitterly in the midst of the city. And he refuses other clothing Esther sends him.

So she commands Hatach, the chamberlain Ahasuerus has appointed to attend to her, to go to Mordecai and ask him why, and, giving Hatach a copy of the decree, Mordecai asks him to ask Esther to make supplication to Ahasuerus.

Esther, replying that Ahasuerus hasn't called her to him in thirty days, says those who enter his presence with no invitation die if he doesn't hold out his scepter to them. And Mordecai replies by telling her not to think she'll escape in the king's house what happens to the other Jews, and she replies by telling him to gather the Jews in Shushan, to fast for her for three days and nights, neither eating nor drinking. And, telling him she and her maidens will do the same, she says she'll go into the king's presence and that, if she perishes, she perishes.

And, three days later, in the fifth chapter, she puts on her royal apparel and stands in the inner court of the king's house. And Ahasuerus offers her the scepter, and, after she touches it, he asks what her request is and tells her he'll grant it to the half of his kingdom. So she asks him to come with Haman to a banquet she'll prepare.

Haman responds to the invitation by going home with a happy heart. But on the way he sees Mordecai in the king's gate, and Mordecai neither stands nor moves for him, and Haman, telling his wife and friends of what Ahasuerus has done for him, brags of Esther's asking no other man to come to the banquet with the king, but he says that's nothing to him while he sees the Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate. And his wife and friends, advising him to let gallows be made fifty cubits high and to ask the king that Mordecai be hanged on it, tell him to go to be merry with the king at the banquet. And that pleases Haman.

But, that night, in the sixth chapter, Ahasuerus can't sleep, asks for a reading of his chronicles, and asks what's been done for Mordecai for informing him of the plot against him. And, hearing that nothing's been done for him, he

asks Haman what should be done for a man the king delights to honor, and Haman, asking himself whom the king would delight to honor more than him, asks that a prince proclaim before that person while parading him through the street of the city on the king's horse and in the king's apparel, with the royal crown on his head. And Ahasuerus tells Haman to do that for Mordecai.

Haman does, and Mordecai returns to the king's gate, and Haman goes home mourning with his head covered and tells his wife and friends what happened to him. They tell him that, if Mordecai's of the seed of the Jews, he won't prevail against Mordecai but shall fall before him. And, as they speak, chamberlains come hurrying to take Haman to the banquet Esther prepared.

And, in the seventh chapter, at the banquet, Ahasuerus, again asking Esther what's her request, again tells her he'll grant it to the half of his kingdom. So then Esther tells him her people are sold to be slain, and the king asks her who dared to presume to do that, and she tells him it was the wicked Haman. And Ahasuerus in wrath goes out to the palace garden, and Haman, rising to ask Esther for his life, falls on her bed. And Ahasuerus returns from the garden and asks whether Haman isn't also going to force the queen. And one of his chamberlains tells him of the gallows.

So hanging Haman on the gallows he built for Mordecai pacifies Ahasuerus' wrath, and the eighth chapter begins with Ahasuerus giving Esther Haman's house and Mordecai coming before him, and Esther tells him what Mordecai is to her. And Ahasuerus gives Mordecai the ring he took from Haman. And Esther sets Mordecai over Haman's house.

And she extends her request into asking Ahasuerus to revoke the decree to the kill the Jews, and Ahasuerus tells her to write in his name all she wishes for the Jews and to seal her decree with his ring, and Mordecai dictates the reprieve to the scribes and includes in it instructions for the Jews to destroy, kill, and cause to perish the power of all the people, women, and little children who would assault the Jews, and to take the spoil of them for prey.

And, in the ninth chapter, Mordecai grows greater, and the Jews kill five hundred men in the Shushan palace, and they also kill Haman's ten sons. And, when those numbers go to Ahasuerus, he tells them to Esther and asks her whether she requests anything further, and she asks that Haman's ten sons also hang on the gallows. The Jews don't take spoil or prey, but they kill 75 thousand in the other provinces, and Esther and Mordecai write another decree. To commemorate those days of killing, they decree a feast for the Jews each year throughout their generations. And they call the feast Purim, for the lottery.

And, saying Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and the islands of the sea, the tenth and final chapter of the book of Esther asks whether the acts of the power of his might and the greatness to which he advanced Mordecai aren't

written in the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia, because the Jew Mordecai was next to the king Ahasuerus and great among the Jews and was accepted by the multitude of his brothers, seeking the wealth of his people and speaking peace to his seed.

In the first chapter of the Book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar tells the prince of the eunuchs to bring some of the captive children of Israel who were seed of kings and princes, had no blemish, and were skillful in wisdom and cunning in knowledge and understanding science to stand in his palace and learn the tongue of the Chaldeans, and he appoints them a daily provision of his meat and the wine he drinks.

But one of them, deciding not to defile himself with the meat and wine, tells that to the prince of the eunuchs, in whom he's found favor and tender love. His name is Daniel, but the prince of the eunuchs calls him Belteshazzar and calls three captives who agree with Daniel Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. And, telling Daniel he's afraid of Nebuchadnezzar, the prince of the eunuchs asks him why Nebuchadnezzar should see his face and the faces of the other three worse than like the other children of their sort.

So Daniel asks the person the prince of the eunuchs has set over the four to give them pulse and water for ten days and then compare their countenance to that of the other children of Israel. And at the end of the ten days the countenance of the four appears fairer and fatter than the countenance of those eating Nebuchadnezzar's meat, and, at the end of the three years Nebuchadnezzar set for preparing them to stand before him, Nebuchadnezzar communes with them, finds that none are like them, inquires of them in matters of wisdom and understanding, and finds them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers in his realm. And this chapter closes by saying Daniel continued to the first year of King Cyrus.

The second chapter begins with Nebuchadnezzar having a dream and asking all the magicians and astrologers and sorcerers and Chaldeans to interpret it. But he doesn't remember the dream, and the Chaldeans tell him no man on earth can interpret it if he doesn't tell them what it is, and in fury he commands the destruction of all the wise men in Babylon. So the Chaldeans seek to kill Daniel and his fellows.

But Daniel asks the captain of the guard why he's so hasty. And he goes from the captain to the king, desires time from him, and says he'll show him the interpretation, and the interpretation is revealed to him in a night vision. So he blesses God, tells Nebuchadnezzar the dream, and says it means other kingdoms shall succeed Nebuchadnezzar.

So Nebuchadnezzar falls on his face, blesses Daniel, and, seeing he could reveal that secret, says Daniel's god is the god of gods, the lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets. And he makes Daniel great, gives him great gifts, and makes him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. But Daniel asks him to set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon, while Daniel sits in Nebuchadnezzar's gate.

But the third chapter begins with Nebuchadnezzar making a gold image sixty cubits high and six cubits wide and setting it up in the plain of Dura. And, commanding that everyone fall down and worship it when music sounds, he says anyone who doesn't shall be thrown into the midst of a fiery furnace, and Chaldeans tell him the Jews Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego aren't falling down and worshipping it. So he calls them to him and asks them whether that's true.

And they reply that, if he throws them into the fiery furnace, God will deliver them. So he commands the mightiest men of his army to bind them and throw them into it, and the fire's so hot it kills the mighty men as they throw them into it. But Nebuchadnezzar sees three men walking in the furnace and says the form of the fourth is like the son of God, and he calls Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego out of the furnace and calls them servants of the highest god, and the fire hasn't singed their hair, changed their coats, or passed its smell onto them.

So Nebuchadnezzar, saying that blessed is their god who sent his angel and that no other god can deliver in that way, proclaims against anyone who speaks against him, and, saying that any who do shall be cut into pieces and that their houses shall be made a dunghill, he promotes Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

And the fourth chapter begins with Nebuchadnezzar bidding peace to all people, praising God, recounting the dream Daniel interpreted and later events, and saying the name Belteshazzar that the Eunuch gave Daniel accords with the name of his god.

In the dream a holy watcher comes down and commands that a tree be destroyed, but he commands, for the tree's portion to be with the beasts of the field, leaving, in the tender grass of a field, a stump of its roots with a band of iron and brass, and Daniel reluctantly tells Nebuchadnezzar that the tree in the dream is Nebuchadnezzar.

And he tells him accordingly to accept, if it lengthens his tranquility, his advice to break off, by righteousness and showing mercy to the poor, his sins and iniquity. And, after recounting all that, Nebuchadnezzar proclaims that, twelve months after the dream, while walking in the palace of the kingdom of

Babylon, he asked whether he hadn't, by the might of his power and for the honor of his majesty, built Babylon for the house of the kingdom. And he proclaims that, while he said that, a voice from heaven told him the kingdom had departed from him and that he'd be driven from men, and he proclaims that it happened that hour. And, in the proclamation, he finds himself eating grass with oxen, with his body wet with dew, his hair grown as eagles' feathers, and his nails grown as birds' claws.

And, in the proclamation, at the end of those days, he lifts his eyes to heaven, and his understanding returns to him, and he blesses the highest and praises and honors him who lives forever, him whose dominion and kingdom is everlasting from generation to generation, and, expressing the insignificance of the inhabitants of earth and the power of God in the army of heaven, he proclaims that then his reason and his honor and brightness returned to him, for the glory of his kingdom.

And, proclaiming that his lords sought him, that he was established in his kingdom, and that excellent majesty was added to him, he says that then, in the time in which he's proclaiming, he praises and extols the honor of the king of heaven whose words are truth and whose ways are judgement, and that the king of heaven is able to abase those who walk in pride.

But the fifth chapter begins with a feast Nebuchadnezzar's son Belshazzar holds after succeeding Nebuchadnezzar. While tasting wine, he commands bringing the gold and silver vessels Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem, and Belshazzar and his princes and wives drink wine from them and praise their gods of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone. And in that hour fingers of a man's hand write on the wall near the candlestick, presumably the gold candlestick with the seven branches, and Belshazzar's countenance changes.

His thoughts trouble him, and the joints of his loins loosen, and his knees smite against one another. So he calls for the astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers and promises to clothe in scarlet whoever can show him the interpretation of the writing and that the person who can shall have a gold chain around his neck and be third in ruling the kingdom, but none of them can. So the queen tells Belshazzar of Daniel, whom the prince of Nebuchadnezzar's eunuchs yet calls Belteshazzar.

But Daniel, telling Belshazzar to keep the wealth and power, tells him Nebuchadnezzar lost his kingdom because of his pride, that he was driven from the sons of men, and that they fed him with grass as oxen. And, calling Belshazzar Nebuchadnezzar's son and telling him he knows what he's told him but hasn't humbled himself, he tells him that, by drinking wine from the vessels from the house of the lord of heaven with his lords and wives and concubines,



while praising his gods of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone that neither see nor hear nor know, he's lifted himself against the lord of heaven. And he tells him he hasn't glorified the god in whose hands are his breath and whose ways are all his ways.

And he tells him the words on the wall mean God has numbered his kingdom and ended it. And Belshazzar does to Daniel what he said he'd do for whomever interpreted the writing, but, that night, Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, is slain. And this chapter ends by saying the 32-year-old Median Darius took the kingdom.

And the sixth chapter begins with Darius setting 120 princes over the kingdom, three presidents over the princes, and Daniel over the presidents.

But the presidents conspire against Daniel. Finding no fault in him, they decide to find against him concerning the law of his god, and they ask Darius for a decree to cast into a lions' den anyone worshiping anyone other than Darius. But, while knowing of the decree, Daniel kneels in his chamber with its window open and prays three times a day. So the presidents tell Darius of that.

Darius is displeased with himself and sets his heart to deliver Daniel, but the presidents tell him no decree of his can be changed, and men put Daniel into the lions' den. Darius tells Daniel his god will deliver him, but he and his lords seal with their signets a stone men set against the den's entrance, and Darius goes home and fasts and prays for Daniel. And the next morning he goes to the lions' den and cries lamentably to him.

Calling him a servant of the living god, he asks him whether God was able to deliver him from the lions, and Daniel replies by telling Darius to live forever and telling him God sent an angel to close the mouths of the lions, and Darius has the presidents thrown into the den, with their wives and children.

And he makes a decree that men in all dominions of his kingdom fear before the god of Daniel and that God is the living god and steadfast forever. And he says that, having delivered Daniel from the power of the lions, God rescues, delivers, and works signs and wonders. And this chapter closes by saying Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of the Persian Cyrus.

But the seventh chapter, with Daniel having a night vision with fantastic beasts and someone like the son of man coming with clouds of heaven to the ancient of days, returns to the reign of Belshazzar, and in this chapter Daniel asks a person in the vision to interpret it.

The interpretation is that the beasts are kingdoms devouring one another until the saints of the highest, despite the beast with ten horns that are

ten kingdoms wearing out the saints, thinking to change times and laws, take the kingdom and possess it forever.

The interpreter says the judgement, with the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven given to the people of the saints of the highest as all dominions serve and obey him, shall sit forever, and this chapter ends with Daniel saying his cogitations troubled him and that his countenance changed in him but that he kept the matter in his heart.

And the eighth chapter begins later in the reign of Belshazzar with another vision appearing to Daniel. In this vision, Daniel sees himself in the palace of Shushan, sees a fight between a goat and a ram, and hears a saint ask another saint how long shall be the vision of the daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation giving the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot. And the second saint tells Daniel the sanctuary shall be cleansed in 2300 days.

And, while Daniel seeks the meaning of that vision, the appearance of a man stands before him and tells Gabriel to make Daniel understand it. The appearance of a man doesn't say who Gabriel is, but Gabriel comes near where Daniel's standing, and Daniel's afraid and falls on his face. And Gabriel calls Daniel a son of man and tells him to understand because the vision shall be at the time of the end.

Daniel's sleeping, but Gabriel touches him, sets him upright, and tells him he'll make him know what, because the end shall be at the time appointed, shall be in the last end of the indignation. And he tells him the fight between the goat and the ram is between Greece and Media and Persia and that, when the transgressors come to the full, those kingdoms shall be broken. And he says four other kingdoms shall arise.

But he says a king of fierce countenance understanding dark sentences shall stand up with mighty power, destroy the mighty and the holy people, and stand up against the prince of princes, but also shall be broken.

But he tells Daniel, because the vision won't be in those days, to shut it up, and this chapter closes with Daniel saying he was sick for days and arose and did the king's business, that the vision astonished him, and that no one understood it.

And the ninth chapter, beginning by saying it's in the first year of the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of Medes who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, returns to the reign of Darius and says Daniel understood by the book by which the word of God came to Jeremiah that God would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem.

And in this chapter Daniel prays to God, confesses his transgressions and transgressions of Israel since the time of Moses, and begs God to turn his

anger from Jerusalem and shine his face on God's desolate sanctuary, for God's sake.

And, while he's praying, Gabriel, caused to fly swiftly to Daniel, touches him at about the time of the evening oblation, tells him he's come to give him skill and understanding, and says seventy weeks are determined for the people and the holy city to finish the transgressions, end the sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, bring everlasting righteousness, seal up the vision and prophesy, and anoint the holiest.

And he tells Daniel to understand and know that the time from the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem until the messiah the prince shall be seven weeks. And he says the streets and the walls shall be built in 62 weeks, that the messiah shall be cut off in 62 weeks but not for himself, and that the people of the prince shall come and destroy the city and the sanctuary. And he says the end shall be with a flood and that war and desolation are determined to the end.

And this chapter closes with Gabriel saying the messiah shall confirm the covenant with many for a week, but that the messiah shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease in the middle of the week and shall make it desolate for the spreading of abominations until the consummation, and that what's been determined shall pour upon the desolate.

The tenth chapter begins by saying that, in the third year of the king of Persia Cyrus, Daniel was three weeks in mourning. It doesn't say for what he was mourning, but it says that, beside the river Hiddekel, he had a vision of a man in linen with loins girded in gold. And in this chapter, after further describing the man, Daniel says the man's words were like the voice of a multitude, and in the vision the man tells Daniel the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood him for 21 days but that the chief priest Michael came to help him. And he says he stayed there with the kings of Persia and that now he's come to make Daniel understand what shall befall his people in the latter days.

Daniel says he's too weak, but the man tells him he knows why he came to him, that he'll return to fight with the prince of Persia, and that the prince of Greece shall come when he's gone. In the context of history, that suggests that the writing of this book was after Alexander the Great conquered Persia in the fourth century BCE, but the man tells Daniel he'll show him what's noted in the scripture of truth. And this chapter closes with him telling Daniel that, excepting Daniel's prince Michael, no one holds with him in those things.

The eleventh chapter, returning to the first year of Darius, begins with Daniel saying he stood to confirm and strengthen Darius, but next it continues the vision from the tenth chapter. Daniel says, presumably referring to the man who spoke to him in the tenth chapter, that the man stood to comfort and

strengthen him. And the man says three kings of Persia shall stand and that a fourth shall be richer and shall stir up all against the realm of Greece.

And he tells of kings fighting one another and joining one another in the end of years, tells of other events and says the person who comes against the king of the north shall act in accordance with his own will and that no one shall stand before him, and says he'll stand in the glorious land that shall be consumed by his hand.

But Daniel doesn't ask the man to interpret any of what's in this chapter, and it closes by saying the person following the king of the north shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, but that he'll come to his end and that no one shall help him.

And the twelfth and final chapter of the Book of Daniel begins with the man saying that then Michael, the great prince who stands for the children of the people, shall stand. And he says there will be a time of trouble as never was seen since nations have been but that then every one of his people who shall be found written in the book shall be delivered. And he says many sleeping in the dust of the earth shall awaken, some of them to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame and contempt, that the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and that those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as stars forever.

But he tells Daniel to shut up the words and seal the book to the time of the end. And then Daniel sees a man on each side of the river and a man in linen on the water, and one of the men asks the man in linen how long shall be to the end of those wonders, and the man in linen lifts his hands to heaven and swears by him who lives forever that it shall be for a time and times and a half. And he says that, when he's scattered the power of the holy people, all those things shall be finished.

But Daniel, not understanding, asks him what shall be the end of those things. But the man in linen tells Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end, to go his way. But he says many shall be purified and made white and tried, but that the wicked shall do wickedly and not understand, while the wise understand.

And he says that from that time the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, that the abomination that makes desolate shall be set up, that the days shall be 2290, and that those who wait and come to the 1335 days shall be blessed.

And this chapter closes the book of Daniel with the man telling Daniel, because he'll rest and stand in his lot until the end of the days, to go his way until the end.

The first chapter of the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah begins in the first year of the king of Persia Cyrus. It says that then, for the word of God by the mouth of Jeremiah to be fulfilled, God stirred Cyrus to proclaim throughout his kingdom that the god of heaven had given him all the kingdoms of the earth and charged him to build God a house at Jerusalem. And, in this chapter, he asks that God's people go there to do that.

He asks for donations of gold and silver, other goods, and beasts, and the chief fathers of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and Levites rise up with others God's spirit has raised and collect the offerings, and Cyrus brings forth the 5400 vessels of gold and silver Nebuchadnezzar took from the house of God.

And the second chapter lists the origins of the people returning to Jerusalem and numbers them. The total congregation is 42,360 with their 7337 servants and maids and two hundred singing men and women. And this chapter also numbers their beasts and their gifts to the treasury.

In the third chapter they build an altar, keep the feast of the tabernacle, give money to builders, give food and drink to people of Zidon and Tyre to bring cedars from Lebanon according to their grant with Cyrus, lay the foundation of temple, and begin rebuilding it.

And they sing together and praise and thank God, and many of them who saw the first temple weep and shout for joy at the laying of the foundation, and, because the people shout loudly, they can't discern the noise of the shouts of joy from the noise of the weeping, and the noise is heard far away.

But in the fourth chapter the strife within the house of Israel resumes. Adversaries of Judah and Benjamin come to Zerubbabel and other chiefs and ask to help with the building, and Zerubbabel and Jeshua and other chiefs refuse their help. So, from the reign of Cyrus through the reign of Ahasuerus to the reign of Darius, the adversaries trouble the building.

And they write a letter to Artaxerxes, telling him that, if the Jews build the walls, they won't pay tribute to him. The letter tells him to search the book of the records of his fathers and see that Jerusalem was destroyed because it was rebellious and hurtful to kings and provinces, and Artaxerxes searches and commands that the building cease, and the work ceases until the reign of Darius. But that order of succession of Persian rule differs from the Book of Daniel.

And the fifth chapter begins with Haggai and Zechariah prophesying and Zerubbabel and others resuming building the house of God. The governor of the west side of the Jordan asks them who told them to build the wall, but the eye of God is on the elders of the Jews and keeps them from ceasing before the matter goes before Darius. So the governor writes a letter to Darius telling him of the situation since Nebuchadnezzar and asking him to let a search of his treasure house be made for Cyrus' decree.

In the sixth chapter the search discovers the decree, and Darius makes another decree permitting the building and providing tributes and other needs for it, and the decree also requires that timbers of the house of anyone who alters it be pulled down from the house and set up for hanging the person altering the decree, and that the person's house be made a dunghill.

So the elders build and prosper through the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah, finish building the house of God, sacrifice hundreds of beasts, and purify the priests and Levites, and the children of the captivity keep the Passover.

And this chapter closes by saying that, because God made them joyful and turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of the god of Israel, they kept seven days with joy the feast of the unleavened bread.

And the seventh chapter, beginning with Ezra going from Babylon to Jerusalem with priests and others in the seventh year of the king of Persia Artaxerxes, says Ezra was a ready scribe in the law God gave Moses and that he's prepared his heart to seek God's law, and, in this chapter, Artaxerxes grants all his requests.

He commands releasing all the captives to return to Jerusalem with silver and gold he and his counselors offer to the god of Israel inhabiting Jerusalem and with all the silver and gold Ezra can find in the province of Babylon, and he provides money for beasts for sacrifice. Asking that anything God demands be done for the house of God be done, he asks why wrath should be against his realm and his sons. And he outlaws taxes for the priests and others of the house of God.

And Ezra asks that God be blessed for putting the thing into the heart of Artaxerxes to beautify the house of God and for extending mercy to him before Artaxerxes, and, as the hand of God is on Ezra, he's strengthened.

And this chapter closes with Ezra saying he gathered the chief men of Israel to go with him, and the eighth chapter begins by listing people who went with him, beginning with the sons of Phinehas.

But Ezra, because he's told Artaxerxes the hand of God was on them, is ashamed to ask Artaxerxes for a band of soldiers for protection. So, to afflict himself and the people with him before God, for a right of way for them, their little ones, and their substance, he proclaims a fast for them. And, after they arrive in Jerusalem, they spend four days numbering the silver and gold, offer a burnt offering of about a hundred beasts, deliver Artaxerxes' commissions to his officers on that side of the river, and further the people and the house of God.

But the ninth chapter begins with the princes telling Israel the people and the Levites haven't separated themselves from the people of the lands. They

say they're acting in accordance with the abominations of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites and that, by taking their daughters for themselves and their sons, they've mingled the holy seed with them. And Ezra rends his clothing, plucks hair from his head and beard, sits down astonished, and tells God of that.

And, in the tenth chapter, when Ezra has prayed, confessed, wept, and thrown himself down before the house of God, a great congregation of men, women, and children of Israel, because they're also weeping, assemble to him and ask to make a covenant with God.

So Ezra, making them swear to do that, fasts and mourns for the transgressions of the captives. So they make a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem that the children of the captivity should gather at Jerusalem in three days, and three days later they sit in the street of the house of God, trembling because of great rain. And Ezra stands before them, and they confess and agree to separate themselves from their strange wives.

But they say the people are many and the rain great and that accordingly the work can't be done in a day or two, and they appoint but two people to direct the work, but, examining the matter on the first day of the tenth month and finishing it on the first day of the first month, they do it.

And this chapter, the final chapter of Ezra's section of the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah, ends by listing people who took strange wives and saying some of them had children by them.

The first chapter of Nehemiah's section of the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah begins with Nehemiah at the palace of Shushan. His brother Hanani and others of Judah come to him, and he asks them concerning Jerusalem and the Jews who've escaped the captivity, and they tell him the captives are in affliction and reproach, that the wall's broken down, and that the gates are burned. So Nehemiah sits down, weeps, mourns, fasts, and prays for days, asking God for mercy.

And he closes this chapter by saying he was the king's cupbearer, and the second chapter begins with him serving wine to Artaxerxes in Artaxerxes twentieth year.

Artaxerxes asks him why his countenance is sad while he's not sick, and Nehemiah replies by asking Artaxerxes why his countenance shouldn't be sad while the place of his fathers' sepulchers lies waste. And Artaxerxes asks him what he requests, and he asks permission to return to Judah to rebuild the city of his fathers' sepulchers, and Artaxerxes asks him how long he'll be there, and Nehemiah sets a time. In this book, He doesn't specify the time, but he asks Artaxerxes for letters for conveyance to Judah and for timbers for the building.

And Artaxerxes grants it in accordance with God's good hand on Nehemiah. And he also gives him an escort of army captains and horsemen.

But, when Nehemiah presents the letters to the governors west of the Jordan, his purpose grieves the Horonite Sanballet, the Ammonite Tobiah, and the Arabian Geshem. So he goes to Jerusalem on an ass with a few men walking and arrives at night, and, until he sees some of the damage to the city, he tells no one there what God has put into his heart to do there. And then, while the elders welcome the project, the Horonites, Ammonites, and Arabians laugh them to scorn and ask them whether they'll rebel against the king.

But Nehemiah tells the scorners God will prosper the welcomers, that God's servants will arise and build, and that the scorners have no portion, right, or memorial in Jerusalem, and the third chapter describes some of the work and names some of the people who do it.

But in the fourth chapter Sanballat instigates the army of Samaria against the work. And Tobiah deprecates it, and the Ammonites and the Arabians and the Ashdodites are angry, and the work slows. But, with the builders praying and setting a watch day and night, it continues, and Nehemiah gives them weapons.

So, while half of them defend while the other half work, each worker has a weapon in hand. And Nehemiah tells them to gather and fight if they hear a trumpet and to sleep inside the city to guard it. And this chapter closes with Nehemiah saying that, excepting to wash it, none of them removed their clothing.

But the fifth chapter begins with an outcry of the people and their wives against their brothers the Jews. They complain of usury and slavery, and Nehemiah rebukes the elders and asks them whether they shouldn't walk in the fear of God. And, requiring them to stop the usury and slavery, he orders them to return the land they've taken and a hundredth of the money, corn, wine, and oil they've exacted.

And, saying that, in the twelve years he's been governor in the land of Judah during the reign of Artaxerxes, he and his brothers haven't eaten the bread of the governor, he says the governors who preceded him did. Listing the numbers of beasts prepared for him daily and the store of wine of every ten days, he says previous governors also took silver and that their servants bore rule over the people. But he says that, for fear of God, because the bondage was great on the people, he doesn't require the bread of the governor.

And this chapter closes with Nehemiah asking God to think of him for good according to all he's done for the people.



In the sixth chapter he tells of more subterfuge by Sanballat and Tobiah and of many in Judah swearing to Tobiah, but he also says the wall was finished and that they knew God wrought the work.

And in the seventh chapter he sets up the doors, gives his brother Hanani and the ruler of the palace Hananiah charge over Jerusalem, and numbers the people and the beasts. But he says that, because some of the priesthood weren't found in the register among those who were reckoned by their genealogy, they were polluted. And he says the Tirshatha told them that, until a priest stood up with the Urim and Thummin, they shouldn't eat of the most holy things. In this chapter, he doesn't say who the Tirshatha is, and neither does he mention Ezra. But the numbering of the people and the beasts is the same as Ezra's numbering.

And the eighth chapter begins by saying all the people gathered in the street before the water gate and asked Ezra to bring the book of law of Moses God had commanded to Israel. And, after the destruction of the first temple, the *Miqra* doesn't mention the ark of the covenant, but this chapter says Ezra stood at a wooden pulpit above the people and read the book of the law all morning, and it says others stood beside him and that others caused the people to understand it. And it says the Tirshatha is Nehemiah.

And in this chapter he and Ezra teach the people and tell them that day's holy to God. And, because the people weep when they hear the words of the law, they tell them not to mourn or weep. And they tell them to eat and drink and send portions to those for whom nothing was prepared.

And they find in the book that they should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month, that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities to go to the mountains and bring branches of various kinds of trees to make the booths, and that they should make the booths on their rooves, in their courtyards, and in the courtyard of the house of God.

And, because the children of Israel hadn't done that since the days of Nun's son Joshua, they sit in the booths, and this chapter closes by saying Ezra read from the book of the law of God each of the seven days of the feast and that a solemn assembly was on the eighth day, according to the manner.

And the ninth chapter begins with children of Israel assembling with fasting. With sackcloth and ashes on them, they stand and confess their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. And they read the book of the law a quarter of the day and confess and worship God a quarter of the day.

And then the Levites stand on their stairs, tell God a summary of history from Abram to the captivity, tell God he was just in all he brought upon the people, and thank him for not, because he was merciful while they were wicked, utterly consuming them or forsaking them. And this chapter closes with

their making and writing a sure covenant because of all that. And the princes and Levites and priests seal to it.

And the tenth chapter begins with a list, beginning with the Tirshatha Nehemiah but not including Ezra, of the those who sealed it. And it says the others clove to their brothers and the nobles and entered into a curse and an oath to walk in God's law. And the remainder of this chapter specifies ways of walking in God's law to which they swore.

And the eleventh chapter begins by saying the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem. It says the other people cast lots to bring a tenth of them to dwell at Jerusalem and that they blessed all the men who willingly dwelt there. And the remainder of this chapter lists them and tells where various people dwelt outside Jerusalem.

And the twelfth chapter begins by listing 22 priests who went to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and Ezra is third on the list, and next, beginning with Jeshua, this chapter list Levites, and it also lists some genealogy and tells of the dedication of the wall.

And the thirteenth and final chapter of Nehemiah's section of the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah begins with a reading of the book of Moses on the day of the dedication. And it says that, because the Ammonites and Moabites didn't meet the children of Israel with bread, they should never come into the congregation of God, and it also says they hired Balaam against the children of Israel but that God turned the curse into a blessing. And thus in the *Miqra* the tradition of varying the story of Balaam continues beyond the Babylonian captivity.

And also in this chapter, during an absence of Nehemiah from Jerusalem for a time with Artaxerxes, the priest with oversight of the house of God allies himself with Tobiah and prepares for him the great chamber in the house of God where offerings for the Levites and singers and porters were laid.

But, when Nehemiah returns from Artaxerxes, he casts Tobiah's household goods out of the chamber, commands that the chamber be cleaned, and returns the vessels to the chamber. And, also finding that Jews have been behaving as they did before his original arrival and that the Levites haven't been receiving their offerings, he rebukes the rulers. And all of Judah brings offerings, and he appoints faithful treasurers to distribute them,

And, to keep merchants from bringing ware into the city on the sabbath, he commands closing the gates of the city on the sabbath. And, saying outlandish women caused Solomon to sin while no king was like him, he punishes people for marrying wives of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. And, finding that one of the grandsons of the high priest who prepared the chamber for Tobiah is a son-in-law of Sanballat, he chases him away.

So, asking God to remember them for defiling the priesthood, the covenant of the priesthood, and the Levites, he asks God not to wipe out the good deeds he's done for the house of God and its offices, and the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah ends with Nehemiah asking God to remember him for good.

The first chapter of the book of Chronicles lists genealogy from Adam to Esau and Israel. It doesn't include Eve or Cain or Abel, but it closes by listing kings and chiefs and some other descendants of Edom, and the second chapter begins by listing descendants of Israel. It mentions Tamar but not Dinah, and it includes descendants of David's sisters but doesn't mention Ruth, and the third chapter lists descendants of David through the captivity. And, beginning with Pharez, the fourth chapter lists more descendants of Judah and lists descendants of Simeon. And the fifth chapter lists descendants of Reuben.

But the fifth chapter begins by saying that, because Reuben defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, and it says genealogy is reckoned after birthright. And, before listing descendants of Reuben, it says Judah prevailed above his brothers and that the chief rulers came from him, but that the birthright was Joseph's. And this chapter, while saying Gad dwelt near Reuben, doesn't list Gad's descendants.

And, while listing the heads of the houses of the half tribe of Manasseh that settled east of the Jordan, this chapter closes by saying Manasseh went whoring after gods not God and that God stirred the spirit of kings of Assyria to take Reuben, Gad, and that half tribe of Manasseh to other lands.

The sixth chapter lists descendants of Levi and lists their cities within the inheritance of other tribes. And the seventh chapter lists descendants of Issachar and Benjamin and the sons of Naphtali, and, listing descendants of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher, it numbers some of them. And the eighth chapter lists more descendants of Benjamin.

And those chapters listing descendants of Israel also mention some of their deeds, places they dwelt, and other circumstances pertinent to them. And, though they don't list descendants of Dan or Zebulun, the ninth chapter begins by saying all of Israel was reckoned by genealogies and was written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, who were carried to Babylon for their transgressions. And the ninth chapter also gives some details of the occupation of the land of their possession.

Saying the first inhabitants of their cities were the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, and the Nethinims, it says the Nethinims assisted with the temple and the tabernacle of the covenant. And, saying the children of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh dwelt in Jerusalem, it lists the genealogy of

Saul's great grandfather Gibeon through Saul and Jonathan to Azel's sons. And this chapter closes by listing Azel's sons.

Beginning with the deaths of Jonathan and Saul, the tenth through the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapters of the Book of Chronicles summarize the reign of David. And, beginning by saying David was old and made his son Solomon king over Israel, the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter says David gathered the princes of Israel with the priests and Levites and that the Levites older than thirty years were numbered. And the 23<sup>rd</sup> through the 26<sup>th</sup> chapters list the genealogy of the Levites and tell how David allotted responsibilities to them. And the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter tells how he delegated responsibility for the host and for the treasures and other wealth.

In the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter, David assembles the leaders of Israel and tells them God told him not to build a house for him but chose Solomon from all his sons to succeed him and build the house of God. And in this chapter David tells them God chose Solomon to be his son and that God would be Solomon's father, and he gives Solomon the pattern of the temple, gives him the instruments and other gold and silver he's accumulated for it, and tells him, because God and the Levites will be with him for the service of the house of God, to be strong and of good courage. And he tells him all the people will be wholly at his command.

In the 29<sup>th</sup> chapter, telling all the congregation God chooses Solomon to succeed him, David tells of his contribution to the temple. And other leaders of Israel contribute thousands of talents of gold and other wealth, and the people rejoice because they give willingly with a perfect heart, and David rejoices also. And, telling God of God's greatness and power, David tells him the offerings and all riches and honor come from him.

And, asking God to give Solomon a perfect heart to keep God's commandments and testimonies and statutes and build the palace for which he's made provision, he tells the congregation to bless God, and, bowing its heads and worshiping God and the king, the congregation offers to God burnt offerings of thousands of beasts, eats and drinks before God, makes Solomon king again, anoints him to be chief governor, and anoints Zadok to be priest.

And Solomon sits on God's throne in the stead of David and prospers. And all of Israel obeys him, and Israel's leaders submit themselves to him, and God bestows on him royal majesty that hasn't been on any king before him in Israel. And this chapter closes with a brief obituary for David.

It says Jesse's son David ruled over all Israel seven years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem, that he died in a good old age full of days and riches and honor, and that his son Solomon reigned in his stead, and it says the acts of the first and last King David are written in the book of the seer Samuel and in the books of the prophet Nathan and the seer Gad, with all of David's reign and

might and the times that went over him and Israel and all the kingdoms of the countries.

Most English translations of the Book of Chronicles divide it into two sections as they divide the books of Samuel and Kings, and the first chapter of its second section begins by saying David's son Solomon was strengthened in his kingdom and that God was with him and magnified him exceedingly. And, saying the reason Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings at the high place in Gibeon before he asked God for wisdom was that the tabernacle of the congregation was there, it says David prepared another tent for the ark of the covenant and put a brass altar before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the remainder of this chapter tells of Solomon asking God for wisdom and collecting horses and other wealth from Egypt and other places.

From its second chapter through its ninth, beginning with building the temple, the second section of the Book of Chronicles tells a version of the reign of Solomon. And, from its tenth chapter through its 35<sup>th</sup>, it tells a version of the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel from Rehoboam through Josiah. So those chapters summarize most of the Book of Kings.

And the 36<sup>th</sup> and final chapter of the second section of the book of Chronicles tells of other kings, and of the Babylonian captivity, including that God stirred the spirit of the king of Persia Cyrus to proclaim that God charged him to build a house in Jerusalem, and, saying Cyrus asked who of all his kingdom is of God's people, it closes by saying he asked that God be with them and let them go.

So the Book of Chronicles tells of events not in the book of Kings, and the book of Kings tells of events not in the Book of Chronicles, and details vary, but the theme, the *Miqra*'s basic theme that God directs blessings and atrocities in response to whether people worship and obey him, is the same.

And the Book of Chronicles indicates why people call the religion Judaism and not Israelism. In the books of Samuel and Chronicles Judaic David begins the division of the house of Israel against itself that his son Solomon's son Rehoboam completes. And, in books of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, after the Babylonian captivity, God reinstates Judaic control of Jerusalem,

And, in both the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles, kings of Israel defy God more than do kings of Judah, and no book of the *Miqra* says what became of Samaria or the kingdom of Israel after the Assyrian captivity.

## Chapter 10

### Daoism

The definitive scripture of Daoism is the *Dao De Jing*. Daoists say its author was Lao Zi, but many historians suggest that other persons wrote it, and estimates of when Lao Zi lived range through the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Writings some historians attribute to Confucius say Confucius said he met Lao Zi and had met no wiser person, and Confucius lived from the sixth century BCE into the early fifth century BCE, but that attribution is questionable.

“*Lao zi*” means “aged child”, and some Daoists say he was eighty years in his mother’s womb, and some say Lao Zi wasn’t his name but a description of him. But all Chinese names are descriptions, and they don’t necessarily describe the persons whose names they are, and Lao may have been the family name of Lao Zi, while Zi was his given name. But, notwithstanding any of that, historical consensus says Lao Zi was a government official, and Daoists say he wrote the *Dao De Jing* when he was leaving public life.

They say a ferryman asked him to write it before he crossed a stream on his way into a life of seclusion, the development of life into which the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* says Yajnavalkya was about to enter when his wife Maitreyi asked him to tell her what he knew, but Daoism has no ranking of righteousness other than the term “*sheng ren*” referring to any wise and righteous human.

“*Dao*” means “way” or “path” or “road”. And “*de*” means “virtue” or “power” as the English word “virtue” means “power” in the English phrase “by virtue of”. And a *jing* is any writing many people think defines an attitude or practice many people have found important over a long period of time.

Some historians say the *Dao De Jing* is a compendium of axioms by many people. But that assertion depends on denying that the attitude the *Dao De Jing* defines is consistent through its 81 segments. And that attitude, that the way to virtue and ultimately any power is by virtue of accepting the inevitable actuality of earth and sky, is the basic premise of Daoism.

It's the premise that happiness depends on maximizing acceptance to minimize disparity.

And that may be the reason estimates of the number of Daoists range from 24 million to 173 million. The smaller number is an estimate of the number of people both calling themselves Daoists and practicing Daoist rituals in Daoist temples. But the *Dao De Jing* prescribes neither rituals nor temples, and neither does it proscribe accepting any religion that doesn't proscribe accepting, and so the larger number may be an underestimate.

Being a Daoist only requires trying to emulate what the *Dao De Jing* calls a *sheng ren*. And the *Dao De Jing* essentially tells what its author thinks a *sheng ren* believes and facilitates. So what follows is paraphrasing of each of its 81 short segments.

#### Segment 1:

Neither *dao* nor names must be constant. But, though the sky and the earth originally had no names, having names engendered the many things. So, though perceiving the manifestation of names results in perpetual desire, perceiving their essence results in continually having no desire.

And thus, though both manifestation and essence constitute one's unity, one calls its emitting the different names unity's obscuring obscurity's again obscuring the gate to everything's essence.

#### Segment 2:

Below the sky, all know the actuality of beauty only because of having disdained, and all know the actuality of good only because of not having been good. So having and not having are mutual causes living together as difficulty and ease complete one another as long and short depend on comparison to one another as lofty and low support one another as tone and melody harmonize in one another as front and back follow one another. And that's how *sheng rens* sustain by having no action.

Their work's progress isn't words' teaching.

So the many entities, arising in it through not refusing, live while not having it and act while not relying on it. And that incessant service, and largely only incessance, is by not abandoning.

#### Segment 3:

Honoring worth cause people to contend, as valuing goods difficult to obtain cause robbery, and showing ways to be greedy causes people to be discordant with one another.

So *sheng rens* would govern accordingly.

Emptying people's minds to fill their stomachs yields to their will and enforces their bones, continually causing people to have no cunning and have no desire and keeping largely cunning ones from risking action, and thus facilitating government by acting with no action.

So next would be no not governing.

Segment 4:

*Dao* absorbs while using it may not deplete. Deep, it seems to be the many things' ancestor, blunting their edges while loosening their knots and fusing their brightness while uniting their dust. And, though it's dark, it seems perhaps to remain.

And, though I don't know who its children are, imagining creation is its precedent.

Segment 5:

Sky's earth doesn't feel as humans feel for the many entities acting as kindling. And *sheng rens* don't feel as other humans feel for the many families acting as kindling. The space of sky and earth is like a bellows, emptying while not collapsing while emitting more in its motion.

And many words, counting to exhaustion, aren't like keeping to the core.

Segment 6:

Valley spirit doesn't die. That's called obscure femininity. And one calls obscure femininity's being valley spirit's gate the root of sky's earth. It perpetually perpetuates seeming to remain. So using it doesn't belabor it.

Segment 7:

Sky continues while earth endures. Yet sky and earth, by the means by which one can continue and yet endure, don't live by their separate self. So they can also continue life.

And that's how *sheng rens* are. So is their bodies' being while others' bodies precede theirs, or their setting their bodies aside while others' bodies remain, against their self-interest? It's how they can complete their self-interest.

Segment 8:

High good is like water. Water's good, while not contending, is advantageous to the many things. So, therein, staying all humans' disdain is near to *dao*.



So stopping is good on earth. And mind is good in depth, and sharing is good in human sentiment, and words are good in honesty. And norms are good in governing as work is good in ability as motion is good in timeliness.

So largely only not contending has no fault.

Segment 9:

Grasp while what's to be grasped seems to remain for the grasping. And secure while the sharpness of what's to be secured can't long protect it from being secured. Otherwise, if one fills halls with gold and jade, none of it can be kept.

That is, if one values abundance while being pride of oneself, one will keep only the downfall of the abundance and the self while the *dao* of the sky is to withdraw one's body when its service is complete.

Segment 10:

Carrying managing personalities, one must embrace unity with no disparity, as concentrating breath to bring pliancy is an ability of infant children, as washing and clearing obscure vision can have no fault.

And loving people and governing nation needs no knowing, as the opening and closing of the gate to the sky can act as a hen, as light needs no action to brighten all around.

But, though light emits life while neither having nor relying on action, one calls such sustaining while not controlling obscure *de*.

Segment 11:

By thirty spokes sharing one hub, the use of carts is in the spokes not having the hub. By shaping clay around space, the use of implements is in their not having the space or its contents. And, by chiseling doors and windows, the use of rooms is in their not having the openings for them.

So having is those things' acting advantageously while not having actuates their use.

Segment 12:

The diversity of the five colors and tones and flavors makes humans eyes and ears and mouths confuse what they see or hear or taste. And, as excessively chasing in fields hunting makes human minds turn mad, difficulty of attaining good makes humans hinder others from obtaining them. So *sheng rens*, by actuating stomachs and not eyes, appeal to stomachs while leaving eyes as they are.

Segment 13:

Both favor and dishonor are like fear, and both value and great grief are like bodies, but what does that mean?

Both favor and dishonor are like fear in that, because one can't fall from favor if one doesn't have it, attaining it incurs fear of losing it. And both value and great grief are like bodies in that, if we don't acquire bodies, we can't lose them! So, if we don't acquire bodies, what grief can we have?

Yet, accordingly, by way of that accordance, valuing what bodies do below the sky enables entrusting below the sky, while cherishing what bodies do below the sky enables trusting below the sky.

Segment 14:

Perceiving's not displaying names speaks invisibly, and listening's not hearing names speaks quietly, and grasping's not attaining names speaks subtly.

But one can't bring those three into inquiry. So their top isn't bright as their below isn't dim, as boundless boundlessness isn't able to name returning, revering to having no things. And one calls that having no shape's shape and having no thing's image.

And one calls that vague and illusive. But, while its front doesn't display its face as its rear doesn't display its back, seizing the primal of *dao* is by directing having now the ability to know the primal origin. And one calls that *dao*'s thread.

Segment 15:

The good of the primal, obscurely penetrating to incomprehensible depth, actuates mastering the subtlety of one's essence.

So, largely only incomprehensibility forces calling its demeanor cautious, in that it resembles fording a stream in winter. Vigilant, as though fearing all around it, it's reverent like tolerance and yielding like ice beginning to melt. And it seems to have the integrity of kindness and the openness of valleys,

But it's mixed like mud! So what can mud, by its stillness, gradually clear? And what can stillness, by its enduring motion, gradually enliven? Protecting that *dao*, one doesn't desire depletion!

So, largely exacting not depleting, it can shield what is and not need to complete it anew.

Segment 16:

Bringing emptiness to polarity keeps repose firm, for the many things to arise together and for us, by perceiving, to return.

Largely things bloom. And, as each blooms, it returns. It reverts to its root, and reverting to root speaks stillness, and that's called returning to destiny.

And returning to destiny speaks continuity. And knowing continuity speaks light, while not knowing continuity is error, raising disaster. So, knowing continuity's demeanor, its demeanor is broad.

And broad is noble, and noble is the sky. And sky is *dao*, and *dao* is endurance. So ending bodies isn't danger.

Segment 17:

Excessive height is the below knowing one has it. Next beyond that that in excessiveness is the low personally attaching themselves to the high in exaltation. And next is their awe and next their contempt, and having isn't enough in that, and having isn't honesty.

Reticence is what's necessary, the value in words saying that service is complete and work achieved, with the hundred families all saying that of themselves.

Segment 18:

Great *dao* abolishes having human sentiment and morality, intellect and cunning emitting having great hypocrisy, and the six personal attachments, their having reverent devotion, but not fusing.

So it abolishes nations' and households' being in murky discord while having loyal ministers.

Segment 19:

Breaking from both *sheng* and cunning is advantage to people a hundred times, as breaking from sentimentality and morality returns people to reverent devotion, as breaking from scholarship and advantage eliminates gain from thievery.

But saying all that isn't enough. So, making the means to dependability, display plainness. Embracing the whole belittles self-interest and diminishes desire.

Segment 20:

Break from scholarship to have no sorrow. The mutual abandonment scholarship exacts between scholars and others approaches what good? That, with its mutual disdain, is like what humans? So in what can humans' fear not be fear? Wild, it lacks limits!

Yet every human is joyful, as though they're enjoying great feasts or climbing terraces in spring, while I alone am calm. Lacking significance, like infants having no sons, they're as weary as one would be having no place to which to return. And yet, while I alone seem at loss, all of them have surplus.

Is the muddle of my human mind foolishness? Commonly, humans are bright and sharp, while I alone am murky and confused! And, while I'm calm, they're like seemingly incessant ocean gales.

Yet, while I alone am different from humans, I value mothers' nurturance.

Segment 21:

Inclusive, *de*'s demeanor is wholly *dao*, and that's following *dao*. Vague and illusive, *de*'s center has images and things. And, hidden and dim, its center has vitality.

And, with its vitality quite genuine, its center has honesty. And, with self's primal reaching now, the self doesn't abandon its identity. And, by that watching any creation, we know every creature's condition.

Segment 22:

What's bent or crooked is next whole or correct, as what's hollow or worn is next depleted or new, as attainment follows paucity as confoundment follows wealth.

So by that *shēng rèn*s embrace oneness to actuate below sky's standard: Don't display self, and thus is light; don't be selfish, and that's thus being prominent; don't boast of self, and thus have service; don't arrogate self, and thus sustain.

But, largely, only don't contend; and thus, below the sky, no one can contend with you. So is the primal of that wherein one calls bending next whole one's empty words? Truth is its wholeness while reverting.

Segment 23:

And hope and words and self meet that standard. So gusty wind doesn't last all morning, and torrential rain doesn't last through days, and what enacts that is one's sky's earth. And, with sky's earth not honoring ability to endure, more of such is from humans.

So follow the workings of one's *dao*. *Dao* is one's uniting with *dao*, and *de* is one's uniting with *de*, and so is loss one's uniting with loss. And uniting with each is also each enjoying its attainment. So honesty isn't enough in that. And having isn't honesty.

Segment 24:

Erect, one isn't steady, as one doesn't progress while striding, and one doesn't enlighten while displaying oneself, and neither is one prominent. So boasting of oneself isn't service as arrogating oneself isn't sustenance. But the self is present in *dao*.

There it speaks of surplus food and superfluous progress as things perhaps of disdain.

So, having *dao*, one doesn't dwell.

Segment 25:

Having things mixed completely preceded sky and earth and life. Silent, empty and alone, steady and not changing, by its ability to act as below sky's mother, it progresses everywhere while not endangering.

While we know its name, as its children speak of *dao*, forcing actuating its name speaks greatness. But greatness speaks reaching as reaching speaks distance as distance speaks returning. So *dao* is great, and so are sky and earth, and so is nobility.

So, at their core, countries have four greats. But, while nobility stops its oneness there, humans emulate earth as earth emulates sky as sky emulates *dao*. And that's how *dao* emulates self.

Segment 26:

Weight makes roots light as vitality makes masters restless. And, because of that, *sheng rms* outlast a day's progress, indifferently remaining with the weight of the baggage, though having honorable sights. So, with bodies light below the sky and loss of root following lightness and loss of mastery following restlessness, how can one be chief of ten thousand chariots?

Segment 27:

Good progress has no wheel ruts or footprints. Good words have no flaw or blame as good counting uses no tally slips. And good closing has no bolt bar but can't be opened as good knots have no rope restraint but can't be loosened. And such is how *sheng rens* are continually good at liberating humans and things while not rejecting them. And that's called following light.

So good humans don't instruct good humans.

The resources for good humans' instructions are humans who aren't good. So, if good humans are aware of the great delusion of people who aren't good and don't value instructing them, they don't cherish their resources. And one calls that important essence.

Segment 28:

Knowing sky's below's roosters while keeping its hens actuates sky's below's creeks, and actuating sky's below's creeks continually keeps *de* from separating from returning, from reverting to infant childhood.

And knowing sky's below's white while keeping its black actuates sky's below's standard, and actuating sky's below's standard continually keeps *de* from deviating from returning, from reverting to having no polarity.

So knowing sky's below's honor while keeping its dishonor actuates below sky's valley's, and actuating sky's below's valleys continues *de* enough to return, to revert to the whole.

But next the whole disperses, and that actuates implementing *sheng rens*, and use of *sheng rens* actuates lasting officiality, and thus great regulating, not injuring.

Segment 29:

Beginning to desire capturing below the sky, showing we haven't already haven't already captured it, results in sky's below's spirit implementing the ineffectuality of action.

So action is one's ruin, and seizing is one's loss. So things that may be progressing may be following. So exhaling may be inhaling, and what seems to be forceful may be weakness, and oppressing may be succumbing.

And that's why *sheng rens* quite abandon excess and quite abandon extravagance.

Segment 30:

With *dao* aiding human chiefs, one doesn't use weapons to force what's below the sky. Weapons' work, teaching that briars and brambles live where weapons reside, usually rebounds. So disastrous crops follow great wars while good wars are already resolving while not risking capturing by force and with no arrogance, boasting, or pride.

But, while one calls things' developing and next decaying not being *dao*, not being *dao* is early and already.

Segment 31:

Largely, with one's excellent weapons not being implements of fortune but things perhaps of disdain, one's having *dao* doesn't abide by them.

So masters and children stop abiding by them and next value the left while using weapons next values the right. So, not being masters or children's implements, weapons aren't ready to use their peace indifferently to act highly. So, not being fortunes implements, they attain nothing.

And conquering, while being one's glory, isn't glorious. It's enjoying killing humans and thus can't attain will from below the sky. So prosperous work honors the left while disastrous work honors the right as subordinate instigators of war stand on the left while superior instigators of war stand on the right

And that's how mourning's propriety stands by its words: Funerals' lamentation and sorrow and weeping are by way of every killing of a human by battles' conquering.

Segment 32:

*Dao*, continually having no name, is whole though small while no one below the sky can administer it. So princes' nobility is like its ability to keep the beginning of the many things' honoring themselves as they did in the beginning, as the sky and earth unite with one another to drop sweet dew. But people, none of them making harmony with themselves, originate governing with names.

But names also end, having largely begun to know ceasing, and knowing the ceasing wherein is the ability not to endanger illustrates *dao*'s presence below the sky, like streams' flowing through valleys, to great rivers and oceans.

Segment 33:

Knowing humans is one's wisdom, but knowing one's self is one's light. Conquering humans is one's having strength, but conquering one's self is one's force. And knowing what's enough is one's abundance.

And strengthening progress is one's having will while not losing it is wherein one endures. So dying while not perishing is one's immortality.

Segment 34:

Great *dao* pervades. It can be all around the many things' relying on it while they live. So, while not refusing, serving completely isn't claiming having but clothing and feeding the many things. So chiefs, while not acting and continually having no desire, can name from little.

And the many things revert to that. So, also while not acting, chiefs can name the greatness of their action by their outlasting chiefs who do. So not being selfish enacts greatness and thus is how one can complete one's greatness.

Segment 35:

Apprehending great scenery, sky's below goes its way with no excessive disturbance, until passing guest stop to enjoy sharing cake. But what *dao's* mouth emits is insipid. It has no taste.

And, as one doesn't display its perception enough, one doesn't hear its listening enough.

So use of it isn't sufficiently complete.

Segment 36:

Beginning to withdraw from desire surely confirms its having drawn, as beginning to yield to desire surely confirms its force. And beginning to abolish desire sure confirms its having risen, as beginning to deprive by desire surely confirms having shared. And one calls that subtle light.

But pliant yielding conquers rigid force.

So, as fish can't be taken from the deep, humans can't reveal the advantageous instruments of nations.

Segment 37:

*Dao*, while having no acting, continually has no not acting. But princes' nobility is like their ability to keep the many things' beginning to evolve themselves while desiring to rise. So our way to suppress that is by maintaining the integrity of namelessness that's largely also the beginning of having no desire. And then, by the repose of not desiring, sky's below begins to settle itself.

Segment 38:

High *de*, by having *de*, isn't *de*. Low *de*, by having no *de*, doesn't lose *de*. High *de*, by action's having no acting, has no action. And low *de's* action is while having by acting.

High human sentiment's action is while not having by acting, while high morality's action is while having by acting. And high propriety acts while no one responds. And next it bares its arms to force.

And thus is losing *dao*. And after that is losing *de*, and after that is losing human sentiment and after that morality, and after that is losing propriety. And, largely, propriety is the thinness of one's loyalty and honesty while discord is its face, but confronting understanding one's *dao* while foolishness is its origin is by great reverence abiding in *dao's* solidity.

So not stopping the thinness of one's loyalty and honesty abides in the loss of propriety, and not stopping *dao's* flowering thus abandons its thinness, to retain its solidity.



Segment 39:

Of those anciently attaining unity: Sky attained it by clarity; earth attained it by rest; spirit attained it by alertness; valleys attained it by filling; the many things attained it by living; and princes' nobility attained it by enacting refinement below the sky.

But from that they brought: sky, by having no clarity, beginning to fear rending; earth, by having no rest, beginning to fear evolving; spirit, by having no alertness, beginning to fear stagnation; valleys, by having no filling, beginning to fear depletion; the many things, by having no living, beginning to fear dying; and princes' nobility, by having no lofty value, beginning to fear falling.

So humble action is the root of value, and low action is the foundation of loftiness. But is the nobility of princes calling themselves orphans and diminutive and unworthy the root of humble action? No!

Such is bringing counting as exalted what has no exaltation. So, instead of desiring to shine, shine as does jade. Drop as do stones.

Segment 40:

Returning is the motion of one's *dao* while yielding is the use of it, and the many things of sky's below live from having, while having lives from not having.

Segment 41:

High masters hearing of *dao* labor while practicing it. Mediocre masters hearing of *dao* both seem to retain it and seem to lose it. And low masters hearing of *dao* greatly laugh.

But not laughing isn't enough. So, in order to actuate *dao*, one confirms its words: Brightening, *dao* seems to dim; advancing, *dao* seems to retreat; and *dao*'s leveling seems to flaw. And high *de* resembles valleys as excessive whiteness resembles dishonor, and broad *de* seems insufficient as firm *de* seems unsteady, and what's solid and genuine seems to change. And great places have no boundaries as great implements are slow to complete as great tones are quietly melodious as great images have no shape. So, having no name, *dao* conceals.

Yet largely only *dao* is good and giving and complete.

Segment 42:

*Dao* engendered one; the one engendered two; the two engendered three; and the three engendered the many things. But the many things support *yin* while embracing *yang*. So they absorb breath by enacting fusion.

So wherein is humans' disdain? While nobility broadens by enacting titles, only the diminishing of orphans isn't worthy! So things' perhaps diminishing while gaining is perhaps their gaining while diminishing.

So wherein is humans' teaching also mine? Teaching their force and aggression is one's not attaining and their death! So I begin by enacting teaching fostering.

Segment 43:

As nothingness enters spacelessness, what's most pliant below the sky outruns what's most firm below the sky, and that's how we know that the gain from having no action isn't what words teach, that it's sky's below's quietly reaching.

Segment 44:

Names and bodies interact, but which relates personally? Bodies and belongings interact, but which is more valuable? And gain and loss interact, but which discomfits?

Answers are that extreme cherishing assures great cost, that much hoarding of goods assures substantial loss, that knowing when one has enough doesn't dishonor, and that knowing when to stop doesn't endanger.

And that's that ability, by continuity, endures.

Segment 45:

Great completion is like lack in that lack is an opportunity for more completion. And great depletion is like absorption in that absorption is a means of replenishment. And, similarly, great correcting resembles bending as great cleverness resembles clumsiness as great disputing resembles stammering. And all of that's as restlessness conquers cold as stillness conquers heat. So, clearly, repose actuates below sky's norm.

Segment 46:

With sky's below having *dao* one uses race horses to draw manure. But, with sky's below having no *dao*, war horses live at the edges of the cities. And, with no calamity being greater than not knowing what's enough, no downfall is greater than greed.

So knowing the sufficiency of sufficiency perpetuates sufficiency.

Segment 47:

Increasing distance diminishes knowledge. So don't egress through doors to know what's below the sky or watch through

windows to display the sky's *dao*. *Sheng rens*, by accepting that, don't progress while knowing and don't display while naming. And it's how they complete with no action.

Segment 48:

Actuating scholarship daily gains, while actuating *dao* daily diminishes, and perpetuating that diminishing is by maximizing having no action. And having neither action nor no action continually acquires below the sky by having no work. The work scholarship achieves isn't enough for acquiring below the sky.

Segment 49:

That *sheng rens'* minds change is because the many families accord their actions with their minds. So *sheng rens* are the good of both good people and people who aren't good and the honesty of both honest people and people who aren't honest. So *de* is both good and honest.

So *sheng rens'* presence below the sky is shy, shyly actuating sky's below's muddy minds as all the many families take note with their ears and eyes.

So *sheng rens* are everyone's sons.

Segment 50:

To depart from life is to enter death. So both life and death have thirteen companions. And humans' life motion and their death on earth are also thirteen.

So largely by what do they live life's solidity?

Hear of good covering to maintain one's life!

Traveling on land, don't encounter tigers or rhinoceroses, and don't enter war not clad in armor or weapons. By that, rhinoceroses and tigers have no place in which to thrust their horns or attach their claws, and weapons have no place in which to impress their blades. So, largely by such, humans have no dying on earth.

Segment 51:

*Dao* lives from *de's* nourishing things' shaping and completing their circumstances. So, by that, none of the many things fail either to esteem *dao* or to value *de*. But, largely, neither *Dao's* esteem nor *de's* value either esteems or values. And thus their destiny is to continue the self in that way.

So *dao*'s life is *de*'s emission. It's its prolonging and developing, protecting and preparing, feeding and sheltering. And living while not having and acting while not asserting prolongs while not controlling.

But one calls that obscure *de*.

Segment 52:

Sky's below, originating by acting as sky's below's mother, finishes attaining its motherhood by knowing its children, and that finishing is returning.

So, perpetuating that motherhood, ending bodies isn't danger. And, shutting bodies' mouths and closing their gates, in the end bodies don't labor. But, opening their mouths and busying their work, in the end they aren't liberated.

So displaying smallness speaks light. And retaining pliancy speaks strength. And using bodies' brightness for that returning reverts them to light. So one calls that light following continuity. And it leaves no calamity.

Segment 53:

Our cause is transitional. And, accordingly, within it is knowing the progress of great *dao*. So only straying from it is fear.

Yet, while that progress is quite free of obstruction, people usually deviate from it. So, while mornings are quite clear, fields are quite weedy and granaries quite empty. And yet, dressed in rhetoric, covering themselves by carrying blades advantageous to them, and excessively drinking and eating, the wealthy have surplus goods!

So doesn't one call that robbery and pride and contrary to *dao*?

Segment 54:

Good firming isn't uprooted. And one isn't taken from good clinging. And, by offering and sacrifice, progeny doesn't stop.

So, from cultivation of bodies, their *dé* becomes genuine. And, from cultivation of households, their *dé* becomes surplus. And, from cultivation of villages, their *dé* becomes continuous. And, from cultivation of nations, their *dé* becomes abundant.

So, from cultivation of sky's below, its *dé* becomes pervasive. So perceive bodies, households, villages, nations, and all else that's below the sky for what it is. And what tells us sky's below is like that is such perception.

Segment 55:

Possessing *de*'s solidity is comparable to infant children. Wasps and snakes don't sting them, and neither do fierce beasts attack them, and predatory

birds don't grab them. Their bones yield, while their tendons are pliant, and yet their grasp is firm.

And, not knowing the intercourse of females and males, they rise fully with the utmost vitality. And, their fusing being utmost, they outlast a day of wailing while not being hoarse. And knowing that fusion speaks continuity.

And knowing continuity speaks light. But gaining life speaks fortune, and minds cause breath to speak force, and things develop and next decay. And one calls that not being *dao*, and not being *dao* is early, and already.

Segment 56:

Knowing isn't one's words, and words aren't one's knowing. So shut words' mouth, and close their gate; blunt their edges, and loosen their knots; diffuse their brightness, and unite their dust. But that's called obscure unity.

It can't attain while personally relating or shunning, while taking advantage or losing, or while valuing or humiliating. Yet thus is actuation of value below the sky.

Segment 57:

Normality governs nations while abnormality deploys weapons. But acquiring below the sky is by having no work. And we know that by this:

While many constraints and prohibitions are below the sky, people's poverty increases. And their many advantageous implements and nations and households add to the obfuscation, and humans' many skills cleverly but abnormally increases the multiplicity of things arising, as emulating all that promotes it. And then is having many robbers and thieves. So *sheng rens* say that, taking no action while people's self evolves, they implement stillness when the people's self normalizes and do no work when the people's self abounds, and that they have no desire when the peoples' self is whole.

Segment 58:

With people being genuine when their government is dull but being deficient when their government is sharp, who know the polarity of that, its having no norm? And how and wherein is people's happiness in calamity or does their happiness depend on calamity? And who knows the polarity, the having no norm, of that?

Humans' delusion, with normality returning to acting abnormally and good returning to acting ominously, daily affirms polarity's endurance.

But that's why and wherein *sheng rens* shape while not disfiguring, correct but don't overreach and brighten but don't dazzle, and do all that harmlessly.

Segment 59:

No one governing humans or work or the sky seems to be in restraint. But, largely, exacting restraint is called the early dressing one calls the weight of accumulating *de*. And next it has no not subduing.

And next is no one knowing one's polarity. And no one's knowing one's polarity can be by having nations. And having nations' mothering can be by continuing to endure.

So one calls that deep roots and firm stems continuing life and the enduring perception of *dao*.

Segment 60:

Governing great nations is like frying small fish.

But, by *dao* ruling sky's below, its ghosts aren't spiritual. But that isn't that sky's below's ghosts aren't spiritual but that their spirit doesn't harm humans. But it isn't only that their spirit doesn't harm humans but also that *sheng rens* don't harm humans.

Largely, it's that *sheng rens* and other humans don't harm one another, and therein is *de*'s reciprocal return.

Segment 61:

Great nations are nations downstream. And the integrity of what's below the sky is its femininity. And femininity, by continual stillness, conquers masculinity by stillness acting from below. And, by being below, after great nations capture small nations, small nations capture great nations. So great nations, by being below small nations, capture small nations. But next, also by being below, small nations capture great nations.

So, with great nations willingly feeding small nations' people along with theirs as small nations willingly enter into working for humans for that food, perhaps being below is both for capturing and for being captured,.

Largely, both nations, one and each, if the great ones properly acting as below, attain what they desire.

Segment 62:

*Dao* is the storehouse of one's many things, a place protecting the treasure of both good humans and humans who aren't good. But, because they

can, beautiful words sell esteeming progress by people's ability to gain! So what protects from that?

What keeps humans who aren't good from having and thus strengthening sky's child's appointing the three broad, though their having tribute jade behind teams of four horses isn't like settling into advancing this *dao*?

Is that primal? If so, wherein is its value, and how is it one's *dao*? So, instead of preaching seeking salvation by way of crime, actuate sky's below's value!

Segment 63:

Action having no acting, work having no working, and taste having no tasting, great and many are small and few. So, requiting malice by way of *de*, planning difficulty from its being easy, and enacting greatness from its being small, sky's below's difficult work surely arises from what's easy, and its great work surely arises from what's small. And that's how, while not acting greatly, *sheng rens* can at last complete their greatness.

So, largely, light promises assure diminishing honesty as much ease assures much difficulty, and that's how *sheng rens* are like difficulty, and thus how in the end they have none.

Segment 64:

What's still is easily grasped as what's insignificance is easily planned, and what's frail is easily dissolved as what's subtle is easily dispersed, and acting's lack is from having as government's lack is from discord. And tiny seeds engender forests, as nine levels of terraces arise from accumulating soil, as a journey of a thousand miles begins beneath one's feet. And acting, being one's ruin, seizes one's loss.

So, because of that, *sheng rens* have no acting and thus have no ruining and have no seizing and thus have no loss, while others pursue their work until they've nearly completed it and then ruin it, though maintaining caution from beginning to end would have no such ruining. And all of that is why *sheng rens* desire not to desire and why they don't value goods for the difficulty of obtaining them. And it's how scholarship isn't scholarship.

So it's how *sheng rens*, by helping the many things help themselves by not risking acting, return every human to the wherein of their passing.

Segment 65:

The good of the primal actuates one's *dao*. But, contrary to by light, people decide their behavior by their foolishness. So difficulty of governing is from the extent of people's cunning.

So governing nations by cunning is nations' theft while governing nations with no cunning is nations' happiness. And, knowing those two factors, one also model's the standard, but one calls continually modeling the standard obscure *de*, and obscure *de* is deep. But, while it's also distant, it returns one from disdain.

And, thus, returning is the utmost in great conformity.

Segment 66:

How, like rivers and oceans, can one actuate the nobility of a hundred valleys? One can actuate it by their goodness and lowness! That's how.

And it's how high people's low words attract people, why people desire leaders who don't give their own bodies precedence, and how *shēng rěns* stay high while not burdening people and lead while not losing people.

And it's how sky's below can joyously exalts while not being excessive and how not being contentious keeps people from contending with one another below the sky.

Segment 67:

All below the sky say our *dao* seems greatly extraordinary. But, largely, only greatness seems extraordinary in that way, seeming similarly to endure, while small. So, largely, we have three treasures, their grasping and protecting.

The first speaks devotion, while the second speaks frugality, and the third speaks not risking acting as though one's the precedent of sky's below. And thus devotion can dare while frugality can broaden, and not risking acting as though one's the precedent of sky's below can complete, implement, and sustain. So, now, shunning devotion but daring and shunning frugality but broadening, and shunning being behind but preceding, are dying.

And, largely, battling for devotion is to die next, and annexation for further conquering is to die after that, and so sky's beginning to liberate is by the protection of one's devotion.

Segment 68:

Mastering action well, one isn't violent; and, battling well, one isn't angry. Conquering opponents well, one doesn't reciprocate; and, using humans



well, one acts as though one's below them. And one calls that the *de* of not contending but using humans' strength.

And one calls it reconnecting the sky's primal polarity.

Segment 69:

Words of using weapons are that we shouldn't risk acting as chiefs while acting as guests or risk advancing an inch while retreating a foot.

One calls that progress with no progress. One calls it baring arms one doesn't have, to force opposition one doesn't have, to seize weapons one doesn't have. And no great calamity is great from light opposition.

But, while such lightness doesn't approach mourning our treasure, matching weapons mutually increases one's lamenting one's conquering.

Segment 70:

Our words are quite easy to know and quite easy to practice below the sky, and yet no one can know them or practice them.

But, as work has masters, words have ancestors. So, largely, exacting having no knowledge isn't by our not knowing. Knowing, we teach quietness, and then we're one's value.

And that's how *sheng rens*, while clad in wool, conceal jade.

Segment 71:

Knowing that one doesn't know is high, while not knowing what one knows is disease, and largely only disease causes disease. So, by not causing disease, *sheng rens* don't cause disease by their disease causing disease. That's how not to cause disease.

Segment 72:

With people not fearing awe, next great awe is at its utmost, lacking the constraint wherein it might stop. So not having the excess wherein great awe lives exacts not being excessive. And that's why *sheng rens* know the self but don't display the self.

And it's why they cherish the self but don't value the self and thus abandon valuing in order to obtain cherishing.

Segment 73:

Dare to risk, and next be killed. But, daring not to risk, one will next survive. And either of those alternatives may be either to one's advantage or to one's loss!

So who knows wherein is the sky's disdain? But that's how *sheng rens* are like their difficulty! Sky's *dao* doesn't contend but conquers well and isn't words but responds well. And neither do *sheng rens* or the sky summon anything. And yet selves come to them.

So, in that way, slowly while planning well, sky's net is vast and vastly shunning, while losing nothing.

Segment 74:

How and by what, if people don't fear death, is dying a threat? Causing people to continue to fear dying is like our attaining the seizing and killing of people acting abnormally, and what risk is in continually having officials do that killing? It's largely having officials be one's killers.

And, largely, that's great artisan hewers standing in for great artisan hewers quietly having the hewing while not harming their hands!

Segment 75:

People's starving is by those who are high taxing much for the high ones' food. So the difficulty of governing people is by the action of the high people. So people's lightly dying is by the high ones' seeking life's solidity.

So, largely, only by the high people's not acting for their life can valuing life have worth.

Segment 76:

Humans' living is pliant and yielding, while their dying is firm, forcing. And the life of the grass and the trees and the many other things is pliant and frail, while their death is brittle, dry. So firm force accords with one's dying while pliant yielding accords with one's life.

And that's why weapons' force next fails to conquer and how trees' force next becomes weapons.

Forcing greatly stays low while pliant yielding stays high.

Segment 77:

Sky's *dao* shares, like drawing a bow, with the lofty lowering to lift the low.

But having surplus is one's taking while not giving to those who don't have enough. And yet, while the *dao* of the sky takes from surplus to compensate for insufficiency, humans' *dao* provides for surplus by taking from what's already insufficient. So, below the sky, only one's having *dao* can have surplus by providing.

And that's why *sheng rens* act while not asserting and move on upon completion of service.

They don't desire displaying worth.

Segment 78:

Nothing below the sky is as pliantly yielding as water. Yet by not having its ease, with its yielding and pliancy conquering force and rigidity, no one's force can conquer its attacking one's firm force. But, while no one below the sky doesn't know that, no one can practice it.

So that's why *sheng rens* say that one calls keeping nations humble the shrines' grain chief. And it's why they say that one calls keeping nations unfortunate below sky's nobility. But normal words are like returning.

Segment 79:

Compounding great malice with more malice surely produces surplus malice while quiet can be by actuating good. And that's why *sheng rens* take the creditor's copy of contracts but don't impose their claim on people. So officials having *dé* agree while officials having no *de* claim.

And, having no personal relationships, the *dao* of the sky continually shares humans' goodness.

Segment 80:

Results of diminishing the population of small nations are having many implements for which they have no use, people considering dying while not considering emigrating while they have boats in which they could and exalting their chariots for which neither do they have use, and returning to knotting cords to count the ways of using their weapons they have no reason to wield.

So, with their food sweet and their clothing beautiful and their dwellings quiet, though they're in the neighborhood of nations near enough for the nations to see one another and hear one another's birds' and dogs' chirping and barking, they enjoy their particular customs.

And, at the utmost of that, the people decay and die not visiting one another.

Segment 81:

Honest words aren't beautiful, and beautiful words aren't honest. Good words aren't disputing words, and disputing words aren't good. And knowing words aren't learned, as learned words aren't knowledge.

And *Sheng rens* don't hoard. By acting, in the end, the human self has more. But, by sharing, in the end humans' self is much more.

So, as the sky's *dao*'s advantage is its not losing, *sheng rens' dao*'s action doesn't contend.

That final segment is a brief summary of the entire *Dao De Jing*. It begins by deprecating the abstraction of words, academic education, and contention of any kind and by implying that the alternative is honesty and goodness. Next, deprecating the greed to which it quite dramatically refers in the eightieth segment, it plainly says the alternative is the integrity of sharing. And next it implies that the integrity of sharing is the beneficial wholeness of the sky. And it closes by saying *sheng rens* practice *wéi wú wéi*.

The phrase “*wéi wú wéi*”, literally meaning “acting having no acting”, is at the beginning of the last sentence of the *Dao De Jing*'s third segment and at beginning of its 63<sup>rd</sup> segment and refers to the *Dao De Jing*'s premise that happiness comes from not trying to fight the inevitable cycle from primal unity, through abstraction into differentiation, and back to primal unity.

And that's the connection from Hinduism to Buddhism and is the basis for the synthesis of Buddhism and Daoism into what we now call Zen.

So the number of Daoists may be more than a billion.

## Chapter 11

### Buddhism

Siddhattha Gotama lived in the fifth century BCE. He was a son of a Hindu king of a region of what we now call Nepal, and he grew up in the luxury and protection of his father's palace, until he wandered out and found suffering. He was 29 years old then, and he had a wife and a son, but he left the palace and them to try to find a way to end the suffering he accidentally had discovered. And, after six years of wandering as an ascetic, he said that, while meditating beneath a tree, he found what he was seeking.

So now people call him the Buddha and call the tree the Bodhi Tree. “*Buddha*” and “*bodhi*” are Sanskrit words referring to consciousness, and the tree was in northeastern India, at what's now the town Bodhgaya. And, from there, the Buddha wandered on to a deer reserve near Varanasi, where he began promulgating the consciousness he said he'd acquired beneath the tree.

From then, he taught until his death, what Buddhists call his *parinirvana*, 45 years later. And, a few months after his *parinirvana*, his disciples convened to recall what he'd taught and to memorize it for posterity, and they convened occasionally thereafter to be sure they hadn't forgotten it and to remind or correct one another if they had. And others succeeded them until some recorded the recollection in writing a few centuries later.

Buddhists say they don't have scriptures. But, in the sense that the word “scripture” literally means “writing”, the collections of writings of what Buddhists say the Buddha taught are scriptures. And, while the amount of time between the Buddha's speaking and his followers' writing what they said he said makes the writing questionable, Daoism is the only religion of the six most popular religions to say that words of its founder are most of the words of its definitive scripture, and scriptures of three of the other five of those six religions are compilations of various authorship, and the reminders during the congregational recollections add authority to Buddhist scripture.

But Buddhism divided into two factions. And one of the factions attributes to the Buddha words the earlier compilation didn't include in the

original compilation, and those words are in Vedic Sanskrit while the original recording is in Pali, the dialect of Sanskrit the Buddha spoke. But most Buddhists prefer that faction.

Buddhists call the factions Theravada and Mahayana. “*Theravada*” means “old learning” while “*mahayana*” means “large vehicle”, but some adherents of the Mahayana faction call the Theravada faction Hinayana, meaning “small vehicle”. The Mahayana faction calls itself Mahayana because its adherents believe Buddhists have a responsibility to free everyone from suffering, and they call the Theravada faction Hinayana because they say its adherents don’t. But, because compassion is fundamental to both factions, that distinction is questionable.

And both factions call their scripture threads. But a way to distinguish the Hinayana threads from the older threads is that Pali for “thread” is “*sutta*” while Vedic Sanskrit for “thread” is “*sutra*”. And another way to distinguish the threads is by the words “*nibbana*” and “*nirvana*”.

The fundamental premise of both factions of Buddhism is the same as the fundamental premise of Hinduism but in different terms. Hindus use the Sanskrit word “*yoga*” to refer to realizing the unity of the universe while Buddhists use the word “*nibbana*” or “*nirvana*” to refer to extinguishing the illusion of differences. “*Yoga*” means “union” while “*nibbana*” and “*nirvana*” literally mean “blowing out”, and Hindus say *yoga* is absolute bliss while Buddhists say “*nibbana*” or “*nirvana*” is extinguishing suffering, absolute release from it.

But “*nibbana*” is Pali while “*nirvana*” is Vedic Sanskrit. And the threads common to both factions are in Pali while the threads particular to Mahayana Buddhism are in Vedic Sanskrit. And Theravada Buddhists spend more time with other Buddhists than do Mahayana Buddhists while Mahayana Buddhists spend more time in solitary meditation.

But both factions, as Hindus say the *atman* is *Brahman*, say the notion of a separate self is illusion. So, ultimately, the notion of universal unity makes the distinction between Theravada Buddhism and Hinayana Buddhism academic. And the Buddhist notion of consciousness is beyond academic abstraction.

## Chapter 12

### Wheel, Mindfulness, and Love Suttas

Buddhists say what they call the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* is a record of the beginning of the Buddha's teaching. "*Dhammacakkappavattana*" is a Pali phrase referring to setting in motion the wheel of *dhamma*, and "*dhamma*" is a Pali for "*dharmā*". And the format of the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* is a model for other *suttas* and *sutras*.

Most of them begin by identifying the site of the exposition and identifying somewhat the persons present. Next the main body of the *sutta* or *sutra* is either a soliloquy by the Buddha or a conversation between the Buddha and one or more other persons present. And the ending ordinarily tells results of the *sutta* or *sutra*.

The *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* begins by saying the Buddha was staying at the Isipatana deer sanctuary near Benares and spoke to a group of five *bhikkhus*. "*Bhikkhu*" is a Pali word meaning "beggar" that Buddhists use to refer to meditant ascetics. And Benares was a name for Varanasi.

The main body of this *sutta* begins with the Buddha saying that *bhikkhus*, when they've departed from worldly life, should follow neither of two extremes. He says the extremes are sense-pleasure and self-mortification, that sense-pleasure is low, coarse, vulgar, ignoble, and unprofitable, and that self-mortification is painful, ignoble, and unprofitable. And he says the middle way the *tathagata* understands after avoiding those extremes produces vision and knowledge and leads to the calm insight and enlightenment of *nibbana*.

"*Tathagata*" is a Pali and Vedic Sanskrit word meaning "thus arrived", and the Buddha applies it to Buddhism as Daoists apply the designation "*sheng ren*" to Daoism, not to designate any separate person but as a way of personifying the actuality of achieving *nibbana* or *nirvana*.

And, next in this *sutta*, the Buddha calls the middle way to arrival at *nibbana* the noble eightfold path and says it's right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration, and next he designates what he calls noble truths.

He says the noble truth of suffering is that suffering is birth, decay, disease, death, association with what one doesn't love, separation from what one loves, and not acquiring what one wants, and he says another way of saying that is to say suffering is the five heaps of clinging.

He doesn't list those five heaps in this *sutta*, but the *Satipatthana Sutta* says they're form, sensation, perception, ideation, and awareness. And next in this *sutta* he says the noble truth of the origin of suffering is that passionate pleasure accompanies the craving that causes rebirth, delight in objects, and the craving either to be or not to be. And next he says the noble truth of the cessation of suffering is the cessation, relinquishing, and abandoning of that craving and the complete release and detachment from it. And next he says the noble truth of the way leading to that cessation is the noble eightfold path.

And next he tells the *bhikkhus* that, with the thought that the noble truth of suffering is the noble truth of suffering, vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom, and light arose in him concerning things one hadn't previously known. And next he says the same of the thought that suffering has to be understood and of the thought that it has been understood. And he refers similarly to each of the other three noble truths.

But he varies the second and third thought for each of those three. For the origin of suffering, they're that it has to be abandoned and has been abandoned. For the cessation of suffering, they're that it has to be realized and has been realized. And for the way leading to the cessation of suffering, they're that it has to be developed and has been developed.

And next he tells the *bhikkhus* that, while his knowledge and vision of those four noble truths in those three phase and twelve ways wasn't fully clear to him, he didn't declare to the world with its various kinds of deities, humans, and other beings that he understood the wisdom fixed beyond, and next he says that, when it was fully clear to him, knowledge and vision arose in him, and next he says that then he declared it to all those beings.

And the main body of this *sutta* ends with the Buddha saying the deliverance of his mind is unshakeable, that that's the last birth, and that no more births will be here.

And the closing of this *sutta* begins by saying the five *bhikkhus* were glad at heart and approved the Buddha's words, that the passionless and stainless view of the truth appeared to someone this *sutta* calls the venerable Kondanna, and that then Kondanna knew that everything having the nature of rising has the nature of falling.

And it says that, with the fortunate one, presumably the Buddha, setting in motion the wheel of *dhamma*, devas of various places it designates proclaimed in unison that the incomparable wheel of *dhamma* has been turned



by the fortunate one at the Isipatana deer sanctuary near Benares and that no recluse or brahmin or deity or other being can stop it.

It says that, in a moment, an instant, and a flash, word of the wheel of *dhamma* went up to the world of *Brahman*, that the system of ten thousand worlds quaked and shook, that a boundless sublime radiance surpassing the power of the deities appeared on earth, and that then the Buddha uttered that Kondanna truly understood.

And this sutta ends by saying that the venerable Kondanna, presumably one of the *bhikkhus* in that gathering, received the designation Kondanna the wise.

“*Satipatthana*” is Pali for “mindfulness foundation”, and the *Satipatthana Sutta* begins by saying that at one time the fortunate one was living at the Kuru people’s marketing town Kammasadamma and addressed some *bhikkhus*, telling them the four foundations of mindfulness are the only way for the purification of beings, the destruction of suffering and grief, and reaching the right path, attainment of *Nibbana*.

In it he tells them that, having overcome covetousness and grief in this world, an ardent and clearly comprehending and mindful *bhikkhu* lives here contemplating the body in the body. He says the same of contemplating feeling in feelings, awareness in awareness, and mental objects in mental objects. And next he tells the *bhikkhus* how to do that.

Of the body he says a *bhikkhu* goes to the forest, to the foot of a tree or to an empty place, sits and bends his legs crosswise into his lap with his body erect, and arouses mindfulness in the object of meditation that’s the breath in front of him.

He says that mindful the *bhikkhu* breathes in and out while thinking and understanding that, when he’s breathing in and out or long or short, he’s doing that. He says that, while thinking of doing that while experiencing the whole body and calming its activity, the *bhikkhu* trains himself to do that. And he says that doing that is how clever turners or turners’ apprentices do their work.

He says the *bhikkhu* lives contemplating the body in the body internally or externally or both internally and externally, that he lives contemplating origination of things or dissolution of things in the body or contemplating both origination and dissolution of things in the body, or that his mindfulness is established with the thought that the body exists only to the extent necessary for knowledge and memory, and he says that, while the *bhikkhu* contemplates the body, he lives independently and clings to nothing in the world.

And he says the same of the *bhikkhu*’s understanding that he’s going, standing, sitting, or lying, of any other dispositions of the body when they occur,

and of practicing clear comprehension, whether the *bhikkhu*'s going backwards or forward or looking ahead or aside and whether he's in a shoulder cloak or in a robe with a bowl, and in regard to what the *bhikkhu* eats, drinks, chews, or savors, and when he's defecating, asleep or awake, or speaking or silent.

He says a *bhikkhu*, reflecting only on the body, thinks that in it are hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, fibers, bones, marrow, kidneys, a heart, a liver, lungs, a spleen, intestines, a stomach and its contents, and various fluids. And he says doing that's like a man loosening a bag full of different kinds of grain, opening it and seeing the grains, and reflecting on the names of the different kinds. And he says a *bhikkhu* contemplates that as he otherwise contemplates the body.

And he says the same of a *bhikkhu* reflecting on the solidity, cohesion, calorificity, and oscillation of the body, as a clever cow butcher or a cow butcher's apprentice would reflect while sitting at a crossroads after slaughtering a cow and dividing it into portions.

And he says the same of a *bhikkhu* seeing a dead body decomposing over days in a boneyard while the *bhikkhu*'s thinking his body is of the same nature as the dead body, will be like it, and hasn't surpassed that process. And he says the same of a *bhikkhu* seeing crows, dogs, other scavengers, and worms eating a dead body in the boneyard and of seeing the body when it's but a skeleton. And he says the same of other conditions of decomposition of the body, until he says it of its being but dust.

And next he begins speaking of contemplating feeling in feelings. He says the *bhikkhu*, when experiencing a pleasant feeling, a painful feeling, or a feeling that's neither pleasant nor painful, understands what he's experiencing. And, including both spiritual and worldly feelings in that consideration, he also says of feelings what he said of the body concerning internality and externality, origination and dissolution, knowledge and memory, and clinging.

And next he begins speaking of contemplating awareness in awareness. He refers to lust, hate, and ignorance, to the constricted and distracted states of awareness, to awareness becoming great or not becoming great, to the state of awareness with or without a superior mentality, and to the quiet and free states of awareness. And he says of each of those conditions of awareness that the *bhikkhu* understands it for what it is, is aware of its presence or absence, and lives contemplating all that in the way in which he lives contemplating the body and feelings.

And next he begins speaking of contemplating mental objects in mental objects, and, designating five categories of mental objects and dividing each category into subcategories, he begins with the five hindrances.

They're lust, anger, lethargy, agitation, and doubt. And he says of each that the *bhikkhu* knows when it's present in him and when it isn't, that he knows

how it arises and how abandoning it occurs, and that he knows how it fails to recur. And he says also of contemplating those hindrances what he said is common to his contemplating the body and feeling and awareness.

The next category of mental objects he designates is the five heaps of clinging: form, sensation, perception, ideation, and awareness; and he says the *bhikkhu* considers how they're what they are and how each arises and disappears and that the *bhikkhu* lives contemplating them also in the ways he says is common to his contemplation the mental objects he's previously designated.

The next category of mental objects he designates is the six internal and six external bases of sensation. He says they're the eye and images, the ear and sounds, the smelling organ and odors, the tasting organ and flavors, the tactility organ and what's tangible, and the mind and mental objects. And he says of each pair that the *bhikkhu* understands it and understands how the fetter depending on it arises, disappears, and fails to recur. And he says the *bhikkhu* lives contemplating them also in the ways common to the other mental objects.

The next category he designates is the seven factors of enlightenment. They're mindfulness, investigation of mental objects, energy, joy, calm, concentration, and equanimity. And he says of each that the *bhikkhu* understands that he has it when it's present, that he doesn't have it when it's absent, how each arises, and how cultivating it comes to be. And he says the *bhikkhu* lives contemplating each of them also in those common ways.

And the fifth and final category of mental objects the Buddha designates in this *sutta* is the four noble truths he designates in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, and he says the *bhikkhu* understands how they accord with actuality.

And then, again deploying a mnemonic function of repetition that many of the *suttas* deploy, he repeats once more what he's said also of contemplating each of the other categories of mental objects. And he follows that by saying that, if the *bhikkhu* maintains the four foundations of mindfulness in that manner for seven years, one should expect either the fruition of knowledge here and now or expect, if a kind of clinging remains, the state of non-returning. And he says the same of six years and five years and so on down to a year, and he says it of seven months and on down to a month, and then down to a half month.

And this *sutta* closes by saying the fortunate one spoke thus and that the *bhikkhus* rejoiced at his words.

“*Metta*”, meaning “benevolence” or “friendship” or “amity”, is a Pali form of the name *Maitri* in the *Maitri Upanishad*. And, while Buddhists have developed a non-canonical context for the *Metta Sutta* that complies with the tradition of introducing and concluding *suttas* by describing circumstances and

results of them, it's an exception to that tradition. It's ten brief stanzas describing the Buddhist notion of compassion in absolute terms and permitting no exceptions.

Its first stanza says that, to attain the state of peace, one with good skill would do what's moral and honest, be docile and gentle, and not be proud.

Its second stanza says the person should be content and not be burdensome to others or have excessive burdens, should live simply and serenely and be prudent and not impudent, and should refrain from greedy familial attachment.

And its third stanza, saying the person would do no slight that would bring reproach from other knowing ones, asks for comfort and safety for all beings, for them to become joyful.

Its fourth stanza refers to all breathing beings, be they frail, firm, tall, large, medium in size, short, small, or thick, and its fifth stanza extends that list to those that are visible or invisible, those residing near or far, and those who've received birth or haven't, and it asks that all those beings become joyful.

Its sixth stanza asks that one not deceive or despise anyone anywhere or angrily or mindfully wish suffering or other ill to anyone anywhere. And its seventh stanza asks that the person cultivate boundless thoughts for all beings as a mother guards her only child with her life. And its eighth stanza asks that all beings in the world boundlessly cultivate amity everywhere with no barriers or malice or enmity.

Its ninth stanza asks that, standing, walking, sitting, or supine and alert, the person pursue the mindfulness it says one says is *Brahman* abiding here.

And its tenth stanza says that then with no error, with virtue endowing insight, having purged oneself of sensuality and greed, the person shall not again receive birth in a womb.

## Chapter 13 Other Suttas and the Law Steps

“*Adittapariyaya*” is Pali for “fire dissertation”, and, saying in the *Adittapariyaya Sutta* that all is burning, the Buddha specifies what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls the bases of sensation and other mental objects and says they’re burning with the fire of lust, hate, delusion, and what the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* calls suffering. He tells the *Bhikkhus* present that, by observing those foundations of mindfulness, the noble disciple who sees things that way becomes dispassionate and detached, that the detachment liberates him, and that with liberation comes knowledge of the liberation. And he says that then the disciple knows birth is exhausted, that the righteous life has been lived, that all that must be done has been done, and that nothing remains to do for that.

And this *sutta* closes by saying the thousand *bhikkhus* present were liberated from impurities during its exposition and that they were glad and rejoiced at the Buddha’s words.

“*Mangala*” is Pali for “auspicious”, and the *Mangala Sutta*, beginning by saying a splendid deity came into the presence of the fortunate one and told him many men and deities have pondered auspiciousness, it says the deity asked the fortunate one to tell what’s the highest auspiciousness and that the fortunate one listed ten conditions.

The first condition the Buddha lists is not to associate with fools but to associate with the wise and honor those worthy of honor. The second is, after acting meritoriously and setting oneself on the right course, to reside in a suitable place. The third is vast learning in handicraft, a highly trained discipline, and pleasant speech. The fourth is to support one’s parents and cherish one’s wife in peaceful occupations. The fifth is liberality, righteous conduct, helping relatives, and blameless acts. And the sixth is to cease evil, to abstain from it and intoxicating drinks, and to be diligent in virtue.

So the first six pertain mainly to worldly life. But the seventh is reverence, humility, contentment, gratitude, and opportunely hearing the *dhamma*. The eighth is patience and obedience, observing the wandering ascetic *bhikkhus* Buddhists call *samanas*, and discussion of the *dhamma* at appropriate times. And the ninth is self-control, righteous life, perception of the noble truths, and realizing *nibbana*.

And the Buddha ends the list by saying that, if a man's mind is sorrowless, stainless, and secure and doesn't shake when worldly vicissitudes touch it, that's the highest auspiciousness.

A question, considering the ordinary use of the superlative adjective "highest", is how all those other nine conditions can also be highest. But this *sutta* closes with the Buddha saying those are the highest blessings, that those who act in those ways are unconquered and attain happiness everywhere, and that the highest auspiciousness is that. So a question is whether that unity of plurality is a metaphor for the monistic notion that everything is everything.

And then the question is how anything can be more or less unique.

*Sabbasava* is a Pali word referring to eliminating impurities, and, saying in the *Sabbasava Sutta* that he'll expound the method of restraining all cares and troubles, the Buddha begins that expounding by saying destroying impurities is but for one who knows and sees wise and unwise reflection.

He says that, for a person who reflects unwisely, cares and troubles that haven't arisen arise, while those that have arisen increase. He says that, for those who reflect wisely, cares and troubles don't arise, while those that have arisen disappear. And he categorizes cares and troubles by ways of ridding oneself of them.

The ways are insight, restraint, use, endurance, avoidance, dispersal, and cultivation, and he describes wise and unwise reflection for each category.

Of insight, he says the uninstructed ordinary man, the man who doesn't see the noble ones or good men and is unversed and untrained in their teachings, doesn't understand or know on what he should or shouldn't reflect and accordingly reflects on things on which he shouldn't reflect and doesn't reflect on things on which he should reflect. And he says the defilements of sense pleasure, being, becoming, and ignorance arise or increase if one reflects on them and that they disappear or don't arise if one doesn't. And he lists sixteen questions he says are ways to reflect unwisely.

The first two questions are whether one was or wasn't in the past. The third and fourth are what and how one was in the past, and the fifth is what one became in the past, after having been what. The sixth through the tenth questions are the first questions but concerning the future, and the eleventh

through the fourteenth are the same but concerning the present. And the final two, referring to the past, the present, and the future, are whence the person came and whither the person shall go.

And next the Buddha says that, having reflected unwisely in those ways, one of six false views arises in the person as though it were true and real. The first two of the six are that one either has a self or has no self; the third and fourth are that one perceives by one's self either self or non-self; and the fifth is that one perceives self by non-self. And the sixth is the view that one has a self that speaks, feels, and experiences the fruits of good and bad actions here and there, and that it's permanent, stable, everlasting, and unchanging forever.

And, saying that's called being enmeshed and scuffling in an agitated jungle wilderness fetter of views, the Buddha says the ordinary uninstructed man, fettered by that fetter of views, doesn't liberate himself from *dukkha*. "*Dukkha*" is the Pali word the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* uses to refer to suffering, and next the Buddha says that the opposite of what he said of the uninstructed ordinary man is true of the instructed noble disciple.

And next, listing the four noble truths, he says that reflecting on them is wise reflection, that three fetters fall away from the person reflecting in that way, that the three fetters are the troubles of which one can rid oneself by insight, and that those fetters are the false idea of self, attachment to observances and rites, and skeptical doubt.

Of restraint, the Buddha says a *bhikkhu* considering wisely restrains what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls the internal sense forms, but he doesn't specify in this *sutta* what cares and troubles restraining them eliminates.

Of use, he says how a *bhikkhu* considering wisely limits his use of robes, food, lodging, and medicine. He says the *bhikkhu* uses robes exclusively to avoid cold and heat, gadflies and mosquitoes, wind and sun, and creeping creatures, and to cover himself decently. He says the *bhikkhu* doesn't use food for pleasure, excess, or adornment, but exclusively to support and sustain his body, keep it from harm, and support the righteous life, thinking he'll put out feelings and not produce feelings and that his life will be maintained blamelessly and conveniently. And he says the *bhikkhu* uses lodging exclusively to avoid what he uses robes to avoid, to dispel the risks of seasons, and to enjoy seclusion. And he says the *bhikkhu* uses medicine exclusively to rid himself of pain and illness he may have and to maintain his health.

Of endurance, he says a *bhikkhu* considering wisely tolerates what he says the *bhikkhu* uses robes and lodging to avoid, that he also tolerates hurtful language, and that he also becomes inured to bodily feelings that are painful, acute, sharp, severe, unpleasant, disagreeable, or deadly.

Of avoidance, he says a *bhikkhu* considering wisely avoids a savage elephant, a horse, a bull, a dog, a snake, a stump, a thorny hedge, a pit, and a precipice. And he says the *bhikkhu* also avoids a refuse pool or a dirty pool, sitting in or frequenting such unseemly places or resorts, and cultivating bad friends. And he says the *bhikkhu* avoids what would lead his discreet fellows in the righteous life to conclude that he's gone astray.

Of dispersal, the Buddha says a *bhikkhu* considering wisely doesn't tolerate thoughts of sense pleasure that have arisen in him and that he rejects, discards, destroys, and extinguishes them, and he says the same of thoughts of ill will and violence.

And, of cultivation, he says a *bhikkhu* considering wisely cultivates what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls the seven factors of enlightenment.

And the Buddha closes this *sutta* by saying a *bhikkhu* who has done all that is said to have restrained all cares and troubles, cut off craving, struck off his fetters, and, by fathoming false pride, ended suffering.

“*Vatthupama*” is Pali for “cloth parable”, and the Buddha delivers one in the *Vatthupama Sutta*. He says that, if a fuller dips a soiled or dirty piece of cloth into any dye, its color, because the cloth isn't clean, shall remain bad and dirty. And he says that, if the fuller dips clean cloth into any dye, its color, because the cloth is clean, shall be beautiful and clean.

And he says life is similar. He says that, when one's mind is impure, one must expect a bad future life and that, when one's mind is pure, one must expect a good future life. And he says the mind's impurities are cupidity, enmity, anger, rancor, deceit, obduracy, haughtiness, pride, arrogance, inflation, and indolence.

He says *bhikkhus* who recognize that and abandon those impurities find serene joy in the enlightened one, the worthy perfectly enlightened one endowed with knowledge and virtue who's the happy knower of worlds, the matchless tamer of men and the teacher of deities and men, the conscious and fortunate one, presumably the Buddha.

And he says those *bhikkhus* find serene joy in the *dhamma* that's excellently expounded by the fortunate one, can be realized in the present life, produces immediate results, invites people to come and see, leads to the goal, and must be comprehended by the wise, each for himself.

Of course a question is whether the final phrase of that sentence is why Mahayana Buddhists call Theravada Buddhists Hinayana Buddhists, but the Buddha also says in this *sutta* that those *bhikkhus* find serene joy in the community of disciples of the fortunate one. And he says the community is of good conduct, is upright, wise, and dutiful, is worthy of offerings, hospitality,



gifts, and reverential salutation, and is an incomparable field of merit to the world. And the word designating the community is “*sangha*” in both Pali and Vedic Sanskrit.

And he says that, with the impurities renounced, discharged, spewed, and abandoned, those *bhikkhus*, thinking they’re endowed with serene joy in the enlightened one and his teaching, are touched with a feeling for the truth and receive the gladness associated with it.

And, saying the mind of the contented man is concentrated, he says that then joy arises, that the body’s calm when the mind is joyful, and that one feels contented when one’s calm.

He says that, as a soiled and dirty cloth plunged into clear water or as gold passed through a furnace becomes pure and clean, *bhikkhus* who have reached that state in virtue and achieved mental discipline and wisdom may, with no impediment, partake of the choicest rice with all manner of sauces and curries.

And he says that, with thoughts of love, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity, those *bhikkhus* pervade the world with radiant thoughts of a mind all-embracing, vast, and boundless, with no hate or ill will, that then they know that there’s a lower and a higher stage, and that deliverance lies beyond that realm of perception.

And he says that, when those *bhikkhus* know and see that, their minds are liberated from the impurities of sense pleasure, continuing existence, and ignorance, that then is knowledge that they’re liberated, that birth is exhausted, that the righteous life has been lived, and that nothing remains to do on that account, and that such *bhikkhus* can be said to have bathed internally.

But next in this *sutta* a brahmin sitting near the Buddha asks him whether he goes to bathe in the river Bahuka. So the Buddha, asking the brahmin what the river Bahuka matters and mentioning Gaya and several other places where one might bathe, says a fool of black deeds may plunge daily at those places but not be purified. He says those places don’t cleanse men who are guilty of hate and evil.

He says that, for a person who’s pure, any day is auspicious and righteous. Saying that, cleansed and pure in deeds, such a person always fulfils observances, he tells the brahmin to come and bathe where he is and love all that lives. And, specifying Gaya again and asking the brahmin what good is bathing there, he tells him that, if he doesn’t lie, kill, or steal and isn’t a greedy miser but lives in trust, his well at home is Gaya. So the brahmin, telling the Buddha that what the Buddha has told him has cleared his vision in various ways, says he takes refuge in the Buddha, the *dhmma*, and the *sangha* and asks to receive the higher ordination under the Buddha.

And this *sutta* says that, receiving the higher ordination and, dwelling alone, aloof, strenuous, ardent, and resolute, the brahmin attained and remained in the incomparable state. It says the incomparable state is the ultimate aim of righteous life in quest of which sons of families go from home to homelessness and know through higher knowledge what the Buddha said of *bhikkhus*. And this *sutta* closes by saying the brahmin became an *arahant*.

“*Arahant*” is a Pali word meaning “deserving” that *Theravada* Buddhists use to refer to persons who’ve achieved *nibbana*.

The title of the *Sigalovada Sutta* refers to the Buddha’s advice to Sigala. Sigala, in this *sutta*, is a householder’s son who, rising early and leaving the city of Rajagaha with his hair and clothing wet, lifts his hands to worship the six quarters of earth and sky. And the Buddha, in this *sutta*, entering the city in his robe and with his bowl for alms, sees Sigala and asks him why he does that.

Sigala, replying that he does it to honor his father, says his father on his death bed told him to worship the quarters. But the Buddha tells Sigala that in the discipline of the Aryans one shouldn’t worship the quarters in that way. So Sigala asks him to teach him how one should.

The Buddha, beginning that teaching by saying that, by avoiding fourteen evils, the Aryan disciple is the guardian of the six quarters, tells Sigala the Aryan disciple has put away the four vices, does no evil actions from the four motives, and doesn’t make toward the six doors of dissipating wealth.

He says that by that the Aryan disciple is on his way to conquering both worlds and to success in both and that by that, at the dissolution of his body after death, he’ll receive a happy rebirth in the higher world.

And he says the four vices are killing, stealing, adultery, and lying, that the four motives are partiality, enmity, stupidity, and fear, and that the six doors are drink, presence in streets at inappropriate times, frequenting fairs, gambling, associating with evil friends, and idleness.

He says the dangers of drink are loss of wealth, increase of quarrels, susceptibility to disease, evil reputation, indecent exposure, and ruining one’s intelligence.

He says the perils of presence in streets at inappropriate times are that one has no protection, that neither do one’s wife, children, or wealth, that one falls under suspicion of being responsible for undetected crimes, that false rumors are attached to one’s name, and that one goes out to meet many troubles.

He says the peril of frequenting fairs is looking to see where are dancing, singing, music, recitation, cymbal-playing, and beating of tam-tams.

He says the perils of gambling are being hated if one wins, mourning one’s loss of wealth if one loses, wasting one’s wealth, one’s word having no

weight in gatherings, being despised by one's companions and friends, and, because people say a gambler won't be a good husband, not being sought for marriage.

He says the peril of associating with evil friends is that any gambler, libertine, drinker, cheat, swindler, or man of violence will be one's friend.

And he says the peril of idleness is that, saying it's too cold, too hot, too early, too late, or that one's too hungry or too full, one does no work, leaving what one should do undone and making no money while one's wealth dwindles.

And he also tells of four kinds of persons one should consider foes seeming to be friends. He says that, while pursuing their own interests, rapacious persons give little and demand much and that, when they do what they must do, they do it only from fear. He says some persons he doesn't typify make friendly professions regarding the past and the future, but that they show their unreliability when opportunities for service arise, and that their only service is their empty sayings. He says flatterers approve one's bad deeds as well as one's good deeds and praise one to one's face but speak ill of one in one's absence. And he says a wastrel is one's companion when one drinks, is in the streets at inappropriate hours, attends shows and fairs, and gambles.

But he also tells of four kinds of friends one should consider good-hearted. He says a helper protects one when one's caught unaware, protects one's property when one's away from it, and is a refuge when one's afraid, and he says that, when one has tasks to perform, such a friend provides twice as much help as one needs. He says a friend who's constant in happiness and adversity tells one his secrets and doesn't betray one's secrets, doesn't forsake one when one is in trouble, and would die for one's sake. He says a friend of good counsel restrains one from doing wrong and enjoins one to do right, that one learns from such a friend, and that such a friend shows the way to the higher world. And he says a sympathetic friend doesn't rejoice at one's misfortunes, rejoices with one in one's prosperity, restrains those who speak ill of one, and commends those who speak well of one.

And then the Buddha returns to this *sutta*'s original question, the question of how an Aryan disciple protects the six quarters, and he tells Sigala that Aryan disciples should look upon parents as the east, teachers as the south, wives and children as the west, friends and companions as the north, servants and employees as the nadir, and recluses and brahmins as the zenith.

He says children should minister to their parents in five ways: by supporting their parents as their parents have supported them, by performing the duties their parents have performed, by maintaining the lineage and tradition of their family, by looking after their inheritance, and by giving alms on behalf of them. And he says parents receiving such ministrations from their children show

their love for their children in five ways: by restraining their children from evil, by directing them toward what's good, by training them to a profession, by arranging suitable marriages for them, and by handing their inheritance to them, in due time.

He says students should minister to their teachers in five ways: by rising for them, by waiting on them, by eagerness to learn, by personal service to them, and by respectfully accepting their teaching. And he says teachers should show their love for their students in five ways: by training them well, by making them grasp what they've learned, by instructing them thoroughly in the lore of every art, by introducing them to their friends and companions, and by providing for their security everywhere.

He says husbands should minister to their wives in five ways: by respecting them, by courtesy to them, by being faithful to them, by handing authority to them, and by providing them with adornment. And he says wives should love their husbands in five ways: by doing their duty well, by hospitality to attendants, by fidelity, by looking after their husbands' earnings, and by skill and industry in their commercial dealings.

He says members of families should minister to their friends and companions in five ways: by generosity, by courtesy, by benevolence, by equality, and by being true to their word. And he says their friends and companions should love them in five ways: by protecting them when they need protection, by looking after their property when they can't, by becoming a refuge in danger, by not forsaking them in their troubles, and by respecting their relatives.

He says masters should minister to their servants and employees as the nadir in five ways: by assigning them work according to their ability and strength, by supplying them with food and wages, by tending them in sickness, by sharing extraordinary delicacies with them, and by giving them leave and gifts at appropriate times. And he says the servants and employees should love their masters in five ways: by awakening before they awaken, by going to bed after they go to bed, by taking what's given to them, by doing their work well, and by speaking well of them and giving them a good reputation.

He says members of families should minister to recluses and brahmins in five ways: by affectionate acts, words, and thoughts, by keeping their houses open to them, and by supplying them with their worldly needs. And he says recluses and brahmins should show their love for the members of families in six ways: by keeping them from evil, by exhorting them to do good, by loving them with kind thoughts, by teaching them what they haven't learned, by correcting and refining what they've learned, and by revealing to them the way to a higher world.

He says the quarters are protected and made safe for the Aryan disciples in those ways, and Sigala, praising in various ways what the Buddha has told him, asks the Buddha to accept him as a lay disciple, as one who takes refuge in him from that day, as long as life endures.

“*Mahāparinibbāna*” is Pali for “great beyond extinguishing”, and the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* tells of the final *nibbāna* of the Buddha, what one might call his death. In this *sutta* the Buddha tells his disciple Ananda that the *dhamma* and discipline the Buddha has taught and laid down will be Ananda’s teacher when he’s gone beyond. But he adds some instructions.

He says that, instead of calling senior *bhikkhus* friend, junior *bhikkhus* should call them honorable or venerable, and he directs Ananda to permit the *sangha* to abolish the minor precepts.

And he tells him to impose the highest penalty on the *bhikkhu* Channa. Buddhists say Channa was the Buddha’s charioteer when he was a prince, that he was excessively proud of that and of his long association with the Buddha, and that he tried to arrogate himself in the *sangha*. And, to Ananda’s asking what’s the highest penalty, the Buddha replies that it’s that, regardless of whatever Channa says, the *bhikkhus* not speak to him.

And next the Buddha addresses all the *bhikkhus* there. Telling them not to reproach themselves later with the thought that they didn’t ask while their teacher was with them, he asks that, if any doubt or perplexity is in the mind of but one of them, about the Buddha, the *dhamma*, the *sangha*, or the path, they ask. And he repeats that instruction three times, but no *bhikkhu* speaks.

So he tells them their reason for not speaking may be their reverence for their teacher and that they might speak to a friend. But still none speak, and Ananda tells the Buddha he has faith that none of them has any doubt or perplexity, and the Buddha replies that Ananda speaks from faith but that the *tathagata* knows. He says the *tathagata* knows for certain that none of the *bhikkhus* has any doubt or perplexity.

And, telling Ananda that even the lowest of the five hundred *bhikkhus* there has entered the stream toward consciousness and isn’t liable to fall into a lower state, he tells the *bhikkhus* that conditional things are transient and tells them to accomplish their aim with diligence, and this *sutta* says that those were the last words of the *tathagata*.

“*Pada*” is a Pali word for “steps” or “footprints”. So a literal translation of the title of the *Dhammapada* is “Law Steps”, but it’s a collection of 423 sententious assertions Buddhists attribute to the Buddha, and Buddhists

don't say how anyone collected them. Their form is similar to Solomon's proverbs, and some of them allude to the fundamental premise of Buddhism, but many refer to quotidian life.

The first *pada* is an example of the first category. It says all states have mind as their forerunner and are products of mind and that, if one speaks or acts with a defiled mind, suffering follows one. But the second, exemplifying the oblique similes that are in many of the *padas*, says suffering follows as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught ox.

And, after several *padas* decrying hatred and resentment and promoting love as the alternative, the 26<sup>th</sup> *pada* says fools of little intelligence give themselves to negligence while the wise man protects his diligence as a supreme treasure. And the 33<sup>rd</sup> *pada* says that, as the fletcher makes straight the arrow, the wise man makes straight the fickle mind that's difficult to guard or control. But none of the *padas* tells how one might learn to do any of that, and many effectually deny its possibility.

And the 51<sup>st</sup> *pada* may epitomizes the irrelevance and meaninglessness of many of the *Dhammapada*'s similes and metaphors. It says that, as a beautiful flower is colorful but lacks fragrance, similarly fruitless is the eloquence of the words of one who doesn't practice one's words. One question is how fragrance is more beautiful or fruitful than color, and another is how that's relevant to verbal integrity. And neither does that *pada* say how to practice its words.

And the *padas* contradict one another. The thirtieth *pada* says one should consider only what oneself has done or not done and should ignore the faults of others. But the 61<sup>st</sup> forbids fellowship with the fool and says that, if one finds no one equal to or better than oneself, one should pursue a solitary course. Besides denying the basic *mahayana* premise and denigrating what the Buddha did with the last 45 years of his life, those two *padas* effectually say that one who accepts the company of a fool is a fool. And the 64<sup>th</sup> *pada* says that, if a fool associates with a wise man all his life, his understanding of the truth will be like a spoon's understanding of soup.

And the 85<sup>th</sup> *pada*, by saying that few among men cross to the other shore and that others only run up and down the bank on this side, also denies the doctrine that everyone eventually reaches *nirvana*. And the 129<sup>th</sup> *pada* says that all tremble at weapons and fear death and that accordingly one should compare others to oneself and not slay or cause to slay. But the first part of the second of those two *padas* effectually says no one has achieved *nibbana*.

The 131<sup>st</sup> *pada* says that one who torments with a rod those who are seeking happiness shall not obtain happiness. And that of course accords with the *Metta Sutta*, but the 152<sup>nd</sup> *pada* says the man of little learning grows as a bull

with his flesh growing while his wisdom doesn't, and the 155<sup>th</sup> *pada* says men who haven't lived the righteous life or obtained wealth in their youth pine away as herons in a pond with no fish. And the 159<sup>th</sup> *pada* says a well-controlled man who practices what he admonishes others to do will have control of others, while controlling oneself is difficult, but the 165<sup>th</sup> *pada* says evil is done and undone by oneself, that purity and impurity depend on oneself, and that no one can purify another.

Of course those references to separate selves effectually deny not only what both Hinduism and Buddhism generally say of the *atman* but also specifically what the *Sabbasava Sutta* says of the *atta*. So those words effectually define not only the superficial difference between Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism but also a superficial difference between Buddhism and Hinduism. "*Atta*" is the Pali form of the Vedic Sanskrit word "*atman*".

And the 167<sup>th</sup> *pada* says that, by not following mean things or dwelling in negligence, the world isn't prolonged. And the 171<sup>st</sup> *pada* asks that we see how the world resembles an ornate chariot in which fools flounder while no attachment to it is for the wise. But one must go to *suttas* to learn what the Buddha said was mean, what he said we shouldn't neglect, or what floundering and attachment are.

And, while not saying what the stream is, the 178<sup>th</sup> *pada* says the gain of entering the stream is better than sole sovereignty over the earth, going to the upper world, or ruling the universe, and, while not saying what the fundamental precepts or higher consciousness are, the 185<sup>th</sup> *pada* says the teaching of the Buddha is to speak no ill, be moderate in eating, live in seclusion, practice restraint in accordance with the fundamental principles, and devote oneself to higher consciousness.

The 201<sup>st</sup> *pada* gives some indications of the precepts of Buddhism. It says the conqueror begets enmity and that the defeated lie down in distress while the peaceful relinquish both victory and defeat and rest in happiness, and the 205<sup>th</sup> *pada* says that, having tasted solitude and tranquility, one becomes woeless and stainless and drinks the essence of joy and truth. But more quotidian *padas* are the general tenor of the *Dhammapada*.

Between the 201<sup>st</sup> *pada* and the 205<sup>th</sup> *pada* is the 204<sup>th</sup> *pada*'s exemplifying that by preceding saying nibbana is the supreme bliss by saying that health is the best gain, that contentment is the best wealth, and that a trusty friend is the best kinsman. And the 215<sup>th</sup> *pada* says grief and fear arise from lust and that no grief or fear is for one who has no lust, but it doesn't specify the relationship between freeing oneself from lust and the reference to solitude and tranquility ten *padas* earlier. And the 231<sup>st</sup> through the 233<sup>rd</sup> *padas* direct

controlling one's body, words, and mind and following right ways, to guard against physical, verbal, and mental agitation, but they don't say what ways are right.

And the 239<sup>th</sup> *pada* says a wise man removes his impurities gradually, and the 240<sup>th</sup> *pada* says the transgressor's deeds lead the transgressor to states of woe, but neither says what are impurities or transgressions. And the 248<sup>th</sup> *pada* says evil things are uncontrollable, and the 252<sup>nd</sup> *pada* says one's own faults are more difficult to see than are others' faults, and the 273<sup>rd</sup> *pada* says the eightfold path is the best path and that the four noble truths are the best truths. But the *Dhammapada* doesn't say what the eightfold path is, what the four noble truths are, how faults are faults, or how to control evil.

The 277<sup>th</sup> and 278<sup>th</sup> *padas* say conditional things are impediments and suffering, and the 279<sup>th</sup> says all *dhamma* has no self. And each says that, when one sees in wisdom what it says, one becomes dispassionate toward the painful, and each says that's the path to purity. But the *Dhammapada* in general evaluates different conditions of different selves, and a question is how purity doesn't eliminate pain, and the 280<sup>th</sup> *pada* returns entirely to quotidian concerns and effectually to the notion of futility. It says people who don't strive while they're young and strong will never find the way to wisdom. And so the *padas* stagger on to the 423<sup>rd</sup>.

But, ostensibly directly quoting the Buddha, all the *padas* are from the first person point of view. So, ostensibly, the Buddha closes the *Dhammapada* by saying in its 423<sup>rd</sup> *pada* that what he calls a brahmin is one who knows former lives, sees the upper and lower worlds, has reached the end of births, and has attained knowledge beyond. It effectually says the Buddha said he calls a brahmin a *muni* who's quit quotidian life but keeps it and more in mind.

So the meandering inconsistencies of the *Dhammapada* and some of the *suttas* make the credibility of the centuries of orally passing on the teaching of the Buddha questionable, but such is also true of the recording of the scriptures of the other five of the six most popular religions, excepting perhaps the *Dao De Jing*.



## Chapter 14 Lotus, Diamond, and Heart Sutras

The full Sanskrit title of what English-speaking people call the Lotus Sutra is *Saddharma Pudarika Sutra* and means “sublime white lotus thread”. Few people, whether or not they call themselves Buddhists, say it reports words Siddhartha Gautama spoke during his life on Earth. But, in Mahayana epistemology, that’s irrelevant.

The Lotus Sutra, like many of the *suttas*, refers to how many persons are present to hear it, but the Lotus Sutra says those present are innumerable and of many different kinds of beings. And, in the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha speaks for innumerable years, while those present sit through all those years with no movement, with tranquility of mind, and with no fatigue. And, while promising that the Buddha shall deliver the lotus of the true law, the Lotus Sutra is longer than any of the *suttas*, and yet, at least literally, it doesn’t deliver it.

Among the men and women and divine and demonic persons present are many *bodhisattvas*, persons other *Mahayana sutras* say have achieved *nirvana* and work to help others achieve it, and they ask in this *sutra* how to fulfill that duty. And, referring to raining flowers, brilliant rays, and magnificent *buddha* fields, it presents many images of immeasurable breadth, height, and depth. And, referring to many *tathagatas* and giving them names, it refers to many Buddhist doctrines it doesn’t semantically explain.

And that use of the word “*tathagata*” points to the most fundamental difference between Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. *Theravada* Buddhists say the Buddha calls his separate self the *tathagata*, while *mahayana* Buddhists use the word “*tathagata*” as Hindus refer to the unity of *Brahman* and *atman*, and, to Mayayana Buddhists, that’s effectually the meaning of the word “*mahayana*”. Effectually they use both the term “*mahayana*” and the term “*tathagata*” to refer to how *bodhisattvas* liberate everyone by liberating themselves.

So the Lotus Sutra may be but a huge metaphor for the ineffable vast unity of the diversity one obviates by way of *nirvana*. But it also contains a

parable of a burning house it says the Buddha tells, and the parable suggests that this *sutra* is a fictional lure to draw persons to the actual truth. In the parable a father, to draw his children out of the house, tells them their toys are outside, but they aren't. And, when they go outside, he gives them better toys but fewer.

And this *sutra*, saying the Buddha says such fiction isn't lying but promising horrors to people who misrepresent it, describes the horrors. And its nearest approach to fulfilling literally its promise to reveal the lotus of the true law is such threats and parables and metaphors and a few obscure references to the four noble truths. So what the *Dao De Jing* calls obscure is more direct.

The Lotus Sutra says that one who understands that all laws are empty and indistinct penetrates the enlightenment of the perfectly enlightened, but one must meander through its labyrinthine obscurity to find that understanding, and so it may be mainly a means for meditation.

The full Sanskrit title of what English-speaking people call the Diamond Sutra is *Vajracchedika Prajnapāramita Sutra*. The word “*Vairacchedika*”, perhaps suggesting cutting as a diamond cuts, refers to cutting as a thunderbolt cuts. And the word “*prajnaparamita*” means “wisdom fixed beyond” and is also the title of a collection of *sutras* of which the Diamond Sutra is one.

Reports of the circumstances and time of composition of the collection vary. One claim is that its composition was on a mountain a king gave to Siddhartha Gautama during his life on Earth, and another assertion is that it isn't one composition but a compilation of writings of the ninth century C.E., and another notion is that the compilation was in that time but of older compositions. And some Buddhists and others say the Diamond Sutra is a fundamental part of the *Prajnaparamita*, while others say it's a summary of the components of that compilation, but common diction permits actuality of both of those considerations. But, whichever is actual, the Diamond Sutra effectually defines Mahayana Buddhism.

Beginning by using the syllable “*Om*” to initiate addressing the *prajnaparamita* by calling it fortunate and noble, its narrator says he or she heard that once the fortunate one dwelt at Sravasti in the Jeta grove in the garden of Anathapindika with 1250 *bhikkhus* and many great *bodhisattvas*, and the narrative begins with the fortunate one dressing in his cloak, taking his bowl and going into Sravasti to collect alms, returning and eating, surveying his surroundings, putting away his bowl and cloak, washing his feet, sitting on the seat arranged for him, crossing his legs and holding his torso upright, and fixing his attention before him.

Then many *bhikkhus* approach him, salute his feet with their heads, walk to his right and around him three times, and sit to a side of him. Next the venerable Subhuti arrives and sits, rises and places his upper robe over one shoulder, kneels with his right knee on the ground, bows forward, and folds his hands toward the fortunate one. And then, calling the Buddha the well gone, Subhuti tells him that wonderful is the amount of the greatest help and highest favor, by the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious one, to the *bodhisattvas*. “*Arhat*” is Vedic Sanskrit for “*arahant*”.

And next Subhuti asks the Buddha how a son or daughter of good family who’s set out in the *bodhisattva* vehicle stands, progresses, and controls his or her thoughts. And the Buddha, replying that Subhuti has spoken well and accurately, tells him to listen as he answers that question, and Subhuti agrees and listens. So the Buddha begins by telling how one who sets out in the vehicle of a *bodhisattva* should produce a thought.

Saying the person thinks he or she must lead to *nirvana* as many beings as are in the universe of beings, he specifies all who are born from an egg, a womb, or moisture, or from no phenomenal origin, whether they have form or no form, perception or no perception, or neither perception nor no perception. He says the thought includes all comprehended under the term “being”, that it includes any conceivable form of conception, and that the person must think he or she must lead them into the realm of *nirvana* that leaves nothing behind. But he also says that, while innumerable beings have thus been led to *nirvana*, none have.

He says the reason for that is that no *bodhisattva* in whom the notion of a being takes place can be called a conscious being and that the reason for that is that no one in whom the notion of a self, a being, a living personality, or a person takes place should be called a conscious being. Next, saying a *bodhisattva* presenting a gift shouldn’t depend on anything anywhere, he specifies that the *bodhisattva* shouldn’t depend on what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls the six external bases of sensation: sight objects, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables, and mind objects. And he says the reason for that is that the *bodhisattva* should present gifts in a way depending on no notion of significance and that the reason for all of that is that the heap of merit of a conscious being presenting a gift with no dependence isn’t easy to measure.

Then he asks Subhuti whether, in any of the directions the *Sigalovada Sutta* calls quarters or in the four horizontal intermediate directions, he thinks the extent of space is easy to measure. And, after Subhuti replies negatively to those questions, the Buddha says the heap of merit of the independently giving conscious being is similarly difficult to measure. And he says that’s why those

who have set out in the *bodhisattva* vehicle should present gifts by no dependence on the notion of significance.

And next he asks Subhuti whether he thinks one can see the *tathagata* by his possession of marks. A nominally Hindu tradition designates 32 marks of a great person, and Buddhists have said the Buddha possessed those marks, but Subhuti replies negatively. He says the reason for his denial is that the *tathagata* has taught that the possession of marks is no possession of marks, and the Buddha, saying fraud accompanies the possession of marks and doesn't accompany no possession of marks, says that thus the *tathagata* is to be seen from no marks as marks.

Next Subhuti asks whether in the future period, in the last time in the last epoch in the last five hundred years, at the time of the collapse of the good *dharma*, when the words of this *sutra* are taught, any beings will understand their truth, and the Buddha tells him not to speak thus.

Telling him that at that time will be *bodhisattvas* with the gift of good conduct, virtuous qualities, and wisdom, who will understand the truth of the words when they're taught, he says those *bodhisattvas* won't be such as have honored or planted their roots of merit beneath but one *buddha* but will be such as have honored many hundreds of thousands of *buddhas*, that they'll be any *bodhisattvas* who have found any thought of serene faith during the teaching of the words of this *sutra*, that the *tathagata* knows and sees them by his *buddha* cognition and by his *buddha* eye, and that they'll beget and acquire an immeasurable and incalculable heap of merit.

He tells Subhuti the reason for that is that no perception of a self, a being, a personality, or a person takes place in those *bodhisattvas*, that neither does a perception of either a *dharma* or no *dharma* take place in them, and that no perception or nonperception takes place in them.

And he says the reason for that is that, if the *bodhisattvas* had a perception either of a *dharma* or of no *dharma*, they'd by that seize upon a self, a being, a personality, or a person. He says that's why a *bodhisattva* should seize neither upon a *dharma* nor upon no *dharma* and that the *tathagata* has taught a saying with an obscure meaning because of that. And he says the saying is that those who know discourse on *dharma* to be like a raft should forsake *dharmas* and should forsake no *dharmas* still more.

The raft simile is in the *Alagaddupama Sutta*. And that *sutta*, using a water snake as a metaphor for misapprehending *dhamma* by way of *kama*, says a person wouldn't take a raft with him after crossing a river on it. "*Alagaddupama*" means water snake.

Next in this *sutra* the Buddha asks Subhuti whether the *tathagata* has either demonstrated any *dharma* or known any *dharma* to be the utmost right

and perfect consciousness. And Subhuti replies that the *tathagata* hasn't and that he understands the Buddha to have said the reason the *tathagata* hasn't done that is that the *dharma* the *tathagata* has fully known or demonstrated can't be grasped or presented in words. And he says that's because it's neither *dharma* nor no *dharma* and that that's because an absolute exalts the noble personality.

And next the Buddha asks Subhuti whether he thinks that, by filling this system of a billion worlds with the seven precious things and giving it to the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious ones, a son or daughter would beget a great heap of merit, and, replying that the heap of merit would be great because the *tathagata* has spoken of it as no heap, Subhuti says that's how the *tathagata* speaks of a heap of merit.

The seven precious things are gold, silver, diamonds, other gems, lapis lazuli, coral, and pearls, and the Buddha replies that, if another person were to take from this discourse on *dharma* one stanza of four lines and demonstrate and illuminate it in full detail to others, that person would beget on the strength of that a greater and immeasurable and incalculable heap of merit, and he says the reason for that is that from this discourse has issued the utmost right and perfect consciousness of the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious ones, and that all the *buddhas* and fortunate ones have also issued from it,

And he says the reason the *dharma*s special to the *buddhas* are called the *dharma*s special to the *buddhas* is that the *tathagata* has taught that the *dharma*s special to the *buddhas* are simply not a buddha's special *dharma*s, and next he asks Subhuti whether the thought of having attained the fruit of a stream winner occurs to a stream winner.

And, replying negatively, Subhuti says the reason a stream winner is called a stream winner is that the stream winner has won no *dharma*, that neither have any of what the *Satipathana Sutta* calls the six external bases of sensation been won, and that claiming to have won the fruit of a stream winner would be the stream entrant's having in him a seizing on a self, a being, a personality, and a person.

Buddhists designate four stages along the path to full consciousness: winning entrance to the stream that's the path, having but one more birth remaining, having no birth remaining, and being an *arhat*. And the Buddha repeats his question of the stream winner for each of the other stages, and, replying to each question, Subhuti says of each other stage that no *dharma* has won it. But he refers to the bases of sensation only in regard to the stream winner, and he repeats only for the *arhat* what he says of seizing.

And then Subhuti refers to himself. He says he's the one the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious one has indicated to be the foremost of those who dwell free of greed in the forest. And, saying that yet the thought of his being an *arhat*

free of greed doesn't occur to him, he tells the Buddha that, if the thought of his being an arhat had occurred to him, the *tathagata* wouldn't have declared of him that the son of good family Subhuti, who's foremost of those who dwell in peace, dwells nowhere, and that that's why he's called a dweller in peace.

Of course a question here, considering that Subhuti has identified himself by name and social position, is whether Subhuti is in this *sutra* to exemplify people who preach the words of the Buddha but don't understand them, and next the Buddha asks him whether he thinks the *tathagata* has learned any *dharma* from the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious one Dipankara.

Mahayana Buddhists say Dipankara was a *buddha* previous to Shakyamuni, and both Mahayana Buddhists and Theravada Buddhists call Siddhartha Gautama Shakyamuni because he was a prince of the Shakyas and was a *muni*, but that's consistent with the *mahayana* notion that everyone eventually is a *buddha*, and, consistent with the Buddha's saying *dharma* is no *dharma*, Subhuti replies negatively to that question also.

And next the Buddha says that, were any *bodhisattva* to say he'll create harmonious *buddha* fields, the *bodhisattva* would speak falsely. He says the reason for that is that, by speaking of the harmony of the *buddha* fields, the *tathagata* has taught the harmony of *buddha* fields as no harmony. So this *sutra* effectually calls the *buddha* fields in the Lotus Sutra metaphorical.

And next the Buddha says that thus the great *bodhisattva* beings should produce thought that's independent of what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls external bases of sensation. And next he asks Subhuti whether, were a man to have a body so huge that its personal being is like Sumeru, the king of mountains, his personal being would be huge. And Subhuti replies that it would be huge because the *tathagata* has taught that personal being is no being. And he says that's why it's called personal being.

Next the Buddha asks Subhuti whether grains of sand as many as the grains of sand in as many Ganges rivers as the grains of sand in the Ganges would be many, and Subhuti replies that the Ganges rivers would be many and that the grains of sand would be many more. And next the Buddha tells Subhuti he's announcing and making known to him the question of whether he thinks that, were a woman or a man to fill that many world systems with the seven precious things and present them as a gift to the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious ones, that woman or man, on the strength of that, would beget a great heap of merit. And Subhuti, again calling the Buddha the well gone, says the heap of merit would be great, immeasurable, and incalculable.

And the Buddha says that, be that as it may or may not be, were a son or daughter of good family to take from this discourse on *dharma* but one stanza of four verses and demonstrate and illuminate it to others, that person would

beget a greater immeasurable and incalculable heap of merit, and he says that moreover the spot of earth of that demonstration and illumination would be a shrine for all the world, with its men and good and evil deities.

And then, asking what we then should say of those who will bear the entirety of this discourse in mind and illuminate it in full detail for others, he says they'll be wonderfully fortunate and that the teacher, or a guru representing him, dwells on that spot.

And then Subhuti asks the Buddha what this discourse on *dharma* is and how he should bear it in mind, and the Buddha replies that it's called the wisdom fixed beyond and that he should bear it in mind as such.

Kumarajiva, a fourth century C.E. Buddhist monk who translated Buddhist scripture into Chinese, translated "prajnaparamita" into Chinese meaning "adamantine wisdom beyond", and that's how this *sutra* received its currently popular English title. And some persons say it ends with the Buddha giving it that designation in that reply to Subhuti's asking what it is and how he should bear it in mind. But most Buddhists say it continues.

And the continuation begins with the Buddha telling Subhuti the reason he should bear it in mind as the wisdom fixed beyond is that the *tathagata* has taught that what he's taught as the wisdom fixed beyond isn't fixed beyond.

And next he again asks Subhuti whether he thinks the *tathagata* has taught any *dharma*. And he replies to Subhuti's negative reply by telling him to consider the number of particles of dust in this world system of a billion worlds and by asking him whether they'd be many. And, replying that they'd be many because the *tathagata* has taught them as no particles, Subhuti says this world system is called a world system because the *tathagata* has taught it as no system.

And next the Buddha asks Subhuti whether he thinks one can see the *tathagata* by means of the 32 marks of a great person, and Subhuti replies negatively and says the reason is that the *tathagata* has taught that they're called the 32 marks of great person because they're no marks, and next, telling Subhuti to consider a woman or a man relinquishing all of her or his possessions as many times as the number of grains of sand in the Ganges and to consider a another person taking but one stanza of four lines from this discourse and demonstrating it to others, the Buddha tells him the latter would beget a greater immeasurable and incalculable heap of merit.

And then the impact of *dharma* moves Subhuti to tears. And he wipes away his tears, and, again calling the Buddha well gone and telling him that exceedingly wonderful is how well the *tathagata* has taught this discourse on *dharma*, he says recognition has been produced in him through it. And he says he's never before heard such a discourse on *dharma* and that most wonderfully fortunate will be those producing a true perception when this *sutra* is taught.

He says that, because the *tathagata* teaches true perception, what's true perception is no perception. He says accepting and believing this discourse isn't difficult for him but that those beings who will be in a future period, in the last time in the last epoch, in the last five hundred years, at the time of the collapse of the good *dharma*, and will take up this discourse on *dharma*, bear it in mind, recite it, study it, and illuminate it, in full detail for others, will be most wonderfully fortunate. And he says that, however, no perception of a self, a being, a personality, or a person shall take place in them, that the reason is that what's a perception of a self, a being, a personality, or a person is indeed no perception, and that the reason for that is that the *buddha* fortunate ones have left all perception behind.

And the Buddha replies that what Subhuti says is so. He says that most wonderfully fortunate will be those beings who upon hearing this *sutra* won't tremble or be frightened or terrified. And he says the reason for that is that the *tathagata* has taught it as fixed the furthest beyond, that what the *tathagata* teaches as fixed the furthest beyond is also what the innumerable auspicious *buddhas* beyond also teach, and that that's why it's called what's fixed furthest beyond.

And, adding that the *tathagata*'s fixing of patience beyond is actually no fixing, he says the reason for that is that, when the Raja of Kalinga cut the flesh from each of his limbs, he had no fixing of his patience beyond, and he says the reason for that is that, had he then a perception of a being, a self, a personality, or a person, he'd have had a perception of ill will, and next he says that, with his transcendental knowledge, he remembers that through five hundred births he's wisely led the good life of devotion to patience with no perception of a self, a being, a personality, or a person.

The assertion here is that, because patience requires being patient with a self, a being, a personality, or a person, it isn't beyond. And, since the historical relationship between Buddhism and the kingdom of Kalinga was long after the life of the Shakyamuni *buddha*, this also indicates the insignificance of time in *Mahayana* Buddhists' notion of authenticity of *sutras* and of actuality in general. In that epistemology, all the *buddhas*, including Dipankara, Shakyamuni, and all else inside and outside the great vehicle, are in all time.

And next the Buddha says that, thus rid of all perceptions, the great conscious being should raise its thought to the utmost right and perfect consciousness. He says the great conscious being should produce a thought that's independent of what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls the external bases of sensation, of *dharma* and no *dharma*, and of anything else. And he says that for that reason the *tathagata* teaches that a gift should be presented by an



independent *bodhisattva* and not by one who depends on what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls the external bases of sensation.

And, telling Subhuti that further a *bodhisattva*'s presenting gifts in that manner is for the welfare of all beings, he says the reason for that is that the perception of a being is only a non-perception and that the beings the *tathagata* has called all beings are indeed no beings. And he says the reason for that is that the *tathagata* speaks in accordance with actuality, speaks the truth of what is and not otherwise, and doesn't speaking falsely. And he tells Subhuti that nevertheless, with regard to the *dharma* the *tathagata* has fully known and demonstrated, neither truth nor fraud is.

And he says that in darkness a man can't see anything, that as such one should view a *bodhisattva* who's fallen among objects and renounces a gift. He says a man with eyes sees multiple images when night becomes light at the rising of the sun and that as such one should view a *bodhisattva* who hasn't fallen among objects but renounces a gift. And he tells Subhuti that furthermore the sons and daughters of good family who will take up this discourse on *dharma*, bear it in mind, and recite, study, and illuminate it, in full detail for others, have fully been known by the *tathagata*, with his *buddha* eye.

And, again posing the hypothesis of a woman or a man relinquishing possessions countless times through immeasurable time, he says again that another person, a person hearing this discourse on *dharma* and not rejecting it, would on the strength of that beget a greater immeasurable and incalculable heap of merit, and he asks what we should say of one who'd learn it, bear it in mind, and recite, study, and illuminate it, in full detail for others, after writing it.

And he says this discourse on *dharma* is unthinkable and incomparable. He says the *tathagata* has taught it for the welfare of beings who've set out in the best and most excellent vehicle. He says again that the *tathagata* has known with his *buddha* cognition and seen with his *buddha* eye those who will take it up, bear it in mind, and recite, study, and illuminate it, in full detail for others. And he says the *tathagata* has fully known them, that they'll receive the auspiciousness of an immeasurable heap of merit unthinkable, incomparable, measureless, and illimitable, and that they'll carry along an equal share of consciousness.

And, saying the reason for that is that this discourse on *dharma* couldn't be heard by beings of inferior resolve or by such as have in view a self, a being, a personality, or person, he says that neither could any being who hasn't taken the pledge of conscious beings hear it, take it up, bear it in mind, recite it, or study it.

And he says that moreover the spot of earth of the revelation of this *sutra* will be worthy of worship by all the world with its *devas*, men, and *asuras*,

and that it'll be worthy of respectful salute and honor by circumambulation, as is a shrine. But he says that yet those sons and daughters of good family who will take up these veritable *sutras*, bear them in mind, recite, and study them, will be well humbled. And he says the reason for that is that they'll reach the consciousness of a *buddha*.

And he says that, by means of that humiliation, the impure deeds of their former lives that are liable to lead them into states of woe will be annulled in this life.

And next the Buddha describes merit in comparison to his own. He says that with his superior knowledge he recalls that, during incalculable eons before the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious Dipankara, he gave satisfaction by service to 84 thousand million billion *buddhas* and fortunate ones and never after became alien to them. But he says the heap of merit from that doesn't approach a hundred billionth part of the merit of those who, in the last time, in the last epoch, in the last five hundred years, during the time of the collapse of the good *dharma*, will take up these *sutras*, bear them in mind, and recite, study, and illuminate them, in full detail for others.

He says it doesn't bear number, fraction, counting, similarity, comparison, or resemblance approaching it. And he says that moreover, were he to teach the heap of merit those sons and daughters of good family would beget and acquire, beings would become frantic and confused. But he says that nevertheless, since the *tathagata* has taught this discourse on *dharma* as unthinkable, so should one expect an unthinkable *karma* result from it.

And then Subhuti repeats part of his original question. He again asks the fortunate one how one who has set out in the *bodhisattva* vehicle should stand and control his thoughts. And the Buddha replies by repeating part of the beginning of his answer.

He says that one who's set out in the *bodhisattva* vehicle should produce a thought that he or she must lead all beings to *nirvana* and into the realm of *nirvana* that leaves nothing behind, but that, after beings have been led to *nirvana*, none have been led to *nirvana*. And he says again that the reason for that is that, were a notion of a being, a personality, or a person to take place in a *bodhisattva*, the *bodhisattva* couldn't be called a conscious being. And he says the reason for that is that one who has set out in the *bodhisattva* vehicle isn't a *dharma*.

And next he asks Subhuti whether, when the *tathagata* was with the *tathagata* Dipankara, he set out any *dharma* by which he's fully known the utmost right and perfect consciousness. Subhuti replies negatively, and the Buddha replies that for that reason the *tathagata* called Dipankara a young *brahmin* and predicted of him that in a future period he'd be a *tathagata arhat*

fully conscious one called Shakyamuni. And he tells Subhuti that the reason for that is that the designation “*tathagata*” means “*tathata*”.

“*Tathata*” is Sanskrit for “how all is”, and the Buddha tells Subhuti that whoever would say the *tathagata* has fully known the utmost right and perfect consciousness would speak falsely, that the reason for that is that nowhere is any *dharma* by which the *tathagata* has fully known the right and perfect consciousness, and that neither truth nor fraud results from the *dharma* the *tathagata* has fully known and demonstrated.

He says that because of that all *dharmas* are the Buddha’s own and special *dharmas*, that the reason for that is that the *tathagata* has taught that all *dharmas* are no *dharmas*, and that that’s why all *dharmas* are called the Buddha’s own and special *dharma*’s as a man might have a huge body, and Subhuti says the *tathagata* has taught as having no body the the *tathagata* said has a huge body, and he says that’s why he’s called endowed with a huge body.

The Buddha, agreeing and saying again that a *bodhisattva* who says he’ll lead beings to *nirvana* shouldn’t be called a conscious being, asks why and asks Subhuti whether any *dharma* has the name Conscious Being, and Subhuti, replying negatively, says the fortunate one has said that because of that the *tathagata* teaches that all *dharmas*, not having the character of living beings, not having a living personality, and not being a person, are selfless, and then the Buddha and Subhuti also repeat what they said of harmonious *buddha* fields.

And then, telling Subhuti that the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious one has declared that the *bodhisattva* who’s intent on the selflessness of the *dharmas* is a great conscious being, the Buddha asks him whether he thinks the *tathagata*’s physical eye, deific eye, wise eye, *dharma* eye, and *buddha* eye are actual, and Subhuti replies that each is.

Then the Buddha, asking Subhuti whether he thinks the *tathagata* has used words to refer to the grains of sand in the Ganges, asks him whether he thinks the world systems would be many were they as many as that many grains of sand, and Subhuti replies affirmatively to both questions.

And then the Buddha, telling Subhuti he knows in his wisdom the many trends of thought of as many beings as are in those world systems, says the reason for that is that the *tathagata* has taught the trends of thought as no trends, that that’s why they’re called trends of thought, and that the reason for that is that past, future, and present thought are all unattainable.

Then he again asks Subhuti the question of whether, on the strength of filling the billion words systems with the seven precious things and giving it to the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious ones, a son or daughter of good family would beget a great heap of merit. And again, to Subhuti’s again replying affirmatively, he replies that the heap would be immeasurable and incalculable.

And this time he says that, if a thing such as a great heap of merit were, the *tathagata* wouldn't have spoken of it.

And then, asking Subhuti whether he thinks the *tathagata* can be seen by means of the accomplishment of the form of his body, he asks again whether the *tathagata* can be seen through his possession of marks, and Subhuti replies negatively to both questions, says the reason for his negative replies is that the reason the accomplishment of the form of his body is called that is that the *tathagata* has taught that it's no accomplishment, and says again that the reason the possession of marks is called that is that the *tathagata* has taught that it's no possession of no marks.

Then, continuing this sequence of repetition and elaboration, the Buddha asks Subhuti whether the *tathagata*'s having demonstrated *dharma* occurs to him. And, with no reply from Subhuti, he says that whoever would say the *tathagata* has demonstrated *dharma* would be speaking falsely and misrepresenting the Buddha by seizing on what isn't present. And he says that's because no demonstration of a *dharma* is attainable.

And then Subhuti asks the Buddha whether, in the future, in the last time, in the last epoch, in the last five hundred years, at the time of the collapse of the good doctrine, any beings will hear such *dharmas* and truly believe. And the Buddha replies that, because the *tathagata* has taught that they're no beings, they're neither beings nor no beings. And he says that's why he spoke of all beings.

Then he asks Subhuti whether he thinks the *tathagata* has fully know the ultimate right and identical consciousness by any *dharma*, and Subhuti replies negatively, and the Buddha agrees and says that not the least *dharma* has been found or attained, that that's why it's called the ultimate right and identical consciousness, that it's the same as itself and that nothing is at variance, and that that's why it's called the same as itself.

And he says that, being the same as itself through the absence of a self, a being, a personality, or a person, the ultimate right and identical consciousness is fully known as the totality of all the wholesome *dharmas*. And he says that, because the *tathagata* has continued to teach the wholesome *dharmas* as no *dharmas*, they're called wholesome *dharmas*. And that's the plainest expression of the notion of unity that pervades *this sutra*.

But then he says that, were a woman or a man to pile up the seven precious things until their bulk equaled that of all the Sumeru kings of mountains in the world system of a billion worlds and present them as a gift, the heap of merit from that wouldn't approach a hundredth part of that of a son or daughter of good family taking up and demonstrating but one four-verse stanza of this *prajnaparamita* discourse on *dharma*.

And, extending the comparison to its bearing no comparison, asking Subhuti whether he thinks a *tathagata*'s having liberated beings occurs to a *tathagata*, he tells Subhuti that, because the *tathagata* hasn't liberated any being anywhere, he shouldn't see that way. He says that, had the *tathagata* liberated any being anywhere, that would have been, on the part of the *tathagata*, a seizing of a self, a being, a personality, or a person. And he says foolish common people have seized on that but that they've been called foolish common people because the *tathagata* has taught of them as no people.

Then he again asks Subhuti whether he thinks the *tathagata* is to be seen by means of his possession of marks, and Subhuti again replies negatively, and then the Buddha says that, if the *tathagata* could be recognized by his possession of marks, any ruler of the universe would be a *tathagata*.

And then, after saying he understands by the fortunate one's teaching that the *tathagata* isn't to be seen by his possession of marks, Subhuti quotes two four-verse stanzas he says the fortunate one taught on the occasion of that teaching.

In the first stanza, its persona who's presumably the Buddha says that those who have seen him by image or followed him by voice engage in wrong effort and won't see him, and the second stanza says that one should see the *buddhas* from the *dharma*, that their guidance comes from the *dharma* bodies, that yet *dharma*'s true nature is indiscernible, and that no one can be conscious of it as an object.

And then the Buddha, asking Subhuti whether he thinks the *tathagata* has known the utmost right and perfect consciousness through his possession of marks, tells him that, because the *tathagata* couldn't, he shouldn't see that way. And next he tells Subhuti that no one should tell him that those who have set out in the *bodhisattva* vehicle have conceived the destruction or annihilation of a *dharma* and that, because they haven't, neither should he see that they have. And next he refers again to the sons and daughters giving the seven precious things to the *tathagatas*.

But this time, saying that a *bodhisattva* who would gain the patient acquiescence of *dharms* that are inherently nothing and uncreated would on the strength of that beget a greater immeasurable and incalculable heap of merit, he adds that the *bodhisattva* shouldn't acquire a heap of merit. And Subhuti replies that surely the *bodhisattva* should acquire a heap of merit, and the Buddha replies that the *bodhisattva* should acquire but shouldn't seize upon. He says that thus one says "should acquire".

Next he says that, because the *tathagata* is one who's never come from anywhere or gone anywhere, whoever says the *tathagata* goes, comes, sits, or

reclines doesn't understand the Buddha's teaching, and that that's why the *tathagata* is called the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious one.

And next he asks Subhuti whether, were a son or a daughter of good family to grind with incalculable vigor into the smallest particles of dust as many world systems as are the particles of dust in this great world system of a billion worlds and reduce them to the similitude of a collection of such particles, that would be an enormous collection of particles.

Replying affirmatively and saying the reason is that the fortunate one wouldn't have called it an enormous collection of particles if it were one, Subhuti says that's because the *tathagata* has taught as no particles what he's taught as a collection of the smallest particles.

And, saying that's why it's a collection of the smallest particles, he says the world system of a billion worlds is called that because the *tathagata* has taught it as no system, that the reason for that is that a world system's having been anywhere would be an instance of seizing on a material object, that the *tathagata* has taught that as no seizing, and that that's why it's called seizing on a material object.

And the Buddha adds the assertions that seizing on a material object is but a linguistic convention, that it's vocal expression with no factual content, and that, while yet the foolish common people have seized upon it, it's neither a *dharma* nor no *dharma*.

He asks Subhuti whether that's because whoever would say the *tathagata* has taught the view of a self, a being, or a living personality or person would be correct. And, replying negatively, Subhuti says the reason saying that wouldn't be correct is that the *tathagata* has taught the view of a self, a being, a living personality, or person as no view, and that that's why it's called a view of the self. And then the Buddha says that one who's set out in the *bodhisattva* vehicle should know all *dharmas*, view them, and be intent on them, but that the person should know, view, and be intent on them in a way in which the person doesn't set up the perception of a *dharma*. And he says the reason for that is that the *tathagata* has taught the perception of a *dharma* as no perception and that that's why it's called perception of *dharma*.

And, calling it finally, the Buddha specifies great *bodhisattva* beings in the assertion that, were one to fill the immeasurable and incalculable world systems with the seven precious things and give them to the *tathagata arhat* fully conscious ones, a son or daughter of good family taking but one stanza of four lines from this *prajnaparamita* discourse on *dharma*, bearing it in mind, and demonstrating, reciting, studying, and illuminating it, in full detail to others, would beget a greater immeasurable and incalculable heap of merit.

And, asking how, he answers that the son or daughter would illuminate it with no revelation, and that that's why one would say the illuminator would illuminate it.

And, finally in the main body of this *sutra*, the Buddha recites a four line stanza saying one should view what's conditional as a star, a fault of vision, a lamp, a mock show, dew drops, a bubble, a dream, a lightening flash, or a cloud.

And next this *sutra* says that thus spoke the fortunate one and that the venerable Subhuti, the male and female *bhikkhus*, the other righteous men, women, *bodhisattvas*, and the whole world, with its *devas*, *asuras*, and *gandharvas*, rejoiced in the teaching of the fortunate one.

And it closes by calling that the completion of the noble fortunate *Vajracchedika Prajnapāramita*

The Heart Sutra may be the most popular *sutra*. Its full Sanskrit title is *Prajnaparamithrdaya Sutra* and means "the thread of the heart of wisdom fixed beyond". And many *Mahayana* Buddhists chant it at least daily.

It, like the Diamond Sutra, begins by using the syllable "Om" to initiate addressing the *prajnaparamita* by calling it fortunate and noble, and next it says the *bodhisattva* Avalokita was moving in the deep course of the wisdom fixed beyond and looked down and saw five heaps, presumably the five heaps of clinging to which the Buddha refers in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* and other *suttas* and *sutras*: form, sensation, perception, ideation, and awareness; and that he saw in their being that they were empty.

And next he addresses Sariputra. Buddhists say Sariputra was one of the eighty principle disciples of the Shakyamuni *buddha* and was especially wise, and in this *sutra* Avalokita, telling Sariputra that form is emptiness, that emptiness is form, and that emptiness and form don't differ from one another, says that whatever is form is emptiness, that whatever is emptiness is form, and that the same is true of emptiness and each of the other four heaps of clinging.

And next he tells Sariputra that emptiness marks all *dharmas*, that they're neither produced nor stopped, neither defiled nor immaculate, and neither deficient nor complete, and that thus none of the five heaps of clinging is in emptiness.

And he says that neither is any of what the *Satipatthana Sutta* calls bases of sensation, either internal or external, until we reach no mind awareness, in emptiness. And he says that neither is ignorance, extinction of ignorance, or any other such thing in emptiness, until we reach no decay, death, or extinction of decay or death. And he says the same of suffering, originating, ceasing, paths, cognition, and both attainment and no attainment.

And next he tells Sariputra that, because of neither attaining nor not attaining and through having relied on the wisdom fixed beyond, a *bodhisattva* dwells with no thought coverings, hasn't been made to tremble in the absence of thought coverings, has overcome what can upset, and in the end attains *nirvana*.

And he says that, because all *buddhas* of all time have relied on the wisdom fixed beyond, they fully awaken to the utmost right and perfect consciousness. And he says that for that reason we should know the *prajnaparamita* as the great mantra, the mantra of great knowledge, the utmost and unequalled mantra, the allayer in truth of all suffering. And, asking what then could go wrong, he says the mantra has been delivered by the wisdom fixed beyond and runs: "*Gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhisvah*"; meaning:

"Gone, gone, gone beyond. Consciousness. Hail."

And this sutra closes by saying that here is the completion of the *prajnaparamitahrdayam*.



## Chapter 15

### Christianity

Christianity is an extension of the doctrine of the Pharisees. The Pharisees were a Judaic sect that interpreted the *Miqra* prophecies that a messiah would descend from David and resurrect the Kingdom of Judah and rebuild Jerusalem to mean the messiah would resurrect the people who've obeyed the commandments God delivered to Moses. The word "messiah" is from a Hebrew word meaning "anointed", and the title "Christ" is from a Greek word with the same meaning, and Christians say Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ.

But Jesus lived during the Roman occupation of the land of Canaan, and Christian scripture contradicts itself regarding the question of whether he descended from David, and it says Jesus told his disciples to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees. And the Pharisee Saul of Tarsus, more than a decade after the death of Jesus, after changing his name to Paul and taking leadership of the movement Jesus began, wrote about a third of the part of Christian scripture that's particular to Christianity. And timing in his writing suggests that he directed the writing of all of it.

The definitive scripture of Christianity is the Bible. Because, when papyrus was the main material of paper for books, the Phoenician city Byblos was a major source of papyrus, the word "bible" means "book". And most of the Bible is the *Miqra*, and, calling their arrangement of the *Miqra* the Old Testament, Christians, because the part of the Bible that's exclusive to Christianity augments the *Miqra*, call that part the New Testament.

One example of the augmentation is Paul's waiving the doctrine of circumcision for Greeks and others who weren't Judaic but chose to be Christian. Greeks were the first persons of any ethnicity to call Paul's followers Christians, and an example of Christianity's extension of the doctrine of the Pharisees regards ambiguous prophecies in the *Miqra* regarding what God would do for or against the gentiles. So Paul, calling his doctrine the gospel of uncircumcision, says God told him to welcome gentiles into Christianity.

But, whether or not Paul founded Christianity and whether or not Jesus was the messiah, the basic premise of Christianity is that God loved the world so much that he sacrificed the only son he begat, for all who believe in that son not to perish but to have eternal life.

And Christians extend the doctrine of the Pharisees into saying Jesus was both the Christ and that son.

## Chapter 16

### Gospels

Each of the four Gospels has a different author. Matthew, one of Jesus' disciples, was the author of the first of them. Mark and Luke, apostles of Paul's who probably never met Jesus, were the authors of the second and third. And John, who called himself the disciple Jesus loved, was the author of the fourth. And each of the Gospels varies considerably from each of the others.

But Christians call each of the authors of the Gospels an evangel, and the word "evangel" is a combination of Greek words meaning "good" and "messenger", and the word "gospel" is a combination of Germanic words meaning "good" and "story".

So Christians effectually call the authors of the Gospels good messengers or good storytellers.

The first chapter of Matthew's Gospel begins by listing the genealogy of Jesus' mother's husband. His name was Joseph, and this chapter lists his genealogy from Abraham through fourteen generations to David, through fourteen more generations to the Babylonian captivity, and through fourteen more generations to the birth of Jesus. But this chapter also says Mary conceived Jesus while she was espoused to Joseph but before he knew her.

But it also says Joseph was unwilling to make her a public disgrace. And, in this chapter, after he considers how to put her away privately, an angel of God comes to him in a dream, calls him a son of David, and tells him, because the child Mary has conceived is of the holy spirit, not to fear marrying her. And the angel tells Joseph to name the child Jesus and tells Mary she'll bring forth a child that will save his people from their sins.

But the angel also says the purpose of all that is to fulfil the prophesy that a virgin shall bring forth a son whose name shall be Emmanuel. "Emmanuel" is from Hebrew for "God with us", and that prophesy is in the seventh chapter of the Book of Isaiah, but the name Jesus is a Greek form of the

Hebrew name Joshua, meaning “saving lord”. And such discordant professions of accordance with the *Miqra* are a motif in the Gospels.

In the second chapter of Matthew’s Gospel is Jesus’ birth. It’s in Bethlehem while Herod is king, and in this chapter wise men saying they’ve seen Jesus’ star in the east come to worship him, and hearing of that troubles Herod. So he gathers the chief Judaic priests and scribes and demands to know where to find Jesus, and, telling him of the prophesy that the birth of the messiah would be in Bethlehem, they quote Hosea’s saying God told Bethlehem a ruler would come from there and be a shepherd of his people Israel. So Herod tells them to go there, find him, return, and, for him to go and worship him, tell him where he is.

So the wise men follow the star, find Jesus, and present gifts to him, but God warns them in a dream not to return to Herod, and they don’t. And, in another dream, an angel warns Joseph to take Jesus and Mary to Egypt because Herod will seek to destroy the child. So Joseph, Mary, and Jesus flee to Egypt and stay there until the death of Herod, and this chapter also says sending them to Egypt fulfilled God’s prophesy through Hosea that he’d call his son out of Egypt. But that’s another example of the discordant professions of accordance with the *Miqra*. The son in that prophesy of Hosea’s is Israel.

Yet Herod orders the killing of all the children in and near Bethlehem who are younger than two years, and this chapter says his ordering that fulfilled Jeremiah’s prophesy referring to Rachel weeping for her children, but that prophesy refers to Joseph’s son Ephraim, who was a grandson of Rachel’s, and not to Joseph’s brother Judah, who was a stepson of Rachel’s.

And next, in another dream, an angel tells the Joseph who’s Mary’s husband to return to the land of Israel because the people seeking to destroy Jesus are dead. But Joseph fears that the son of Herod then reigning in his father’s stead shall behave as his father did, and he receives another warning from God in another dream, and so he doesn’t then return to Bethlehem. He takes Mary and Jesus to Nazareth in Galilee, and this chapter says the purpose of that was to fulfil a prophesy that the messiah would be called a Nazarene, but the *Miqra* says Samson was a Nazarite not from Nazareth.

In the third chapter of Matthews’s Gospel, a John the Gospels call John the Baptist, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand and calling for people to repent, comes preaching in the wilderness of Judaea. And this chapter refers to the Book of Isaiah prophesying that one crying in the wilderness would prepare a way for God and make his path straight. And in this chapter people of the region come to John for baptism in the Jordan and to confess their sins.

Pharisees and Sadducees also come. But John, calling them a generation of vipers, asking them who warned them to flee the wrath, and saying

God could make stones children of Abraham, tells them not to tell themselves Abraham was their father. And he also tells them that any tree not bringing forth good fruit will be hewn down, that he baptizes with water of repentance while someone whose shoes he isn't worthy to bear will come after him, and that the person coming after him will baptize them with the holy spirit and fire.

The Sadducees were a sect of Judaism that denied the Pharisees' interpretation of the prophesies of resurrection, and next in this chapter Jesus comes to John the Baptist from Galilee for baptism, and John demurs. He says that, rather than his baptizing Jesus, Jesus should baptize him. But Jesus insists.

And John complies, and heaven opens to Jesus, and John sees the spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Jesus, and a voice from heaven says Jesus is its beloved son, in whom it's well pleased.

Presumably the voice is God's. And, in the fourth chapter, the spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness for the devil, presumably the Satan of the *Miqra*, to tempt him. And he fasts there forty days and nights.

Then the devil tells him, if he's the son of God, to command the stones there to be bread, but Jesus says man shall not live by bread alone but by every word from the mouth of God. And next the devil sets Jesus on a pinnacle of the temple and tells him to throw himself down, and, referring to what the 91<sup>st</sup> Psalm says of those who dwell in the secret place of the highest, the devil tells him angels shall bear him up, if he's the son of God. But Jesus tells the devil that scripture also says one shouldn't tempt God.

Next the devil takes him to a mountain, shows him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and promises them to him, if he'll fall down and worship him. But Jesus, then calling the devil Satan and telling him to go away, tells him scripture also says one should worship and serve only God. And, when the devil goes, angels come and minister to Jesus.

Next in this chapter Jesus hears John the Baptist is in prison, and, to fulfil Isaiah's saying a light has dawned on people living in the shadow of death in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali along the Jordan in Galilee of the gentiles, he returns to Galilee, dwells in Capernaum, and, telling people, as did John the Baptist, to repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand, begins to preach.

And, along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus recruits his first four disciples. The first two are the brothers Peter and Andrew, and the next two are the brothers James and John, and those four are fishers. Jesus tells Peter and Andrew he'll make them fishers of men, and they immediately leave their nets to follow him. And James and John leave their boat and their father.

And Jesus teaches in the synagogues of Galilee, preaches the gospel of the kingdom, and heals all kinds of sickness and disease. His fame spreads through all of Syria, and people bring him people with diseases, people

possessed with devils, and people who are lunatic, and he heals them. And people from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea, and beyond the Jordan follow him.

And the next three chapters are what Christians call the Sermon on the Mount. The fifth chapter begins with Jesus seeing a multitude of people and, with his disciples following him, going onto a mountain. And he begins the sermon with what Christians call the Beatitudes.

He says that, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs, blessed are the poor in spirit, that, because they'll be comforted, blessed are those who mourn, that, because they'll inherit the earth, blessed are the meek, that, because they'll be filled, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, that, because they'll obtain mercy, blessed are the merciful, that, because they'll see God, blessed are the pure in heart, that, because they'll be called the children of God, blessed are the peacemakers, and that, also because the kingdom of heaven is theirs, blessed are those persecuted for the sake of righteousness.

And he tells his audience they're blessed when people revile and persecute them and say all manner of evil against them falsely for his sake. He tells them to rejoice because their reward in heaven is great because people persecuted the prophets who preceded them. And he calls them the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

He tells them that, as people don't light a lamp and put it under a bushel but put it on a stand to light the whole house, they should let their light shine before people for the people to see their good works and glorify their father who's in heaven. And he says he didn't come to destroy the law or the prophets but to fulfil the law until all of it's fulfilled. And the remainder of the fifth chapter is ethical injunctions.

Saying that whoever breaks one of the least of the commandments and teaches people to break it shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, while whoever practices and teaches the commandments shall be called great there, he tells his audience that, if their righteousness doesn't exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees, they'll in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.

He says that both those who disobey the commandment against killing and whoever is angry with his brother without cause shall be in danger of judgement. And he says that whoever expresses contempt for his brother shall be in danger of the court while whoever calls his brother a fool shall be in danger of hell fire. And that's the first mention of hell in the New Testament.

And he also says that whoever brings a gift to the altar and remembers contention with his brother should leave the gift, go and reconcile with his brother, and then come and offer the gift, and he says that, to avoid going to

prison and paying all one owes before one's release, one should also quickly reconcile with other adversaries.

Referring to the commandment against adultery, he says that whoever looks on a woman in lust has already committed adultery in his heart, that whoever puts away his wife for any reason other than fornication causes her to commit adultery, and that whoever marries the divorced woman also commits it.

He says that, if one's right eye or right hand offends one, one would profit more by throwing it away than by keeping it and having one's whole body thrown into hell. Extending the commandment against vainly swearing by God, he says one shouldn't swear by anything: not by heaven, because it's God's throne; not by earth, because it's God's footstool; not by Jerusalem, because it's the city of the great king; and not by one's head, because one can't make a hair of it white or black. And he says anything beyond yes and no comes from evil.

Next, in one of many instances of the Gospels' saying Jesus contradicted his assertion that he came to fulfill all of the law, he disagrees with the *Miqra*'s assertion that God directed the retribution of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. He says one shouldn't resist evil, that one should turn one's other cheek to one who smites one on one's right cheek, and that one should go two miles with a person who compels one to go with one a mile. And he says one should give both one's cloak and one's coat to a person who sues for one's coat and that one shouldn't refuse a request for a loan.

And he says we shouldn't love our neighbors but hate our enemies. He says we should bless those who curse us, do good to those who hate us, and pray for those who spitefully abuse and persecute us. And he says that by that we may be the children of our father in heaven, who makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good, sending rain on both the just and the unjust.

He asks what reward we'll receive by loving those who love us. And, saying the publicans do that, he asks whether, if, as do the publicans, we salute only our brothers, what we do is more than they do. Publicans were officials of the Roman government who collected public revenue.

And Matthew closes this chapter of his Gospel by saying Jesus told us to be perfect as our father in heaven is perfect.

The sixth chapter begins with Jesus saying that, if we give alms for others to see us doing it, we'll have no reward from our father in heaven. He says hypocrites do that in the synagogues and in the streets, that they do it for the glory of men, and that they have their reward, but that we should give alms in secret, with our left hand not knowing what our right hand is doing. He says our father who sees what one does in secret shall reward us openly for that.

And he says the same of prayer. He says we should pray privately and not use vain repetitions as heathens do. And, saying our father knows what we need before we ask him, he tells us what to pray.

The prayer he cites calls God our father in heaven and asks that his kingdom come and that his will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. It asks God to give us our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And it asks God to deliver us from evil and not lead us into temptation.

It tells God we're praying because the kingdom, power, and glory are his forever. And it closes with the word "amen", a Hebrew word that may be a cognate of the Sanskrit syllable "om", means "truly", and connotes requesting that what precedes it be true. And Christians call that prayer the Lord's Prayer.

Next Jesus says God won't forgive our trespasses if we don't forgive others'. And he says that when we fast we shouldn't appear sad or disfigure our faces as the hypocrites do when they fast. He says we should instead anoint our heads and wash our faces.

And next he forbids accumulating treasure on earth. He says that instead we should accumulate treasure in heaven where moths and rust don't corrupt it. And he says our hearts are where our treasure is.

Next he says the light of the body is in the eye and that, if one's eye is single, one's whole body shall be full of light, and, saying that, if one's eye is evil, one's whole body shall be full of darkness, he asks how great is the darkness if the light in one is darkness.

He says that, because serving two masters would require either hating one master and loving the other or adhering to one and despising the other, no man can serve two masters. And next he specifies that we can't serve both God and mammon. "*Mammon*" is a Hebrew word for "money".

Next he says that thus we shouldn't take thought for our life, for what we eat or drink, for our body, or for our raiment. And, asking whether our life and body aren't more important than meat or raiment, he tells us to see that God feeds birds while they don't sow or reap or store. But, unlike the Buddha in the *Metta Sutta*, he asks whether we aren't better than the birds.

Next he tells us to consider the wildflowers, how they grow while neither toiling nor spinning, while Solomon in all his glory wasn't arrayed as one of them. But he asks why God would clothe more than us grass that's in the field today but thrown into an oven tomorrow. And next, before more plainly directing not seeking meat, drink, or raiment, he calls his audience of little faith.

He says gentiles also seek such things, that God knows we need such things, and that, if we seek first the kingdom of God, such things shall be added to us. And this chapter closes with Jesus telling his audience that, because



tomorrow shall take thought for things of itself, we should take no thought for tomorrow. He says the evil of today is sufficient.

The seventh chapter begins with Jesus telling us that, not to be judged, we shouldn't judge, and he says we'll receive whatever we deliver. Asking why we regard a mote in our brother's eye while we have a beam in our own eye and why we ask for removal of our brother's mote while we haven't removed our beam, he says we need to remove the beam from our eye to see clearly to remove the mote from our brother's eye. And he says that, if we give holy things to dogs or throw pearls to pigs, the dogs or pigs will trample the things and tear us, and he says asking shall result in receiving, that seeking shall result in finding, and that knocking shall result in opening. And he asks whether a man would give his son a stone if he asks for bread or give him a snake if he asks for a fish.

And next he asks how much more our father in heaven will give to those who pray to him than he'd give to evil people who give good gifts to their children. And next he delivers what Christians call the Golden Rule, that we should do to others what we would have them do to us, and he says that's the law and the prophets. And next he says that, because the gate to destruction is wide while the gate to life is narrow, we should enter at the narrow gate.

Next he tells us to beware of false prophets who come to us in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravening wolves. And, as does God in the *Miqra*, he says we can know the credibility of a prophet by whether what the prophet prophesies occurs. Next he says not everyone who calls him lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, that entering the kingdom of heaven requires doing the will of his father in heaven. And, telling the iniquitous who tell him they've thrown out devils and done wonderful works in his name that he never knew them, he tells them to depart from him.

And, saying that whoever hears what he says and complies is like a wise man who builds his house on a rock, while those who don't are like a foolish man who builds his house on sand, he says the house on the rock shall stand in wind while the house on sand falls in such weather.

And Matthew ends his quotation of the Sermon on the Mount by saying the people were astonished when Jesus ended those sayings and that their astonishment was because Jesus taught them as one with authority and not as one of the scribes.

The eighth chapter begins with Jesus descending the mountain with the multitude following him. A leper kneels to him and tells him he can make him clean if he will, and he touches the leper and tells him he will, and immediately the leper is clean. And Jesus tells him to tell no one but to show himself to a priest and offer as a testimony the gift Moses commanded.

As Jesus enters Capernaum, a centurion tells him the palsy is grievously tormenting his servant at home, and Jesus replies that he'll go there and heal the servant. Centurions were Roman military commanders, and this centurion, telling Jesus he gives people orders and that they follow them, says that, while he's not worthy of Jesus' being under his roof, a word from Jesus could heal his servant. And Jesus says he's found no faith so great in Israel.

And he also says that many shall come from east and west and sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven but that the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth, and, saying that what the centurion believed Jesus could do would be done, he tells the centurion to go his way, and the servant is healed in that hour.

Next, at Peter's house, Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law of fever, and that evening people bring him people devils have possessed, and Jesus casts out the spirits with his word and heals all the sick, and Matthew says the healing was to accord with the prophesy in the 53<sup>rd</sup> chapter of the Book of Isaiah that a servant of God would take our infirmities and bear our sickness.

But next, seeing the multitude around him, Jesus orders departing to the other side of the Jordan. There a scribe offers to be his disciple, but Jesus tells him foxes and birds have holes and nests while the son of man has no place to lay his head. And a man asks Jesus to let him bury his father before following him, and Jesus tells him to follow him and let the dead bury the dead.

And next in this chapter he boards a ship and sleeps. A storm arises, and his disciples awaken him and ask him to save them, and, asking them why they're fearful and telling them they're of little faith, he rebukes the wind and calms the sea. So, amazed, they ask what kind of man the wind and waves obey.

When he arrives on the other side of the Jordan, two people devils have possessed come out of the tombs there and meet him. Their ferocity keeps people from passing, and, calling Jesus the son of God, they ask him what they have to do with him and why he came there to torment them before the time. And they ask him, if he's going to cast them out, to cast them into a nearby herd of pigs.

So he does, and the herd of pigs with the devils in it runs down a steep place and drowns in the sea, and their keepers flee into the city and tell everyone there what happened. So all the city comes out and meets Jesus and begs him to leave its vicinity. So the ninth chapter begins with Jesus boarding another ship.

He comes to his own city, and people bring him on a bed a man sick of palsy, and Jesus tells the man to be of cheer because his sins are forgiven. Some scribes tell themselves Jesus is blaspheming, and Jesus knows their thoughts and asks them why they think evil in their hearts and whether telling people their sins are forgiven is easier than telling people to arise and walk. And then he

tells the man to arise and take his bed home, and the man does, and Jesus tells the scribes he did that for them to know the son of man has power on earth to forgive sins. And the multitude marvel and glorify God for giving that authority to men.

Going on, Jesus sees the publican Matthew sitting and receiving customs and tells him to arise and follow him. And he dines at Matthew's house with other publicans and sinners, and Pharisees ask Jesus' disciples why he does that, and Jesus tells them the sick and not the whole need a physician. And, telling them to go and learn what that means, he says that, because he came to call not the righteous but the sinners to repentance, he'll have mercy and not sacrifice. But disciples of John the Baptist ask him why the Pharisees fast often while Jesus' disciples don't fast.

Asking them whether children of the bridechamber mourn while the bridegroom is with them, Jesus tells them the day will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and that then they'll fast. And next he says that, because patching a new garment with old cloth would rend the garment worse, no one does that. And, further suggesting that he needn't obey previous law, he speaks similarly of old wine and new bottles.

While he says those things, a ruler who worships him tells him his daughter's dead and asks him to lay a hand on her to bring her to life. Jesus and his disciples rise and follow the ruler, and a woman who's been issuing blood twelve years comes behind him, touches the hem of his garment, and tells herself that doing that will make her whole. Jesus turns, sees her, addresses her as daughter, tells her to be of good comfort, and tells her that her faith has made her whole, and she's whole from that hour.

At the ruler's house, Jesus says the daughter isn't dead but sleeping, and people laugh him to scorn. But, when the people go out, Jesus takes the daughter by hand, and she rises, and the fame of her rising spreads through all the land. And next Jesus heals two blind men who call him the son of David and ask him to have mercy on them.

Jesus asks them whether they believe he can heal them, and, when they say they do, he touches their eyes and tells them the healing will accord with their faith, and, when their eyes open, he tells them to see that no one knows of that, but they spread his fame through all the country.

Next people bring him a dumb man a devil possesses, and, when, after Jesus casts out the devil, the man speaks, the multitude marvel and say such never has been seen in Israel. Pharisees say he cast out the devil through being the prince of the devils, but Jesus continues teaching in the synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and disease among the people of the cities and villages, and seeing the multitude faint and

scattered abroad as sheep with no shepherd moves Jesus to compassion. So he tells his disciples that the harvest is plenty while the laborers are few and to pray to the lord of the harvest to send laborers to it.

And the tenth chapter begins with Jesus assembling his twelve disciples and giving them power to cast out unclean spirits and heal all manner of sickness and disease, and Matthew names the twelve.

Saying Simon was the first and is called Peter, he next names Peter's brother Andrew, and next he names the brothers James and John. Next he names Philip, Bartholomew, and Thomas, and next he names Matthew, and he again calls him, presumably himself, a publican. And next he names Thaddaeus, another James, and a Simon he calls the Canaanite. And the last disciple he names is Judas Iscariot. And he says Judas betrayed Jesus.

And next he says Jesus sent the twelve forth. Then in this chapter, commanding them not to go the way of the gentiles or into the cities of the Samaritans but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Jesus tells them to preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, to heal the sick, clean the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils, and to give freely, as they've freely received. And, telling them to provide for their journey no gold, silver, brass, scrip, shoes, staves, or two coats, he says the workman is worthy of his meat.

He doesn't say how the people of the city that was Ahab's capital aren't lost sheep of Israel, but he tells his disciples to ask in each city who's worthy, to salute each house they enter, and to let their peace come upon worthy houses. And he tells them to let their peace return to them if a house isn't worthy and to shake the dust from their feet as they leave houses and cities that don't receive them or hear their words. He says that, in the day of judgement, more tolerance shall be for Sodom and Gomorrah than for those cities.

And he tells them he's sending them forth as sheep among wolves, that they should be as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves, and that, for his sake, people will scourge them in their synagogues and bring them before governors and kings as a testimony against them and the gentiles.

But he tells them not to take thought of how or what they speak. He says that what they speak shall be given to them in the hour of their speaking. And he says that not they but the spirit of their Father in them shall speak.

But next he prophesies brothers delivering their brothers to death and children causing their parents to be killed. And, saying all men shall hate them for his sake, he tells them to flee to another city when they persecute them, and he says they'll not have gone over all the cities of Israel until the son of man comes. But he tells them not to fear the servants of Beelzebub but rather to preach in light on the housetops what he tells them in darkness.

And, saying nothing shall not be revealed, he tells them not to fear those who kill the body but can't kill the soul but to fear him who can destroy both in hell. He tells them that two sparrows are sold for a farthing but that no sparrow falls to the ground but with their father's knowing, that the hairs of their head are numbered but that they're of more value than many sparrows, and that that's why they shouldn't fear. And he tells them he'll confess before his father in heaven whoever confesses him before men and that he'll deny before his father in heaven whoever denies him before men.

And next he tells his disciples not to think he came to send peace on earth but that he came to send a sword. He says he came to set a man against his father, the daughter against the mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And he says a man's foes shall be his own household and that one who loves his father or mother or son or daughter more than him isn't worthy of him.

And he tells them that anyone who doesn't take his cross and follow him isn't worthy of him, that one who finds his life shall lose it but that one who loses his life for his sake shall find it, that one who receives them receives him, and that one who receives him receives the one who sent him.

And he says that one who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward and that one who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward, but he also tells them that whoever, in the name of a disciple, gives a cup of cold water to a little one shall not lose his reward.

And Matthew begins his eleventh chapter by saying that, when Jesus finished commanding his disciples, he went to teach and preach in their cities. And, in this chapter, John the Baptist hears in prison of Christ's works and sends two of his disciples to him, and they ask Jesus whether he's the one that should come or whether they should seek another. And, telling them to go and tell John of his healing and preaching, he says whoever isn't offended in him is blessed.

And, after John's disciples go, he speaks of him to the multitude. Asking them whether they went to the wilderness to see a reed shaken in the wind and telling them men in soft clothing are in king's houses but that they went to see a prophet and that John's more than a prophet, he refers to the prophet Malachi's prophesying sending a messenger before him to prepare the way before him. And Malachi's prophesy is of God sending a messenger to prepare a way before God.

And next Jesus says that, while the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist, no prophet greater than John has risen from women. And he says the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence since the days of John the Baptist and that, because of all the prophets and the law

prophesied until John, the violent take it by force. And he says John's the resurrection of the prophet Elijah.

And next he compares the present generation to children sitting in the markets and calling out to their fellows that they've piped for them while they haven't danced and have mourned for them while they haven't lamented. Next he says that, while John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking while people said he had a devil, the son of man came eating and drinking while people called him glutton, a winebibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners. And, saying wisdom is justified from her children, he prophesies against the unrepentant cities in which he's done works.

He says that, because the works he's done in Capernaum would have led Tyre and Sidon to repentance, Capernaum shall be brought down to hell. He says that, if as many mighty works had been done in Sodom, Sodom would be remaining in that day. And he says that for that more tolerance would for Sodom on the day of judgement.

And next he thanks God for hiding those things from the wise while, because it seemed good in God's sight, revealing them to babes. And he says God delivers all things to him, that only the father knows the son, and that only the son and those to whom the son will reveal the father know the father. And he says he'll give rest to all who labor, are heavily laden, and come to him.

And, telling the multitude to take his yoke upon them and learn from him because he's meek and low in heart, he tells them that, because his yoke is easy and his burden light, they'll find rest in their souls.

The twelfth chapter begins with Jesus and his disciples going through a grain field on the Sabbath. His disciples are hungry and begin picking and eating the grain, and Pharisees say that's unlawful on the Sabbath. But Jesus reminds them of David and his soldiers eating sacrificial bread in the house of God when they're fleeing Saul, and, asking them whether they haven't read in the law that priests in the temple are blameless on the Sabbath, he tells them that with them is one greater than the temple. And, again telling them that, had they known what his words mean, he'd have mercy and not sacrifice, he says that neither would they have condemned the guiltless.

And, saying the son of man is lord of the Sabbath, he goes from there into their synagogue, heals a man's withered hand, and asks whether healing is lawful on the Sabbath. And, asking which of the men there wouldn't lift a sheep of theirs from a pit if it fell into it on the Sabbath, he asks whether a man isn't better than a sheep and whether doing well isn't lawful on Sabbath days. So the Pharisees go out and hold council against him to decide how to destroy him, but he knows that and withdraws.

But the multitude follows him, and he heals all of them and tells them that, to fulfil a prophecy of Isaiah's that's in Isaiah's 42<sup>nd</sup> chapter, they shouldn't refrain from informing on him. That chapter of Isaiah's includes the words Matthew says were words from the sky when John the Baptist baptized Jesus, and it also says the gentiles shall trust the name of the servant of God to whom God refers in that chapter. And it also says former things are past and that God's declaring new things.

Next in this chapter people bring Jesus a deaf and dumb man a devil has possessed, and the people, amazed by his healing him, ask whether Jesus isn't the son of David. But Pharisees say again that Jesus casts out devils by Beelzebub, and this time, replying that a city or house divided against itself can't stand, Jesus asks whether Satan's kingdom can stand if Satan's divided against himself to cast out Satan. And he tells the Pharisees that, if he casts out devils by the spirit of God, the kingdom of God has come to them.

And, asking the Pharisees how one can enter a strong man's house and spoil his goods if one doesn't bind the man, he says those who aren't with him are against him and that those who don't gather with him shall be scattered abroad, and he repeats things he's said earlier in Matthew's Gospel, until some scribes and Pharisees ask him for a sign.

And then, telling them an evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, he says that, other than the sign God gave to Jonah when Jonah fled from prophesying against Nineveh, no sign shall be given to that generation. And, saying the son of man shall be three days in the heart of the earth as Jonah was three days in the belly of the whale, he tells them that one greater than Jonah is in their presence. And, saying the queen of the south shall rise against that generation, he continues that reference to the Queen of Sheba by saying that one greater than Solomon is there. And he says the present evil generation is like a person who replaces with worse devils the devils he casts from a person.

And, as he speaks there, his mother and his brothers are standing outside wishing to speak with him, and he replies to hearing that by saying that whoever does the will of his father in heaven are his brother, sister, and mother, and that thus his disciples are his mother and brothers.

The thirteenth chapter begins with Jesus sitting in a ship and telling a parable to a multitude. His disciples ask him why he's speaking in parables, and he tells them that knowing the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven is given to them, but not to the multitude. And he tells them that those who have shall be given abundance, that what those who haven't have shall be taken from them, and that the multitude neither see nor understand what they hear.

And, referring to Isaiah's sixth chapter's saying God told Isaiah that people would be that way, he says the people's heart is waxed gross, that their

ears are dull of hearing, and that their eyes are closed. And he tells his disciples their eyes and ears are blessed because they see and hear, and that prophets and righteous men have desired to see and hear what they've seen and heard, but that they haven't heard it. But they ask him to explain the parable he tells at the beginning of this chapter, and he explains it and tells and explains others.

The first parable he explains refers to circumstances distracting people from understanding the word of God, and the second refers to separating good from evil to keep from destroying good before destroying evil. The third and fourth refer to the kingdom of God beginning small in a person but growing to grandeur. And the fifth and sixth refer to giving for that growth all one has.

The seventh refers to angels separating the wicked from the righteous at the end of time. And, saying of the end of time that the angels will throw the wicked into a fiery furnace with weeping and gnashing of teeth, he asks the disciples whether they understand all those things. And his reply to their replying affirmatively is that every scribe who's been instructed in the kingdom of God is like the owner of a house who brings from his storeroom treasures both old and new.

And next in this chapter he teaches in a synagogue in his country. People there ask whence came his wisdom and mighty works, whether he isn't the carpenter's son, whether his mother isn't called Mary, whether his brothers aren't James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, and whether his sisters aren't there with them. And Jesus says that only in his own country and house has a prophet no honor, and Matthew says Jesus offended the people and that because of their disbelief he didn't do many mighty works there.

And he begins his fourteenth chapter by saying the tetrarch Herod heard of Jesus' fame and told his servants that the reason for the mighty works was that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, and next in this chapter is the story of the death of John the Baptist.

In it Herod imprisons John because he told him his having married his brother Philip's wife Herodias was unlawful. But, because the multitude count John a prophet, Herod fears them and doesn't have him killed, until Herodias's daughter dances and pleases him. Then he swears to give her whatever she asks, and her mother instructs her to ask for John the Baptists head, in a charger.

The tetrarchs were Jews Romans appointed to govern other Jews, but Matthew calls Herod the king and says he was sorry but complied, and next in this chapter John's disciples bury John's body and tell Jesus.

But next in this chapter Jesus privately goes by ship to a desert place. Seeing a multitude there, he's moved to compassion and heals their sick, and that evening Jesus' disciples, pointing out to him that they're in a desert place,



tell him to send the multitude to their villages to buy food for themselves. But Jesus tells his disciples the multitude needn't go.

He tells them to give the multitude food. So they tell him they've but five loaves and two fish, but Jesus, telling them to bring him the loaves and the fish, tells the multitude to sit on the grass, takes the loaves and fish, looks up to heaven, breaks the bread, and gives it to his disciples. And the disciples give it to the multitude, and the multitude eat until they're full and fill twelve baskets with what remains, and Matthew says those who ate were five thousand men, in addition to women and children.

Then Jesus tells his disciples to board a ship and go, while he sends the multitude away, and, after sending the multitude away, he goes to a mountain to pray. So the ship leaves him there, and waves toss the ship in the middle of sea, but Jesus walks to the ship on the water. His disciples see him but say he's a spirit and cry out in fear. So Jesus tells them who he is.

Peter tells Jesus to bid him to come to him on the water, if he's Jesus. And Jesus complies, but Peter fears the wind and begins to sink and cries for Jesus to save him. So Jesus puts forth a hand and saves him, and they go onto the ship, and this chapter ends in the land of Gennesaret with more healing. But Jesus, asking Peter why he doubted, tells him he's of little faith.

The fifteenth chapter begins with scribes and Pharisees asking Jesus why his disciples transgress the traditions of the elders by not washing their hands when they eat bread. Jesus replies by asking them why, by saying that, by saying children's profiting from their parents is a gift, children are free of their responsibility to their parents, the Pharisees transgress God's commandment to honor their fathers and mothers. And, telling them Isaiah's rebuking people for their hypocrisy pertains to them, he tells the multitude there that what goes into a person's mouth doesn't defile a person, while what comes out of it does.

Jesus' disciples tell him that by saying that he's offended the Pharisees, and Jesus, replying that every plant his heavenly father hasn't planted shall be rooted up, tells his disciples to leave the Pharisees alone. He says they're blind leaders of the blind and that both the blind and the blind leading the blind shall fall into a ditch. And Peter asks him to explain that.

So Jesus, asking Peter whether he also remains without understanding, tells him that what goes into a person's mouth comes out into a sewer but that what comes out of a person's mouth comes from the heart, that, because murder, adultery, fornication, false witness, and blasphemy come from the heart, what comes from the heart defiles a person, but that eating with unwashed hands doesn't defile a person.

And next he departs to the coast of Tyre and Sidon, and there a Canaanite woman asks him to have mercy on her, calls him the son of David, and tells him a devil is grievously vexing her daughter, but he doesn't answer.

His disciples ask him to send her away because she's crying to them, and he replies that he's sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but she worships him and asks him to help her. So he replies that casting children's bread to dogs isn't appropriate, but she tell him dogs eat crumbs that fall from their masters' tables, and he commends her faith and promises fulfilment of her request. And the daughter is whole from that hour.

Next, as he sits on a mountain near the sea of Galilee, multitudes bring him people with various diseases, and he heals them. Filling them with seven loaves and a few little fish, he feeds the four thousand men and women and children there, and they leave seven baskets of remnants. And he sends them away and boards a ship to Magdala.

Matthew's sixteenth chapter begins with Pharisees and Sadducees asking Jesus for a sign from heaven. Calling them hypocrites, he rebukes them for predicting weather by the appearance of the sky while they can't discern the sign of the times. And, repeating what in the twelfth chapter he told the Pharisees of Jonah, he leaves them and tells his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

But his disciples reason among themselves that he told them that because they'd forgotten to bring bread, and, reminding them of the two occasions of feeding multitudes with a few loaves and fish, he asks them how they don't understand that he wasn't referring to bread but was warning them against the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Next in this chapter, in Caesarea in Philippi, Jesus asks them who people say the son of man is. And they reply that some say he's John the Baptist while others say he's Elijah while others say he's Jeremiah or one of the other prophets. So Jesus asks them who they say he is, and Peter says he's the Christ, the son of the living God.

And then Jesus calls Peter Simon. But, also saying he's blessed, he tells him that not flesh and blood but Jesus' father in heaven revealed that to him. And next, telling him he's Peter and that upon that rock he'll build his church, he says the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The name Peter is a form of a Greek word meaning "rock".

And next, telling Peter he'll give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, Jesus says that whatever Peter binds on Earth shall be bound in heaven and that whatever he looses on Earth shall be loose in heaven. But next, telling his disciples to tell no one he's Jesus the Christ, he begins to show them how he'll go to Jerusalem, suffer much from the elders, the chief priests, and the

scribes, be killed, and rise again on the third day. And Peter rebukes him for that and says it won't happen to him, and Jesus turns to Peter, calls him Satan, and tells him to get behind him. And, telling Peter he offends him, he says Peter doesn't savor the things of God but the things of men.

And next, telling his disciples to let whoever follows him deny themselves and take up their cross, he says again that saving one's life loses it and that losing one's life for his sake finds it because of the question of what profit is gaining the whole world while losing one's soul. And he says the reason for that is that the son of man shall come with angels in the glory of his father and that then he'll reward all persons in accordance with their works. And he also tells them that some standing there shall not taste death before seeing the son of man coming in his kingdom.

Matthew's seventeenth chapter begins six days later with Jesus taking Peter and James and John onto a high mountain, and there Jesus' face shines as the sun, and his raiment is white as light, and Moses and Elijah appear and talk with him. Peter, asking Jesus whether his and the others' being there is good, asks him to let him, James, and John make three tents, for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, but a bright cloud overshadows them, and a voice from the cloud says what the voice from the sky said when John the Baptist baptized Jesus. And the voice also directs Peter, James, and John to hear Jesus, and they fall on their faces afraid.

Jesus touches them and tells them to rise and not be afraid, and then they see only Jesus. And, as they descend from the mountain, Jesus tells them to tell no one of the vision, until the son of man is risen again from the dead. The three disciples ask him why the scribes say Elijah must come first, and Jesus replies that Elijah shall come first and restore all things but that he's come already but that the scribes didn't know him and did what they would to him. And then the three disciples know Jesus is speaking of John the Baptist, and the four return to the multitude.

Then a man kneels before Jesus, asks him to have mercy on his son, and tells him the son's lunatic, that he often falls into fire and often into water, and that he took him to Jesus' disciples but that they couldn't heal him. So Jesus, calling the disciples a faithless and perverse generation, asks how long he'll be with that generation and suffer it. And, telling the man to bring him his son, he rebukes the devil, and the devil departs from the son.

The disciples ask him why they couldn't cast out the devil, and Jesus, telling them the reason was their disbelief and that, if they had faith as a mustard seed and told the mountain to go somewhere else, the mountain would go, says that, with that much faith, anything would be possible for them, but he also says the kind of devil that was in the son goes out only by prayer and fasting.

Of course a question here is how, if anything's possible with faith as a grain of mustard seed, it isn't enough to drive out any kind of devil. But, of course, possibilities are that Matthew misunderstood or misremembered or deliberately misrepresented. And much in the Gospels raises for their authors the question of those possibilities.

Next, in Galilee, Jesus tells his disciples the son of man will be betrayed into the hands of men and that they'll kill him. And he tells them again that he'll rise again on the third day. But the disciples are filled with grief.

And next, in Capernaum, a tribute collector comes to Peter and asks him whether his master pays tribute. Peter replies affirmatively, but Jesus, calling him Simon again, asks him what he was thinking and whether kings of earth take custom or tribute from their own children or from strangers. Peter replies that they take it from strangers, and Jesus tells him that then the children are free, but he tells Peter not to offend the tribute collectors.

Telling him to cast a hook into the sea and take the first fish that comes up, he says that, when he opens the fish's mouth, he'll find a piece of money, and he tells him to give the money to the tribute collector, for both of them.

In Matthew's eighteenth chapter, Jesus' disciples ask Jesus who's greatest in the kingdom heaven, and Jesus sets a little child amid them. Telling them they'll not enter the kingdom of heaven if they don't become as little children, he says those who humble themselves as that child are greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And he says that whoever receives such a child in his name receives him and that drowning in the depths of the sea with a millstone hanging around one's neck would be better for a person than that the person offend one of those children believing in him.

Saying offences necessarily come but that woe should come to those by whom the offenses come, he declares woe to the world for offenses, and he directs his disciples to take heed that, because the little ones' angels, because the son of man came to save what was lost, always behold the face of his father in heaven, they not despise one of them.

And, saying again that losing parts of one's body causing one to sin is better than being thrown into hell fire with the body parts, he says a man having a hundred sheep will go to the mountains to retrieve one that's strayed and that he'll rejoice for that one sheep more than he rejoices for all the others.

And next, adding to his instructions for settling disputes between brothers, he says one should first show one's brother's sin to him privately, that, if that doesn't settle the dispute, one should try again before three witnesses, that, if that doesn't settle it, one should take the dispute to the church, and that, if that doesn't settle it, one should treat the brother as one would treat a gentile or a publican. But then he says that whatever one binds on earth will be bound in

heaven, that whatever one looses on earth will be loose in heaven, and that he'll be in the midst of any two or three who gather in his name. And Peter asks him how many times he should forgive his brother for sinning against him.

And Jesus replies that he should forgive him seventy times seven times, that the kingdom of heaven is like a king who forgave a servant's debt but didn't forgive the servant's not forgiving another servant's debt to the first servant after the king forgave the first servant's debt, and that the king responded to that by delivering the first servant to tormentors until he paid the original debt.

Matthew's nineteenth chapter begins with a multitude following Jesus from Galilee to Judaea. There Pharisees ask him whether a man's putting aside his wife for any cause is lawful, and Jesus replies that the creator at the beginning made them male and female, that a man should leave his parents and cleave to his wife, and that the two should be one flesh. And he directs that no man put asunder what God has joined together.

But the Pharisees ask him why Moses commanded putting away wives by writing divorces, and Jesus tells them Moses did that because of the hardness of their hearts but that such wasn't so at the beginning. And he repeats what he said earlier concerning causing adultery by divorcing for any reason other than fornication. But his disciples tell him that, if that's the situation with a man and his wife, marrying isn't good.

So Jesus replies that only men to whom what he'd said is given can receive it, says some eunuchs are born eunuchs from their mothers' wombs but that some have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, and directs that whoever can receive that receive it.

But next his disciples rebuke people for bringing children to him for him to lay his hands on them. And then Jesus, telling them to suffer little children and not to forbid them to come to him, tells them again that of such as children are the kingdom of heaven. And he lays his hands on the children.

But he and his disciples travel on, and a young man comes to him, calls him good master, and asks him what he should do to have eternal life. And then Jesus, asking him why he called him good, tells him only God is good but that he'll enter into life if he obeys the commandments against murder, adultery, stealing, and bearing false witness and obeys the commandments to honor one's parents and to love one's neighbor as oneself. And the man, telling Jesus he does all that, asks what he yet lacks.

So Jesus tells him he'll have treasure in heaven if he goes and sells all he has, gives to the poor, and comes and follows him, but, because the man has great possessions, the man goes away sorrowfully. So Jesus tells his disciples that going through the eye of a needle is easier for a camel than is entering the kingdom of heaven for a rich man. And that amazes the disciples.

So they ask him who then can be saved, and Jesus tells them it's impossible for men but that all things are possible with God, and Peter, telling him he and the other disciples have forsaken all and followed him, asks what they'll have for that, and Jesus, telling them they've followed him in the regeneration of his glory, says that, when the son of man sits on the throne of his glory, they'll, on twelve thrones, sit judging the twelve tribes of Israel and that all who've forsaken siblings, parents, wives, children, or land for his name's sake shall receive a hundredfold and inherit everlasting life.

And this chapter closes with Jesus saying that many who are first shall be last and that the last shall be first, and the twentieth chapter begins with Jesus saying that in a parable.

In the parable, a householder, early one morning, hires people to work in his vineyard. He promises to pay them a penny for the day, and, at the end of the day, he pays each of them a penny, but those he hired early in the day complain that he should have paid them more than he paid those he hired later. So, asking one of them whether he didn't agree to the wage he paid him, he asks those complaining whether doing what he wishes to do with what's his isn't lawful, and, asking them whether their eye is evil because he's good, he closes that parable by saying that, the reason many shall be first while the first shall be last is that many shall be called but few chosen,.

And next in this chapter, on his way to Jerusalem, he tells his disciples he'll be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes and that they'll condemn him to death and deliver him to the gentiles to be mocked, scourged, and crucified, and he again says he'll rise again on the third day.

But then the mother of James and John comes to him and asks him to grant that her sons sit on his right and left in his kingdom. So he asks James and John whether they're able to drink from the cup from which he'll drink and be baptized with the baptism with which he'll be baptized, and they reply that they are, and he says they shall. But he says that what their mother requested isn't his to give, that it's for those for whom his father has prepared it.

Hearing all that moves the other ten disciples with indignation against James and John. And Jesus, calling them to him and telling them they know the gentiles exercise dominion over them and authority on them, tells them such shouldn't be so among the disciples. He tells them to let whoever's great among the disciples be their minister and, as the son of man came to minister and give his life to ransom many, to let whoever will be chief among them be their servant.

And next, as a multitude follows him from Jericho, two blind men calling him the son of David cry to him for mercy. The multitude rebuke them for not holding their peace, but they cry more, and Jesus stands still and calls to

them, asking what they wish him to do to them. So they ask that their eyes be opened, and Jesus has compassion on them and touches their eyes, and they immediately receive their sight and follow him.

The 21<sup>st</sup> chapter begins with Jesus nearing Jerusalem with his disciples. Jesus, sending two of them from the Mount of Olives into a village and telling them they'll find an ass and her colt there, tells them to bring them to him and tell anyone who speaks to them that the lord needs them. Matthew says the reason for that is Zechariah's telling the daughters of Zion that their king comes to them sitting on an ass and the foal of an ass, and the disciples bring the ass and the colt, put their clothes on them, and set Jesus on them. And the multitude cut branches from trees, strew the branches and their clothes on the way, and cry hosanna to the son of David and the highest and that blessed is he who comes in the name of God. And the people of Jerusalem ask who Jesus is, and the multitude replies that he's Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth.

Next Jesus goes into the temple, evicts the merchants from it, and overturns the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those selling doves, and, quoting Isaiah's saying God promised joy in his house of prayer and Jeremiah's saying God asked whether the house bearing his name has become a den of robbers, he also heals blind and lame who come to him there, and the chief priests and scribes see that and the children crying hosanna to the son of David, and that displeases them.

So they ask Jesus whether he hears what the children are saying, and, asking them whether they've read that praise is perfected from the mouths of babes and sucklings, he leaves them, goes to Bethany, and lodges there.

But, next morning, he returns to the city hungry and, seeing a fig tree with leaves but no figs, tells it to have no fruit henceforth. So it withers, and his disciples marvel at how quickly it withered, and Jesus tells them that, if they have faith and don't doubt, they can do that. And, again telling them faith can move mountains, he tells them that, when they pray believing, they'll receive what they ask, and they don't ask him why, as he'd multiplied the loaves and fish, he didn't give figs to the tree.

Next, in the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people ask him by what authority he does what he does. He tells them he'll answer them if they'll tell him whether the baptism of John the Baptist was from heaven or of men, and they reason among themselves that, if they reply that it was from heaven, Jesus will ask them why they didn't believe John, and, because John was a prophet to the people, they fear the people if they say it was of men. And Jesus responds with a parable of two sons.

One son in the parable refuses to work in his father's vineyard but repents and works in it, and the other son promises to work in the vineyard but

doesn't, and Jesus asks which son did the will of his father. The priests and elders tell him the one who repented did, and Jesus, telling them publicans and harlots shall enter the kingdom of God before they do, tells them John came to them in righteousness. And he tells them the publicans and harlots believed him while the priests and elders saw that and didn't repent.

And next he tells a parable of a householder who plants a vineyard, cultivates and fortifies it, lets it out to husbandmen, goes to a far country, and at harvest time sends servants for the fruit of the vineyard. The husbandmen beat one servant, kill one, and stone one, and the householder sends more servants, and the husbandmen do the same to them. So, saying the husbandmen will revere his son, the householder sends the son.

But the husbandmen kill the son also, and Jesus asks the priests and elders what the householder will do to the husbandmen, and, calling the husbandmen wicked men, they say the householder will miserably destroy them. So Jesus, asking them whether they've read in the scriptures that the stone the builders reject becomes the head of the corner, he tells them doing that is God's and is marvelous in our eyes, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth its fruits, that whoever falls on that stone shall be broken, and that the stone will grind to powder anyone on whom it falls. And the chief priests and the Pharisees, perceiving that Jesus is speaking of them, seek to lay hands on him, but, because the multitude take him as a prophet, they fear the multitude.

Jesus begins the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter with a parable of a king who invites people to his son's wedding. In it the people don't come, and some of them kill servants the king sends to invite them, and so the king sends servants to invite anyone bad or good they find anywhere. But one of those who accept isn't in a wedding garment, and the king orders binding him and casting him into darkness in a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth, and Jesus ends that parable by again saying that many are called but few chosen.

And, after taking counsel to know how to tangle him in his talk, the Pharisees ask him whether giving tribute to Caesar is lawful, and Jesus tells them to render to Caesar what's Caesar's and render to God what's God's, and they marvel and go away. But, on the same day, Sadducees, ask him about the law, and, telling him of the law that required Judah's second son to marry the wife of his first son, to raise children for the first son, after his death, they ask him which brother shall be a woman's husband in heaven if by that law she successively marries seven sons. And, telling them they know neither the scriptures nor the power of God, he says that, in the resurrection, people don't marry but are angels of God in heaven, and, also asking them whether they



haven't read that God said he's the god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he says God isn't the God of the dead but of the living.

Hearing that astonishes the multitude, but the Pharisees gather again, and one of them's a lawyer and asks Jesus which is the great commandment in the law. Jesus says the first and great commandment is to love God with all one's heart, soul, and mind, and that the second is like it, that one should love one's neighbor as one's self, and he says all the law and the prophets hang on those two commandments. He doesn't say how those two commandments are alike, but Hindus would say that, because everything is God, because God is everything, they're alike because both one's neighbor and oneself are God.

And next Jesus asks the Pharisees whose son they think the Christ is. They say he's the son of David, and Jesus, replying by asking them why David said the lord told his lord to sit on his right hand until he made his enemies his footstool, asks why David called the Christ lord if he's his son, and no one answers. And those are references is to the 110<sup>th</sup> Psalm, and Matthew closes this chapter by saying no one dared ask Jesus more, from that day forth.

But Matthew's 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins with Jesus telling the multitude that the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. And he tells them that thus the Pharisees should observe what they ask the multitude to observe, but that the multitude shouldn't do as the scribes and Pharisees do. And he rebukes the scribes and the Pharisees through the remainder of this chapter.

He says they lay burdens on people's shoulders but move the burdens with not one finger, that all their works are for people to see them, and that they love the highest rooms at feasts and the chief seats in synagogues, being greeted in the markets, and being called Rabbi. The title "rabbi" is from a Hebrew word meaning "master", and Jesus tells the multitude that their only master is Christ, that all of them are brothers, and that their only father is their father in heaven. And, saying again that the greatest among them shall be their servant, he tells them that those who exalt themselves shall be abased and that those who humble themselves shall be exalted. And, calling the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, he says they shut the kingdom of heaven against people and that they neither go there nor suffer others to go there. And he says they travel around sea and land to make one proselyte and make the proselyte twice the child of hell they are.

Calling them blind guides who say swearing by the temple is nothing, he says whoever swears by the gold of the temple is a debtor, and he calls them fools. Asking them whether the gold is greater than the temple that sanctified it, he similarly rebukes them concerning the altar and the gifts the altar sanctifies, and he tells them that whoever swears by the alter swears by all things on it. And, saying that whoever swears by the temple swears by him who dwells in it,

he says that whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits on it.

And, again calling the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, he tells them they pay the tithe of mint, anise, and cumin but omit the weight of the law and that they should have done judgement and mercy and faith and left the other tithing undone. And, again calling them blind guides, he says they strain at a gnat but swallow a camel, that they make the outside of a cup and platter clean while they're full of extortion and excess, and that they're like whited sepulchers, appearing beautiful outside while they're full of dead bones and uncleanness. He tells them, to make their outside clean, to clean what's inside the cups and platters, and he tells them they outwardly appear righteous to people while within they're full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

He bemoans their building tombs of the prophets and garnishing the sepulchers of the righteous while they deny having taken part in the blood of the prophets. Asking why they witness to themselves that they're children of those who killed the prophets, he tells them to fill the measure of their fathers. And, calling them serpents and a generation of vipers, he asks them how they can escape the damnation of hell.

He asks them why they kill, crucify, scourge in their synagogues, and persecute, from city to city, prophets, wise men, and scribes. He says that all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah, whom they killed between the temple and the altar, shall come upon them. And he says all of that shall come upon that generation.

And he tells Jerusalem he'd have gathered its children together as a hen gathers her chickens beneath her wings but that they wouldn't gather, and he tells them their house is left to them desolate and that, until they say that blessed is he who comes in the name of God, they'll not see him again.

So the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Jesus and his disciples departing from the temple. The disciples offer to show him its buildings, but he replies that every stone of it shall be thrown down, and next in this chapter Jesus is sitting on the Mount of Olives, outside Jerusalem. The top of the Mount of Olives is about a fifteen-minute walk from the walls of Jerusalem.

There Peter asks Jesus when those things shall be and what shall be the sign of his coming and the end of the world. And Jesus, telling him not to let anyone deceive him, says many shall come in his name and say they're the Christ. And, through the remainder of this chapter, Jesus prophesies the end of the world.

He begins by warning of false prophets, and his prophesy is in the manner of the *Miqra* prophets, but he adds details concerning the Christ. He says fulfilment of the prophesy shall occur before that generation passes but that

neither the angels in heaven nor the son but only the father shall know when. And he says that then will be like the days before Noah entered the Ark.

He says people will be eating and drinking and marrying, that two men or women will be together in the field or grinding with a hand mill, and that one will be taken while the other's left. And, telling his disciples to keep watch, he asks them which of them is like a faithful and wise servant whose master has put him in charge of his servants and household, and not like a wicked servant who, saying his master is delaying, then smites the other servants and eats and drinks with the drunken. He says the master will come when the servant isn't looking, that he'll cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites, and that there shall be much weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And Matthew's 25<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning with Jesus telling parables concerning preparation for the kingdom of heaven and concerning rejection of those who don't prepare, ends with him telling of the king of heaven, when the son of man comes in his glory, dividing people as a shepherd divides sheep from goats. But the criterion for the division is compassion, and in the prophesy the king, telling some people they've been charitable to him, tells others they haven't, and the people ask him when he's seen any of them behaving in either way, and, replying that being charitable to the least of people is being charitable to him, he tells those who haven't to depart from him. And, saying that those who haven't are cursed into the eternal fire he's prepared for the devil and the devil's angels, he says the righteous will go to eternal life.

The 26<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Jesus telling his disciples that but two days remain before the Passover feast and that the son of man has been betrayed, and next in this chapter the chief priests, scribes, and elders gather in the palace of the high priest Caiaphas and consult to take Jesus by subtlety and kill him.

And next in this chapter, in a house in Bethany, a woman comes to Jesus with an alabaster box of precious ointment and pours it onto his head. Jesus' disciples, calling that a waste and asking its purpose, say the ointment might have been sold for much for the poor, but Jesus asks them why they're troubling the woman, and he tells them that, because they'll always have the poor with them but won't always have him, what she's wrought on him is a good work, and he also says she poured the ointment onto him for his burial and that what she did shall be a memorial for her wherever in the world that gospel shall be preached. And next in this chapter the disciple Judas Iscariot goes to the chief priests and asks them what they'll give him to deliver Jesus to them. So they pay him thirty pieces of silver, and, beginning then, he seeks an opportunity to betray Jesus.

After that in this chapter, on the first day of the Passover feast, Jesus' disciples ask him where he wishes them to prepare for him to eat it, and he tells

them to go to a man in the city, tell him he wishes that he and his disciples keep the Passover at his house, and tell him his time is at hand. Matthew doesn't say why, after what Jesus said of harming children, he'd celebrate the death of countless Egyptian children. But his disciples comply and prepare the feast, and Jesus sits down with them.

As they eat, he tells them one of them shall betray him, and each asks whether he's the one. Jesus, replying that the one who dips a hand with his into the dish shall betray him as is written of him, says woe is to the betrayer and that not having been born would be better for him. And, to Judas' asking him whether he's the betrayer, Jesus replies that Judas is saying that.

As they eat, Jesus takes bread and blesses it, breaks it, gives it to his disciples, tells them to eat it, and says it's his body. Taking a cup and giving thanks, he gives the cup to them, tells them to drink of it, and says it's his blood of the new testament that's shed for many for the remission of sins. And he tells the disciples he won't again drink of the fruit of the vine until he drinks it new with them in his father's kingdom.

Next, after singing a hymn, they go out to the Mount of Olives, and there Jesus tells them that, because of Zechariah's prophesy that God will command striking the shepherd and that the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad, they'll be offended by him because of that night, but he says that, after he's risen, he'll go before them into Galilee.

Peter replies that, though all men may be offended by him, he never shall. But Jesus tells him he'll deny him three times that night before the cock crows. And Peter and other disciples reply that, though they may die with Jesus, they won't be offended by him.

Next, at Gethsemane, a garden on the side of the Mount of Olives facing Jerusalem, Jesus tells the disciples to sit while he goes to pray. But he takes Peter, James, and John with him, and, beginning to be sorrowful and telling them he's sorrowful to death, he asks them to stay there and watch with him. But he goes a little further, falls on his face, and prays to his father that, if possible, the cup pass from him. But he asks for accordance not with his will but with his father's.

And then he returns to the three disciples. Finding them sleeping, he asks Peter whether he couldn't watch with him one hour, and, again telling him to watch, he tells him, because the spirit is willing but the flesh weak, to pray not to enter temptation. And he goes again, repeats the request of his father, returns again, and again finds the three disciples sleeping, and, not awakening them then, he goes again, repeats the prayer again, and returns to them again.

And this time, telling them to sleep and take their rest, he says the hour is at hand and that the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. And,

telling them to rise, he says the betrayer is at hand, and, while he speaks, Judas arrives with a great multitude from the chief priests and the elders of the people, with swords and staves. And Judas, having told them he'll betray Jesus by kissing him, comes to him and greets him, calls him master, and kisses him. And Jesus, calling Judas friend, asks him why he's come.

And then people lay hands on Jesus and take him. One of those with Jesus draws his sword and strikes off an ear of a servant of the high priest, but Jesus, telling him to return his sword to its place, says those who take the sword shall perish by the sword, and, asking him whether he thinks Jesus can't pray to his father and receive more than twelve legions of angels, he asks him how then the scripture should be fulfilled. And he says it must, and, asking the multitude whether they came with swords and staves to take him as they would against a thief, he points out that he's been with them daily, teaching in the temple, and asks why they didn't take hold on him then. But Matthew says all of that was done to fulfil the scripture of the prophets. And then all of Jesus' disciples forsake him and flee.

But, from afar, Peter follows him to the high priest's palace, where the people holding Jesus take him, where the scribes and elders have assembled with the high priest Caiaphas, and Peter goes in and sits with the servants there, to see the end.

The chief priests, the elders, and the council seek false witnesses against Jesus to kill him, but many come before two say he said he could destroy the temple and build it in three days, and then the chief priest Caiaphas rises and asks him of what they witnessed against him and whether he answers nothing.

But, until Caiaphas adjures him by the living God to tell whether he's the Christ, the son of God, he holds his peace. And then he tells Caiaphas that Caiaphas says that but that later he'll see the son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven. Caiaphas replies to that by rending his clothes, saying Jesus has spoken blasphemy, telling Jesus he has, and asking what further witness the council needs, since it's heard Jesus' blasphemy. And he asks for a verdict, and the council says Jesus is guilty of death, and people spit on Jesus and buffet him, and some smite him with the palms of their hands, call him Christ, and tell him to prophesy to them who smote him.

And next in this chapter are Peter's three denials. A young woman comes to him and tells him he was with Jesus in Galilee, and, telling her in the presence of all there that she doesn't know what she's saying, he goes out to the porch. There, another young woman sees him and tells those there that he was with Jesus of Nazareth, and he replies that he doesn't know Jesus. And, a while later, a man tells Peter his speech betrays him.

And then, beginning to curse, Peter swears that he doesn't know Jesus, and immediately the cock crows. So then Peter remembers that Jesus told him he'd deny him three times before the cock crew. And this chapter closes with Peter going out and weeping bitterly.

Matthew's 27<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with the chief priests and elders agreeing to kill Jesus and leading him to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate. And Judas, seeing that Jesus has been condemned, repents and returns the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders and tells them he's sinned and betrayed innocent blood. But, asking him what that has to do with them, they tell him to see to it, and he throws down the silver in the temple and goes and hangs himself.

The chief priests take the silver, but, saying that, because it's the price of blood, putting it into the treasury is unlawful, they agree to buy with it the potter's field, for burying strangers. And Matthew says the field is called the field of blood for that reason and that doing that fulfilled a prophesy in the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Jeremiah that has no relevance to the prophesies of the messiah. And next in this chapter of Matthew's is Jesus' standing before Pilate.

Pilate asks him whether he's the king of the Jews, and Jesus replies as Matthew says he replied to other questions, by telling Pilate that Pilate says it. And he gives no reply to the accusations of the chief priests and elders, and Pilate asks him whether he hasn't heard how many things they've witnessed against him, and still Jesus answers not a word. Then Pilate, marveling greatly, decides to release to the people a prisoner.

He says he'll permit releasing whomever they wish. And, because he knows the delivery of Jesus to him was from envy, he asks the people whether they'll have him release Jesus or the notorious prisoner Barabbas. And then, saying Jesus is called the Christ, he sits down in the judgement seat.

Pilate's wife sends him a message calling Jesus a just man and telling Pilate, because, in a dream that day, she's suffered many things because of Jesus, to have nothing to do with him. But the chief priests and the elders persuade the multitude to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus, and Pilate asks them what he should do with Jesus, and they all demand his crucifixion. And, to Pilate's asking them why and what evil Jesus has done, they reply by crying out more for crucifying him.

So Pilate, seeing that he can't prevail and that he's making a tumult, takes water and washes his hands before the multitude, calls Jesus a just person, says he's innocent of Jesus' blood, and tells them to see to it, and they answer that his blood shall be on them and their children.

So Pilate releases Barabbas to them, has Jesus scourged, and delivers him to them to be crucified. And his soldiers take Jesus out to the hall where

Peter first denied Jesus, gather their whole band, strip Jesus, put him into a scarlet robe, put on his head a crown of thorns they weave, put a reed in his right hand, kneel before him, hail him as the king of the Jews, spit on him, and smite his head with the reed. And then they take the robe from him, put his own raiment on him, and lead him away to crucify him.

Leaving the hall, they see a man of Cyrene whose name is Simon and compel him to bear Jesus' cross. And then they go to a place called the place of the skull, and there the soldiers give Jesus vinegar mingled with urine. Jesus tastes it but won't drink it, and the soldiers crucify him, divide his garments, and cast lots for them, and Matthew says they did that because of a verse in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm that's neither a prophecy nor relevant to prophecies of the messiah. And, after writing over Jesus' head the accusation that he's Jesus, the king of the Jews, the soldiers sit down and watch him.

People pass by wagging their heads and tell Jesus to save himself and come down from the cross if he's the son of God and can destroy the temple and build it in three days. And the chief priests and scribes and elders say he's saved others but can't save himself, that they'd believe he's the king of Israel if he'd come down from the cross, and that he trusted in God and should let God deliver him now if God will have him because he said he was the son of God. And two thieves are also crucified there, one on Jesus' right hand and the other on his left. And the thieves throw the same vitriol into Jesus' teeth.

And next, from the sixth hour to the ninth hour, darkness is over the land. And, at about the ninth hour, Jesus cries with a loud voice the complaint to God with which David begins his 22<sup>nd</sup> psalm. And, because the Hebrew word for God in that psalm is "el", some people there think he's calling for Elijah.

One person takes a sponge, fills it with vinegar, puts it on a reed, and gives it to Jesus to drink, but others say to let things be as they are, to see if Elijah comes to save him, and Jesus cries again with a loud voice and yields up the ghost. Then the curtain before the temple is torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth quakes, and the rocks rend, and the graves open, and many bodies of the saints who've slept arise and come out of the graves. And Matthew says that after the resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

And, when the centurions and those watching with them see the earthquake, they fear and say Jesus truly was the son of God. And women ministering to Jesus, including Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of Jesus, and the mother of James and John, watch from afar. And a man whose name is Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea who's also a disciple of Jesus', goes to Pilate and begs for Jesus' body.

Pilate accedes to that request, and Joseph wraps Jesus' body in clean linen cloth, lays it in a new tomb he's hewn for himself in rock, rolls a great

stone to the door of the sepulcher, and leaves Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Jesus sitting against it.

But the next day the chief priests and the Pharisees go together to Pilate and, calling Jesus the deceiver, say they remember he said while he was alive that he'd rise again after three days. They tell Pilate to command securing the sepulcher for three days, to be sure Jesus' disciples don't come in the night, steal him, and tell the people he rose from the dead, making the end of the error worse than its beginning. And Pilate, saying they have their watch, tells them to go and make it as secure as they can, and this chapter ends with them making it sure, sealing the stone, and setting the watch.

And the 28<sup>th</sup> and final chapter of Matthew's Gospel begins with Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Jesus coming to see the sepulcher at the end of the Sabbath at the beginning of the dawn of the first day of the week.

And then, because an angel of the lord descends from heaven and rolls the stone from the door and sits on it, is another earthquake. The angel's countenance is like lightning, and his raiment's as white as snow, and the keepers of the tomb shake for fear of him and become as dead men, and the angel speaks to the women. Because he knows they're seeking the crucified Jesus, he tells them not to fear, and he tells them that, because Jesus has risen as he said, he isn't there.

He tells them to go quickly to Jesus' disciples and tell them he's risen from the dead and is going before them to Galilee. And, with great fear and joy, the Marys comply, and, as they run to tell the disciples, Jesus meets them and greets them, and they grasp his feet and worship him. And, repeating the instruction of the angel, he tells them they'll see him in Galilee.

As they go some of the watch go to the city and tell the chief priests what happened. So the chief priests assemble with the elders, and, after counsel, they give large money to the soldiers and tell them to say Jesus' disciples came at night and stole him while they slept. And they say they'll provide persuasion and security for them if Pilate hears of that.

And the watch complies, and Matthew says their account remains commonly reported among the Jews, but Jesus' disciples go to the mountain in Galilee Jesus appointed to them. When they see him, some worship him while some doubt, but Jesus comes and tells them that all power in heaven and earth is given to him. And he tells them thus to go and teach all nations.

He tells them to baptize the nations in the name of the father, the son, and the holy ghost and to teach them to observe all he's commanded them. And he tells them he's with them always to the end of the world. And Matthew ends his gospel with the word "amen".



Mark's Gospel is mainly a summary of Matthew's, but, besides omitting much, Mark adds some details and varies from Matthew's narrative in other ways also.

He begins his first chapter by saying it's the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and he calls Jesus the son of God and begins his narrative with Isaiah's prophesy of a voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way for the lord, and this chapter continues through Jesus' healing the leper and telling the leper to tell no one. And a variance from Matthew in this chapter is that the leper publishes the healing so widely that Jesus can't openly enter a city and goes to a desert place. But people go to him there from every quarter.

Mark's second chapter begins with Jesus in a house in Capernaum with too many people in and around the house for the house to receive more by its door. And in this chapter four people, bringing a man sick with palsy to the house, uncover the roof and let the sick man on his bed down through the roof, and Jesus heals him. And, with more healings and Mark's calling Matthew Levi, most of this chapter is versions of healings and interlocution with scribes and Pharisees.

In his third chapter, Mark lists Jesus' disciples. He includes Matthew and doesn't call him Levi, but he says Jesus called the brothers James and John the sons of thunder. And, also in this chapter, Jesus' friends think he's beside himself and, to lay hold on him, go to a house full of people where he is, and it's the house in which Matthew says Jesus said his disciples are his mother and brothers.

In Mark's fourth chapter are some of the parables. In his fifth chapter, Jesus sends the devils into the pigs, but in Mark's version Jesus asks the devils their name, and they say that, because they're many, it's Legion, and, in this chapter, when the woman with the 12-year issue touches Jesus' garment, Jesus knows virtue goes out of him and turns and asks who touched his clothes, and his disciples ask how he can ask who touched him in the multitude thronging him, and the woman knows what's done to her, fears and trembles, falls down before Jesus, and tells him all the truth. And Mark's sixth chapter ends with people asking Jesus to let them touch the border of his garment, and all who touch it are healed.

In Mark's seventh chapter, the woman Matthew says is a Canaanite asking Jesus to cast a devil from her daughter is Greek, and, to heal the deaf mute in Decapolis, Jesus puts his fingers into the man's ears, spits, touches the man's tongue, looks up to heaven, sighs, and tells the man to be opened.

In Mark's eighth chapter, Jesus spits on a blind man's eyes and has to touch the man's eyes with his hands twice to heal him, and the multitude Jesus

feeds with seven loaves haven't eaten in three days, and Jesus tells his disciples to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Herod.

In Mark's ninth chapter, John, interrupting Jesus while he's speaking of receiving children, tells him his disciples saw a man casting out devils in Jesus name and says that, because the man didn't follow them, the disciples forbade him to do that. And Jesus replies that, because no man who does a miracle in his name can lightly speak evil of him, they shouldn't forbid the man. And he says the reason for that is that anyone not against them is with them.

In Mark's tenth chapter, James and John and not their mother ask of Jesus that they sit on his right and left hands in his glory. And, in Mark's twelfth chapter, Jesus sits against the treasury and sees how people cast money into it, and a poor woman comes and throws two mites into it, and Jesus calls his disciples to him and tells them she's cast more than have all the others, that the others have cast of their abundance while she's cast in all she had, and he says it's all her living. And, in Mark's fourteenth chapter, when Jesus' disciples flee after men seize Jesus, a young man who's a follower of Jesus has a linen cloth around his body, leaves the cloth, and flees naked.

And, after saying in his sixteenth and final chapter that the first person to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection was Mary of Magdala, Mark says Jesus had cast seven devils out of her.

And Mark omits from his Gospel the virgin birth, the devil tempting Jesus in the wilderness, and the Beatitudes.

Luke's Gospel is the longest and varies from Matthew's more than does Mark's. He begins his first chapter by saying that, as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things that are most surely believed among us, as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, and as he's had perfect understanding of all things from the first, writing in order seemed good to him also. But the fact that no other Gospel mentions Luke makes questionable the notion that he had perfect understanding of all things from the first.

And he addresses his Gospel to Theophilus and says it's for Theophilus to know the certainty of things he's been taught. He doesn't otherwise identify Theophilus, but the word "theophilus" is from Greek for loving God, and the only other mention of Luke in the Bible is in epistles Paul wrote at least fourteen years after the crucifixion. So, presumably, long after the crucifixion, Luke wrote his gospel for Paul, and he begins his narrative with events that preceded the births of Jesus and John the Baptist.

He says in his first chapter that the names of the parents of John the Baptist were Zacharias and Elisabeth, that both were Levites, that Elisabeth

descended from Aaron, that Zacharias was a priest who burned incense in the temple, that they were righteous but, because Elisabeth was barren, had no children, and that they were old.

In this chapter an angel comes to Zacharias in the temple and tells him Elisabeth shall bear him a son, that he should call him John, that his prayer has been heard, that he'll have joy and gladness, that others will rejoice in the birth, that John won't drink strong drink, that, from his mother's womb, he'll be filled with the holy spirit, that he'll turn many of the children of Israel to their god, and that John shall go before God in the spirit and power of Elijah.

And Zacharias, telling the angel he and Elisabeth are old, asks him how he'll know all that will occur, and the angel replies that he's Gabriel, that he stands in the presence of God, and that, because Zacharias didn't believe what he told him, he'll be unable to speak until it occurs. And, by Zacharias' inability to speak when he leaves the temple, people perceive that he's seen a vision. And the Bible names no angel other than Gabriel, Michael, and Lucifer.

Elisabeth says God looked on her and took away her reproach. But she hides for six months, and, in the sixth month of her pregnancy, God sends Gabriel to Nazareth to a virgin espoused to a man of the house of David. The man's name is Joseph, and the virgin's name is Mary, and Gabriel greets the virgin and tells her she's highly favored, that God's with her, that she's blessed among women, and that she'll bring forth a son and call his name Jesus. And he tells her Jesus shall be great, that he'll be called the son of the highest, that God shall give him the throne of his father David, that the son shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and that his kingdom shall be endless.

Mary asks Gabriel how, seeing that she doesn't know a man, what he said shall be. And Gabriel replies that the holy spirit shall come upon her, that the power of the highest shall overshadow her, and that thus the holy thing to be born of her shall be called the son of God. And he tells her that also her cousin Elisabeth has conceived a son while barren in her old age and that nothing is impossible for God. And Mary, calling herself the handmaiden of God, asks for accordance with Gabriel's word.

Gabriel departs, and Mary, going to Elisabeth's home in a city in the hill country of Judaea, salutes Elisabeth, and, when Elisabeth hears the salutation, John leaps in Elisabeth's womb. Filled with the holy spirit, she says with a loud voice that Mary and the fruit of Mary's womb are blessed, and, asking Mary whence the mother of her lord has come to her, she tells her John leaped at the greeting and that things told her from God shall be performed. And Mary replies that her soul magnifies God, that her soul has rejoiced in God, her savior, that God has regarded her humility, and that henceforth all generations shall call her blessed for the mighty things he's done to her.

And she says that, from generation to generation, his mercy shall be on those who fear him, that he's scattered those who are proud in the imagination of their hearts, pulling the mighty from their seats and exalting those of low degree, filling the hungry with good things, and sending the rich away empty, and that he's helped his servant Israel and spoken to Abraham and his seed forever, and she abides three months with Elisabeth and returns to her house.

When Elisabeth comes to full time for delivery and brings forth a son, her neighbors, hearing how God has shown great mercy on her, rejoice with her. But, when they come to circumcise the child on his eighth day, they call the child Zacharias, for his father. And, when Elisabeth says his name shall be John, they tell her that none of her kindred has that name.

So they make signs to ask Zacharias to decide, and Zacharias asks for a writing table and writes that his name is John, and then Zacharias' mouth opens. He speaks and praises God, and fear comes on everyone there, and noise of that spreads through all the hill country of Judaea, and all hearing it ask what manner of child John shall be. And the hand of God is with John, and Zacharias is filled with the holy spirit and prophesies, blessing the God of Israel for visiting and redeeming his people and raising a horn of salvation for those in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, who've been since the world began.

And he tells John that John will be called the prophet of the highest and go before the face of God to prepare his ways, give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of their god, give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and guide their feet into the way of peace.

And Luke closes this chapter by saying the child grew strong in spirit and was in deserts until the day of his appearance to Israel.

His second chapter begins with Caesar Augustus decreeing a tax and all going to their cities to be taxed. Because Joseph is of the house and lineage of David, he takes Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem, the city of David, in Judea, and Mary, being great with child, brings forth her firstborn son there. And, because no room's for them in the inn, she wraps him in swaddling clothes and lays him in a manger.

And, in that country, an angel of God comes to some shepherds watching their flocks at night, and the glory of God shines around them, and they're afraid, but the angel tells them not to fear. He tells them he's bringing them news of great joy to all people that in the city of David is born a savior who's the Christ, the lord, and not to fear. And he tells them they'll find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

And suddenly a multitude of the heavenly host is with the angel and proclaiming glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to humanity. So, when the angels leave the shepherds and go to heaven, the shepherds decide to go to Bethlehem to see what God has made them know has happened. And, after finding Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger, they tell abroad what was told to them concerning the child. And all the people who hear what the shepherds tell wonder. But Mary keeps all that in her heart and ponders it.

On his eighth day, the child is circumcised, and, in accordance with the angel's instruction before his conception, he's called Jesus. And, when the days of purification the law of Moses requires of Mary after giving birth are accomplished, she and Joseph take Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to God as the law requires for every firstborn male, and they perform the sacrifice it requires. And a man waiting for the consolation of Israel comes into the temple in the spirit and takes Jesus into his arms.

The holy spirit has promised him he won't die before seeing the Christ. And, saying he's seen his salvation and asking God to let him depart in peace as he's promised, he blesses Mary and Joseph and tells Mary some of the prophecies of the Christ, and an old female prophet there speaks similarly of Jesus. And, after performing the requirements of God's law, Joseph and Mary and Jesus return to Nazareth, and the grace of God is on the child as he grows strong in spirit and is filled with wisdom.

His parents go to Jerusalem each year to celebrate the Passover, and, when Jesus is twelve years old, when they leave Jerusalem to return to Nazareth, he stays behind, and, when they leave Jerusalem to return to Nazareth, until they've traveled all day, they don't know he isn't with them. Then they look for him among those traveling with them, and, not finding him, they turn back and seek him three days in Jerusalem, until they find him sitting among doctors in the temple, hearing and answering them. And his understanding and answering astonishes all hearing him.

But Mary, telling Jesus she and his father have sought him sorrowing, asks him why he did that to them, and he asks them how they sought him and whether they didn't know he must be about his father's business, but he goes with them to Nazareth and is subject to them

And Mary also keeps all those sayings in her heart, and Jesus increases in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and humanity.

Luke's third chapter begins in the time of Pilate, Herod, and Caiaphas, when John the Baptist begins teaching. In his teaching in this chapter, John tells publicans to exact no more taxes than those appointed to them, and, when soldiers come to him for baptism, he tells them to be content with their wages.

And this chapter also repeats much of what Matthew and Mark say of John the Baptist, including the baptism of Jesus, the voice from the sky, and the holy spirit descending on Jesus in the bodily form of a dove.

And it says Jesus was about thirty years old then, and it lists Joseph's genealogy from God through David and says Jesus was supposed to be a son of Joseph's, but it doesn't say the supposing was correct.

Luke's fourth chapter repeats the story of the devil tempting Jesus in the wilderness, and also in this chapter the book of Isaiah is delivered to Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth. He reads in it Isaiah's saying that, because God had anointed Isaiah to preach the gospel to the poor and sent him to heal the brokenhearted, preach deliverance to the captives, recover the sight of the blind, and free those who are bruised, the spirit of God was on Isaiah. And, closing the book, he tells the people there that the prophesy's fulfilled in their ears on that day, the day of his reading it.

And next he tells them they'll tell him the proverb that a physician should heal himself. And he says that many widows were in Israel, but that Elijah was sent to but one in the region of Sidon, and that the only leper Elijah healed was a Syrian. And Luke cites in that context Jesus' saying that no prophet is accepted in his own country.

The people of Nazareth respond to that by pushing Jesus out of the city and, to cast him from it headfirst, leading him to the edge of the hill on which the city was built. But Jesus passes through them and goes to Capernaum, where he teaches on the Sabbath days and casts a devil from a man in the synagogue. And that's the beginning of Luke's telling of Jesus' casting out devils and healing people and of his fame.

Luke's fifth chapter begins with a variation of the story of Peter becoming a disciple of Jesus'. In this version, Jesus sees fishermen and two ships, boards Peter's ship, asks him to take it a little from land, and sits down to teach the people from the ship. And, when he finishes teaching the people, he tells Peter to take the ship out to the deep and let down his nets for a draught.

Peter replies that the fishers have worked all night and taken nothing. But he complies, and they catch so many fish that their net breaks, and Peter beckons for help from his partners in the other ship. And they fill both ships to the extent that the ships begin to sink.

So, astonished, Peter falls at Jesus' feet, calls himself a sinful man, and asks Jesus to leave him, and Peter's partners James and John are also astonished. But Jesus, telling them not to fear, says that henceforth they'd catch men. And they bring the ship to land, forsake all, and follow Jesus.

And this chapter also contains versions of other stories in the previous Gospels. And one of them is of the calling of Matthew, and it calls him Levi. But this chapter doesn't mention Andrew.

But Luke's sixth chapter lists the twelve disciples and includes Andrew and calls Levi Matthew. And Luke doesn't name Thaddeus, but he names another James and says he's the son of Alphaeus, and he says the Simon other than Peter is called the Zealot. And he names another Judas and says he's the brother of James, presumably the second James.

And also in this chapter a multitude seeks to touch Jesus because virtue goes out of him and heals them. And this chapter includes parts of the Sermon on the Mount, including some of the Beatitudes but none of the Lord's Prayer. And this chapter and other chapters of Luke's also repeat much of other stories from Matthews's and Mark's Gospels with variances in sequence and rationale.

And Luke begins his seventh chapter with another example of that. He tells of Jesus' healing the servant of the centurion, but in this version the centurion hears of Jesus and sends the elders of the Jews to ask him to heal the servant, and the elders tell Jesus the centurion's worthy because he loves their nation and has built them a synagogue. And the centurion doesn't tell Jesus he's unworthy but sends friends to tell him that.

And this chapter ends with a woman anointing Jesus with oil from an alabaster box in the home of a Pharisee. The woman stands behind Jesus, weeps, begins to wash his feet with her tears, wipes them with the hair of her head, and kisses them, before she anoints them with the oil. And the Pharisee says within himself that, were Jesus a prophet, he'd know the woman was a sinner.

So Jesus asks the Pharisee which of two debtors would most love a creditor who forgave them their debts, the one who owed the creditor most, or the one who owed least. And the Pharisee tells Jesus he supposes the debtor owing most would most love the creditor. And Jesus tells him he's judged rightly.

And then he turns to the woman and tells the Pharisee that he gave him no water for his feet but that the woman washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair, that he gave him no kiss but that the woman hasn't stopped kissing his feet, that he didn't anoint his head but that the woman anointed his feet with ointment, that her many sins are forgiven because she loves much, and that one who's forgiven little loves little. And, telling the woman her sins are forgiven, he says her faith has saved her and tells her to go in peace. And others there ask within themselves who Jesus is to forgive sins.

And in his eighth chapter Luke agrees with Mark's saying that Jesus cast seven devils from Mary of Magdala and that Jesus felt virtue go from him when the woman with the issue touched the border of his garment.

In his ninth chapter, Jesus, on his way to Jerusalem sends messengers to a Samaritan village to prepare for his arrival. But, because he's facing Jerusalem, the Samaritans decline to receive him, and James and John ask Jesus whether, as Elijah did, he'll command fire from heaven to consume them, and Jesus turns and tells them they don't know of what manner of spirit they are. He says the son of man didn't come to destroy humans' lives but to save them.

Then they go to another village, and Luke begins his tenth chapter with Jesus appointing seventy persons in addition to the twelve disciples, to go to cities ahead of him.

He tells them the harvest is great but that the laborers are few, and they return and tell him the devils are subject to them through his name. And he tells them he gives them power to tread on serpents and scorpions and power over all the enemy, and he tells them nothing shall hurt them by any means. And Luke includes in that story elements of other stories from the previous Gospels.

And also in this chapter Luke combines the story of the rich man asking Jesus what to do to for eternal life with the story of the lawyer asking him what's the greatest commandment. In Luke's story the lawyer asks what to do to inherit life, and Jesus tells him he should love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength and love his neighbor as himself, and the lawyer replies by asking Jesus who's his neighbor. And Jesus replies with a parable in which a man going from Jerusalem to Jericho falls among thieves who strip him of his raiment, wound him, and leave him half dead.

In the parable, a priest and a Levite see the man and pass on the other side, but a Samaritan stops, has compassion on him, binds his wounds, sets him on his beast, takes him to an inn, and cares for him there. And, when he leaves the inn, he pays the host of the inn to care for the man, and he promises to pay more when he returns, if the cost is more than he's paid. And Jesus asks the lawyer which of the three, the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan, was a neighbor to the man. And the lawyer replies that the neighbor was the one who showed mercy. And Jesus tells the lawyer to go and do the same.

And this chapter ends with two sisters hosting Jesus in their house. One's name is Martha, and the other's name is Mary, and Martha receives Jesus into their house, but Mary sits at Jesus' feet, hears his word, and leaves Martha with the encumbrance of serving. So Martha asks Jesus whether he doesn't care that her sister's left her to serve alone, and Jesus, telling her she's careful and troubled about many things while Mary's chosen the one thing necessary, says it shouldn't be taken from her.



In Luke's eleventh chapter, Jesus' disciples ask him to teach them to pray as John the Baptist taught his to pray, and Jesus responds by telling them part of the Lord's Prayer. And also in this chapter a woman calls out to Jesus that he and the woman who gave him birth and nursed him are blessed. And Jesus replies that blessed are those who hear the word of God.

In Luke's twelfth chapter a man asks Jesus to tell his brother to divide his inheritance with him, and Jesus asks the man who made him a judge or divider of the brothers. But later in this chapter Jesus says he didn't come to bring peace but to divide people against one another and to send fire on the earth and that he wishes it were already kindled but that it has a baptism to undergo. But, unlike Matthew, Luke doesn't say Jesus said he came to bring a sword,

Luke begins his thirteenth chapter with some people telling Jesus of some Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with Romans' sacrifices. Jesus, asking the people whether, because those Galileans suffered such things, they were more sinful than the other Galileans, says they weren't, but he says all who don't repent will similarly perish. But, of course, besides the lack of any history of such Roman sacrifices, a question here is how credible is Pilate's both doing that and demonstrating a desire to let the Jews govern themselves.

And also in this chapter a Pharisee tells Jesus to go away because Herod will kill him. And Jesus replies to that by calling Herod a fox and telling the Pharisee to tell Herod that Jesus casts out devils, accomplishes cures, and will do cures for the next two days and be perfected on the third. And he says that, because a prophet can't perish out of Jerusalem, he'll walk those two days.

Luke's fourteenth chapter doesn't substantially deviate from Matthew's or Mark's gospels. But, in his fifteenth chapter, after a variation of Jesus' saying a man would rejoice more over one sheep of his he loses and finds than he does over his many sheep he hasn't lost, he tells of a woman rejoicing more over a silver coin she loses and finds than she does over nine silver coins she hasn't lost. And he says that's like rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

And next he tells a parable of a son asking his father to give him his inheritance and going to a distant country and squandering it. In the parable the son sinks into poverty and feeds pigs to eat, and then, remembering that his father's servants have food to spare, he returns home and begs his father to make him one of his servants. But the father tells his servants to bring the son his best robe and dress him in it, to put a ring on one of the son's hands and shoes on his feet, and to prepare a fat calf for the prodigal son to eat merrily.

The prodigal son's older brother complains. He tells the father that the prodigal brother has devoured his inheritance with harlots and that the father has never held such a feast for the older brother. But the father tells him that,

because his brother was dead and is alive again and was lost and is found, they had to celebrate and be glad.

Luke's sixteenth chapter begins with Jesus telling a parable of a rich man and his steward. The rich man, accusing the steward of wasting his goods, tells him he'll no longer be his steward, and the steward responds by dissolving debts to the rich man by letting the debtors pay a portion of what they owe. The rich man, reasoning that the children of this world in that generation are wiser than the children of light, commends the steward for wisely doing that. But he also says the steward's motive was to induce the debtors to receive him into their houses when he'd have no employment.

And next, reasoning that, when they fail, it would receive them into eternal habitations, Jesus tells his disciples to make themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. And he asks them who, if they haven't been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, will commit true riches to their trust, and who, if they haven't been faithful in what's others', will give them what's their own. And Luke puts into that context what Matthew's Gospel says Jesus said of God and mammon and serving two masters.

Covetous Pharisees hear all that and deride Jesus, but Jesus, telling them they justify themselves before humans while God knows their hearts, says that what's esteemed among humans is abomination in the sight of God. He also tells them that the passing of heaven and earth would be easier than the failure of one tittle of the law, but, immediately before saying that, he says the law and the prophets existed until John the Baptist but that the kingdom of God is preached since then and that every human presses into it. And he follows those two assertions with another parable.

In it a beggar whose name is Lazarus is full of sores and lies at a rich man's gate. The rich man is clothed in purple and fine linen and fares sumptuously every day. And Lazarus, with dogs licking his sores, desires to be fed with crumbs that fall from the rich man's table.

But, when Lazarus dies, angels carried him into Abraham's bosom. And, when the rich man dies, he goes to hell, looks up from the torments there, sees Abraham with Lazarus in his bosom, and cries begging Abraham to send Lazarus to dip the tip of a finger in water and cool his tongue from the flames tormenting him. But Abraham, pointing out the difference between Lazarus' life on earth and the rich man's and the difference between Lazarus' comfort after earth and the rich man's torment, says no one can pass the great gulf then fixed between the rich man and Abraham with Lazarus.

The rich man replies by begging Abraham to send Lazarus to the rich man's father's house to warn his five brothers of the torments, but Abraham tells him the brothers have Moses and the prophets and to let the brothers hear them,

and the rich man argues that, if someone from the dead goes to them, they'll repent, but Abraham replies that, if they haven't heard Moses and the prophets, they won't be persuaded if one rises from the dead.

In Luke's seventeenth chapter, ten lepers ask Jesus to have mercy on them, and Jesus tells them to go and show themselves to the priests, and they're cleansed as they go. One of them is a Samaritan, and the Samaritan returns and thanks Jesus, and Jesus, asking him where the other nine are, says that only the stranger returned to give glory to God. And, telling the Samaritan his faith has made him whole, he tells him to go his way.

And also in this chapter Pharisees ask Jesus when should come the kingdom of God. Jesus replies that it won't come with observation, but he also tells them that, because the kingdom of God is within them, they shouldn't look for it here or there. And that's essentially the Hindu notion of unity of the atman and Brahman.

And also in this chapter Jesus tells his disciples that the son of man shall be like lightening shining from one part under heaven to other parts under heaven, but he says the days will come when they desire to see one of the days of the son of man but won't see it, and he says he'll suffer many things and be rejected by their generation.

In Luke's eighteenth chapter, enjoining his disciples to pray always and not faint, Jesus tells them a parable of a judge a widow troubles with a request that he avenge her against her adversary. The judge decides to avenge her, but only because she's troubled him, and Jesus calls the judge unjust, but he asks his disciples whether God, when he bears long his chosen crying to him day and night, won't avenge them. And he answers that God will avenge them quickly.

But next, asking whether the son of man shall find faith on earth when he comes, he tells a parable of a Pharisee and a publican praying in the temple. The Pharisee, thanking God that he's not an extortioner, unjust, an adulterer, or like the publican, tells God he fasts twice each week and tithes all he has, but the publican stands far away and, not looking up to heaven, beats his breast, calls himself a sinner, and asks God to be merciful to him. And Jesus says that the publican, because the humble shall be exalted while the exalted shall be humbled, goes to his house justified, while the Pharisee doesn't.

In Luke's nineteenth chapter Jesus tells a parable of a nobleman who, before going far away to receive a kingdom, delivers to each of ten of his servants a pound of money. When he returns, he finds that two of the servants have gained profit from the pound they received, while one of them, gaining nothing from it, has laid in a napkin the pound he received. So the nobleman rewards the two who profited and tells people standing by to take the pound from the one who kept it in a napkin and give it to the one who gained the most.

The servant who laid the money in the napkin tells the nobleman he did that because he knew the nobleman was an austere man who picks up what he doesn't lay down and reaps what he doesn't sow, and the nobleman replies that, if the servant knew that, he should have put the money in a bank for usury. And Jesus says that, because the people of the kingdom sent the nobleman a message saying they wouldn't have him reign over them, the nobleman's purpose in going there was to claim the kingdom. And, saying the nobleman ordered them killed before him, Jesus says that everyone who has shall receive, while people having little shall have it taken from them.

Luke's twentieth chapter doesn't deviate substantially from Matthew's or Mark's Gospel, but in his 21<sup>st</sup> chapter Jesus prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem by gentiles treading it down, and, prophesying the division of people against one another, he says women with children shall fall by the sword, and, telling his disciples the destruction will be a sign of the coming of the son of man in a cloud with power and glory, he says some of them will see that in their generation. And details in Luke's 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter differ from Matthew's and Mark's gospels in several ways.

One way is that in it Jesus tells his disciples at his last supper that he won't eat the Passover again until it's fulfilled in heaven. Another is that, while telling Peter he'll betray him, he tells him Satan desires to have Peter to sift him as wheat. And Luke says in this chapter that Satan entered Judas.

And, also in this chapter, Jesus, telling his disciples he sent them with no purse or scrip or shoes, asks them whether they lacked anything, and they say they didn't. But next he tells those who have a purse or scrip to take it, and he also tells those who don't have a sword to sell their garments and buy one, and the disciples tell him to look at two swords there, and he says they're enough. But, also in this chapter, Jesus heals the chief priest's servant's ear that one of his followers cuts off.

And, in Luke's 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter, because Herod's the tetrarch for Galilee and is in Jerusalem then, Pilate consults with him concerning the accusations against Jesus, and Luke says Herod had long wished to see Jesus and hoped to see him perform a miracle, that Pilate and Herod had been enemies but became friends on that day, that the soldiers who mocked Jesus were Herod's, and that their doing that preceded Pilate's judgement.

And also in this chapter women bewail and lament Jesus on his way to his crucifixion, and he turns to them and tells them not to weep for him but to weep for themselves and their children, and he again prophesies against Jerusalem.

And, in Luke's version of the crucifixion, the two malefactors Matthew says were crucified with Jesus disagree with one another. One of them

joins the derision as Matthew says both did, but in Luke's version the other asks the deriding one whether he doesn't see that he's in the same condition and doesn't fear that God sees, and he asks Jesus to remember him when he comes to his kingdom. And Jesus replies that he'll be with him that day in paradise.

And, in the 24<sup>th</sup> and final chapter of Luke's Gospel, Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Jesus go to the tomb and find the stone away from the entrance. No one's in the tomb, and the angel and not Jesus speaks to them there, and they leave the tomb and tell the eleven remaining disciples what they've seen. And they don't believe the women.

And also in Luke's version the first persons to see Jesus after his resurrection are Peter and others as they walk to Emmaus, about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. And Peter and those with him are held from knowing Jesus while, as they sadly walk, Jesus asks them what's the communication among them, and Cleopas, one of those with Peter, asking Jesus whether he's a stranger in Jerusalem, tells him Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. And, telling Jesus how the chief priests and the people delivered him to death by crucifixion, he says he and others trusted that Jesus was the one who should have redeemed Israel.

And, when they reach Emmaus, they ask Jesus to eat with them. And, when he blesses and breaks bread and gives it to them, they know him. But he vanishes from their sight, and they return to Jerusalem.

But, as the eleven disciples gather in Jerusalem, he reappears to them. They fear and think he's a spirit, but, showing them his hands and feet, he tells them spirit has no flesh or bones. And, while they wonder, as their joy keeps them from believing, he asks them whether they have any meat there, and they give him a piece of broiled fish and a piece of a honeycomb, and, as he eats before them, he reminds them of things he's told them and opens their understanding to know scriptures. And, saying preaching of repentance and remission of sins should begin in Jerusalem, he tells them to stay in Jerusalem until they're endowed with power from on high.

But he leads them out to Bethany, and, in Bethany, he lifts his hands and blesses them. And, as he's blessing them, he's parted from them and carried up to heaven, and they worship him and return to Jerusalem with great joy. And Luke closes his Gospel by saying they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God, amen.

John's Gospel varies more from the other three Gospels than Luke's varies from Matthew's and Mark's.

His first chapter begins with a creation story saying that, in the beginning, the word was with God and was God, that all things were made by

God, that nothing was made without him, that life was in him, and that life was the light of men.

Next he says that, while the light shined in darkness, the darkness didn't comprehend it, and he says a man whose name was John was sent from God to bear witness of the light for men to believe through him, but that John wasn't the light. He says the man who was the light was the true light lighting every human who comes into the world, that he was in the world and that the world was made by him but that the world didn't know him, and that he came to his own but that his own didn't receive him. And he says he gave power to be sons of God to all who received him and believed in his name.

And he says the birth of such is neither of blood nor of the will of the flesh but of God, that the word was made flesh and dwelled among us, that we beheld the glory of that word, light, and flesh, that the glory was as of the only begotten of the father, and that it was full of grace.

And the evangel John says that John, bearing witness of him, cried that he was who he'd said should come after him but was preferred before him because it was he who was before him. And the evangel John says that, because the law was given by Moses, we've received his fullness and grace for grace, but that, while no human has seen God at any time, the truth came by Jesus Christ. And he says the only begotten son, in the bosom of the father, has declared God.

Next he says that's the record of the baptist John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him who he was. And, in this chapter, the baptist John confesses that he isn't the Christ, and priests and Levites ask him whether he's Elijah, and he says he isn't, and they ask him whether he's that prophet. They don't say which prophet that prophet is, but the baptist John replies that neither is he that prophet, and they ask him, for them to answer those who sent them, to tell them who he is, and he says he's the voice crying in the wilderness to make straight the way of the lord, as Isaiah prophesied.

Then the evangel John says the priests and Levites interrogating John the Baptist are Pharisees, and next they ask him why, if he's neither the Christ nor Elijah and isn't that prophet, he baptizes, and, replying that he baptizes with water while the one whose shoelaces he isn't worthy to loosen is standing among them, John the Baptist says again that he's coming after him but is preferred before him.

All of that occurs where John the Baptist is baptizing in Bethany, and the next day he sees Jesus coming, and, calling him the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, he says he didn't know Jesus but came baptizing with water to make him manifest to Israel, and he says he bears record that Jesus is the holy son of God.

Other details in the evangel John's version of the meeting are similar to what the other gospels say of it, but the next day, in the evangel John's version, John the Baptist, standing with two of his disciples, sees Jesus and tells his disciples to look at the lamb of God, and they turn and follow Jesus.

And Jesus turns and asked them what they seek, and they asked him where he dwells, and Jesus tells them to come and see. So they do and stay with him that day, and one of them is Andrew, and Andrew finds his brother Simon and tells him they've found the messiah, and, when Jesus sees Simon, he tells him he's Jona's son Simon but that he'll be called Cephas. And he says that means "stone", or Peter.

And the next day Jesus goes into Galilee. There he finds Philip and tells him to follow him, and the evangel John says Philip's of the village of Peter and Andrew. And Philip finds Nathaniel, and, telling him they've found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote, he says he's Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathaniel asks Philip whether anything good can come from Nazareth, and Philip tells him to come and see, and he goes.

Jesus calls Nathaniel an Israelite with no guile, and Nathaniel replies by asking Jesus from where he knows him, and Jesus replies that he saw him beneath a fig tree before Philip called him. Then Nathaniel, calling Jesus rabbi, says he's the son of God and the king of Israel, and Jesus tells Nathaniel he believes because he said he saw him under a fig tree, but that he'll see things greater than that. He tells him he'll see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the son of man.

In John's second chapter Jesus and his disciples are called to a wedding his mother's attending. When the people there want wine, Mary tells Jesus they have no wine, and, calling her woman and asking her what he has to do with her, he tells her his time hasn't yet come. But she tells the servants to do whatever he says.

And he orders filling six water pots with water, drawing from it, and carrying what they draw to the governor of the feast. The governor of the feast tastes it, calls the bridegroom, and says all men set forth the good wine first and set forth the worst when people have well drunk, but that this bridegroom has kept the good wine until then. And this chapter says producing that wine was the beginning of the miracles Jesus did, that it manifested his glory, and that then his disciples believed in him.

Next Jesus and his mother and brothers and disciples go down to Capernaum, but a few days later, when the Jews' Passover is at hand, Jesus goes up to Jerusalem. There, in John's version of the story of the money changers and merchants in the temple, Jesus makes a whip, drives them from it, pours out the money changers' money, and overthrows their tables. In Matthews's version

Jesus quotes Jeremiah's saying they made of God's house a den of robbers, but in John's version Jesus' disciples remember David's writing to God in his 69<sup>th</sup> psalm that the zeal of God's house has eaten him up.

And this chapter says that, when Jesus said he'd destroy the temple and raise it up in three days, he was speaking of his body, that, when Jesus arose from the dead, his disciples remembered he'd said that to them, and that then they believed the scriptures. And at the end of this chapter, when people see miracles Jesus does at the Passover feast in Jerusalem, many believe in his name, but, because he knows all and doesn't need anyone to testify of humanity, he doesn't commit himself to them. And John closes this chapter by saying the reason for that is that Jesus knows what's in humanity.

John's third chapter begins with a Pharisee who's a ruler of the Jews coming to Jesus by night and telling him that, because, if God isn't with him, no man can do the miracles Jesus does, he knows Jesus is a teacher who's come from God. Jesus tells him no one who isn't born again can see the kingdom of God, and the Pharisee asks how one can enter the womb a second time and be born when he's old, and Jesus, replying that one who isn't born of water and the spirit can't enter the kingdom of God, says whoever's born of the spirit is like hearing wind while unable to tell whence it comes or whither it goes. The Pharisee asks him how that can be, and Jesus, asking the Pharisee whether he's a master of Israel and doesn't know, tells him we say what we know and testify to what we've seen but that the Pharisee doesn't receive our witness. And, telling the Pharisee he hasn't believed earthly things he's told him, he asks him how then he'll believe heavenly things he might tell him.

And he says no human has ascended to heaven who didn't descend from heaven, that the son of man who's in heaven isn't an exception and, for whoever believes in him not to perish but have eternal life, must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and that the reason for that is that God so loved the world he gave his only begotten son for it.

And next in this chapter, contrary to Matthew's and Luke's saying Jesus came not for peace but to divide people against one another, Jesus says God didn't send his son into the world to condemn it but to save it through him. But he follows that by saying that one who believes in the son isn't condemned but that, because he doesn't believe in the name of the only begotten son of God, one who doesn't is condemned already. And he calls that the condemnation.

And he says light is come into the world, that, because humans' deeds are evil, they love darkness rather than light, and that all those who do evil hate the light and stay away from it to keep their deeds from reproof, but that, for their deeds to be made manifest to be wrought in God, those who do truth come to the light.



And next in this chapter Jesus and his disciples go to Judaea, and Jesus stays there with them and baptizes while John the Baptist is also baptizing there, and a question of purifying arises among John's disciples.

They tell John the person to whom he bore witness is also baptizing and that all come to him. And John, beginning by saying humans can receive nothing not given to them from heaven, elaborates further on preferring Jesus to him. And this chapter closes with John the Baptist saying the father loves the son and has given all things into his hand, that those who believe in the son have everlasting life while those who don't believe on him shall not see life, and that the wrath of God abides on him.

The evangel John's fourth chapter begins with Jesus, after hearing the Pharisees have heard he baptizes more disciples than did John the Baptist, departing Judaea for Galilee, but it says his disciples and not he baptized.

On his way in this chapter, he needs to go through Samaria, and weary he stops at a well Jacob gave to Joseph. There, because his disciples have gone into the nearby city to buy meat, he asks a Samaritan woman to give him drink, and, seeing Jesus is a Jew and asking him why he's asking drink of a woman of Samaria, she tells him Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. And Jesus, replying that, if she knew the gift of God and who was asking, she'd have given him drink and not asked, tells her he'd have given her living water.

She replies that he has nothing for drawing and that the well is deep, but she also asks him from where he has the living water and whether he's greater than their father Jacob, who gave them the well and drank from it with his children and cattle, and Jesus replies that whoever drinks from the living water shall never thirst again.

The woman replies by asking him to give her that water, for her not to thirst and not to need to go there to draw, and Jesus tells her to call her husband there. She says she has no husband, and Jesus tells her she's had five husbands and that the man she has then isn't her husband, and she says she perceives that he's a prophet. But she also tells him her fathers worshiped on that mountain but that the Jews say people ought to worship in Jerusalem, and Jesus replies that the hour is coming when she'll worship neither on that mountain nor in Jerusalem but shall worship the father.

He also tells her she doesn't know what she's worshiping and that salvation is of the Jews, but he also tells her God's a spirit and that those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. And, telling him she knows the messiah's coming, she says the messiah will tell them all things, and Jesus tells her he's the messiah. And that's the Bible's only assertion that Jesus said directly that he's the messiah or the Christ.

And then his disciples return. They marvel at his talking with the woman, but they don't ask her what she's seeking, and they don't ask Jesus why he's talking with her. And the woman leaves her water pot and goes into the city, where she tells people to come see a man who told her all she's ever done, and she asks them whether he isn't the Christ.

The disciples tell Jesus to eat, but Jesus tells them they don't know what meat he has to eat, that his meat is to do the will of him who sent him and finish his work, and that four months remain before the harvest in which the reapers receive the wages and gather the fruits of eternal life.

Because of what the woman tells them, many of the Samaritans believe in him, and they ask him to stay with them, and he stays two days. Then many more believe and tell the woman their believing isn't because of what she said but because they've heard Jesus. They say they know he's Christ who's the savior of the world.

And next in this chapter Jesus goes to Galilee. He goes there because he's said a prophet has no honor in his own country. But, from seeing what he did in Jerusalem at the feast, the Galileans receive him.

In Cana a man from Capernaum asks him to heal his son, and Jesus, telling him he won't believe if he doesn't see signs and wonders, says his son shall live. And the man accepts Jesus' word, returns home, finds that the healing began at the time Jesus told him that, and then believes, and John closes this chapter by calling that the second miracle Jesus did. But it doesn't say how that agrees with his saying in the third chapter that people believed in him because of the miracles he did at the Passover feast.

And his fifth chapter contains another healing. And Jesus debates more with the Pharisees, and, telling them that, because Moses wrote of him, they'd believe him if they believed Moses, he implies that he's the son of God. But he doesn't call himself the Christ.

And, in John's sixth chapter, after Jesus feeds five thousand people with five small barley loaves and two small fish, they say he's the prophet who should come into the world, and, perceiving that the multitude intends to make him a king by force, he departs into a mountain alone.

His disciples, to cross the Jordan on a boat, leave him there in the dark, but he rejoins them by walking to them on the water, and the multitude cross the river in other boats and ask him how he came there. Telling them they don't seek him because they saw the miracles but because they ate the loaves and were filled, he tells them to labor not for the meat that perishes but for the meat that leads to everlasting life, and he says that, because God has sealed him, he'll give it to them. So they ask him what they might do to work the works of God, and, telling them he's the work of God and that they should believe on him, he asks

them what sign they desire, and they tell him of the manna their fathers ate in the desert.

So, calling himself the bread of life, he further extends the metaphor of meat leading to everlasting life, but he says that, if his father who sent him doesn't draw the person to him, no person can come to him. And, saying he'll raise that person up on the last day, he tells his audience that all of that was written by the prophets, that his audience's fathers who ate manna are dead, and that, if they don't eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, they have no life in them. And he says all that in the synagogue at Capernaum, and both Jews and his disciples question it, and many of his disciples walk no more with him.

And John's seventh chapter begins by saying that, because Jews sought to kill him, he couldn't walk in Jewry and walked in Galilee. But his brothers, saying no one does secretly what he seeks be known openly, tell him to go to Judea for his disciples to see the works he does. And, because they don't believe him, they tell him, if he does those things, to show himself to the world.

Replying that his time isn't come while theirs is always ready, he tells them to go up to the feast. But later he goes secretly and again teaches openly in the temple, and Jews ask how he can know letters while he hasn't learned. He replies that his doctrine isn't his but of him who sent him, and, asking them whether Moses didn't give them the law, he says none of them keep the law.

And he asks them why they try to kill him. Saying he has a devil, they ask him who's trying to kill him, and he replies that he's done one work and that they all marvel. And he tells them Moses didn't give them circumcision because it was of Moses but because it was of the fathers and that they circumcise on the Sabbath but are angry at him because he made a man whole on the Sabbath.

But some people of Jerusalem ask those people whether he isn't the one they're trying to kill, and, telling those people he speaks boldly while they say nothing to him, the people of Jerusalem also ask whether the rulers don't know he's the Christ, but they also say they know whence he's come but that no man will know whence the Christ comes.

Then Jesus cries that they know both who he is and whence he comes, that he didn't come of himself, that he who sent him is true, and that they don't know him who sent him. So then they seek to take him, but, because his hour isn't yet come, no one then lays hands on him, and some people believe on him, and the Pharisees hear of the murmuring. And the debate continues until this chapter closes with every man going to his own house.

And John's eighth chapter begins with Jesus returning to the Mount of Olives. But early next morning he returns to the temple and resumes teaching the people, and scribes and Pharisees bring a woman and set her in the midst of

the people, and, telling Jesus she was taken in the act of adultery and that Moses commanded in the law that such be stoned, they ask him what he says. So, as they ask, Jesus stoops, writes on the ground with a finger, and tells them to let whoever is sinless among them cast the first stone.

So, convicted by their conscience, the accusers go out one by one and leave Jesus alone with the woman amid other people. Lifting himself up, Jesus asks the woman where her accusers are and whether no man has condemned her, and she says that no man has. And Jesus, saying that neither does he, tells her to go and sin no more, and he continues teaching.

He tells the remaining people that they're from beneath while he's from above and that they're of the world while he isn't. So they ask him who he is, and he tells them he speaks to the world of things he heard from him who sent him. They don't understand that he's speaking of the father, but he tells them he is, and many believe on him.

And he tells them that they'll know the truth and that the truth shall make them free. But, replying that they're Abraham's seed and have never been in bondage to any man, they ask him how he says he'll make them free, and Jesus replies that he knows they're Abraham's seed but that they're seeking to kill him, that they'd do Abraham's works if they were Abraham's children, that Abraham didn't seek to kill him, and that, if God were their father, they'd love him. And he tells them they're of their father the devil, that they'll do the lusts of their father, and that the devil, because he's a liar and the father of lying, was, from the beginning, a murderer with no truth in him.

So, as though Samaritans didn't descend from Abraham, they reply by asking Jesus whether they don't say well that he's a Samaritan and has a devil, and Jesus, replying that he has no devil and that they dishonor him while he honors his father, tells them that, if a man keeps his sayings, he'll never see death. And then, asking him whether he isn't yet fifty years old but has seen Abraham, they take up stones to cast them at him. But he hides himself, and this chapter ends with Jesus going from the temple through their midst.

In John's ninth chapter, Jesus' disciples ask him whether a blind man or his parents sinned to make the man blind, and, replying that neither the man nor his parents have sinned, Jesus says the man's blind for Jesus to work the works of him who sent him, and he spits on the ground, makes clay from the spit, anoints the man's eyes with the clay, and tells the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam.

The man does that and sees, and his neighbors ask him how he gained his sight, and he tells them what Jesus did. They ask him where Jesus is then, and he tells them he doesn't know, and they take him to the Pharisees. And the Pharisees interrogate and accuse him and his parents and preach to them.

Some of the Pharisees say that, because Jesus doesn't keep the Sabbath, he isn't of God. But others ask how a man who's a sinner can do such miracles, and the man's parents say they don't know how their son came to see, or who healed him. But the reason they say that is that, because the Jews have agreed to put out of the synagogue anyone confessing Jesus is Christ, they fear the Jews.

The parents also say they only know that the man's their son and was born blind. And, to the Pharisees' telling the man Jesus is a sinner, the man replies that he doesn't know whether or not Jesus is a sinner but that one thing he knows is that he was blind but now sees. But, to the Pharisees' accusing him of being one of Jesus' disciples, he replies that no one since the world began has heard of any man opening the eyes of anyone who was born blind, and he tells them Jesus could do nothing if he weren't from God. So the Pharisees, telling him he was born in sins and asking him whether he's teaching them, throw him out.

And Jesus hears of that, finds the man, and asks him whether he believes in the son of God. That he might, the man asks Jesus who's the son of God, and Jesus tells him he's both seen him and is speaking with him, and the man calls him lord, tells him he believes, and worships him, and Jesus says he's come into the world for those who don't see to see and for those who see to be made blind. So some Pharisees ask him whether they're also blind, and this chapter closes with Jesus telling them they'd have no sin if they were blind, but that, because they say they see, their sins remain.

In John's tenth chapter, calling himself the good shepherd, Jesus says the sheep know the shepherd, that the shepherd enters the sheepfold by the door and not by any another way as would a robber, that a hireling who doesn't own the sheep sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep, but that the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep, that the good shepherd knows his sheep, and that they know him.

And he says his father loves him because he lays down his life to take it again, that he has power both to lay it down and to take it again, and that no man can take it from him, and then Jews ask him why he makes them doubt.

They tell him to tell them plainly whether he's the Christ, and he replies that he's told them but that, because they're not his sheep, they don't believe. He says his sheep hear his voice, that he knows them, that they follow him, that he gives them eternal life, and that no one can pluck them from his hand. And he says his father who gave them to him is greater than all, that no one can pluck them from his father's hand, and that he and his father are one. And that clause is a succinct and direct expression of the basic premise of Hinduism, that the Atman and Brahman are one. But then again Jews take up stones to stone him.

So he asks them for which of the good works he's shown them they'll stone him. And, replying that they don't stone him for a good work but for blasphemy, they say he's a man making himself God. And Jesus asks them whether saying they're gods isn't written in their law and whether they're saying the person God sent into the world blasphemes by saying he's the son of God. And he tells them to believe his works and know that the father is in him and that he's in the father.

And then he escapes across the Jordan to where John the Baptist began baptizing. He abides there with many resorting to him and saying John did no miracle but that what he said of Jesus is true. And many believe in Jesus there.

John's eleventh chapter, saying Jesus resurrected to life the brother of Mary and Martha, also says Mary was the woman who anointed Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair, but it doesn't say she was a sinner or did that in a Pharisee's house. The sisters, in this chapter, send to tell Jesus that their brother Lazarus whom Jesus loves is sick, but Jesus, before telling his disciples that their friend Lazarus is sleeping and asking that they go there to awaken him, stays two more days where he is, and, when he tells them Lazarus is sleeping, they reply that he'll do well if he's asleep. So then Jesus tells them Lazarus is dead, and the disciple Thomas asks that they go to die with him, and Martha meets them outside her house's village.

Telling Jesus he could have saved Lazarus from dying, she says God will give him whatever he asks of God. So Jesus tells Martha her brother shall rise again, and she tells him she knows Lazarus shall at the resurrection. So he tells her that he's the resurrection and the life and that whoever believes in him shall live, though he were dead. And he asks her whether she believes that.

So she tells him she believes he's the Christ. And then she goes and tells Mary he's there, and he goes to the tomb and sees Jews there weeping with Mary, and Mary falls at his feet and tells him she knows her brother wouldn't have died, had Jesus been there. And Jesus weeps, and then the Jews there tell one another to behold how he loved Lazarus.

Then Jesus orders the removal of the stone from the tomb, and Martha tells him Lazarus has been dead four days and stinks. Asking her whether he didn't tell her she'd see the glory of God, he looks up, thanks his father for hearing him, and resurrects Lazarus. But he also tells his father he knows he always hears him but that he said that to make the people standing there believe his father sent him, and many of the Jews believe in him. But some of them go and tell the Pharisees what he's done, and the Pharisees say that Jesus does many miracles and that all will believe in him. But they also say that, if they leave Jesus alone, the Romans will take away their place and their nation.

And the Pharisee Caiaphas, whom John also says was the high priest that year, tells the other Pharisees that they know nothing and that, to keep the whole nation from perishing, letting one man die for the people is expedient. And, in John's Gospel, Caiaphas says Jesus should die not only for the nation but also for Caiaphas to unite the children of God who are scattered abroad. So the Pharisees and priests counsel from that day forth to kill Jesus. And Jesus walks openly among the Jews no more.

John's twelfth chapter begins at the home of Mary and Martha six days before the Passover. Lazarus sits at table with Jesus, and Mary anoints Jesus' feet with oil from a spikenard, and Judas Iscariot complains that the oil could have been sold for the poor for three hundred pennies. But Judas' complaint is because he bears the money and is a thief.

Jesus, telling him to leave Mary alone, says she's kept the ointment for the day of his burial and that they'll always have the poor with them but won't always have him. And many Jews, knowing Lazarus is there, go there not for Jesus but to see Lazarus because Jesus raised him from the dead. But, because many Jews believe in Jesus because of Lazarus, the chief priests consult to kill Lazarus also.

The next day Jesus finds the ass and rides into Jerusalem, and there some Greeks go to Philip and ask to see Jesus. Philip tells Andrew of that, and Andrew tells Jesus, and Jesus says the hour in which the son of man should be glorified has come and that a grain of wheat remains alone if it doesn't fall, but that, if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. John doesn't say how that relates to the Greeks, but it suggests the basic premise of the *Dao De Jing*.

But Jesus, also saying his soul is troubled, asks whether, though he came to that hour for that cause, he should ask his father to save him from it. And then he asks the father to glorify the name of the father, and a voice comes from heaven and says he's glorified it and shall glorify it again, and, to signify that he'll die, Jesus tells the people who hear the voice that it didn't come because of him but for their sake. And, saying that then is the judgement of the world when the prince of the world shall be cast out, he says that, if he's lifted from the earth, he'll draw all men to him.

And that's the *bodhisattva* notion, and people there tell Jesus that they've heard from the law that the Christ shall abide forever, but Jesus tells them the light shall be with them but a little while and that, to keep darkness from coming upon them, they should walk while they have the light. But he also tells them that those walking in the dark don't know where they're going, and he tells them to be, by believing in the light while they have it, children of the light. But next he departs and hides himself from them,

And John says that, because Isaiah prophesied that, for them to be converted for him to heal them, he'd blind them and harden their hearts, they didn't believe him. And he says that, while some of the chief rulers believed in him, they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God and that, fearing the Pharisees might put them out of the synagogue, they didn't confess him. And next in this chapter Jesus cries that those who believe in him don't believe in him but in him who sent him and that they don't see him but him who sent him.

And he says that, because he didn't come to judge the world but to save it, he doesn't judge anyone who hears his words but doesn't believe them. But he says that those who reject him and don't receive his words have one to judge them. And he says the word he's spoken shall judge them in the last day.

But, saying he hasn't spoken of himself, he says the father who sent him gave him a commandment what to say and speak, that he knows his commandment is life everlasting, and that he speaks for that as the father told him to speak.

And, in John's thirteenth chapter, Jesus has what Christians call his last supper, his celebrating the Passover the night before his crucifixion, and he washes his disciples' feet. Peter tells him he'll never wash his feet, but Jesus replies that otherwise he'll have no part in him, and then Peter asks him to wash also his hands and his head. And, after washing the disciples' feet, Jesus reminds them of humility and service and tells them he's given them an example. And he tells them they should wash one another's feet.

But, as Jesus and his twelve disciples sit at the table, Jesus tells the disciples that, for the scripture to be fulfilled, one of them shall betray him. A disciple Jesus loves is leaning on Jesus' bosom, and Peter asks him to ask Jesus which of them shall betray him, and Jesus replies that the one to whom he'll give a sop after he's dipped it shall be the one, and he dips a sop and gives it to Judas Iscariot, and, as Luke says he did, Satan enters Judas. And Jesus tells Judas to do quickly what he'll do, and Judas goes out immediately, into the night.

Saying that then the son of man is glorified and that God is glorified in him, Jesus tells the remaining disciples that he's giving them a new commandment, that they love one another as he's loved them, and he tells them that men by that shall know they're his disciples. And Peter asks him where he's going, and Jesus says Peter can't go there but will follow later, and Peter, asking him why he can't follow him then, tells him he'll lay down his life for Jesus' sake. And this chapter closes with Jesus telling Peter he'll deny him three times before the cock crows.



John's fourteenth chapter begins with Jesus telling his disciples to believe in God and him and not to let their hearts be troubled, and he tells them many mansions are in his house and that he's going to prepare a place for them, but Thomas and Philip express doubt. And Jesus, telling them that on the day they see him they'll know he's in his father, that they're in him, that he's in them, and that the comforter who's the holy spirit shall tell them all things. And this chapter ends with Jesus asking them to arise and go with him.

And, in John's fifteenth chapter, Jesus elaborates on the unity of God and him and his disciples, and, repeating his commandment that they love one another as he's loved them, he says no love is greater than laying down one's life for one's friends.

But, also telling them that, if the world hates them, it hated him before it hated them, he says those who hate him hate his father also. And, saying he'll send a comforter from the father, he says that, when the comforter comes, the spirit of truth that proceeds from the father shall testify of him. And this chapter closes with Jesus telling his disciples that, because they've been with him from the beginning, they'll also bear witness.

In John's sixteenth chapter, Jesus tells his disciples more of the comforter. He tells them that, if he doesn't depart, the comforter won't come to them, that, if he does, he'll send him to them, and that, when the comforter comes, he'll, with righteousness and judgement, reprove the world of sin. And, again calling the comforter the spirit of truth, he tells the disciples that, because the comforter won't speak of himself but of whatever he hears, he'll guide them to truth. And he speaks of the comforter as he's spoken of himself.

But, saying the comforter will glorify him and tell them of things to come, he again tells his disciples that they won't see him for a while but will see him again. They say they don't understand, but, repeating some of what he's said in other ways, he says he came from the father and will leave the world and go to the father again. And then they say he's speaking plainly and not in proverbs, that then they're sure he knows all things, and that by that they believe he comes from God.

John's seventeenth chapter begins with Jesus speaking and lifting his eyes to heaven, and the remainder of it is a prayer in which, telling God his disciples understand and asking God to protect them but not take them from the world, Jesus asks God that, to show the world that God sent him, they maintain their unity.

In John's eighteenth chapter, the person cutting off the right ear of the servant of the high priest who arrests Jesus is Peter. The servant's name is Malchus, and Jesus tells Peter to return his sword to the sheath and asks Peter whether he shouldn't drink of the cup his father has given him. And this chapter

also says the chief priest's servant whose ear Peter cut off was one of the persons to whom Peter denied knowing Jesus.

And also in this chapter Pilate tells the people accusing Jesus to judge him by their own law. But they say killing a man isn't lawful for them, and Pilate enters the judgement hall, calls Jesus, and asks him whether he's king of the Jews, and Jesus asks Pilate whether he's saying that of himself or from others. Pilate asks Jesus whether Pilate's a Jew and tells him the chief priests of Jesus' nation delivered him there, and Jesus tells him that, if his kingdom were of this world, his servants would fight that delivery, and Pilate again asks him whether he's a king. Then Jesus replies that Pilate is saying that, but he also says he was born to that end and came into the world for the cause of bearing witness to the truth, and he asks everyone who knows the truth to hear his voice.

In John's nineteenth chapter, Pilate asks the people shouting for Christ's crucifixion whether he should crucify their king, and the people shout that Jesus also said he made himself the son of God, and that frightens Pilate into trying further to elicit both explanation from Jesus and permission from the Jews to release him, but the Jews shout that whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar and that, if Pilate releases Jesus, he isn't a friend of Caesar's.

And also, in John's version of the story, Jesus and not a Simon of Cyrene carries the cross after Pilate delivers him to the soldiers for crucifixion. And also, in John's version, Pilate writes in Hebrew and Greek and Latin the title calling Jesus the king of the Jews, and the chief priests tell Pilate not to say Jesus is the king of the Jews but to say Jesus says he is, but Pilate replies that he's written what he's written. And also, in John's version, Jesus sees his mother and the disciple he loves standing by the cross, tells the disciple he loves to behold his mother, and tells his mother to behold her son.

In John's twentieth chapter Mary of Magdala goes to the tomb before dawn, finds it empty, runs to Peter and the disciple Jesus loves, and tells them Jesus has been taken from the sepulcher and that she doesn't know where whoever has taken him has laid him. Then the disciple Jesus loves outruns Peter and looks into the tomb before Peter reaches it, but Peter enters it first, and the disciple Jesus loves follows and sees, and then they believe. And John says they hadn't yet known the scripture that Jesus would rise from the dead.

Then, leaving Mary standing outside the sepulcher weeping, the two disciples go home. And then she looks into the tomb and sees two angels in white, one sitting at each end of where Jesus' body had lain, and the angels ask her why she's weeping, and she tells them what she told the two disciples. And then she turns and sees Jesus and supposes him to be the gardener.

He asks her why she's weeping and whom she's seeking, and she tells him that, if he's borne Jesus away and tells her whence, she'll take Jesus away. Then Jesus says her name, and then she recognizes him and calls him master, but, telling her not to touch him, he says he hasn't yet ascended to his father, and then he tells her to go and tell his brothers he's ascending to his father and their father, his god and their god. She does, and that evening Jesus appears to them, bids them peace, shows them his wounds, breathes on them, tells them to receive the holy spirit, and says that whose sins they remit are remitted and that whose sins they retain are retained.

But the disciple Thomas isn't there. And, when the others tell him of that meeting, he says he won't believe until he's touched the wounds, and, eight days later, Jesus reappears and tells Thomas to touch the wounds, and Thomas calls him his lord and his god. But Jesus tells him that blessed are those who believe but haven't seen.

And John closes this chapter by saying Jesus did in the presence of his disciples many signs not in this book, but that those in it are written for us to believe Jesus is the Christ and the son of God, for us to have life through his name.

John's 21<sup>st</sup> and final chapter begins at the Sea of Tiberius. Peter and others of Jesus' disciples go fishing, and Jesus stands on the shore and asks them whether they have any meat, but the disciples don't know him and reply that they have none. He tells them that, if they cast their net on the right side of their ship, they'll find, and they find more fish than they can draw.

So the disciple Jesus loves tells Peter Jesus is the lord. And Peter wraps his coat around himself and casts himself into the sea, and the others follow him ashore in the ship, dragging the fish. As soon as they arrive ashore, they see a fire with fish on it and some bread, and Jesus, telling them to bring some of the fish they've caught, asks them to dine and gives them bread and fish.

After dining, Jesus asks Peter whether he loves him more than do the others, and Peter tells Jesus that Jesus knows he does, and Jesus tells him to feed his lambs. Twice more Jesus asks him whether he loves him and replies to his replies by telling him to feed his sheep. And Jesus' third repetition grieves Peter.

And next Jesus signifies by what death Peter would glorify God. He tells him he girded himself and went where he wished when he was young but that another will gird him when he's old and take him where he doesn't wish to go. And then he tells Peter to follow him, and Peter turns and, seeing the disciple Jesus loves following, asks Jesus what that man will do, and Jesus

replies that he'll wait until he comes. But he also asks Peter what that is to him, and he again tells Peter to follow him.

Then John says a saying went abroad to the brothers that Jesus didn't say that but said the disciple Jesus loved shouldn't die. And next John says the disciple Jesus loved was the one testifying and writing those things and that we know his testimony is true. So, effectually saying Jesus preferred him to the other disciples, John effectually says he's the disciple Jesus loved.

And his Gospel omits Matthew's and Mark's story of Jesus rebuking him and his brother James for their or their mother's asking that they sit on his right and left in his kingdom or his glory. And John closes his Gospel by saying Jesus did many other things but that he supposes that, if they were written, the world couldn't contain all the books that should be written, amen. And John doesn't tell of Jesus's ascension to heaven.

And neither does John make clear who or what the comforter is, whether it's entirely spirit or would appear in physical form to lead Jesus' movement, but the next book in the New Testament may clarify that.

## Chapter 17

### Acts of Apostles

The defining difference between a disciple and an apostle is that a disciple learns while an apostle teaches, and the Book of Acts tells of acts of apostles during the organizing of disciples into teaching Christianity after the crucifixion, and its author is Paul's disciple and apostle the evangel Luke.

Luke begins its first chapter by addressing Theophilus as he does at the beginning of his Gospel and by referring to the former treatise he's made and to all Jesus began to do and teach. Presumably the treatise to which he refers is his Gospel, and he says that, during forty days after his resurrection, before a cloud received him out of their sight on the Mount of Olives, Jesus was with his eleven remaining disciples and showed himself alive by many infallible proofs. And he says that, when Jesus' disciples came together with him at the end of those forty days, they asked him whether he'd then restore the kingdom of Israel.

He says Jesus replied that knowing the time or the season the father has put into his power wasn't for them, but that they'd receive power at the time of the holy spirit coming upon them, and that they'd be witnesses to him in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth. And he says that, as the disciples stood looking steadfastly as Jesus went up, two men in white apparel asked them why they stood gazing into heaven and told them Jesus would come in the manner in which they'd seen him go. And next in this chapter the eleven return to Jerusalem and join a group of about 120 people in an upper room, and Jesus' mother and brothers are among them.

Peter says Judas purchased a field with the reward of his iniquity, that he fell headlong and burst apart in the midst of the field, and that all of his bowels gushed out. And, referring to David's 109<sup>th</sup> psalm for authority, Peter directs selecting a replacement for Judas from those who went among them from the baptism of John to the day on which Jesus was taken from them. And they narrow the choice to two, pray to Jesus to choose between the two, cast lots, and ordain one whose name is Matthias.

The second chapter of Acts begins with the apostles together in a place in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Pentecost is a Judaic holiday on the fiftieth day after Passover, and in this chapter a sound from heaven like rushing wind fills the house where the apostles are sitting, and cloven tongues like fire appear to them and sit on each of them. And they're filled with the holy spirit and begin to speak with other tongues.

Devout Jews of every nation under heaven are dwelling at Jerusalem then, and the occurrence is noised abroad, and the multitude gather, and, because each hears his own language, they're confounded and ask one another whether the apostles aren't Galileans.

Some say they're full of new wine, but Peter stands and says the time is but the third hour of the day and that they're not drunk but fulfilling a prophesy he quotes from the second chapter of Joel's section of the Book of the Twelve. The prophesy is of God saying he'll pour out his spirit on all flesh, but it says nothing of any kind of tongues. And it says the pouring will be on the last day.

And next Peter quotes some of what the *Miqra* says of David and gives it a Pharisical interpretation. He says David was a prophet and knew God had sworn an oath with him that he'd raise a Christ of the fruit of his loins to sit on his throne in accordance with the flesh. And he asks that all of the house of Israel know God made both God and the Christ they crucified.

And he commands that all the people there be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins and receive the gift of the holy spirit. So those who gladly receive his words are baptized, and about three thousand souls are added to his company that day, and they continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and in fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. And, selling their possessions and goods and parting them to all as each needs, they're together and have all things in common.

And, in the temple, in breaking of bread from house to house, in eating their bread with gladness and singleness of heart, in praising God, and in having favor with all the people, they continue daily with one accord, and God daily adds to the church such as should be saved.

The third chapter begins with Peter and John going to the temple. There a man who's been lame since he was in his mother's womb asks alms of them, and Peter, telling him he has no silver or gold but will give him what he has, heals his lameness and tells him to rise and walk in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. And, walking, leaping, and praising God, the man enters the temple.

All the people see him, recognize him, and run wondering to him and Peter and John. And Peter, asking them why they're looking at him and John as though they'd made the man walk by their own power or holiness, tells them the god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob glorified his son Jesus. And, rebuking them for denying Jesus and killing him, he tells them faith in Jesus' name made the man strong.

But he also tells them he knows that what they and their rulers did was from ignorance, and, telling them to repent and be converted, for their sins to be blotted out when the time of refreshing comes in the presence of the lord, he tells them God shall send the Jesus Christ who preached to them before, that Moses and all the prophets from Samuel onward prophesied those days, that they're the children of the prophets, that all the kin of the earth shall be blessed in their seed, and that God sent his son Jesus first to them.

In the fourth chapter, for preaching the Pharisaical doctrine of resurrection from the dead, priests, Sadducees, and the captain of the temple arrest Peter, John, and the man faith in Jesus' name had healed. They keep them in jail overnight, and, next morning, they take them to the high priest Annas. And Caiaphas is with Annas.

Peter, filled with the holy ghost, rebukes the rulers of the people and the elders of Israel. But, because they've done a miracle, the people who've arrested them decide they have no cause to hold them. They threaten them and order them to stop teaching in the name of Jesus, but they release them.

Peter and John, telling them to judge whether listening to them is more right than listening to God, say they can't not tell the things they've seen and heard, and for that the captors threaten them more, but, because the people glorify God for what they've done, they release them, and they return to their own company and tell what the chief priests and the elders said to them.

So the company praises God and says God asked by the mouth of David why the heathens rage and why the people imagine vain things. And, after more praise and praying, the place is shaken, and, filled with the holy ghost, the company collects more possessions and goods, sells them, and brings the prices to the apostles, and this chapter specifies land and houses among the possessions. And a Levite from Cyprus whose surname is Barnabas sells land and brings the price of it, and this chapter, saying Barnabas' surname means the son of consolation, closes by saying he laid the money at the apostles' feet.

But the fifth chapter begins with a husband and wife keeping part of the price of a possession they sell. Peter asks the husband why Satan filled his heart to lie to the holy ghost, and, hearing that, the man falls down and gives up the

ghost, and Peter tells young men to carry him out and bury him. And, three hours later, Peter accuses the wife of conspiring with her husband, and the young men bury her with her husband. And great fear comes on the church and all who hear of that.

Questions are what that story says of God's mercy or of what the Gospels say Jesus said of repentance and forgiving seventy times seven times, whether it says God's the god of whom the Old Testament says Melchizedek was the high priest or that Peter's a priest in the order of Melchizedek, whether Paul's apostle Luke fabricated that story to support the fundraising efforts of Paul's epistles, what any of that says of such as "indulgences" and "megachurches", and what it says of worshiping God and mammon.

But, in this chapter, the apostles render many signs and wonders among the people and the multitudes, and multitudes lay the sick onto couches and bring them into the streets for Peter's shadow to overshadow them as he passes. And they bring both sick people and people vexed with unclean spirits from the cities around Jerusalem, and each is healed. So believers, both men and women, are added to the lord.

The high priest and some Sadducees imprison the apostles again, but an angel of the lord opens the prison's doors, brings them out, and tells them to go to the temple to speak to the people all the words of this life. The high priest and the captain of the temple arrest them at the temple, but a Pharisee who's a doctor of the law tells them of insurrections in response to killing popular protesters. So, after beating the apostles and telling them not to speak the name of Jesus, they release them again. And they keep preaching and teaching Jesus Christ in the temple daily and in every house.

But the sixth chapter of Acts begins with Greek disciples, when the number of disciples increases, murmuring against the Hebrew disciples. Their murmuring is because the Greeks' widows are neglected in the daily ministrations, and the twelve principal apostles respond by calling the multitude of disciples to them and telling them the twelve shouldn't leave the word of God to serve tables. They tell them, for the twelve to give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word, to appoint over that business seven others who are honest and full of the holy spirit and wisdom.

One of those they appoint is Stephan, a proselyte from the Greek colony Antioch who's a man full of faith and power and the holy spirit, and another is a Philip. But that Philip, if the seven weren't of the principle twelve, isn't Jesus' disciple Philip, and, other than Peter, John, and John's brother James, the Book of Acts names none of Jesus' disciples. But, in it, the word of



God increases, and the number of disciples multiplies, and a great number of the priests are obedient to the faith.

But, while some people in a synagogue called the synagogue of the libertines are unable to resist the wisdom and spirit by which Stephen speaks, others there subordinate men to say he spoke blasphemous words against Moses and God. And, stirring the people and the elders and scribes to catch him and take him to the council, they set false witnesses to say they heard him say Jesus of Nazareth would destroy that place and change the customs Moses delivered. But, looking steadfastly at Stephen, the council sees his face as though it were an angel's.

The seventh chapter begins with the high priest asking Stephen whether the accusations are true, and Stephen begins his reply with a version of the *Torah* from God telling Abram to leave Mesopotamia through the Israelites worshiping the golden calf, but the version varies from the *Miqra* in several ways. Stephen says Moses incorrectly supposed his brothers would understand by his killing the Egyptian how God would deliver them, and he says God spoke to Moses by way of an angel in a church in the wilderness on Mount Sinai. And, telling the high priest the high priest has received the law by angels but hasn't kept it, Stephen quotes Amos' prophesying the Babylonian captivity.

And he says the fathers directed Moses in how to make the tabernacle of witness and that later fathers brought it with Jesus into the possession of the gentiles God had driven from the face of the fathers until the days of David. And he says those fathers found favor before God and desired to find a tabernacle for the god of Jacob but that Solomon built him a house while, as the prophets say, the highest doesn't dwell in temples made by hands. And, quoting Isaiah's quoting God's saying heaven is his throne and Earth his footstool, he asks what house or place of his rest we'll build him and whether God's hands haven't made all those things.

And next he rebukes the council. Calling them uncircumcised in heart and ears, he tells them that, like their fathers, they always resist the holy spirit. Asking them which of the prophets their fathers haven't persecuted, he tells them they've killed those who showed of the coming of the just one they've now betrayed and murdered. And he tells them that, by the disposition of the angels, they've also received the law, and that neither have they kept it.

So the council, hearing the things Stephen has said, are cut to the heart and gnash on him with their teeth. Stephen, full of the holy spirit, looks steadfastly into heaven and sees the glory of God with Jesus standing on the right hand of God, but the council cries out with a loud voice, stops its ears, runs on Stephen with one accord, casts him out of the city, and stones him. And

Stephen kneels, calls upon God, asks Jesus to receive his spirit, cries with a loud voice asking the lord not to lay that sin to the charge of its perpetrators, and falls asleep. And, during that assault, witnesses lay their clothing at the feet of a young man whose name is Saul.

The eighth chapter begins by saying that, during much persecution of the church at Jerusalem, Saul consented to Stephen's death, and it says that then, excepting the apostles, the church was scattered throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria. It says that, while Saul was making havoc of the church, devout men lamented Stephen and carried him to his burial. But in this chapter Saul enters every house and hales men and women into imprisonment.

Yet, in this chapter, those who are scattered preach the word, and unclean spirits cry with a loud voice and come out of people they possess, and many who are taken with palsy and many who are lame are healed.

And Philip goes to Samaria to preach, and the people see the miracles he does, and they believe with one accord what they hear him say, and a man using sorcery many people say is the great power of God continues with Philip. But, hearing that Samaria has heard the word of God, the apostles at Jerusalem send Peter and John to them, and the sorcerer offers money for the power to lay hands on people for them to receive the holy spirit, and Peter, telling the sorcerer that, because he thinks the gift of god can be purchased with money, his money perishes with him, says the sorcerer has no part in the matter and tells him his heart isn't right in the sight of God. And, saying he perceives that the sorcerer is in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, he tells him to repent of that wickedness and pray to God for forgiveness, and the sorcerer asks Peter to pray for him for what he's said not to come upon him.

And also in this chapter those who testify return to Jerusalem, and some preach in Samaritan villages, and an angel of God tells Philip to go toward Gaza, and on the way Philip sees a eunuch who's in charge of the treasures of the queen of Ethiopia.

The Eunuch, who's returning from going to Jerusalem to worship, is reading Isaiah while sitting in a chariot, and the spirit tells Philip to join himself with the chariot. So Philip, hearing the eunuch reading Isaiah's telling of a servant of God who was led to the slaughter as a lamb before the shearer and didn't open his mouth, asks the eunuch whether he understands what he's reading. The Eunuch asks how he can with no one guiding him and whether Isaiah is speaking of himself or of someone else, and Philip preaches Jesus to him, and they come to some water, and the Eunuch asks Philip what's to hinder him from being baptized.

So Philip tells him he may be if he believes with all his heart. And the eunuch, saying he believes Jesus Christ is the son of God, commands the chariot to stop, and Philip baptizes him. But, as Philip and the Eunuch come from the water, the spirit catches Philip away, and next Philip is found at Azotus, and he preaches from there to Caesarea, and the Eunuch sees him no more.

At the beginning of the ninth chapter, Saul, continuing to breathe out threats and slaughter against the disciples of the lord, goes to the high priest and requests letters to the synagogues in Damascus to permit him to bind any men or women of the way of the apostles and bring them to Jerusalem.

But, as Saul nears Damascus, a light from heaven shines around him, and he falls to the earth and hears a voice asking him why he persecuted the speaker. He asks the voice to identify itself, and it says it's Jesus Christ and that Saul's kicking against the pricks is hard, and Saul asks it what it wishes him to do, and it tells him to go into the city to be told what to do, and Saul rises. But he sees no man, and neither do the men with him, who are then standing speechless, and they take him to Damascus, where Saul is sightless and neither eats nor drinks for three days.

And, during those three days, the lord, appearing to a man called Ananias and telling him to inquire for a person called Saul of Tarsus at the house of a man called Judas in a street called Straight, says the reason he's to go is that Saul is praying and has seen a vision of a man called Ananias coming and putting a hand on him, for him to receive his sight.

Ananias tells the lord he's heard of the evil Saul's done to the lord's saints in Jerusalem and of his permission to bind all calling on the lord's name. But the lord tells him to go because Saul's a chosen vessel of his to bear his name to the gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. And the lord says he'll show Saul the great things he'll suffer for the lord's name's sake.

So Ananias goes, puts his hands on Saul, and tells him Jesus sent him to him for him to receive his sight and be filled with the holy spirit. And Saul receives his sight, rises and is baptized, eats and is strengthened, and spends some days with the disciples in Damascus, preaching in the synagogues that Christ is the son of God. And all hearing him are amazed and tell one other what Ananias told the lord, and Saul confounds the Jews at Damascus, and his strength increases, proving Christ.

So the Jews take counsel to kill him, but he knows of their lying in wait at the city gates, and the disciples let him down from the wall of Damascus by night in a basket, and he returns to Jerusalem and tries to join the disciples there.

They're afraid of him, but the apostle Barnabas tells them Saul has seen the lord on the way, that the lord has spoken to him, and that he's preached

boldly in Damascus in the name of Jesus. So Saul, speaking boldly in the name of Jesus with the disciples in Jerusalem, disputes against the Greeks. And, when the Greeks also go about to kill him, the brothers send him to Tarsus.

But, walking in the fear of the lord and multiplying in the comfort of the holy spirit, the churches rest throughout Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, and in Lidda Peter heals a man who's been eight years in bed sick of the palsy, and in Joppa he brings a woman back to life.

The tenth chapter begins with an angel appearing to a generous centurion in Caesarea and telling him to go to Peter in Joppa. As the centurion and his servants near the city, Peter, in a trance and praying while hungry, has a vision commanding him to kill and eat unclean beasts, and it inspires him to begin preaching to the gentiles and saving them, and he begins with the centurion. The centurion tells him of the angel, and Peter tells a gathering of believers at the centurion's house that God has shown him he shouldn't call anyone common or unclean, and the holy ghost falls on all hearing Peter's message there, and he orders them baptized.

The eleventh chapter begins with the apostles and brothers in Judaea hearing of the gentiles receiving the word of God. They contend with Peter concerning his going to the uncircumcised and eating with them, but Peter tells them of the vision in Joppa and of the centurion. And he tells them the holy ghost fell upon the gentiles in Joppa as it had fallen on the apostles at the beginning.

Also in this chapter some of those who scattered because of the persecution that arose in regard to Stephen go to Cyprus, Cyrene, and Antioch and, turning many to believing, preach the lord Jesus to Greeks, and Barnabas goes to Tarsus. He finds Saul there and takes him to Antioch, and they assemble with the church there for a year and teach many people. And the disciples are first called Christians there.

But, because one of them prophesies a famine in all the world, they determine to send relief to their brothers in Judaea, and they send it by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

The twelfth chapter begins with Herod stretching forth his hands to vex the church. He kills John's brother James with a sword and imprisons Peter during the Passover. Intending to bring Peter to the people after Easter, he assigns sixteen soldiers to keep him, chains him between two soldiers, and posts the prison's keepers before its door. But, that night, light shines in the prison, and an angel smites a side of Peter's to arouse him, and the chains fall from him.

Peter thinks the angel's a vision, but the angel tells him to dress and leads him from the prison past the guards. The gate opens of its own accord, and Peter follows the angel into the city and through a street where the angel leaves him. Then Peter comes to himself and says he knows the lord sent the angel and delivered him from Herod and the expectation of the Jewish people.

And then he goes to the house of a Mary who's the mother of a John whose surname is Mark. A girl answers Peter's knock at the gate, but, in her gladness, she doesn't open the gate but runs to tell others there that Peter's at it. They tell her she's mad, and, as she persists, they say Peter's his angel, but Peter persists in knocking until, astonished, they open the gate. He beckons for them to hold their peace, tells them how the lord has brought him out of prison, and tells them to go show those things to James and the brothers. And then he leaves to go to another place.

Luke doesn't say to what place he goes. And, leaving the question of whether this chapter's chronology is out of order, neither does he say to which James Peter's referring. Either this episode preceded Herod's killing John's brother James, or the James to whom Peter sends the message is Jesus' brother James or another James, and Luke's narrative doesn't resume until next day.

Then no small stir is among the soldiers, and Herod commands the death of the keepers and sets a day to sit on his throne in his royal apparel and make an oration. During the oration, the people shout that it's the voice of God, and immediately an angel of the lord smites Herod for not giving God the glory, and Herod gives up the ghost, and worms eat him. And this chapter closes with Barnabas and Saul fulfilling their ministry in Jerusalem and returning to Antioch, taking John Mark with them.

In Antioch, at the beginning of the thirteenth chapter, as Barnabas and Saul and others minister to the lord, the holy ghost tells them to separate to the holy ghost Barnabas and Saul, for them to do the work where the holy ghost has called them.

So, with John Mark helping them, they sail to Cyprus, Salamis, and Paphos. In Paphos Saul blinds a sorcerer for falsely prophesying, and, while telling of the sorcerer, Luke says Saul's also called Paul. And then, while John Mark returns to Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch.

On a sabbath in a synagogue in Antioch, Paul, preaching events and doctrines of both the old testament and the new testament to both Jews and Gentiles, argues for that by saying Jesus descended from David and by quoting Isaiah's saying God told him he'd give him for a light to the gentiles. And the gentiles beseech Paul and Barnabas to preach those words to them on the next sabbath. But, when they do, the Jews see the multitude and are envious.

So, contradicting and blaspheming, they speak against Paul's speaking. But Paul and Barnabas tell them the reason they turn to the gentiles is that they judge the Jews unworthy of everlasting life. And the gentiles hearing them are glad and glorify the word of the lord. And those who believe are ordained to eternal life.

So, raising persecution against Paul and Barnabas, the Jews stir up honorable women and the chief men of the city and expel Paul and Barnabas from their vicinity, and Paul and Barnabas shake the dust from their feet against them and travel on to Iconium, where more disciples are filled with joy and the holy ghost.

In Iconium, in the fourteenth chapter, some Jews and gentiles believe Paul and Barnabas. But, to use them spitefully, those who don't believe them assault and stone them. So they flee to Lycaonia.

In Lystra, Paul looks at a man crippled since birth, sees he has faith to be healed, and tells him to stand on his feet, and the man leaps and walks. But the people there call Barnabas and Paul Jupiter and Mercury, and the priest of Jupiter brings oxen and garlands for a sacrifice. So Barnabas and Paul rend their clothes and, crying that they're not gods but men, run among the people.

And Jews from Antioch and Iconium come there, persuade the people, stone Paul, and, supposing he's dead, drag him from the city. But he revives, and, in Derby, he and Barnabas resume preaching and teaching the gospel. And they also return to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch.

The fifteenth chapter begins with some men coming from Judea to Antioch and teaching the brothers that they can't be saved if they aren't circumcised in the manner of Moses, and Paul and Barnabas dispute with them and decide to go to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about that question, and Pharisees among them argue that circumcision is necessary. Peter rises and, telling them they know God gave the gentiles the holy ghost a while earlier, asks them why, by putting onto the gentiles a yoke neither they nor their fathers were able to bear, they tempt God. And Paul and Barnabas declare what miracles God has wrought by them among the gentiles, and a James quotes Amos' saying God said all the gentiles would seek the lord.

He says his sentence is that they not trouble the gentiles but tell them to abstain from pollution of idols, fornication, strangled animals, and blood, and the apostles and elders, selecting men to write letters they address to the gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, send the letters with Barnabas and Paul, and they send them by mouth with a Judas and a Silas.

After more preaching and teaching in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas agree to visit their brothers to see how they're doing in every city where they've preached the lord. But Barnabas determines to take John Mark with them, while Paul, because John Mark left them in Pamphylia, thinks taking him wouldn't be good. And the contention between them is sharp.

So this chapter closes with Barnabas and Mark sailing to Cyprus while Paul and Silas go confirming the churches through Syria and Cilicia.

The sixteenth chapter begins with Paul and his company again coming to Derby and Lystra. In Lystra a disciple whose name is Timotheus, whose mother is a Jew and his father a Greek, joins the company. And, because of the Jews in that region, Paul circumcises Timotheus before traveling with him.

As they travel they deliver the decrees the apostles and elders at Jerusalem ordained, and the churches are established in faith and increase in number daily. But the holy ghost forbids Paul and his company to preach the word in Asia, and, in Philippi, a chief city of Macedonia, finding a girl a spirit of divination possesses, they drive it from her in the name of Jesus Christ. But the girl's masters, because of the loss of their gain from the girl's soothsaying, draw Paul and Silas to the rulers and accuse them of teaching customs unlawful for Romans to receive.

And the multitudes rise against them, and the magistrates rend their clothes from them and command that they be beaten, and after the whipping they throw them into prison and put them in stocks.

But they sing praises to God, and an earthquake shakes the prison and opens its doors. The keeper of the prison, thinking the prisoners have escaped, draws his sword to kill himself, but Paul, crying to him not to harm himself, tells him they're all there. So the keeper takes Paul and Silas to his house, gives them food, washes their stripes, and asks how he can be saved. They tell him that, if he believes in the lord Jesus Christ, he and his house shall be saved. And, speaking the word of the lord to him and all in the house, they baptize him.

And the magistrates send sergeants to order the keeper to release them. But Paul, saying they're Romans, demands that the magistrates come and take them out, and hearing from the sergeants that Paul and Silas are Romans frightens the magistrates. So they go to the prison, let them out, and ask them to leave the city, and, after comforting the brothers in the house of a woman they'd baptized with her household earlier in the chapter, they do.

In Athens, in the seventeenth chapter, seeing the city's wholly given to idolatry stirs Paul's spirit. And, because all Athenians and strangers who go to Athens spend time in nothing other than learning new doctrines, Stoics and

Epicureans listen to him. So Paul tells them he saw an alter with an inscription to the unknown god and that he's declaring that god to them.

He tells them the unknown god is the god of heaven and earth, doesn't dwell in temples made by hands, and isn't worshiped with men's hands as though he needs anything. When they hear of the resurrection of the dead, some of them mock, but others ask to hear more. And, when Paul leaves them, some of them cleave to him, believing.

And, also referring to Greek men and women in Athens who believe and to Paul's disputing with Jews in a synagogue there, this chapter says he agreed with Greek poets' saying all of us are God's offspring, live and move in God, and have our being in him, and that also effectually agrees with the basic premise of Hinduism.

But in Corinth, in the eighteenth chapter, Paul responds to opposition from Jews by telling them their blood's on their heads and that, from then on, he'll go to the gentiles, and the lord tells him in a vision at night to speak and not hold his peace or fear, that he's with him, and that, because he has many people in that city, no man will harm him, and Paul teaches there a year and six months. Jews arrest him and take him before the judgement seat of the deputy of Achaia, but the deputy, telling the Jews he won't judge their law, drives them from the judgement seat, and Greeks beat the ruler of the synagogue there, and neither does the deputy care for that. And Paul stays there a while after that.

In the nineteenth chapter, Paul asks twelve men in Ephesus whether, since they've believed, they've received the holy spirit, and they say they haven't heard of any holy ghost. So he asks them into what they were baptized, and they reply that they were baptized into John's baptism, and he tells them John baptized in repentance and told people they should believe in Jesus' coming after him. And, after he baptizes them and lays his hands on them, they speak with tongues and prophesy.

And, during two years in this chapter, God renders special miracles by Paul's hands, and, when handkerchiefs or aprons from Paul's body are brought to people, disease and evil spirits leave them. And, when seven sons of a chief priest of the Jews try to cast out an evil spirit, the spirit, telling them it knows Jesus and Paul, asks them who they are, and the man with the spirit leaps on the sons and prevails against them, and they flee from the house naked and wounded. And fear falls on the Jews and Greeks knowing of that, and many of them believe and confess, and many who use curious arts bring their books together and burn them and count their price and find it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver.



And also in this chapter is a dispute between Christians and silversmiths who make silver shrines for Diana. The silversmiths complain that the Christians are threatening their income and the honor of Diana's temple, and people threaten the Christians in the theatre, but the town clerk pacifies the people. He tells them they know the city of the Ephesians is a worshiper of the great goddess Diana and the image that fell down from Jupiter and that those things can't be spoken against. But he says the Christians aren't robbers of churches or blasphemers of their goddess, that the law is open, and that deputies are there if the craftsmen have a matter against any man.

And he tells them their inquiring of other matters shall be determined in a lawful assembly but that they're in danger of being called into question for that day's uproar, and, after telling them that by no cause may they give account of that concourse, he dismisses the assembly.

After that uproar, in the twentieth chapter, Paul embraces the disciples and travels on. In Troas he preaches until midnight, and a young man sitting in a window falls asleep, falls from the third floor, and is taken up dead. And Paul resurrects him and continues his travel.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter, Paul travels to Caesarea and abides with Philip, and this chapter calls Philip an evangel and says he had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

Also in this chapter a prophet comes to Caesarea from Agabus, ties his hands and feet with Paul's girdle, and tells Paul the holy ghost says the Jews at Jerusalem shall bind the man who owns the girdle and deliver him into the hands of the gentiles. But Paul says that, for the name of the Lord Jesus, he's ready to be bound and die at Jerusalem. And he returns there.

And there he goes to a James and says in the presence of the elders what God has wrought among the gentiles by his ministry. They glorify God, but, telling him to see how many Jews are jealous of the law, they advise that, before he goes into the temple to speak to the multitude, he purify himself with four men who've taken a vow. He complies, but, saying that he's stirred up all everywhere against the people and the law, brought Greeks into the temple, and polluted it, Jews from Asia stir up the people and lay hands on him.

Having seen him with an Ephesian, they think he brought the Ephesian into the temple. So the people run together, draw him out of the temple, close its doors, and are about to kill him. But a captain hears of that uproar, takes soldiers and centurions, and runs to them. So the people, seeing the captain and the centurions, stop beating Paul.

But the tumult keeps the captain from knowing certainty. So, because of the violence of the people, he commands chaining Paul and carrying him up the stairs into the castle. And Paul asks the captain to let him speak to him.

The captain asks Paul whether he can speak Greek and whether he's an Egyptian who made an uproar and led four thousand murderers into the wilderness. And Paul, replying that he's a Jew and a citizen of Tarsus, asks the Captain to let him speak to the people, and the captain lets him speak from the steps. And, after making a great silence by beckoning with a hand to the people, he speaks to them in Hebrew.

He tells them, in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter, that he's a Jew born in Tarsus but raised in Jerusalem and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers. He tells them of his approving the shedding of the blood of the martyr Stephan, of his other persecuting, of the road to Damascus, and of Jesus sending Ananias to him. And they listen, until he tells them Jesus told him he'd send him to the gentiles, and then they say he isn't fit to live.

So, to know why they cried against him, the captain commands taking him into the castle and examining him by scourging. But, as the soldiers bind him with thongs, Paul asks the centurion standing there whether scourging a Roman who isn't condemned is lawful. And the centurion tells the captain Paul's a Roman, and the captain, asking Paul whether he is, tells him he's obtained his freedom with a great sum, and Paul replies that he was born free.

So the people who would have examined him leave him, and the captain, because he's had Paul bound, is afraid, looses Paul's bands, commands the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brings Paul down and sets him before them.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter begins with Paul seeing the council and telling them he's lived in good conscience. Anias, the high priest, commands smiting him on his mouth, and Paul, calling Anias a whitewashed wall, says God will smite him for sitting to judge him after the law while commanding smiting him contrary to the law. So the council stands and asks Paul whether he's reviling the high priest, and Paul, replying that he didn't know Anias was the high priest, refers to writing against speaking evil of the ruler of the people.

And then, seeing that both Pharisees and Sadducees are present, Paul cries that he's a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee and says he's called into question for the hope and resurrection of the dead. So dissension arising between the Pharisees and the Sadducees divides the multitude, and this chapter says that, while the Pharisees confess both the resurrection and an angel or a spirit, the Sadducees deny both. And scribes of the Pharisees, rising and saying

they find no evil in Paul, ask that, if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, they not fight against God.

So the captain, fearing they'll pull Paul apart, sends soldiers to take him from them and bring him back into the castle, and that night the lord stands by Paul and, telling him to be of good cheer, says that, as he's testified of God in Jerusalem, he also must bear witness in Rome.

The next day, binding themselves under a curse that they'll not eat until they've killed Paul, more than forty Jews tell the chief priests and the elders of their curse, ask them to ask the captain to bring Paul to them for more interrogation, and say they'll ambush him on the way.

But a son of Paul's sister's hears of that plan and tells Paul, and Paul tells a centurion to take the nephew to the captain, and the captain, telling the nephew to tell no one else, commands that two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen prepare beasts for Paul to depart in the middle of the night, for them to escort him to the Roman governor in Caesarea.

And the captain writes a letter explaining the situation to the governor, and Felix, the governor, reads the letter and asks Paul from what province he is, and, learning Paul's from Cilicia and telling him he'll hear him when his accusers come, commands that he be kept in Herod's judgement hall.

The 24<sup>th</sup> chapter begins five days later with the high priest and the elders descending to Caesarea with an orator. The orator and Paul argue before Felix, and Felix, telling them he'll decide after the captain descends, commands a centurion to keep Paul. But he commands the centurion to permit Paul liberty and not forbid his acquaintances to come to him or minister to him.

And Felix's wife is Jew, and he sends for Paul, hears him concerning faith in Christ, trembles, tells Paul to go his way, and says he'll call him when he has a convenient time. But, because he hopes Paul will give him money for his release, he calls him often, until someone whose name is Festus comes to replace him. And then, to show pleasure to the Jews, he leaves Paul bound.

The 25<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Festus ascending to Jerusalem. The high priest, again hoping to ambush Paul, asks Festus to bring Paul to Jerusalem, but Festus replies that the high priest and others may go again to Caesarea to accuse him, if they can. And ten days later some of them again accuse Paul in Caesarea, and Festus, wishing to do the Jews a pleasure, asks Paul whether he'll go to Jerusalem to be judged there by him, but Paul says he should be judged at Caesar's judgement seat. And Festus says he shall.

But, before he sends him to Rome, King Agrippa and Queen Bernice, Jews who rule for Rome as have the Herods, come to Caesarea. And Festus,

telling them of Paul, says Felix has left him in bonds and that Jews accusing him have questions of their superstition and of Jesus, whom Paul affirmed to be alive while he was dead, and Agrippa says he'd like to hear Paul. So, the next day, Festus, commanding that Paul be brought before them and saying he's found that Paul has committed nothing worthy of death, tells them he's brought him before them for examination, for him to have something to write.

And this chapter closes with Festus telling Agrippa and Bernice that sending a prisoner without signifying the crimes laid against him seems to him unreasonable.

The 26<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with Agrippa permitting Paul to speak for himself, and Paul, stretching forth a hand and telling Agrippa that, because Agrippa is expert in the customs and questions among the Jews, he thinks himself happy to answer before Agrippa that day touching the accusations of the Jews, summarizes his life, from his being the first of his nation to know all the Jews at Jerusalem, through his being a Pharisee and persecuting the Christians until Jesus spoke to him on the road to Damascus, on to his turning to God and preaching repentance, and on to Jews trying to kill him for that.

He says of being a Pharisee that it's the most strait sect of his and his audience's religion. And, of Jesus' speaking to him on the road to Damascus, he says Jesus told him he'd make him a minister and a witness of things he's seen and things that would appear to him and that he'd deliver him from the people and from the gentiles to whom he'd send him. And, after saying he's spoken of nothing Moses and the prophets haven't said should come, he says Christ should suffer and be the first to rise from the dead and show light to the people and the gentiles.

So Festus loudly tells him learning's making him mad. But Paul, replying that the king knows those things, asks Agrippa whether he believes the prophets and tells him he knows he does. And Agrippa replies that Paul has almost persuaded him to be a Christian.

Paul replies that, excepting for the bonds, he wishes to God Agrippa and all the others there that day were like him, and Agrippa, Bernice, Felix, Festus, and others go aside and say Paul's done nothing worthy of death or bonds, and this chapter closes with Agrippa telling Festus that Paul might have been set free, had he not appealed to Caesar.

The 27<sup>th</sup> chapter of Acts begins with deliverance of Paul and other prisoners to a centurion for them to sail to Italy. Seasonally dangerous weather slows the voyage, and Paul warns of danger to the ship and its cargo, besides to the lives of the voyagers. But the centurion and others decide to continue, and

they sail into worse weather, jettison tackle, and use rope to try to hold the ship together. And Paul tells them they should have listened to him.

But he also tells them to be of good cheer, because no life would be lost, only loss of the ship. He says an angel of the god he serves and of whose he is stood by him that night and told him not to fear and that he must be brought before Caesar. And he says that, while God has given him all who are sailing with him, they must be cast onto an island.

After fourteen days, they're driven into shallow water, and the sailors decide to lower a boat to escape. But Paul tells the centurion and the soldiers they can't be saved if the sailors don't stay with the ship, and, telling the voyagers they've been fasting for fourteen days and should take some meat for their health, he takes some bread and gives thanks to God in their presence, and they eat. And then they jettison the wheat, discover a creek, and think to thrust the ship into it.

But they run the ship aground, and the soldiers counsel to kill the prisoners, to keep them from swimming out and escaping. But the centurion, wishing to save Paul, keeps them from doing that and commands all who can swim to swim to land. And all the voyagers, some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship, escape safe to land.

The 28<sup>th</sup> and final chapter of the Book of Acts begins with the voyagers learning the ground onto which they've run is the island called Malta, and, because of the rain and cold, the barbarians on it show them kindness. But, when Paul gathers sticks and lays them on a fire they build, a viper comes from the heat and fastens onto one of his hands. So the barbarians say he must be a murderer vengeance doesn't suffer to live after escaping from the sea.

But Paul shakes the viper into the fire. And, when he should have swollen or fallen down dead, the barbarians look and see that no harm has come to him. So then they change their minds and say he's a god.

And Publius, the chief of the island, lodges them for three days, and his father is sick of the fever, and Paul heals him. And others with diseases on the island come and are healed, and, when, after three months there, the company departs, they honor the company and laden them with gifts. And the company travels on to Rome.

There the centurion delivers the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but, with a soldier to keep him, Paul dwells separately from the others, calls the chief Jews there to him, and tells them how he came to be there bound by a chain, and they tell him they've heard nothing of him but that, while, concerning his sect, they know it's spoken against everywhere, they desire to know what he thinks.

So a day later many of them come to his lodging, and he expounds and testifies the kingdom of God and from morning until evening persuades them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, and some believe while some don't.

He refers to the sixth chapter of the Book of Isaiah saying God told Isaiah to tell the people they'll hear and not understand and see and not see or perceive, that the heart of the people is waxed gross, that their ears are dull of hearing, that their eyes have closed from seeing with their eyes, hearing with their ears, and understanding with their hearts, that they should be converted, and that he should heal them.

And he tells them the salvation of God is sent to the gentiles and that he should heal them also, and then, reasoning among themselves, they depart, and the Book of Acts ends with Paul dwelling two years in his own hired house, receiving all who come to him, preaching the kingdom of God, and, with all confidence and no one forbidding him, teaching the things concerning the lord Jesus Christ.

And another relevant factor may be that Luke tells of the voyage from Caesarea to Rome in the first person. That suggests that Luke was an apostle of Paul's before Paul wrote the epistles the next chapter of this book summarizes. But it doesn't support his claim in his Gospel that he had perfect understanding of all things from the first.

## Chapter 18

### Epistles

The Epistles are letters from Paul and some of his apostles. Paul's epistles are to Christian communities or to particular disciples of his, and the other apostles' epistles are to Christians in general or to particular Christians. Most of the epistles are from Paul, but others acted as scribes for him to write most of his epistles, and names of the scribes and other details are in endnotes to them.

The first epistle is from Paul to Roman Christians.

Its first chapter begins with Paul calling himself a servant of Jesus Christ called to be an apostle and separated to the gospel of God. Saying God promised the gospel by his prophets in the holy scriptures concerning his son Jesus Christ made of the seed of David according to the flesh and declared to be the son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, he tells the Romans he and they have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith from all nations, for Jesus' name. And, telling them they're also the called of Jesus Christ and that he wishes grace and peace from their father God and from their lord Jesus Christ to all in Rome who are beloved of God and called saints, he thanks his god through Jesus Christ for all of them.

Next he tells them he thanks God for their faith being spoken of throughout the whole world and that, for him to be comforted with them by their mutual faith, he hopes to impart to them a spiritual gift to establish them. He says his purpose is to have some fruit among them as he has among other gentiles, that he's a debtor to both the Greeks and the barbarians and to both the wise and the unwise, and that, because the gospel's the power of God to salvation first to the Jews but also to the Greeks, he's not ashamed of it. And he says that, because the wrath of God's revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness,

and because what may be known of God is manifest in men because God showed it to them, the righteousness of God from faith to faith is in the gospel.

And, telling them that the invisible things of God from the creation, including God's eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen and understood by all things created, he says that, because those men who hold the truth in unrighteousness didn't glorify God as God when they knew him, they have no excuse.

He says that neither were they thankful, that they became vain in their imaginations, that their foolish heart was darkened, that, professing wisdom, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like man, birds, four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and that, because of that, God gave them up, through the lusts of their hearts, to uncleanness, to dishonor their bodies between themselves.

And, saying that, because they changed the truth of God into a lie and worshiped the creature more than the creator who's blessed forever, God gave them up to vile affections, he lists vile affections.

Beginning with homosexuality of both men and women, he says God gave them over to a reprobate mind and things that aren't convenient and that they were filled with all unrighteousness. Referring to fornication, wickedness, covetousness, and maliciousness, he says men were full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, and malignity and were whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful proud boasters, and inventors of evil things. He says they were disobedient to parents and had no understanding, that they were covenant-breakers with no natural affection, and that they were implacable and unmerciful. And he says those knowing the judgement of God and committing such things are worthy of death and both do those things and have pleasure in those who do them.

In the second chapter of this epistle, elaborating on Jesus' admonition against judging, Paul says that, because they do what they judge, those who judge condemn themselves. Elaborating on the notion of circumcision Luke attributes to him in the Book of Acts, he says circumcision is by nature, and he asks whether, if the circumcision is to fulfill the law, it won't, by the circumcision and the letter of the law, judge a person who transgresses the law. And he closes this chapter by saying a Jew is one who's inwardly a Jew, one whose circumcision is of the heart and in spirit and not in the letter, and one whose praise isn't of men but of God.

Beginning the third chapter by asking what then is the advantage or profit of circumcision, he further elaborates on the theme of the wrath of God, the hypocrisy of judging, and the insignificance of circumcision. He says that, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, the righteousness of God is manifested without the law but is witnessed by the law and the prophets,



and he says it's manifested by the faith of Jesus Christ, with no difference to all and upon all who believe. And he says all are justified by God's grace through redemption in Christ Jesus whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for remission of past sins through God's forbearance. But, saying he and the Romans establish the law, he also tells them God forbids that they make the law void through faith.

In the fourth chapter, in more of such vacillating argument, he says Abraham's birth preceded the law, that the promise comes by faith for the guarantee of grace to all of Abraham's offspring, and that, not excepting Ishmael or Midian, Abraham is the father of us all. Quoting David's saying in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Psalm that God imputes no iniquity to the man whose transgression and sin is forgiven and covered, he says that man is blessed. And, asking whether that blessing comes only on circumcision, he says it's God's imputing righteousness with no works.

In the fifth chapter, he says he and the other Christians, knowing that tribulation works patience, that patience works experience, and that experience works hope, glory in tribulation. He says that, because God is in Christians' hearts by the holy ghost given to them because Christ died for the ungodly, hope makes no shame. And he says that, in Christ's dying for them while they were sinners, God commended his love for them.

He says that, while some men would die for a good man, scarcely one man would die for a righteous man. Saying sin entered the world by one man and that death entered the world by sin and passed onto all men because all have sinned, he includes the sin of Adam in that circularity. And he extends it around saying sin was in the world until the law but that it isn't imputed with no law.

And, by saying those receiving abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by Jesus Christ much more than death reigned by the offense of one man, he draws Jesus into it. He says that, as condemnation of all men came by the offense of one man, justification of life came upon all men by the righteousness of one, that, as the disobedience of one man made many sinners, the obedience of one man will make many righteous, and that, as sin has reigned into death, grace might reign through righteousness into eternal life. And he tells the Roman Christians that the grace might be by his lord and theirs Jesus Christ.

And he begins the sixth chapter by asking them whether he and they shall continue in sin for grace to abound.

Saying God forbids that, and asking them how those who are dead to sin shall live any longer in it, he says those baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death, that, as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, they'll walk in newness of life, and that the dead are free of sin, but

he says that, if they're dead with Christ, they'll also live with him and know he'll die no more and that death has no more dominion over him.

And, saying that neither shall sin have dominion over them, he extends that into a comparison of Christianity to slavery, to the choice of living by serving righteousness or dying by serving sin. And he tells the Roman Christians that death is the wages of sin but that the gift of God is eternal life through their lord Jesus Christ.

And, in the seventh chapter, he takes that metaphorical meandering into comparing dying to free oneself to belong to Christ with dying to free one's wife to marry another man. And, of temptation, he says he's carnal and sold under sin and sees the law in the parts of his body waging war against the law of his mind to sell him under sin. And, asking who will deliver him from the body of death, he thanks God through the lord Jesus Christ for that.

In the eighth chapter he elaborates on that by saying the law was weak through the flesh but that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made him free from the law of sin and death by God's sending his son in the likeness of sinful flesh to condemn sin in the flesh.

But he also says in this chapter that, if they suffer for Christ, all who are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God and joint heirs with Christ. He says that, because it was unwillingly made subject to vanity by reason of the creator's subjecting them in hope, the earnest expectation of the creation awaits the manifestation of the sons of God. And he says the purpose of that is for creation to be delivered from the bondage of corruption and into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

And he tells the Roman Christians that he and they know that until then the whole creation has groaned and travailed in pain together waiting for the adoption, that, because we don't know for what to pray, the spirit helps our infirmity and makes intercession for us with unutterable groanings, and that, because the spirit makes intercession for the saints according to God, one who searches the heart knows the mind of the spirit.

But, saying God foreknew whom he'd call and predestine to conform to the image of his son, he asks who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect, and, asking who condemns and saying God didn't spare his son but delivered him to us, he says God justifies. And, saying that, rather than dying, Christ rose to be the firstborn among many brothers, he asks how God and his son shall not freely give all, and he asks who shall separate us from the love of Christ. But he quotes David's 44<sup>th</sup> psalm's saying we're counted as sheep for the slaughter and are killed all day long for God's sake.

And he begins the ninth chapter by telling the Roman Christians that he says the truth in Christ and doesn't lie and that his conscience also bears him

witness in the holy ghost. And he says that, because he could wish himself cursed from Christ for his brothers in flesh who are Israelites, he has great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart. And next he summarizes what the *Torah* says of God's first making his covenant with Abraham and his descendants but later limiting it to Isaac's and later to Jacob's.

But he says that, because God told Moses he'll have mercy on anyone on whom he'll have mercy, God forbids our asking whether unrighteousness is with God, and, to argue for the righteousness of gentiles, asking whether a potter has power to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor, he carries that argument through other comparisons and references to the Old Testament.

He says that gentiles, who didn't follow righteousness, have attained the righteousness that's faith. And he says that, because Israelites didn't seek it by faith, Israel, which followed the law of righteousness, hasn't attained the law of righteousness. He says that, because they stumbled at the stone of stumbling Isaiah's eighth chapter says God says he'll be to both houses of Israel for a gin and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Israel sought righteousness by works of the law.

But, in the tenth chapter of this epistle, Paul says his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that it might be saved. And, saying no difference is between the Jew and the Greek, in remainder of this chapter he refers to the Old testament to argue the possibility of the Israelites' salvation through confessing that Jesus is the messiah. And he closes this chapter by quoting Isaiah's saying God said to Israel that all day long he's stretched forth his hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people.

In the eleventh chapter, after beginning by saying he's an Israelite of the seed of Abraham and the tribe of Benjamin, he calls himself the apostle to the gentiles, and, through the remainder of this chapter, he continues such arguing for the possibility of salvation of both Jews and gentiles.

In the twelfth chapter, he says all Christians are one body in Christ and that each member belongs to each of the others, and he tells the Romans to distribute their various gifts to the needs of saints, and he tells them to condescend to people of low estate.

In the thirteenth chapter he tells them, because rulers aren't a terror to good works but to evil, to be subject to the higher powers and pay their tribute and their debts. Telling them to obey the commandments against adultery, stealing, and bearing false witness, he says any other commandment is in the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself, that love works no ill to one's neighbor, and that thus it's fulfilling to the law. And he tells them to walk honestly as in the day and not in rioting, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife, or envy.

In the fourteenth chapter, telling the Romans not to despise others for anything they eat, he says Jesus persuaded him that nothing's unclean of itself and that what's unclean is unclean only to one who esteems it to be unclean, but he says one who eats herbs is weak. And he says in this chapter that, whatever we do and whether we live or die, our deeds and our life are to God. And he says Jesus died and revived to be lord of both the dead and the living.

In the fifteenth chapter he asks that, because Jesus didn't please himself, we please our neighbors to edify them. And, saying the reproaches of others fell on Jesus, he says that, to confirm the promises to the fathers and for the gentiles to glorify God for mercy, Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God. And he tells the Romans he'll visit them on the way to Spain.

And he begins the sixteenth and final chapter of this epistle to the Romans by commending to them their sister Phebe. Calling her a servant of the church in Cenchrea and saying she's been a great succor to the many and to him, he tells them to receive her in the lord as becomes saints and to greet men and women he names who presumably are traveling with her, and he specifies the relationship of each of them to him and to Christianity and says some of them laid down their necks for his life and that one of them is his relative, besides much else. And, in this final chapter, someone calling himself Tertius says he wrote this epistle, but its endnote, saying only that it was written to the Romans from Corinthus and was taken by the servant Phebe of the church at Cenchrea, doesn't say who wrote it.

Beginning his first epistle to the Corinthians by calling himself an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, Paul indicates that it's to them from him and their brother Sosthenes. After various Christian greetings, he tells them members of the house of Chloe have declared to him that, saying the Corinthians are of Paul or Apollos or Cephas or Christ, contentions are among them. And he asks whether Christ is divided, whether Paul was crucified, and whether they were baptized in Paul's name.

To keep them from saying he's baptized them in his own name, he says he thanks God he's baptized none of them other than Crispus and Gaius, but he says he also baptized the household of Stephanas and doesn't know whether he baptized any others. He says the reason for his not baptizing in his own name is that, to keep the cross of Christ from being of no effect, Christ didn't send him to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words but with wisdom. And he says the reason for that is that Isaiah said God said he'll destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

And, saying the foolishness of God is wiser than men and that the weakness of God is stronger than men, he elaborates on that through the remainder of this chapter and into the second. In the second he says God speaks wisdom among the perfect while it's the wisdom of God in a mystery that's the hidden wisdom God ordained to their glory before the world. And he says in several ways in this chapter that, had the princes of the world known what he's saying, they wouldn't have crucified the lord of glory.

In the third chapter of this epistle, returning to the question of the Corinthian Christians dividing their loyalty, he says that, because of that, he couldn't speak to them spiritually. He says he instead spoke to them carnally as to babes in Christ, feeding them milk because they couldn't bear meat. And he says that he planted and that Apollos watered but that God gave the increase.

And he says that, like a master builder, he laid the foundation by the grace of God, but that each man receives by his own labor, while no man can lay a better foundation than Jesus Christ. And he tells the Corinthians that every man's work shall be tested by fire, that, if the fire doesn't burn, each man will receive a reward, that, if it does, each may be saved, that he knows the Corinthians are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwells in them. But, returning to the question of their foolishness, he quotes the 94<sup>th</sup> Psalm's saying God knows that the thoughts of the wise are vain.

In the fourth chapter, telling them to judge nothing until the lord comes and brings light to what's hidden in darkness, he promises them the defamation, suffering, and death he promised the Romans. But he says they're a spectacle to the world, angels, and men, that he writes not to shame them but to warn them as his beloved sons, and that, though they have ten thousand instructors in Christ, they haven't many fathers. And he says he's begotten them in Christ Jesus through the gospel and that, because of that, he beseeches them to follow him.

And, saying he's sending them his beloved son Timothy and that Timothy's faithful in the lord and shall remind them of the ways in Christ Paul teaches everywhere in every church, he closes this chapter by asking them whether they wish that he come to them with a rod or in the spirit of love and meekness.

And, beginning the fifth chapter by telling them fornication is commonly reported among them, he says it's of a kind not named among gentiles and that it's having one's father's wife. Telling them they're puffed up and haven't mourned for the perpetrator of the deed to be taken from among them, he tells them to gather in his spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ to deliver such persons to Satan for the destruction of the flesh for the spirit to be saved in the day of the lord Jesus. And, asking them whether they don't know

that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, he tells them he's written to them for them to have no company with fornicators and not to eat with them or have coveters, idolaters, railers, drunkards. or extortioners with them. Of course that also contradicts what the Gospels say Jesus said in response to Pharisees asking why he consorted with sinners.

In the sixth chapter he rebukes the Corinthian Christians for taking one another to law outside their own. And, in that context, referring to the sinners he listed in the fifth chapter, he also contradicts what the Gospels say Jesus said of judging others. He asks the Corinthians whether they don't know the saints shall judge the world and angels.

And he also says that, while not all things are expedient, all things are lawful for him, and he says he'll not be brought under the power of anything.

And he asks the Corinthians whether they don't know their bodies are the members of Christ, and, asking whether he should make the members of Christ the members of a harlot, he says God forbids that, and, telling them their body's the temple of the holy ghost in them and is God's and not theirs, he says they're bought with a price and thus should glorify God in their body and spirit.

And he begins the seventh chapter by telling them, concerning the things about which they'd written to him, that a man's not touching a woman is good. Like Jesus, he says that, if they can't remain single as he is, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. But Paul stipulates further.

Specifying in his proscription against divorce people with spouses who aren't Christian, he says believing spouses sanctify unbelieving spouses and that otherwise their children would be unclean, and he generalizes such sharing of sanctity to other possessions and into continuity of other circumstances, including circumcision and virginity. And of virgins he says giving them in marriage is good but that not giving them is better, and he tells the Corinthians the primary concern is that they live wholly for God and not for their worldly circumstances. And he writes similarly of slavery.

Saying that, because being called in the lord while being a slave is being the lord's free man and Christ's slave, one shouldn't care if one's a slave, he tells the Corinthians that, for them not to be slaves of men, they're bought with a price.

And in the eighth chapter he rationalizes similarly regarding eating meat offered to idols. He says that, because God's the only god, idols are nothing in the world and that so is eating food offered to them. But he says that, if people of weak conscience see Christians eating meat in a temple of an idol and sin because of that, the Christians, by wounding those people's weak conscience, are sinning against Christ.

And, beginning the ninth chapter by asking whether he isn't a free apostle who's seen Jesus Christ, he tells the Corinthian Christians that, if he's not an apostle to others, he's doubtlessly one to them, and most of this chapter is his saying he has a reward from that and doesn't profit from them.

In his tenth chapter of this epistle, Paul paraphrases some of what he's said earlier either in this epistle or in his epistle to the Romans, but, in the eleventh chapter, he adds more doctrine. Saying that the head of every man is Christ, that the head of the woman is the man, and that the head of Christ is God, he says a man's covering his head while praying or prophesying dishonors his head, but that a woman's praying or prophesying with her head uncovered dishonors her head as though it were shaved, and that accordingly, if she does that, it should be shaved. And he says the man isn't of the woman but that the woman's of the man, that the man wasn't created for the woman but that the woman was created for the man, and that, because of the angels, the woman should have power on her head.

And, in the context of repeating the doctrine of marriage being that the couple is one flesh and asking the Corinthian Christians to judge for themselves whether a woman's praying to God uncovered is comely, he asks them whether nature doesn't say a man's having long hair is a shame to him while, because it's given to her for covering, a woman's having long hair is a glory to her.

And also in this chapter he tells them people gathering to celebrate Jesus' last supper should eat at home if they're hungry. Repeating what the Gospels say Jesus said of bread and wine and his flesh and blood, he says that one who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks damnation to himself and isn't discerning the lord's body. And he says that, because of that, many of the Corinthians are weak, and that many sleep.

In the twelfth chapter he says different Christians receive different spiritual gifts, and, specifying words of wisdom, words of knowledge, faith, healing, prophesy, diverse tongues, and interpreting tongues, he says the different Corinthians, because they're all members of the body of Christ, are all of one spirit and should work together.

In the thirteenth chapter he tells them that with no love their gifts are nothing and that prophesy fails while charity doesn't. But he also says that, when he was a child, he spoke and understood as a child, but that, when he became a man, he put away childhood things, and he doesn't say how that accords with Jesus's saying we must become as little children to enter the kingdom of God. And he tells the Corinthian Christians that he and they see darkly through a glass then but that he knows in part and shall be known as he's known. And he also says in this chapter that faith, hope, and charity abide, while the greatest of those three is charity.

In the fourteenth chapter he tells the Corinthians that, while prophesying speaks edification, exhortation, and comfort to men, no one understands what those who speak in tongues say. And, asking them whether unbelievers coming into a church might think those speaking in tongues are mad, he tells them he thanks God that he speaks in tongues more than any of them but that in church he prefers teaching others by speaking five words with his understanding rather than speaking ten thousand words in a tongue. And he tells them to be like children in malice but to be men in understanding.

And he tells them to let their women keep silence in church. Saying the law doesn't permit women to speak, he tells them to let them, if they wish to learn, ask their husbands at home. And he says the reason for that is that women's speaking in church is a shame.

In the fifteenth chapter Paul tells the Corinthian Christians they're the first to whom he's delivered what he's received and that it's that, according to the scriptures, Christ died for their sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day. He doesn't say Jesus said the first commandment is to love God and that loving one's neighbor is like loving God. But he says he's the least of the apostles but the last to see Jesus.

He also says Cephas and not Mary of Magdala was the first to see Jesus after the resurrection, that next were the twelve, that next were five hundred brothers together, that next was James, and that next were all the other apostles. And, he says that, because he persecuted the church of God, he's not worthy to be called an apostle, but that he's what he is by the grace of God, and that he labors more abundantly than all the others. Presumably, since he says James saw Christ after the twelve saw him, the James to whom he's referring in this chapter is Jesus' brother James. And that may clarify the similar question in the Book of Acts. And other epistles confirm that.

Also in this chapter he tells the Corinthians that, if Christ isn't risen, his and their preaching and faith are in vain. And, calling fools people who ask with what body the dead rise, he says bodies of flesh vary while the glory of the celestial is different from the glory of the terrestrial. And he says that what they sow isn't what they'll be, that God gives bodies that please him and gives every seed its own body, and that the resurrection is sown in corruption, dishonor, and weakness but is raised in incorruption, glory, and power.

And he says it's sown in a natural body but raised in a spiritual body, that flesh and blood can't inherit the kingdom of God, and that corruption can't inherit incorruption. But, calling dying sleeping as he does in other instances, he tells the Corinthian Christians he'll show them the mystery that we won't all sleep but will all change. He says that, at the last trump, in a twinkling of the eye, the dead shall rise incorruptible and be changed.



And he says the corruptible must put on incorruptibility, while the mortal must put on immortality. And, quoting Isaiah's saying death is swallowed up in victory and Hosea's asking death where is its sting and asking the grave where is its victory, he says the sting of death is sin and that the strength of sin is the law. But he tells the Corinthian Christians that thanks are to God, who gives them victory through their lord, Jesus Christ.

But he begins his sixteenth and final chapter of this epistle to the Corinthian Christians by giving them instructions for collecting funds. He tells them not to need to collect funds when he comes to collect them but to lay up weekly whatever they can afford. And he tells them that then he'll send their liberality to Jerusalem by whomever they approve by their letters.

And, also in this closing chapter, telling them to welcome any visit from Timotheus, he says he'd wished that Apollos go to them but that Apollos wished not to go then but will go at his convenience. And, asking that anyone not loving Jesus Christ be anathema, he closes this epistle by telling the Corinthian Christians his love is with them in Jesus Christ, amen. And the endnote to this epistle says it was written from Philippi by Stephanos, Fortunatus, Achaicus, and Timotheus.

And he begins the first chapter of his second epistle to the Corinthians by saying it's by the will of God and their brother Timothy.

He tells the Corinthians that, as the suffering of Christ abounds in them and him, consolation abounds by Christ, and, telling them he wishes that they not be ignorant of his and Timothy's trouble in Asia, he says they had the sentence of death but that God delivered them from it.

But, telling them he calls on God for a record on his soul that his not coming to Corinth is to spare them, he says he and Timotheus have no dominion over the Corinthians' faith but that, because the Corinthians stand by faith, they're helpers of their joy.

In the second chapter he elaborates on that and says it exemplifies compassion, that he's written to prove the Corinthians' obedience, and that he and Timothy don't corrupt the word of God, as do many.

Beginning the third chapter by asking whether he and Timothy are beginning to commend themselves again, he commends himself and Timothy throughout it and other chapters. Asking the Corinthians whether he and Timothy need letters of commendation to or from them, he says the Corinthians are their epistle written in their hearts, known by all, and written not with ink but in the spirit of the living God, and not in tables of stone but in fleshy tables of the heart. And he says God has made them ministers of the new testament.

And, further contrasting himself to Moses, he says he doesn't put a veil over his face to keep the children of Israel from looking to the end of what's abolished. And, asking how the ministration of the spirit and righteousness can't be much more glorious than the ministration of the condemnation, he says the minds of the children of Israel were blinded, that the veil continues to cover the reading of the old testament, and that, when they read Moses, the veil remains on their heart. But, saying it'll be taken away on turning to the lord, he closes this chapter by saying that, with our faces open to beholding the glory of the lord as in a glass, we're all, as by the spirit of the lord, changed into the same image, from glory to glory.

In the fourth chapter, continuing to commend himself and Timothy by saying that, if their gospel is hidden, it's hidden to those who are lost, he extends that metaphor of veiling into the notion of Jesus' suffering and dying to make others' suffering and dying insignificant in the glory of God and Jesus, and he tells the Corinthians that, because what's seen is temporal while what isn't seen is eternal, he and Timothy don't look at what's seen but at what isn't seen.

Continuing that notion into the fifth chapter, he says their body's an earthly house while they have a building of God that isn't made with hands and is eternal in the heavens. Telling the Corinthians they earnestly groan not to be found naked but to be clothed with that house in heaven, he extends it into saying anyone in Christ is a new creature and that, giving them the ministry of reconciliation, God has reconciled those in Christ to him by Jesus Christ. And he tells them he trusts that, as they're manifest to God, persuading men and knowing the terror of God, they're manifest in their conscience.

Beginning the sixth chapter by telling them he and Timothy beseech them not to receive the grace of God in vain, he lists suffering of his and Timothy's and tells them he and Timothy nevertheless persevere in rejoicing, that his and Timothy's mouth is open to them, and that their heart is enlarged. He tells the Corinthians they aren't narrowed in him and Timothy but in their own bowels, and, telling them to come out from among the unbelievers, he quotes Isaiah's saying God said that to the Israelites. And he closes this chapter by quoting Samuel's saying God told the Israelites he'd be a father to them and that they'd be his sons and daughters.

Beginning the seventh chapter by asking that, having those promises, they cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh, he asks them to receive him and Timothy and says he and Timothy haven't wronged or corrupted or defrauded anyone, that he isn't saying that to condemn them, and that they're in his and Timothy's hearts, for them to die and live with them.

Again referring to his and Timothy's troubles in Macedonia, he says that nevertheless God has comforted them by the coming of his apostle Titus,

that Titus was comforted in the Corinthians' desire, mourning, and fervent mind toward him, that, though he's made them sorry with a letter, the sorrow was but for a time, that now, because he made them sorry in a godly manner, he rejoices in their having sorrowed to repentance, and that godly sorrow works repentance to salvation, while sorrow of the world works death.

And he tells them he and Timothy were comforted in their comfort but that, because the Corinthians refreshed Titus' spirit, they were exceedingly more joyed for Titus' joy. He tells them that, as Titus remembers their obedience and how they received him with fear and trembling, his inward affection is more abundant toward them. And he closes this chapter by telling them he has confidence in them in everything.

He begins the eighth chapter by telling them grace was bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. He says the churches of Macedonia responded liberally from their abundance of joy in a great trial of affliction and deep poverty but that, while he's not commanding the Corinthians to behave similarly, the occasion of the forwardness of others might prove the sincerity of their love. And, saying they began giving a year earlier and that Jesus Christ was rich but became poor for their sakes, he tells them to give willingly now.

And he continues that fundraising vacillation through the ninth chapter. Telling the Corinthians they shouldn't be ashamed when he comes to them with some Macedonians, he says he's sending brothers to prepare them before his arrival, for them to be ready as bounty and not as covetousness. And he closes this chapter by thanking God for his unspeakable gift.

And, beginning by beseeching them by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, he continues his solicitations in various ways through the tenth chapter.

Beginning the eleventh chapter by asking the Corinthians to bear with him in his folly, he says he's jealous of them. Saying that's because he's espoused them to one husband to present them as chaste virgins to Christ, he tells them he's robbed other churches and taken wages from them to serve the Corinthians. And, telling them they suffer fools gladly, he asks that no man think him a fool if he boasts a little, and he boasts more of his suffering.

Continuing his boasting into the twelfth chapter, he begins it by telling of a vision he says he had fourteen years earlier. He says he knew a man, that he can't tell whether the knowing or the man was in the body or out of the body, that the man was caught up to paradise in the third heaven, that he heard words unspeakable and unlawful for a man to utter, and that he'll glorify of such a one. But he says that, excepting in his infirmities, he won't glorify himself, and, saying the reason for that is that, although he'd desire to glory, he'll not be a fool, he tells the Corinthians they've compelled him to be a fool in glorying.

And then, asking them in what, excepting in his not burdening them, they were inferior to other churches, he says he's coming to them for the third time and won't burden them. Asking whether he's gained from them by Titus or by others he's sent them, he says he fears not finding them as he wishes but finding debates, wrath, strife, backbiting, whispering, swelling, and tumult. And he tells them he fears God will humble him among them and that he'll bewail that many haven't repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lasciviousness they've committed.

And, in the thirteenth and final chapter of this epistle, he extends that into threats. Beginning by again telling the Corinthians he's coming to them for the third time, he quotes the *Torah's* requirement that every word be established in the mouth of two or three witnesses, and he tells them he's writing in his absence to those who've sinned before. And he tells them he told them on his second visit to them that he won't spare them if he comes again.

And he tells them to examine and prove themselves, asks them whether they don't know themselves and know that, if they're not reprobates, Christ is in them, and tells them he and Timothy can't act against the truth but only for the truth, that he and Timothy are glad when he and Timothy are weak while the Corinthians are strong, that he wishes the Corinthians' perfection, and that he's writing in absence to keep from being sharp in their presence.

But he closes this epistle by telling them to greet one another with a holy kiss, saying all saints are with them, and asking that the grace of the lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the holy ghost be with them, amen.

And the endnote to this epistle says Titus and Lucas wrote it to the Corinthians from the Macedonian city Philippi.

Paul begins the first chapter of his epistle to the Galatians by calling himself an apostle and saying he's not of men or by men but by Jesus Christ and God, the father who raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Saying he marvels that the Galatians are so soon removed from him who called them into the grace of Christ to another gospel that isn't another gospel, he tells them some are troubling them and would pervert the gospel of Christ. And, asking for a curse upon anyone, including any angel in heaven, who does that, he says he didn't receive the gospel he preaches from man but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and he tells of his conversion from persecuting the church of God.

But he says he went from that conversion into Arabia and didn't go to Jerusalem to the apostles who preceded him until three years later, that he went there to see Peter and stayed with Peter but fifteen days, and that the only other apostle he saw then was Jesus' brother James.

And he begins the second chapter of this epistle by saying he went to Jerusalem again fourteen years later with Barnabas and that they took Titus with them, and he says he went there by a revelation, that he told the apostles there of the gospel he preached among the gentiles, and that Titus was a Greek and wasn't compelled to be circumcised.

And he says that during that time in Jerusalem a dispute arose between him and Peter regarding that doctrine. He says the other apostles saw that, while the gospel of the circumcision was committed to Peter, the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul, that James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to him to be pillars, gave him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship for him and Barnabas to go separately to the heathens. But he says Peter came to Antioch, that there he withstood Peter to his face, and that the reason for that was that Peter was to be blamed for eating with gentiles but separating himself from them because, when others came from James, he feared those of the circumcision. And, repeating his doctrine that one isn't justified by works of the law but by the faith of Christ, he calls that dissimulation.

But he begins the third chapter by calling the Galatians foolish and asking them who bewitched them, and, through the remainder of this chapter, he repeats some of his arguments for what he calls the gospel of uncircumcision, including arguing further the supremacy of faith over law.

And in the fourth chapter he extends his arguments into what he's said of bondage to Christ, into the preference of Isaac over Ishmael, and into the preference of the new testament over the old testament. He says Ishmael was born into bondage and is of the covenant of Mount Sinai but that Isaac was born free and thus must be the heir. And, not mentioning the Jebusites, he says Jerusalem was born free and must be the mother of us all.

Continuing that allegorical confusion into the fifth chapter, he tells the Galatians he has confidence that their minds won't be otherwise and that whoever's troubling them with the other gospel shall bear judgement, and he says in this chapter that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails in Christ or in a new creature.

And, in this sixth and final chapter of his epistle to the Galatians, he tells them to see what a large letter he's written with his own hand. And he asks that, because he bears in his body the marks of the lord Jesus, no one trouble him henceforth. And this epistle's endnote says only that it's written from Rome to the Galatians.

The chronology in this epistle, what it says of the gospels of circumcision and uncircumcision, that none of the epistles refer to the Gospels the evangelists wrote, and that two of the evangelists were Paul's apostles but

weren't Jesus' disciples, suggest that the writing of the evangelists' Gospels was by direction of Paul at least seventeen years after the crucifixion.

And the chronology also suggests that Jesus was the man whom Paul, at the beginning of the twelfth chapter of his second epistle to the Corinthians, says he met fourteen years earlier.

Paul also begins his epistle to the Ephesians by calling himself an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and next he says it's to the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Jesus Christ. He tells them in that first chapter of it that Jesus chose them and him before the foundation of the world and that accordingly they should be holy and without blame and before him in love. And he says he prays that the god of their lord Jesus Christ give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

In the second chapter he tells them that, when God quickened them through Jesus Christ by grace through the gift of God faith, they were dead in trespasses and sins, and, preaching his gospel of uncircumcision, he tells them they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise and were far, but that, by the blood of Christ, they've become near in Christ.

Beginning the third chapter by telling them that for that reason he's the prisoner of Jesus Christ for them who are gentiles, he says that, if they've heard of the dispensation of the grace of God that's given to him toward them, and of how God revealed to him the mystery, they, by their reading, will understand his knowledge of it, and he says the gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body and, by the gospel that wasn't made known to the sons of men in other ages as it's now revealed by the spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets, should be partakers of God's promises in Christ.

And, telling them that he, the least of all the saints, was made a minister, he says God gave him the grace to preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and make all see what's the fellowship of the mystery that's been hidden in God, who created all by Jesus Christ from the beginning of the world.

Beginning his fourth chapter by again calling himself a prisoner of the lord, he tells the Ephesians, while endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, to walk worthy of the vocation to which they're called, and he asserts the existence of but one spirit, one lord, one faith, one baptism, and one god and father of all. But, saying Christians have different vocations and must act accordingly, he tells the Ephesians God provided some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers, and he says the reason for that was to perfect the saints for the work of the ministry, to edify the

body of Christ. And, to argue that, he quotes the 68<sup>th</sup> psalm's saying that, when God ascended on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts to men, but he also says the ascent indicates that God, to fill all things, first descended into the lower parts of the earth.

And, concerning his gospel of uncircumcision, he tells the Ephesians not to walk, as do other gentiles, having the understanding darkened and alienated through ignorance from the life of God because of the blindness of their heart, in the vanity of their mind. He tells them to comply with exhortations he's delivered in other epistles, to be renewed in the spirit of their mind, and not to give place to the devil. And he closes this chapter by telling them to forgive one another as God forgave them for Christ's sake.

In the fifth chapter he repeats other admonitions, including telling wives to submit themselves to husbands as to the lord, and he says husbands' and wives' being of one flesh is a great mystery, and he tells the Ephesians not to be drunk with wine but to be filled with the spirit.

In the sixth and final chapter of this epistle, he tells children to obey their parents, but he also tells fathers not to provoke their children but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the lord. He also tells slaves to obey their masters with fear and trembling in singleness of their heart, as to Christ, but he also tells masters to know their master is in heaven and that every man shall receive from the lord whatever good he does, whether he's bound or free, and he tells them not to threaten their slaves. And he also tells the Ephesians he's sending Tychicus to them, and the endnote to this epistle says Tychicus wrote it to the Ephesians from Rome.

He begins the first chapter of his epistle to the Philippians by saying it's from Jesus Christ's servants Paul and Timotheus to all the saints in Christ Jesus with the bishops and deacons at Philippi.

As in other epistles, he aggrandizes his troubles and his service, and, saying he's in a strait between desiring to depart to be with Christ and desiring to abide in flesh, he tells the Philippians that being with Christ is far better but that they need more that he stay with them.

In the second chapter he says Jesus, being in the form of God, didn't think being equal to God was robbery but made himself no reputation, that he took upon himself the form of a servant made in the likeness of men, and that, being found in fashion as a man, became obedient to death on the cross.

But also in this chapter he tells the Philippians he trusts he'll send Timotheus to them soon but that he supposed sending them his brother Epaphroditus was necessary. And, telling them Epaphroditus longed for them because they'd heard he was sick, he says that, because, not regarding his life,

for the work of Christ, he was sick nearly to death to supply their lack of service to Paul. But he doesn't say why he didn't heal Epaphroditus as the Book of Acts says he healed people.

In the third chapter he tells the Philippians to beware of dogs, evil workers, and the concision. He says he and they are the circumcision that worships God in the spirit, rejoices in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh. And He says he was circumcised on the eighth day, that he's of the stock of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin, that he persecuted the church, but that what he gained from that he counted as loss for Christ.

In the fourth and final chapter of this epistle, he tells them he rejoices greatly in the lord that at last their care for him has flourished again. He tells them they were careful but lacked opportunity, that he isn't speaking from want, that he knows both how to be abased and how to abound, and that he's instructed in both being full and being hungry. And he tells them they've done well and that, when he left Macedonia, no other church communicated with him concerning giving and receiving.

And he says that, not excepting in Thessalonica, they sent twice what he needed, that his need wasn't because he desired a gift but because he desired fruit to abound to their account, that it fully abounds by his having received from Epaphroditus all they sent, that what they sent is a sweet smell and an acceptable sacrifice, and that it's well pleasing to God.

And the endnote to this epistle says it was written from Rome to the Philippians by Epaphroditus.

Paul begins the first chapter of his epistle to the Colossians by saying it's from him and Timotheus to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse. He tells them he and Timothy give thanks for the hope laid up for them in heaven, of which they've heard in the word of truth of the gospel that came to them, as it's heard in all the world. And he tells them they've also learned of his and Timothy's dear fellow servant who also told him and Timothy of their love in the spirit.

In the second chapter, he tells them to beware of anyone spoiling them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men and the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, and he tells them to let no one who's puffed up vainly in his fleshly mind beguile them of their reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels.

In the third chapter, he tells the Colossians to mortify their members that are on Earth, and the members he lists are fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, and he calls



covetousness idolatry and repeats his doctrine of subordination of wives to husbands, children to parents, and slaves to masters.

And, in the fourth and final chapter, he elaborates on that doctrine, lists Marcus among people he says send the Colossians their greetings, and says Mark is Barnabas' sister's son.

And the endnote to this epistle says it was written from Rome to the Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus.

The first chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians begins with his saying it's from him, Silvanus, and Timotheus, and it tells the Thessalonians they're receiving the word in much affliction, with joy of the holy ghost that has made them examples to all who believe, in Macedonia and Achaia.

In the second chapter, he speaks of his suffering and says his and his apostles' exhortation wasn't of deceit or flattering words in a cloak of covetousness, that he and his apostles have sought no glory from the Thessalonians, and that they imparted to the Thessalonians not only the gospel of God but also his and his apostles' souls.

In the third chapter he says he's sent Timotheus to them and that Timotheus praised them to him and to other apostles. In the fourth and in the fifth and final chapter of this epistle, he summarizes some of his doctrines. And in the fifth he also says the day of the lord comes as a thief in the night.

And the endnote to this epistle says it was written from Athens.

The first chapter of his second epistle to the Thessalonians begins as does the first, and in it Paul tells the Thessalonians their reward for their suffering shall be when the lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who don't know God.

But in the second chapter he tells them not to be shaken in mind or by spirit that the day of Christ is at hand. He says it won't be before a falling away when the man of sin, the son of perdition whose coming is after the working of Satan, is revealed. He says that then the lord will consume that man of sin with the spirit of his mouth and will destroy the brightness of his coming. And he tells them to remember he told them those things when he was with them.

In the third and final chapter of this epistle, telling the Thessalonians that the lord's faithful and shall establish them and keep them from evil, he tells them to withdraw themselves from every brother who walks disorderly and not after the tradition he received from the apostles.

And the endnote to this epistle says it also was written from Athens.

Paul's two epistles to Timothy instruct Timothy in Paul's doctrine and in how to be an apostle. In the first chapter of the first of them, he calls Timothy his son in the faith and says that, for Timothy to war a good warfare, according to the prophesies that went before him, he' committing the apostolic charge to him. And he also tells Timothy that God is immortal but invisible and that the law isn't for the righteous but for the lawless, and he ends this chapter by telling Timothy he's delivered Hymeneus and Alexander to Satan, for them to learn not to blaspheme.

In the second chapter, saying he isn't lying, he tells Timothy he wishes that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety, and not with braided hair, gold, pearls, or costly array. And, telling him to let women learn in silence and subjection, he says that, because Adam was formed first and Eve after, he doesn't suffer women to teach or to usurp authority over a man. And he says Adam wasn't deceived but that woman, being deceived, was in transgression.

And he closes this chapter by saying women, if they continue in faith, charity, holiness, and sobriety, shall be saved in childbearing.

In the third chapter he says a bishop must be blameless, a husband of one wife, apt to teach, not given to wine or greedy of filthy lucre, and not be a brawler. And, saying a bishop must know how to rule his own house and must have his children in subjection with all gravity, he asks how, if one can't rule one's own house, one can take care of the church of God, and he repeats those instructions for deacons. And he says that, to keep from falling into reproach and the snare of the devil, bishops must have a good public reputation, that deacons and their wives must be grave, and that their wives must not be slanderers.

In the fourth chapter he tells Timothy that, by heeding seducing spirits and doctrines of the devil and by forbidding marriage and commanding abstaining from meat, some shall depart from the faith. He says God created meat for it to be received with thanksgiving of those who believe and know the truth, and he says reasons for that are that every creature of God is good and that nothing, if it's received with thanksgiving, is to be refused. And he tells Timothy to put the brothers in memory of those things and to refuse profanity and old wives' fables.

And he begins the fifth chapter by telling Timothy not to rebuke an elder but to treat the elder as a father, the younger as a brother, the older woman as mothers, and the younger as sisters, with all purity. But most of this chapter concerns widows, and, beginning by telling Timothy to honor widows who are widows, he says children or nephews of widows should, because it's good and acceptable before God, show piety at home and requite parents. And he says

anyone who doesn't provide for his own is worse than an infidel but that a widow who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.

And he asks that widows not be taken into the number if they're under sixty years old, haven't been the wife of but one man, aren't well reported for good works, haven't brought up children, lodged strangers, and washed the saints' feet, or haven't received the afflicted and diligently followed every good work. And he tells Timothy the reason for refusing younger widows is that, when they've waxed wanton against Christ, they'll marry, that, because they've cast off their faith and learned to be idle, they have damnation, and that, being tattlers and busybodies, they wander from house to house saying what they shouldn't. And he asks that the elder widows who rule well be counted worthy of double honor but that the younger widows marry and bear children.

And also in this chapter he tells Timothy to stop drinking water but, for his stomach's sake and for his frequent infirmities, to use a little wine.

He begins the sixth and final chapter of this first epistle of his to Timothy by telling him, for the name of God for his doctrine not to be blasphemed, to let all slaves under the yoke count their masters as worthy of all honor. And, saying the love of money is the root of all evil, he tells Timothy to charge those who are rich in the world not to be high minded or trust in uncertain riches but to trust in the living god who gives richly all things to enjoy. And he tells him to charge those who are rich to be ready to distribute.

And the endnote to this epistle says it was written to Timothy from Laodicia, the chief city of Phrygia Pacatiana.

Paul begins the first chapter of his second epistle to Timothy by addressing it to him and calling him his dearly beloved son. He says that, when he remembers the unfeigned faith in Timothy that dwelled first in Timothy's grandmother Lois and his mother, Eunice, he's persuaded it's also in Timothy. And he says he knows Timothy knows all in Asia are turned away from Paul.

And, asking that, because Onesiphoros often refreshed him and wasn't ashamed of his chain, the lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, he says Onesiphorus sought him diligently in Rome and found him, but he doesn't otherwise identify Onesiphorus.

In the second chapter, telling Timothy to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, he says that, to please the person who chooses him to be a soldier, no warring man entangles himself with the affairs of life. But he also tells him that, if they don't strive lawfully, men striving for mastery aren't crowned, and he tells him husbandmen who labor must be the first partakers of the fruits. And he tells him, because they'll increase into more ungodliness, to

shun profane and vain babblings. And he tells him to avoid foolish and unlearned questions.

In the third chapter he tells him that in the last days perilous days shall come. He says men will love themselves and be covetous boasters, proud and blasphemous, disobedient to parents, unthankful, and unholy. And he says they'll lack natural affection and be trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce despisers of good, traitors, and heady and high-minded lovers, loving pleasure more than God. And, saying they'll have a form of godliness but deny its power, he tells Timothy, because they're a sort that creeps into houses and leads away with diverse lusts silly women laden with sin, to turn away from them. And he says they're ever learning while never coming to the knowledge of truth.

In the fourth and final chapter of this epistle he tells Timothy he's ready to be offered, that his departure is at hand, and that he's fought the good fight, finished his course, and kept faith. And, telling him to do diligence and come to him soon, he says only Luke is with him, and, asking him to bring Mark, he says Mark's profitable to him for the ministry. And he tells Timothy to bring him the cloak and books he left at Troas.

And he says that, at his first answer, presumably to his being brought before Nero as the endnote to this epistle says he was, all forsook him. But, saying he prays God that the forsaking not be laid to the charge of those who forsook him, he says that, for his preaching to be fully known and for all the gentiles to hear, God stood with him and strengthened him. And he says he was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

And the endnote to this epistle says it's to Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, and that it was written from Rome when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.

Paul begins the first chapter of his epistle to Titus by calling himself a servant of God and briefly summarizing his doctrine. He says God, who can't lie, promised the hope of eternal life before the world began. And he addresses the epistle to Titus and calls him his own son after the common faith.

Telling Titus he left him in Crete to set in order what's wanting and to ordain elders as he appointed him, he briefly summarizes the criteria for bishops he detailed in his epistles to Timothy, and next he deprecates the Cretians.

He says that many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers are in Crete, that those Cretians are especially those of the circumcision, and that the mouths of those who subvert whole houses, teaching for filthy lucre's sake what they shouldn't teach, must be stopped, and, saying a Cretian prophet said the Cretians

are liars, evil beasts, and slow bellies, and that the witness is true, he tells Titus, for them to be sound in the faith, to rebuke them soundly.

And, also in this chapter, he tells Titus not to heed Jewish fables.

In the second chapter, telling Titus to teach what's sound doctrine, he lists some. One is that aged men be sober, grave, temperate, and sound in faith, charity, and patience, and another is that aged women behave in ways becoming holiness and not be false accusers given to too much wine but be teachers of good things and teach the young to be sober, to love their husbands and children, and to be obedient to their husbands. And he tells Titus to exhort young men to be sober minded and show themselves a pattern of good works, and he tells him to exhort slaves to be obedient to their masters.

In the third chapter, he tells Titus that the kindness and love of the savior God appeared toward man and saved us not by works of righteous we've done but by his mercy. He tells him, because they're unprofitable and vain, to avoid foolish questions, genealogies, contentions, and striving about the law. And he tells him, after the first and second admonition, to reject a heretic.

And the endnote to this epistle says it was written, from Nicopolis of Macedonia. to Titus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians,.

Paul's epistle to Philemon is one chapter telling Philemon that Onesimus is coming to him, asking him to work well with him, telling him he trusts to come there through Philemon's prayers, and asking him to prepare a lodging for him. But in it Paul also says that, if Onesimus has wronged Philemon or owes him anything, Philemon should put it to Paul's account, and he says that, while Philemon owes him his own self, he doesn't say that and will repay the debt. And he says he's writing the epistle by his own hand, but the endnote to this epistle says it's written from Rome to Philemon by Onesimus.

Of Paul's epistles in the New Testament, only his epistle to the Hebrews is to people who resided in the land where Jesus lived and weren't gentiles, and it's also his only epistle not beginning with his name. He begins its first chapter by saying that God, who at various times in diverse manners spoke to the fathers through prophets in the past, has spoken in the most recent days by his son he appointed heir of all and by whom he made the worlds. And next, briefly summarizing his doctrine, he quotes from the *Miqra* to argue that God made his son superior to the angels, but the context of none of the quotations indicates that they refer either to Jesus or to the messiah.

In the second chapter, extending that arguing further into his doctrine, he says that, before God made Jesus superior to the angels, for Jesus to taste death for every man and bring many sons to glory, he made him a little lower

than the angels, and, in the third and fourth chapters, he argues similarly that Christianity is compatible with Judaism.

In the fifth chapter he quotes David's saying in his 110<sup>th</sup> psalm that God told him he's a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek, but he tells the Hebrews that God was speaking to Christ and not to David, and he extends that misrepresentation through the sixth chapter, and, in the seventh chapter, by saying Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth of his spoils and referring directly to the slaughter of the kings, he uses that misrepresentation to justify his solicitation of tithing, and, saying that Melchizedek didn't descend from Levi and effectually denying any relevance of Luke's saying Mary was a cousin to the Levite mother of John the Baptist, he argues that Jesus can be a priest while not being a Levite.

In the eighth chapter he extends that assertion into saying Christians have such a high priest but that he's set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven and is minister of the sanctuary and true tabernacle God and not man pitched. And he says that, because priests offer gifts according to the law, if that priest of the Christians were on earth, he wouldn't be a priest, and he says that thus Christians' priests have something else to offer. And, quoting Jeremiah's prophesying a new covenant making the first covenant old, he says that what decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away.

In the ninth chapter, describing the tabernacle the *Torah* says God described to Moses on Mount Sinai, he describes its use and says Christ didn't become a high priest by the blood of bulls and goats but by his own blood. And, saying a difference between the use of the old tabernacle and the use of the one in heaven is that a testament requires the death of the testator, he says Christ didn't have to offer himself often, as the priests of the old testament offered the bulls and goats, but once in the end of the world. And Paul closes this chapter by saying Christ shall appear a second time to those looking for him, but that then he'll appear for salvation, and not for sin.

In the tenth chapter he elaborates on that by saying blood of bulls and goats can't take away sins. He elaborates further on it by saying that, if we sin willfully after receiving knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins remains. And he says that what shall remain is a fearful expectation of judgement and fiery indignation devouring the adversaries.

And, asking the Hebrews how much sorer punishment they suppose should be thought worthy for those who did spite to the spirit of grace by treading the son of God under foot and counting unholy the covenant by which he was sanctified, he says we know who said vengeance belongs to him, that the lord shall judge his people, and that falling into the hands of the living God is a fearful thing.

He begins the eleventh chapter by saying faith is the substance of hope and the evidence of things not seen. And, referring to people in the *Miqra* in ways in which the *Miqra* doesn't refer to them, he says Abel obtained witness of his righteousness by offering a sacrifice more excellent than Cain's, that Noah condemned the world by preparing an ark to save his house, and that those people saw the promises far off but died in faith, not having received the promises. And he says that Abraham, when he offered his only begotten son, was counting on God's ability to raise the dead.

And he says that Moses by faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, that he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, and that he esteemed the reproach of Christ more than the treasures of Egypt. And he says that by faith, when the harlot Rahab received the spies with peace, she didn't perish with those who didn't believe. And he says all those people received a good reputation through faith, but that they didn't receive the promise.

In the twelfth chapter, quoting Solomon's admonishing his son in the Book of Proverbs not to despise the chastening of God, he tells the Hebrews that, if they endure chastening, God deals with them as sons, that sons whose fathers haven't chastened them are bastards, and that God loves those he chastens and scourges those he receives.

And also, calling Esau a fornicator who sold his birthright for a morsel of meat, he says that, if he weren't rejected for finding no place of repentance while seeking it carefully with tears, he'd have inherited the blessing.

But he tells the Hebrews they've come to Mount Zion, the city of the living god, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the innumerable company of Angels, the general assembly, the church of the firstborn who are written in heaven, the spirits of the just made perfect, and to God, the judge of all.

And he begins the thirteenth and final chapter of this epistle by telling the Hebrews to let brotherly love continue. He tells them, because some people have entertained angels while not aware that they're angels, not to forget to entertain strangers. And, repeating some of what he's said earlier in this epistle and other epistles, he tells the Hebrews to remember those who rule over them and have spoken the word of God to them.

And, telling them to obey them and submit themselves because they watch for their souls and must give account, he says that, because doing it with grief would be unprofitable to those whose account they're giving, that's for the leaders to give the account with joy and not with grief.

And the endnote to this epistle, the final epistle of Paul's in the Bible, says it's written by Timothy from Italy to the Hebrews.

James begins his epistle by calling himself a servant of God and addressing it to the twelve tribes scattered abroad.

It doesn't indicate which James he is, whether he's one of the two James the Gospels say were Jesus' disciples or Jesus' brother Paul told the Galatians he met when he met Peter three or more years after Jesus spoke to him from the sky on the road to Damascus, but relevant may be that John's Gospel says Jesus' brothers didn't believe in him.

In this epistle's first chapter James says that, because God can neither be tempted with evil nor tempt, no one should say God tempts him, and he introduces no other doctrine that's neither in Pauls' epistles nor in the Gospels.

And neither does he in his second chapter, but in his second he disagrees with Paul's doctrine that faith makes works unnecessary. Asking what profit one has if one has faith but no works, he asks whether faith can save one, and he asks what profit, if one does nothing to help the person, is in seeing a person in need and telling the person to go fulfill the need. And, saying faith with no works is dead, he asks whether, when the harlot Rahab received the messengers and sent them out another way, she wasn't justified by works.

In his third chapter he says that not many masters know they'll receive the greatest condemnation. He says a tongue is a little member but boasts great things, defies the whole body, sets afire the course of nature, and is set on the fire of hell. And, saying that both blessings and curses come from the same mouth, he asks that wise men with knowledge show their works out of their conversation with meekness of wisdom. And, in his fourth chapter, he says friendship with the world is hatred toward God.

In his fifth chapter, condemning rich people for withholding payment from workers, he says the cries of the workers are in the ears of the lord of the sabbath, and, telling rich people they've lived in pleasure on earth and have been wanton and nourished their hearts as in a day of slaughter, he says they've killed the just while the just haven't resisted them.

Telling the scattered tribes to be patient until the coming of the lord and to behold the husbandman waiting until the rain for the precious fruit of the earth, he says they've heard of the patience of Job and seen the end of the lord, that the lord is pitiful and of tender mercy, that Elias was also a man of passions, that he prayed for rain, and that no rain was on earth for three years and six months, but that, after more prayer, rain came.

Telling them to let any sick among them call for the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the lord, he says the prayer of faith shall save the sick and that the lord shall raise them up and forgive any sins they've committed, and he tells them to confess their faults to one another, to be healed.



And he closes this final chapter of his epistle by telling the tribes that, if any of them converts from the error of his way any of them erring from the truth, doing that shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.

Peter addresses the first of his two epistles to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. In its first chapter, he tells them they love Jesus Christ, whom they haven't seen. And he tells them some of Paul's pharisaical doctrines.

In the second chapter he tells more of Paul's doctrine and mentions Jesus' calling himself a cornerstone and a stumbling block for the disobedient. Saying a man's suffering wrongfully for conscience toward God is worthy of thanks, he elaborates on Paul's injunction to slaves to be subject to their masters. And he says that's like Jesus' quietly permitting the crucifixion, and he also says Jesus didn't revile people who reviled him, and that contradicts much of the Gospels. It contradicts much of how they say he responded to hypocrites in general and to Pharisees in particular.

And, in the third chapter, saying Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord, he elaborates on Paul's doctrine of subordinating wives to husbands.

And he continues his theme of suffering through the fourth chapter. And he begins it by directing his audience, because Christ suffered for us in the flesh, to arm themselves with that in mind, because one who has suffered in the flesh has ceased in sin, but he tells the scattered strangers to suffer as a Christian and not as a murderer or a thief.

And in the fifth and final chapter he directs his audience to be vigilant because their adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. And, also in the fifth chapter, while telling elders to lead by example and not by constraint, he tells the younger to submit themselves to the older. And, near the end of it, he calls Marcus his son and says he's written the epistle by Silvanus.

Peter doesn't address his second epistle to anyone in particular.

In its first chapter, adding no doctrine of his own, he says that, when he made known the power and coming of his and others' lord Jesus Christ, they didn't follow cunningly devised fables but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

And, also in this chapter, calling his body a tabernacle, he says he must soon put it off, as his audience's lord Jesus Christ has shown him. So a question is whether, giving John credibility, that's a reference to the conversation between him and Jesus that John describes in the final chapter of his Gospel. And another question in that regard may be whether the reason Peter didn't write a gospel is that he died before Paul directed the writing of the Gospels.

In its second chapter, he says that, if God sent the angels who sinned to hell, delivered them into chains of darkness to reserve them to judgement, didn't spare the old world but saved Noah, and didn't spare Sodom and Gomorrah but saved Lot, God knows how to deliver the Godly out of temptation and reserve the unjust to the day of judgement for punishment, and he says people God will reserve for judgement are like Balaam, that Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness, and that the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet and rebuked him for his iniquity.

But, generally, in each of the three chapters of this epistle, Peter preaches the pharisaical doctrines Paul preaches in his epistles. And, near the end of its third and final chapter, calling Paul a dear brother of his and of those he's addressing, he says Paul has written to them also according to the wisdom given him. But he says some things in Paul's epistles are hard to be understood.

Similarity of John's first epistle to his Gospel is conspicuous in its first chapter. He begins the epistle by saying the word of life was from the beginning, that it shows us the eternal life that was with the father, and that God is light. But he also refers in this chapter to Paul's doctrines.

In the second chapter, also with terms of his Gospel, he further expresses Paul's doctrines, but he calls antichrists wicked ones who will oppose Christ as the last day approaches. In the third chapter, by asking that we love not in word or tongue but in deed and truth, he somewhat disagrees both with Paul's doctrine of the irrelevance of works and with his own assertion that the word is God and Jesus. And in the fourth chapter he says the antichrist is already in the world, that God is love, and that we love because God first loved us.

In his fourth chapter he also says in various ways that God is in us and that we're in him. But, as though God isn't entirely omnipresent, he says that's contingent not only on our loving one another but also on our confessing that Jesus is the son of God. And he says the reason we know we dwell in God is that he's given us his spirit.

But, in the fifth chapter, he presents his assertion of the unity of the word, God, and Jesus cosmologically. Saying that three, the father, the word and the holy ghost, bear record in heaven, he says plainly and directly that the three are one, that the three bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood, and that they agree in one. And that approaches metaphorical expressions of unity typical of the Upanishads.

And, calling his readers little children or dear children throughout this epistle, he closes it by telling the little children to keep themselves from idols, amen.

He begins his second epistle by calling himself the elder and addressing it to the elect lady and her children he and all those who've known the truth love in the truth. Considering that he says in his Gospel that Jesus told him and Mary the mother of Jesus to behold one another as mother and son, one might suppose he's addressing this epistle to Mary and that the children to whom he's referring, whether or not they wrote Christian epistles after the crucifixion, are her sons James and Jude his Gospel says rejected Jesus during his life. And, also suggesting that the James who wrote the epistle was Jesus' brother and not his disciple, John, in this only chapter of this epistle, tells the lady to whom he addresses it that he rejoices greatly in finding her children walking in truth.

But he also preaches to her and tells her many deceivers have come into the world who don't confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. And, calling those deceivers the antichrist, he tells her and her children to look to themselves to receive a full reward and not lose what he and they have wrought. And he tells her neither to receive into her house nor wish God speed to any who bring their doctrine to her while not abiding in the doctrine of Christ.

And, while not further identifying the sister, he closes this epistle by telling her the children of her elect sister greet her.

Also beginning his third epistle by calling himself the elder, James addresses it to the well-beloved Gaius he loves in truth, but neither does he further identify Gaius. And he says he has no greater joy than to know his children walk in truth. But much of this epistle is his complaints against Diotrephes.

Beyond his name and his complaints, neither does he identify Diotrephes. But he says Diotrephes loves to have preeminence in the church and that he remembers Diotrephes prating with malicious words, not receiving the brothers, and casting them out of the church. And he says that one who does evil hasn't seen God.

But he says Demetrius, whom he also doesn't otherwise identify, has good report of all and the truth.

Jude begins his epistle by calling himself the servant of Jesus Christ and the brother of James. Since Matthew and Mark say in their Gospels that Judas and James were brothers of Jesus', that suggests that Jude is Jesus' brother Judas and further suggests that the James who wrote the epistle of James was Jesus' brother and not one of his disciples. But, because Luke says in his Gospel that two of Jesus' disciples were the brothers James and Judas, all of that remains questionable.

But Jude addresses his epistle to those who are sanctified by God the father, are preserved in Jesus Christ, and are called. Saying he's writing to warn them of the antichrist and telling them that men who were ordained to that condemnation have crept in, he says those men turn the grace of their god into lasciviousness and deny the only god and their lord Jesus Christ. And he tells those sanctified that he'll remind them that the lord, after saving the people from the land of Egypt, destroyed those who didn't believe. And he repeats what Peter hypothetically says of angels and Sodom and Gomorrah in his second epistle.

And he also says that, when contending with the devil, the archangel Michael disputed about the body of Moses but didn't dare to bring against the devil a railing accusation but asked that the lord rebuke him. And he accuses the antichrists of speaking evil of what they don't know and of corrupting themselves in what as brute beasts they know naturally. And he declares woe to them for having gone the way of Cain and running greedily after the error of Balaam.

And he says they've perished in the gainsaying of Core, but he tells the sanctified that, when the antichrists feast with them, they're spots in feasts of charity of the sanctified, feeding themselves with no fear. And he also says in this only chapter of the last epistle in the New Testament that Enoch and Jesus prophesied the antichrists. Presumably Core is the Korah the Old Testament says rebelled against Moses.

## Chapter 19

### Revelation

In John's book Revelation, the last book of the New Testament, he emulates Old Testament prophets.

Beginning its first chapter by saying it's the revelation of Jesus Christ God gave him to show his servants what must soon come to pass, John says God sent and signified it by his angel to his servant John who bore record of the word of God, the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all he saw. Presumably the record to which John is referring is his Gospel, and next he says that, because the time is at hand, one who reads the words of this prophesy and keeps what's written in it is blessed. And next he addresses the seven churches in Asia.

Repeating his saying in his Gospel that Jesus called himself the alpha and the omega, he calls himself his readers' brother and companion in tribulation and the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. And, beginning his prophesy by saying he was on the island called Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, he says he was in the spirit on the lord's day and heard behind himself a great voice as from a trumpet and that the voice, saying it's the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, told him to write what he sees in a book and send it to the seven churches in Asia, to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicia. And, saying he turned and saw seven golden candlesticks, he says someone like the son of man, clothed to the foot with a garment and girt about the paps with a golden girdle, was in the midst of the candlesticks. And he says that in the righthand of the one like the son of man were seven stars, that a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth, and that his countenance was as the sun shines in its strength.

Next John says that, when he saw the one like the son of man, he fell dead at his feet, and that the one like the son of man laid his right hand on him, told him not to fear, and said again that he's the first and the last. He says the one like the son of man told him he'd lived and was dead, told him he's alive

forevermore and has the keys of hell and death, and told him to write what he's seen and what shall be hereafter. And he says he told him that the mystery of the seven stars and seven candlesticks is that the stars are the angels of the seven churches and that the candlesticks are the churches.

In the second chapter the speaker tells John to write to the angels of the churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, and Thyatira, praising them for some of their behavior, rebuking them for other behavior of theirs, and telling them of threats of which he's aware and against which he'll help them, and he tells him to write to the angel of the church of Thyatira that the son of God says he knows they've suffered a woman whose name is Jezebel who calls herself a prophetess, that he gave her space to repent but that she didn't, and that he'll kill her children.

And, telling him to write that he'll give power over nations to one who overcomes and keeps his works to the end, he says the overcomer will rule them with a rod of iron like one he received from his father, but he also says he'll give such a person the morning star.

In the third chapter, telling John to write similarly to the angels of the churches of Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, the speaker says in various ways that what he's saying are the words of various entities he variously identifies, but John doesn't make clear whether the speaker is all of those entities or another person.

Beginning the fourth chapter by saying that next he looked and saw a door open in heaven, he says the voice, sounding like a trumpet, told him to come up there for it to show him things that must be thereafter, and he says that, immediately in the spirit, he saw a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.

He says the person on the throne appeared as jasper and sardine stone, that a rainbow like an emerald was around the throne, that 24 elders in white raiment and gold crowns sat on seats around it, that thunder and lightning and voices proceeded from it, that seven lamps burned before it, and that the seven lamps were the seven spirits of God.

He says a sea of glass like crystal was before the throne, that four beasts full of eyes before and behind were in and around the throne, that the first beast was like a lion, that the second was like a calf, that the third had a face like a man's, and that the fourth was like a flying eagle, that the beasts were also full of eyes within, that each had six wings about him, and that, saying that holy holy holy is God almighty and that he was and is and is to come, they didn't rest, day or night.

And he says that, when the beasts did that, the 24 elders fell down before the person on the throne who lives forever and that, calling him lord, saying that, because he created all, he's worthy to receive glory, honor, and power, and telling him all were created for his pleasure, they cast their crowns before the throne.

The fifth chapter begins with John, seeing a scroll in the right hand of the person on the throne, saying writing is on both sides of the scroll and that seven seals seal it. And, in this chapter, a strong angel asks who's worthy to loosen the seals, but no one in heaven or under earth can, and John weeps, but one of the elders tells him to see that the root of David who's the lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed to open the book. And, looking and seeing a lamb with seven horns and seven eyes, standing as though it's been slain in the midst of the throne, the elders, and the beasts, John says the horns and eyes are the seven spirits of God sent to all the earth. And the lamb takes the scroll.

Then, with harps and golden vials full of odors that are the prayers of the saints, the beasts and elders fall down before the lamb and sing a new song, a song telling the lamb that, because he was slain and by his blood has redeemed them to God from every kind, tongue, people, and nation, he's worthy to open the book.

And they also sing that God has made them kings and priests to their god and that they'll reign over earth, and ten thousand angels join them in praising the lamb. And John hears every creature in heaven, on earth, and in the sea asking that blessing and honor and glory be to the person on the throne, and to the lamb, forever. And the elders fall down and worship the one who lives forever. And the beasts say amen.

In the sixth chapter, the lamb opens the seals, and one of the four beasts tells John to come and see. On the opening of the first seal, John sees a white horse with a rider on it with a bow, and a crown is given to the rider, who goes forth conquering. On the opening of the second seal, a red horse goes out with a rider given power to take peace from the earth and for people to kill one another, and a sword is given to that rider. On the opening of the third seal, John sees a black horse with a rider with a pair of balances in hand, and a voice in the midst of the beasts calls for a measure of wheat for a penny, for three measures of barley for a penny, and for not hurting the oil and wine. On the opening of the fourth seal, John sees a pale horse with a rider whose name is death, and hell follows him. And power over a fourth of the earth is given to the four riders to kill with the sword, hunger, and the beasts of the earth.

And, upon the opening of the fifth seal, he sees beneath an alter the souls of those who were slain for the word of God and the testimony they held. Those souls cry with a loud voice asking the holy and true lord how long he'll not judge and avenge their blood on those dwelling on earth, and white robes are given to those souls. And they're told that they should remain for another season, until the killing of their fellow servants and brothers who should be killed as they were killed should be fulfilled.

And, on the opening of the sixth seal, John sees a great earthquake, the sun becoming black, the moon becoming as blood, the stars falling, the heaven departing as a scroll when it's rolled, and each mountain and island moved from its place, and all the great men, free men, and bond men hide in dens and rocks of mountains and, asking who can stand, ask the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of the person on the throne and, because the great day of his wrath has come, from the wrath of the lamb.

The seventh chapter begins with John seeing four angels standing on the four corners of the earth. They're keeping the four winds of earth from blowing on it, on the sea, or on any tree, and another angel, descending from the east with a seal from the living God, cries to the other four not to hurt the earth, the sea, or the trees, until he and they have sealed the servants of their god on their foreheads, and they heal twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. But John omits Dan from the list, lists Joseph and Manasseh separately, and doesn't list Ephraim.

And next John sees an innumerable multitude of all nations, kindred, people, and tongues clothed in white robes and standing before the throne with palms in their hands while they cry for salvation to the lamb and their god who's sitting on the throne. And the angels, elders, and beasts fall before the throne and worship God, and one of the elders asks John what the people in white robes are and whence they came, and John replies that the asking elder knows. So the asking elder tells him they're those who've come from tribulation, washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb.

He says that, because of that, they're before the throne of God, serving him day and night in his temple. And he says he who sits on the throne shall dwell among them, that they'll neither hunger nor thirst anymore, and that neither shall the sun nor any heat light on them. And he says that's because the lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them to the fount of living waters and because God shall wipe all tears away from their eyes. But John doesn't say the angel with the seal sealed their foreheads.



The eighth chapter begins with the opening of the seventh seal. Silence is in heaven for about a half hour, and John sees the seven angels before the throne given seven trumpets, and another angel comes and stands at the altar with a golden censor, and, given incense to offer, he fills the censor with fire from the altar and casts it to the earth. And the remainder of this chapter is noise and various kinds of destruction of earth and sky as four of the angels sound their trumpets, and John hears a flying angel call for three woes to the inhabitants of the earth.

The ninth chapter begins with the fifth angel sounding his trumpet. A star falls from heaven and opens a bottomless pit, and locusts come from smoke from the pit, and John says the locusts weren't given to hurt the green things of earth and weren't given to kill but were commanded to torment for five months the men with no seal of God in their foreheads. And their monstrosity includes their torment being like a scorpion striking a man.

Then, after saying they had a king whose name was Abaddon in Hebrew but Apollyon in Greek, John says one of the woes is past. And then the sixth angel sounds his trumpet, and a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God tells the angel to release the four angels bound in the river Euphrates. And John says that, to slay a third of men, they were prepared for an hour and a day and a month and a year.

But an army of two hundred million horsemen do it by fire, smoke, and brimstone from their mouths, and John says the men they didn't kill repented neither worshipping devils or idols nor their murders, sorceries, fornications, or thefts.

He begins his tenth chapter by saying he saw another mighty angel, that it was clothed with a cloud and had a rainbow on its head, a face like the sun, and feet like pillars of fire, and that he saw it come down from heaven holding open a little book and stand with its right foot on the sea and its left foot on the earth, and the angel cries with a loud voice like a lion's, and seven thunders utter their voices, and John begins to write, but a voice from heaven tells him to seal what the thunders utter and not to write it.

Then the angel swears to the eternally living creator that time shall be no longer and that, when the seventh angel begins to sound in the days of his voice, the mystery of God shall be finished as he's declared it to his prophets, and the voice John heard from heaven tells him to take the book from the angel standing on the sea and the earth.

So John goes to the angel and asks him for the book, and the angel gives it to him and, telling him to eat it, says it'll make his belly bitter, and it

does, after making his mouth sweet as honey, and the angel tells John that, before many nations and tongues and kings, he must prophesy again.

The eleventh chapter begins with John being given a reed like a rod. The angel tells him to measure the temple of God, the altar, and the people worshipping there, but, because it's given to the gentiles, not the courtyard. And the angel also tells him the holy city shall be tread under foot for 42 months.

Most of this chapter tells of various fantastic and horrible events with no plain relevance to any doctrine in the Bible, and the events end with an earthquake in a tenth of the city, killing seven thousand men. The remaining men are frightened and give glory to the god of heaven, and John says the second woe is past and that the third is coming quickly, and then the seventh angel sounds, and great voices in heaven say the kingdoms of the world have become their lord's and that he'll reign forever. And the 24 elders fall on their faces, worship God, and thank him for taking his great power and reigning.

And they tell him the nations are angry, that his wrath and the time of the dead has come, that the dead should be judged, that he should give reward to his servants the prophets, the saints, and those small and great who fear his name, and that he should destroy those who destroy the earth.

And then John says the temple of God was opened in heaven, that the ark of God's testament was seen in it, and that lightning, voices, thunder, an earthquake, and great hail were there.

In the twelfth chapter a fantastic woman travails in childbirth while a fantastic dragon stands before her to devour the child upon its birth. The woman gives birth to a male child who's to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and she flees to a wilderness where, to be fed for 1260 days, she has a place God has prepared. And then, with Michael and his angels fighting the dragon and his angels, a war is in heaven that ends with Michael and his angels prevailing.

John, calling the dragon an old serpent, says it's also called the devil and Satan who deceives the whole world, that the dragon's and its angels' place is found no more in heaven, that they were cast into the earth, that then he heard a loud voice in heaven saying that now, because the accuser who accused the voice's brothers day and night before their god is cast down, is come salvation, strength, the kingdom of the voice's god, and the power of its god's Christ, that Michael and his angels overcame the dragon by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony, and that the angels didn't love their lives until the death.

And, asking the heavens and those who dwell in them to rejoice, the voice in heaven, because the devil, because he knows he has but a short time,

has come down to them with wrath, calls for woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, and the dragon, seeing that he's cast into the earth, persecutes those who brought forth the child.

But, to fly to her place in the wilderness, where she's nourished for times from the face of the serpent, the woman is given two wings of a great eagle. The serpent tries to carry her away with a flood of water from its mouth, but the earth helps the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the flood, and the dragon's angry with the woman. But it goes to make war with the remnant of her seed, who, having the testimony of Jesus Christ, keep the commandments of God.

The thirteenth chapter begins with another fantastic beast rising from the sea with one of its ten heads wounded nearly to death but healed, and all of the world wonder after the beast, worship the dragon who gives power to the beast, and ask who can make war with it. The beast is given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemy against God, the ability to make war with saints and overcome them, and power over all kinds and tongues and nations. And John says all dwelling on earth whose names aren't written in the book of life of the lamb shall worship the beast.

He also says that one who leads into captivity shall go into captivity, that one who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword, and that therein is the patience and faith of the saints. But next he sees a beast rising from the earth with two horns like a lamb's but speaking as a dragon and exercising the power of the other beast and doing great wonders, making fire come from heaven in sight of men, and, by making miracles and telling them to make an image of the other beast, deceiving those dwelling on earth. And the beast speaking as a dragon has power to give life to the image, for it to speak and cause any who don't worship it to be killed, and it causes all, small, great, free, and bond, to receive a mark in their right hands or their foreheads.

And John says no man not having the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name, may buy or sell, and that wisdom is letting one who has understanding count the number of the beast, because it's the number of a man, and he says the number is 666.

The fourteenth chapter begins with John looking and seeing the lamb standing on Mount Zion with 144 thousand souls with the lamb's father's name written in their foreheads. Hearing from heaven a voice like the voice of many waters and great thunder, he also hears the voice of harpers harping with harps and singing a new song before the throne, the four beasts, and the 24 elders. But only the 144 thousand redeemed from the earth can hear the song.

And John says that, because they're virgins, they're those who aren't defiled by women. He says they're those who follow the lamb wherever he goes, were redeemed from among men, and are the first fruits to God and the lamb. And he says that, because the hour of judgement has come, an angel flew in the midst of heaven with the everlasting gospel calling for fearing God.

Another angel says that, because Babylon made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, she's fallen. And another says loudly that anyone worshiping the beast and his image and receiving his mark in his forehead or hand shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God and be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and the lamb. And, describing more torment, John says that therein is the patience of the saints keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ.

And he hears a voice from heaven telling him to write that the dead who henceforth die in the lord are blessed, and the spirit tells him they may rest from their labors and that their works follow them. And he looks and sees a white cloud with one looking like the son of man sitting on it with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in hand, and another angel tells the one with the sickle to reap because the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he does.

And an angel with a sharp sickle comes from the temple in heaven, and another angel comes from the altar and tells the angel with the sickle to gather the clusters of the vine of the earth because her grapes are fully ripe, and he does and casts them into the great winepress of the wrath of God, and the winepress is trodden outside the city, and, by the space of 1600 furlongs, blood comes from it to the horse bridles.

The fifteenth chapter begins with John seeing seven angels with the seven last plagues, and those who'd obtained victory over the beast are standing on a sea of glass and singing the song of Moses and the lamb praising the lord, and the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven opens. The seven angels come from it with the seven plagues, and one of the four beasts gives the angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, and the temple fills with smoke from the glory and power of God. And John says no man can enter it until the fulfilment of the seven plagues of the seven angels.

The sixteenth chapter begins with John hearing a voice from the temple telling the angels to pour out the vials onto the earth.

When the first angel pours his vial onto the earth, a noisome grievous sore falls upon the men with the mark of the beast, and upon those who worshiped the beast's image. When the second angel pours his vial onto the sea, the sea becomes a dead man's blood, and every living soul in it dies. And, when

the third angel pours his onto the rivers and onto fountains of water, they become blood.

Then John hears the angel of the waters tell the lord that, because those with the mark of the beast and those who worshiped the beast shed the blood of the saints and prophets, the lord is and was and shall be righteous for judging thus. And the angel tells the lord that the reason he's given those he's judged the blood to drink is that they're worthy. And John hears an angel from the altar tell the lord his judgements are true and righteous.

Then the fourth angel pours his vial onto the sun and is given the power to scorch men with fire, and the scorched men blaspheme God and don't repent to give him glory. Then the fifth angel pours his vial onto the seat of the beast, and the beast's kingdom is filled with darkness, and its inhabitants gnaw their tongues in pain but blaspheme God and don't repent. And then the sixth angel pours his vial onto the river Euphrates, and the water dries up to prepare the way for the kings of the east.

Then, because they're the spirits of devils working miracles going forth to the kings of the earth and the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God almighty, John sees three unclean spirits like frogs come from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, and God gathers them to a place the Hebrew tongue calls Armageddon.

And then the seventh angel pours his vial into the air, and a great voice from the throne in the temple says it's done, and more voices and thundering and lightning are there with the greatest earthquake since men were on earth, and the great city is divided into three parts. And the cities of the nations fall, and Babylon comes before God for God to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath, and every island flies away. And the mountains are lost, and hailstones weighing a talent fall from heaven, and, because of the plague of the hail, men blaspheme God.

The seventeenth chapter begins with one of the seven angels telling John to go with him for him to show him the great whore who sits on many waters. The angel takes him in spirit into a wilderness, where he sees a woman arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with precious stones and pearls, sitting on a scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns and full of names of blasphemy. And the woman has in hand a golden cup full of abominations and filth of her fornication and has a name written on her forehead.

The name is mystery and Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, and John says he sees her drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus and that, when he saw her, he wondered with

great admiration, and the angel, asking John why he marvels, tells him he'll tell him the mystery of the woman and the beast.

So the remainder of this chapter is the angel telling John meanings of the woman and the beast on which she's sitting, but the meaning is no more meaningful than the imagery with no explanation, and the angel tells him prophecies of kings he doesn't name ruling kingdoms yet to come by power from the beast who'll lose war with the lamb, and this chapter ends with the angel telling John the woman's the great city that reigns over the kings of the earth.

John begins the eighteenth chapter by saying he saw another angel come down from heaven and cry that Babylon has fallen. More of the vagueness of the seventeenth chapter is in this chapter, but it also says that, because men will buy no more of her merchandise, the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over Babylon. And it lists some of the merchandise and says that, because riches so great have come to nothing in an hour, men will stand far off for fear of Babylon's torment.

The angel tells heaven and the holy apostles and prophets to rejoice over Babylon because God has avenged them on her. A great angel, casting a stone like a great millstone into the sea, says the great city of Babylon shall be thrown by such violence and be found no more. And John closes this chapter by saying that in her was found the blood of prophets, saints, and all that were slain on the earth.

The nineteenth chapter begins with rejoicing, and voices ask that, because the marriage of the lamb has come, they give honor to God. A voice from the throne says the lamb's wife has made herself ready and that, because fine linen is the righteousness of the saints, she's been granted being arrayed in clean and white linen. And the voice tells John to write that those called to the marriage of the lamb are blessed and that those are the true sayings of God.

John falls at the feet of the voice, but the voice, telling him not to do that, says he's John's fellow servant and a servant of John's brothers who have the testimony of Jesus, and it tells him to worship God because the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy.

Then John, seeing heaven open, sees a white horse with a rider called faithful and true who judges and makes war in righteousness. The rider's eyes are like a flame of fire, and many crowns are on his head, and a sword goes from his mouth, and he's clothed in vesture dipped in blood. Only he knows his written name, but his name is called the word of God, and the armies in heaven,

clothed in fine linen white and clean, follow him on white horses, and on his vesture and thigh is written the name king of kings and lord of lords.

Then John sees an angel standing in the sun and crying loudly to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven for them to gather to the supper of the great god, to eat the flesh of kings, captains, mighty men, horses, the men who sit on them, and all men, free and bond, small and great, and John sees the beast, the kings of earth, and their armies gathered to make war against the rider and his army.

And the beast and the false prophet are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, and this chapter closes with the fowls filled with their flesh and with the remnant of their army slain with the sword from the mouth of the rider of the white horse.

The twentieth chapter begins with John seeing an angel come down from heaven with a great chain and the key to the bottomless pit in hand. The angel lays hold of the dragon, the one John calls the old serpent who's the devil and Satan, and he binds the dragon for a thousand years and casts him into the bottomless pit to keep him from deceiving the nations during the thousand years. And then John sees people on thrones judging souls of people beheaded for witnessing Jesus, for the word of God, and for not worshiping the beast.

Those people live and reign with Christ for the thousand years, but the other dead don't live again until the end of the thousand years, and John says the revival of the beheaded is the first resurrection. But he says that, at the end of those thousand years, Satan shall be released from his prison, and he says that then more wars, deceit, and fire from heaven shall occur, until the devil is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone with the beast and the false prophet, to be tormented forever. And John also sees a great white throne, and the earth and heaven flee from the face of the person sitting on it, and no place is found for them. And God judges by their works the other small and great dead from the book of life and another book that's opened.

And the sea gives up the dead in it, and death and hell deliver up the dead in death and hell, and those dead are cast into the lake of fire, and this chapter ends with John saying the second death is that casting and included all who weren't found written in the book of life.

But the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter begins with John, because the first heaven and earth has passed away, seeing a new heaven and earth and saying the sea is no more, and, seeing the holy city Jerusalem coming from God from heaven, he says it's prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

A voice from heaven tells him to see that the tabernacle of God is with men, that God dwells with them, that they'll be his people, that he'll be their god, that he'll wipe away all tears from their eyes, and that, because what's former has passed away, death, sorrow, crying, and pain shall be no more. And the person on the throne, telling John to write that he'll make things new because those words are true and faithful, says it's done, that he's the alpha and the omega, and that, freely to the thirsty, he'll give from the fountain of the water of the life, and he says that one who overcomes shall inherit all, that the one who overcomes shall be his god, and that he'll be his son. And he says the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, the whoremongers, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and the liars shall have their part in the lake burning with fire and brimstone that's the second death.

And next one of the seven angels with the vials tells John to go with him. Saying he'll show him the lamb's wife, he carries John in spirit to a high mountain and shows him Jerusalem descending from heaven from God with the glory of God, and John describes it. He says its light was like a jasper stone clear as crystal, that it had a great wall with twelve gates with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel written on the gates, that twelve angels were at the gates, that the wall had twelve foundations, and that the twelve apostles of the lamb were in the foundations. And the angel talking with John measures the city with a golden reed, and John says it was square and that its wall was 144 cubits. And he also says the wall was of jasper and that the city was of gold like clear glass and of other precious stones and pearls.

But he says that, because God and the lamb are its temple, he saw that no temple was in the city, that, because the glory of God lit it and because the lamb is its light, the city didn't need a sun, that the nations of the saved shall walk in the light, and that the kings of the earth shall bring glory to it.

And he says that, because night and day shall be no more, the city's gates shall not be shut by day, that the glory and honor of the nations shall be brought into it, that nothing that defiles shall enter it, that neither shall anything that works abomination or lies, and that no one other than those written in the lamb's book of life shall enter it.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> and final chapter of the Book of Revelation begins with the angel showing John the pure river of the water of life clear as crystal and pouring from the throne of God and from the lamb. In the midst of it and on each side of it is the tree of life bearing twelve fruits and yielding her fruit every month. And John says the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

The angel says that no more curse shall be, that the throne of God and the lamb shall be in the tree of life, that God's or the lamb's servants shall serve



God or the lamb and see his face, and that his name shall be in their foreheads. He says the lamb told him that those sayings are faithful and true and that the god of the holy prophets sent his angel to show his servants what must soon be done and to look that he's coming quickly. And, presumably referring to the book John's writing, he tells John that blessed is one who keeps the prophesy of this book.

John says he saw and heard those things and fell down to worship the angel showing them to him. But the angel tells him he's the fellow servant of John, of John's brothers the prophets, and of those who keep the sayings of this book. And he tells him not to do what he's doing but to worship God and, because the time is at hand, to seal the prophesy of the book and let the unjust be unjust, the filthy be filthy, the righteous be righteous, and the holy be holy. And he tells him he's coming quickly, that the reward with him is to give everyone what accords with his work, and that he's the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Saying that, because outside are dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whoever loves and makes a lie, blessed are those who do the commandments to have right to the tree of life and enter the gates of the city, he says he's Jesus.

And, telling John he sent his angel to him for him to testify in the churches, he says he's the root and offspring of David and the bright and morning star. And John, saying the spirit and the bride say to come, asks that whoever hears and thirsts come and that whoever wishes take the water freely, and he says that, because he testifies to everyone hearing the prophesy of this book, God will add, to anyone one who adds to it, the plagues written in it. And he says God will take from the book of life and from the holy city anyone who takes from what's written in this book.

And, saying that he who testifies those things says that surely he'll come quickly, he asks that the lord Jesus come quickly, amen, and that the grace of the lord Jesus be with us all, amen.

And that's the close of John's Book of Revelation, the New Testament, and the Bible.

## Chapter 20

### Gospel of Mary

The two largest factions of Christianity, Roman Catholic Christians and Protestant Christians, disagree substantially on both ritual and doctrine. But, over the more than two millennia since the life of Jesus, the two divisions have come to agree on what scripture comprises the Bible, the definitive scripture of Christianity. Yet neither faction publicizes how that agreement occurred.

And many Christians and secular historians say Gospels not in the Bible clarify what Jesus said and accordingly should be in the Bible. And secular archaeologists say some of the ostensibly Christian manuscripts they've discovered are at least as old as the manuscripts of the Gospels in the Bible. And, excepting Paul's apostle Luke's referring to his Gospel at the beginning of his Book of Acts and the evangel John's referring to his at the beginning of his Book of Revelation, neither the Book of Acts nor any of the epistles refers to any of the four books Christians have come to call Gospels.

And considering that the chronology Paul presents in his epistle to the Galatians suggests that the writing of the Gospels was at least fourteen years after the crucifixion, that two of the Evangelists were Paul's apostles and not Jesus' disciples, and that one of them wrote the Book of Acts telling of Paul's organizing Christianity suggests that the writing of the Gospels was by Paul's direction.

And, despite the fact that Gospels in the Bible say Mary of Magdala saw Jesus after his resurrection before any of his male disciples saw him, neither the Book of Acts nor any of the epistles mentions her.

And one of the Gospels both Roman Catholics and Protestants omit from the Bible may be hers. And, suggesting efforts to deprive us of all it, all we have of that Gospel of Mary is a nineteen-page fragment. And Paul, in several of his epistles, expresses his contempt for women.

And relevant texts the church Paul founded in Rome has released to the public suggest that the current canonical compilation of the Bible may not have been before Gregory I was Pope nearly six centuries after the crucifixion. And

Gregory, whom the Roman Catholic Church calls Gregory the Great, initiated the notion that the Magdalene was a prostitute, and the Roman Catholic Church sustained that slander until 1969. And, in the remaining fragment of the Gospel of Mary, Peter and other disciples of Jesus' agree with Paul's contempt for women.

And that fragment also indicates doctrine contrary to the assertion in two Gospels that Jesus said he came not for peace but to divide us against one another, and it suggests that Jesus was more Hindu, Buddhist, and Daoist than Pharisee or Christian, as do many of the quotations of him in the Gospels.

So many factors suggest both that the following summary of that fragment belongs in this book and that the fragment belongs in the Bible.

The first page of the fragment is the seventh page of the codex of which it's a fragment and begins in the Gospel's fourth chapter with the question of whether or not matter shall be destroyed. It doesn't say who asks the question, but a person it calls the savior answers it and says that all nature, formations, and creatures are in and with one another and will be resolved again into their root. He says matter's resolved only in the root of its nature. And he asks that those with ears hear.

To Peter's replying by asking the savior to tell them what's the sin of the world, the savior replies that sin isn't in or of itself. He says we make it when we act in accordance with the nature of adultery, what's called sin. And he says that's why good came into our midst.

He says good came into the nature of everything to restore its root, and he says the cause of sickening and dying is affection for deceit, and he calls that deprivation. Asking that who has a mind understand, he says matter comes from what's contrary to nature, that it gives birth to passion having no image, and that then discordance arises in the whole body. Telling his audience that that's the reason he told them to be content at heart, he tells them to find, if they're discontented, contentment in the various images of nature. And he again asks that those who have ears hear.

Next, with this chapter calling him the fortunate one, he greets those present, asks that peace be with them and that they acquire his peace, and tells them the authentic one is within them. And he tells them to be careful not to let anyone mislead them by telling them to look outside themselves. And, telling them that those who seek shall find, he tells them to follow the authentic one.

He tells them to go and preach the gospel concerning the kingdom and not to lay down any rules beyond what he's given them. Telling them not to make a law as the lawgiver, he tells them they'll be bound to it if they do. And, after saying those things, the savior departs.

This Gospel's fifth chapter begins with those present weeping bitterly and asking how they can go to the gentiles to preach the kingdom of the authentic one and why the gentiles, since they didn't spare the savior, would spare them.

Then Mary rises, greets those present, and, calling them her brothers and sisters, tells them, because the savior's grace shall be wholly with them and protect them, not to weep or grieve or let their hearts be divided. And she tells them that rather, because the savior prepared them, made them authentic persons, and turned their hearts to the good, they should praise his greatness. But they begin to debate the words of the savior.

Peter, calling Mary sister and telling her they know the savior loved her more than all other women, asks her to tell them the words of the savior she remembers and knows, what they don't know and haven't heard. So, replying that she'll tell them what's hidden from them, she begins by telling them she saw the lord in a vision and told him she'd seen the vision earlier that day. And she says he told her that, because the treasure lies where the mind is, she's blessed because she didn't waver at the sight of him.

And she says she replied by asking him whether one sees a vision by the soul or in the spirit, that the savior replied that one sees it neither in the soul nor in the spirit, and that he said one sees it in the mind between the two.

The eleventh through fourteenth pages of the Gospel are missing from the fragment, and the fifteenth page begins with a story that's an allegorical parable in the eighth chapter.

Desire, in the parable, telling the soul it didn't see the soul going down but now sees it going up, asks the soul why, since it belongs to desire, it's lying. The soul replies that, while it saw desire, the soul was only a garment to desire, and that thus desire didn't see or know or recognize the soul. And, rejoicing, the soul leaves.

And next the soul comes to the third power. The third power is called ignorance, and, asking the soul where it thinks it's going, it tells the soul it's bound in wickedness and not to judge. So the soul, asking ignorance why, since it hasn't judged ignorance, ignorance judges it, says it didn't bind anything but was bound with others that didn't recognize it and that it's recognized that everything, both on earth and in heaven, will dissolve. And next, after overcoming the third power, the soul goes up and sees the fourth power.

The fourth power has seven forms, the forms of darkness, desire, ignorance, zeal for death, the kingdom of the flesh, foolish wisdom of the flesh, and wrathful wisdom. And in this parable those are the seven powers of wrath

and ask the soul whence it comes and whither it's going. And they call it a murderer and a conqueror of space.

The soul replies that what binds it has been killed, that what surrounds it has been overcome, that its desire is gone, that ignorance has died, that it was released from a world in a world, from a type in a type, and from the transient fetter of oblivion, and that henceforth it'll obtain the rest of the time of the season in eternity in silence.

Then, in the ninth chapter, after saying those things, because the savior has spoken to her until then, Mary falls silent. And Andrew then tells the brothers and sisters to say what they wish about what she said but that, because those things seem like different ideas, he doesn't believe the savior said them. And then Peter asks those present whether the savior would speak with a woman and not publicly with them, whether they'll all turn around and listen to her, and whether the savior preferred her to them.

And then Mary, weeping and calling Peter her brother, asks him what he's thinking. She asks him whether he thinks she made all that up in her heart or thinks she's lying about the savior. And Levi replies to that by rebuking Peter.

He tells Peter that Peter has always been angry and that now he sees Peter debating with Mary as he debates with adversaries. Asking him who, if the savior made her worthy, he is to reject her, he says the reason the savior loved her more than him and Peter is that he knew her well. And he says they should be ashamed of themselves, that they should clothe themselves with authentic humanity and acquire it for themselves as the savior instructed them, and that they should preach the gospel and not lay down any rules or order beyond what the savior said.

And the fragment ends with those present beginning to go out to teach and preach the gospel according to Mary.

Archaeologists found that nineteen-page fragment of a fifth century papyrus codex in 1896. Its language is Sahidic Coptic, the language most Egyptians spoke in the fifth century, before the Roman Catholic Church finished determining its current canonical compilation of the New Testament. But some archaeologists say the date of the composition of the original was before the third century, and some archaeologists say it may have originated during the life of Mary of Magdala, and some say the Mary who was the mother of Jesus may have written it.

And, while the fifth-century fragment is the most complete fragment archaeologists have found, archaeologists have found smaller fragments of scrolls of that Gospel in Greek. And the discovery of each of the fragments, both of the

codex and of the scrolls, was in Egypt. And archeologists say the Greek fragments are about two centuries older than the codex.

A codex isn't a scroll but a book of pages.

## Chapter 21

### Islam

The definitive scripture of Islam is the *Qur'an*. An Arabic merchant whose name was Muhammad said the angel Gabriel recited it to him. And “*qur'an*” is an Arabic word meaning recitation.

Muhammad’s birth was in Mecca in the second half of the sixth century CE. His father died before his birth, and his mother died when he was six years old, and one of his grandfathers began taking care of him then but died two years later. His next guardian was an uncle who took him on a trade journey north of Mecca when Muhammad was twelve years old. And the trade routes north of Mecca extended to the Mediterranean port Jaffa north of Jerusalem. So Muhammad may have learned of Judaism and Christianity then.

When he was in his twenties, a wealthy widow fifteen years older than he employed him to trade for her and asked him to marry her, and their marriage lasted until her death 25 years later. During that marriage he occasionally retreated from his trading into reflection in a cave near Mecca, and he said the beginning of the recitation of the *Qur'an* was in that cave in the year 610, when he was forty years old. And he said the revelation came to him in segments during the remaining 22 years of his life, during which he established Islam.

“*Islam*” is an Arabic word meaning “submission”, and “*muslim*” is an inflection of that word meaning “one who submits”, and the most fundamental principle of Islam is submission to the God of Abraham. And, in Islam as in Christianity, integral to that principle is that submission to the God of Abraham leads to eternity in paradise, while the alternative leads to eternity in hell. But those 22 years were years of war, not only between Muslims and the polytheistic Arabs, but also between the Muslims and the Christians and Jews in the region. And much of the *Qur'an* is guidance for that fighting.

The *Qur'an* is 114 *surahs*. “*Surah*” is an Arabic word that sometimes means “enclosure” and sometimes means “row”. But uncertainty of its etymology leaves the possibility that it’s a cognate of the Sanskrit word “*sutra*”

or “*sutta*” meaning “thread” and referring to segments of revelation the Buddha delivered separately during the last 45 years of his life, or perhaps later.

And another similarity to the Buddhist threads is that no one recorded the *surahs* in writing before Muhammad’s death. Muhammad was illiterate, but he recited the *surahs* to others during his life, and some of those others recorded their memory of them in writing and compiled them into the *Qur’an* after his death. But they did it three months after his death, not three centuries after his death, as Buddhists did with the *suttas*.

The order of the *surahs* in the *Qur’an* isn’t chronological. Islam began while Muhammad’s home was in Mecca, but the fighting drove the Muslims to migrate to Medina, where people were more submissive to Islam, and Muhammad said the recitations continued there. But, in the *Qur’an*, some of the *surahs* Muhammad said he received in Medina precede *surahs* he said he received in Mecca, and the writers of the *Qur’an* also combined some of the *surahs* into one *surah*, and some of that combining is of Medina *surahs* with Mecca *surahs*. But, generally, knowing the origin of a *surah* helps explain the development of Islam.

Most of the *Qur’an*, in keeping with the notion that Gabriel recited the *Qur’an* to Muhammad, is in the second person. And, in keeping with the notions that Gabriel is an angel and that angels are God’s messengers, the referent of most of the *Qur’an*’s first person pronouns, both singular and plural, is God. So, to summarize the *Qur’an* from the point of view of Muslims, this book accords with that notion.

Generally, the *Qur’an* presents the *surahs* in descending order by length, but it has many exceptions. And the *Qur’an* doesn’t divide the *surahs* into three sections as this book divides them into chapters. But comparing the number of *surahs* with the number pages in each chapter suggests the ordering by length and also indicates the amount of repetition in the *Qur’an*.

And Muslims, like Christians and Jews, divide their scripture into verses they number, but the first verse of most of the *surahs* is one or more Arabic letters, with no indication of the significance of the letters.



## Chapter 22

### Surahs One through Nine

The title of the first *surah* of the *Qur'an* is The Opening. It says it's in the name of God, the lord and giver of mercy, and, excepting one, every other *surah* of the Qur'an opens by saying that. And the first *surah* also says praise belongs to God, the lord of the worlds and master of the day of judgement, and it says we worship him and ask for his help. And it asks God to guide us to the straight path of those he's blessed, those who've incurred no anger and haven't gone astray.

The title of the second and longest *surah* is The Cow. It's a Medina *surah*, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim*. It says it's the scripture in which is no doubt, the scripture containing guidance for those mindful of God and believing in the unseen, those who keep up the prayer and spend for others from what God has provided them. It tells Muhammad it's for those who believe in the revelation sent down to him and in what was sent down before him and that it's for those having firm faith in the hereafter. And it says such people are following their lord's guidance and will prosper.

But next it tells Muhammad that those who disbelieve won't believe, that whether he warns them or doesn't will make no difference, that God has sealed their hearts and ears, that their eyes are covered, and that they'll have great restraint.

It says some people say they believe in God and the last day while they don't, that they seek to deceive God and the believers while they deceive only themselves, that a disease is in their hearts and that God has added more, that agonizing restraint awaits them for their persisting in lying, and that, when they're told not to corrupt the land, they say they're only putting things right.

Saying that, when they're told to believe as others believe, they ask whether they should believe as fools, it says they're the fools. It says that, when they're with the believers, they say they believe, but that, when they're with the evil ones, they say they were only mocking, that God's mocking them and

allowing them to wander blindly in their insolence, that they've relinquished guidance in exchange for error, and that because of that their trade reaps no profit. And it says God could take away their hearing and sight and that God has power over all things.

Telling people not to set up rivals to God, it tells them, if they doubt the revelation God sent to his servant, to set up a *surah* like it. It tells Muhammad to tell those who believe and do good that they'll have gardens graced with flowing streams and that they'll have pure spouses there and stay there. And it says the losers are those who break their covenant with God after its confirmation, those who sever the bonds God has commanded be joined, and those who spread corruption on the earth.

It asks how we can ignore God after he gave us life when we were lifeless or when he'll cause us to die and will resurrect us to return to him. It says God created all on earth for us and then turned to the sky and made the seven heavens. And it says God knows all.

And it also tells Muhammad that, when God told the angels he was putting on earth someone to act for him here, the angels asked God why he'd put someone on earth who'll cause damage and bloodshed while praising God and proclaiming his holiness.

And, also in the narrative of this *surah*, God teaches Adam the names of everything, shows each to the angels, and asks them to tell him the names, and they reply that they know only what God has taught them. Then God tells Adam to tell the angels the names, and, when Adam does, God asks the angels whether he didn't tell them he knows what's hidden in the heaven and the earth and what they reveal and conceal. And next this *surah* says God told the angels to bow before Adam and that an angel this *surah* calls Iblis refused.

Next it tells a version of the story of Satan tempting Adam and Eve and expelling them from the garden, but it doesn't name Eve or mention a serpent or the tree of life, and it doesn't say the tree from which Adam and Eve ate was the tree of knowledge.

But it says Adam received some words from God, that God accepted Adam's repentance, and that God's the ever relenting and the most merciful. And it says that, before he gave Adam the words, God expelled him and Eve and Satan from the garden, that he told the three they'd be one another's enemies but would have for a time a place to stay on earth and have a livelihood, and that no fear or grieving would be for those who follow his guidance. But it says he told them that those who disbelieve or deny his messages will be inhabitants of the fire and remain there.

And next this *surah* tells the children of Israel to remember how God has blessed them. Telling them God will honor his pledge to them if they honor

their pledge to him, it tells them to believe in the message he's sent down confirming what they already have, and it tells them not to be the first to disbelieve it. And it tells them not to sell God's messages for a small price.

Telling them to remember how God favored them over all people, it tells them to remember when he saved them from Pharaoh's people who slaughtered their sons and spared only their women and that he parted the sea and drowned Pharaoh's people. It tells them they appointed forty nights for Moses and that they worshiped the calf while he was away but that, for them to be thankful, God forgave them. And it tells them Moses gave them the scripture to guide them.

Telling them to remember they told Moses they wouldn't believe until they see God face to face, it says thunderbolts struck them as they looked. And it tells them that, for them to be thankful, God revived them from their death and made clouds to shade them, that he sent manna and quail to them and told them to eat the good things he'd promised them, and that God didn't wrong them but that they wronged themselves. And next it tells them to remember God told them to enter a town humbly and eat freely there but that they substituted another word and that God sent a plague from heaven onto the wrongdoers.

The *Qur'an* has many variants of stories from *Miqra*, and next this *surah* tells the children of Israel to remember when God responded to Moses' praying for water for his people by telling him to strike a rock with his staff, but it says twelve springs gushed from the rock and that each group knew its drinking place.

It says God told them to eat and drink the sustenance God provided for them and not to corrupt the land, that they told Moses they couldn't bear to eat but one kind of food, and that they told him to bring them some vegetables. It says that Moses, asking them whether they'd exchange better for worse, told them to go to Egypt where they'd find vegetables, and it says humiliation struck them and that, because they persisted in rejecting his messages and killed the prophets, they incurred God's wrath. And it says all that was because they were lawbreakers.

Next it says the believers, those believing in God and the last day, including the Jews, the Christians, and the Sabians, will, with no fear or grief, have their reward with their lord. It tells the children of Israel to remember when God took their pledge, made a mountain tower above them, and told them to hold to what God had given them and bear its contents in mind. And it tells them that, when they turned away, but for God's favor and mercy, they'd have been lost.

And it also tells them that, when they broke the Sabbath, God told them to be like apes. And next, giving this *surah* its name, it tells them to remember

when Moses told the children of Israel to sacrifice a cow, and, in this story, they ask him whether he's making fun of them, and he replies that God forbids that he be so ignorant. So they ask him to ask God to show them what kind of cow it should be.

He tells them it should be neither too old nor too young, and they ask him what color it should be, and he replies that it should be bright yellow and pleasant to see, and they ask him to be more descriptive, and, after he tells them it should be one with no blemish and no training to till earth or water fields, they reluctantly slaughter a cow. And then Moses tells them that, were they to kill someone and blame one another, God would bring the matter to light, and this *surah* says God told them to strike the body in such situations with part of the cow. And it also says that's how God brings the dead to life and shows his signs for the children of Israel to understand.

Presumably that's a version of the instructions in the *Torah* of how, if no one witnesses a murder, to absolve from guilt the people of the city nearest the killing. But next this *surah* says it shows the futility of hypocrisy, the presumption of lying while God knows all, and the blasphemy of lying about God. And it reminds its audience of the punishment for disbelief.

Next, telling the children of Israel to remember when God took a pledge from them to be good to relatives, orphans, and the poor and to speak good words to all people, to keep up the prayer, and to pay the prescribed alms, it says God also took a pledge from them not to kill one another and not to drive their people from their homes to help others against them in sin and aggression.

And it says that, in this life, the punishment of those who believe some parts of the scriptures but not other parts shall be only disgrace, but that, on the day of resurrection, it shall be condemnation to the harshest restraint, and it says those people are the people who buy the life of this world at the price of the hereafter, that their restraint won't be lightened, and that they won't be helped.

Next it says God gave the scriptures to Moses and sent others to succeed him. Saying God gave Mary's son Jesus clear signs and strengthened him with the holy spirit, it asks the children of Israel why they become arrogant, call some of the messengers imposters, and, when others bring them something they don't like, kill them. And it asks them, if they were believers, why they killed God's prophets.

It tells Muhammad to tell them that, if they believe the last home with God is to be for no one other than they, they should long for death. It says that, because of what they've stored with their own hands, they'll never long for death. It tells Muhammad he'll find them clinging to life more eagerly than others. And it says polytheists are among those others.

And it tells Muhammad that God's an enemy of any enemy of Gabriel, who brought the Qur'an down to Muhammad's heart, and it says God's also an enemy of any disbelievers who are enemies of God, Michael, other angels, or God's messengers.

It tells Muhammad that God has sent down clear messages to him, that only those who defy God would refuse to believe them, that, when God sent them a messenger confirming their scriptures, they threw them over their shoulders as though they had no knowledge and followed what evil ones had fabricated about the kingdom of Solomon. And it says Solomon wasn't a disbeliever but that the fabricators taught people witchcraft and what was revealed in Babylon to the angels Harut and Marut. But it says those angels never taught with no warning.

It says they told people not to believe but that they came only to tempt. It says the people learned from them what can cause discord between a husband and wife but that they can harm no one with no permission from God. It says that, knowing they'd lose by it any share in the hereafter, the people didn't learn what helped them but learned what hurt them. And it says they were selling their souls for evil.

And, calling Christians and Jews the people of the book, asking them whether they wish to demand from their messenger something like what was demanded of Moses, mentioning other ways in which the people of the book try to demean believers in Muhammad's message, and referring to contention between Jews and Christians while they share one scripture, it says God will judge between them on the day of resurrection.

Next, asking who could be more wicked than those who prohibit the mention of God's name in his places of worship and strive to have the places of worship deserted, it says such people shouldn't enter places of worship with no fear, and it says that east and west belong to God, that God's face is everywhere we turn, and that God's both all-present and all-knowing.

And next it decries people of the book saying God has a child, but, effectually decrying only the assertion that God has but one child, it argues against that admonition by saying everything belongs to God and that God's the originator of the heavens and earth and can create anything only by saying it is.

And this *sutra* says Abraham's lord tested him with commandments, that, after Abraham obeyed the commandments, God promised to make him a leader of his people, that Abraham asked God whether he'd make his descendants leaders also, and that God replied that his pledges don't hold for people who do evil.

And next it says God made the house a sanctuary for the people. Muslims say the house is the Kaaba, and they've built a mosque around it, and

this *surah*, calling it the place where Abraham stood, directs making it a place of prayer and says God commanded Abraham and Ishmael to purify God's house for those who walk around it, stay there, bow, and prostrate themselves in worship. And it says Abraham asked God to make the land secure and provide produce to its people who believe in God and the last day, that God replied that he'd grant disbelievers a short time of enjoyment before the restraint of the fire, that, as Abraham and Ishmael built the foundation of the house, they prayed and made various promises, and that the prayer included asking that God make them devoted to him and make a messenger arise among them to recite his revelations to them. And, saying God replied by telling them to devote themselves to him, it says that, as had Jacob, Abraham replied that he would.

It doesn't say why it refers to Abraham's grandson Jacob's covenant as though it preceded Abraham's. But it tells the believers to say they believe in what was sent down to them, in what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob, and in what was given by their lord to Moses, Jesus, and all the prophets, and it tells them to say they make no distinction between any parts of it. And, saying the people of the book tell others to become Jews or Christians to be rightly guided, it tells Muhammad to tell them his religion is the religion of the upright Abraham who didn't worship any God besides God and to ask them whether they're saying Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob were Jews or Christians.

And it tells Muhammad to ask the people of the book how they can argue with the Muslims about God when he's the lord of both the people of the book and the Muslims. And it tells him to tell them that their past communities passed away, that what their past communities earned belongs to them, and that what the people of the book earn belongs to them and not to the past communities. And it tells them they won't be answerable for the deeds of the past communities.

And next, saying foolish people will ask what's turned the Islamic believers from their former direction of prayer, it tells Muhammad to say that both east and west belong to God, that God guides to the right way whomever he will, and that the Muslims' former direction of prayer was only to distinguish from those who turned from the messenger those who followed him.

That reference is to Muslims' changing their direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Mecca when they migrated to Medina. And this *surah* tells Muhammad that God has often seen him turn his face toward heaven and that accordingly he's turning him to praying in a direction that pleases him. But next, telling him to turn his face in the direction of the sacred mosque, it tells the other Muslims to turn their faces to it, from wherever they are.

The sacred mosque is the one in Mecca around the Kaaba, but this *surah* also says each community has its own direction to which it turns, and, telling the communities to race to do good wherever they are, it says God, having the power to do all, will bring them together.

And this *surah* also tells Muslims not to say those who are killed in God's cause are dead. Telling them those people are alive and that God will test the Muslims with fear, hunger, and loss of property, life, and crops, it tells Muhammad to tell them those afflicted with calamity while saying they belong to God and shall return to him will be given blessings and mercy from their lord. And it tells him to say those Muslims are rightly guided.

And next it says people who walk between the hills Safa and Marwa while on pilgrimage to the Kaaba will be rewarded if they do good on their own. Understanding the *Qur'an* depends on knowledge of behavior it explains nowhere in it or in one or more *surahs* later than the *surah* in which it initially mentions it. And this reference to Muslims circulating between those two hills to symbolize Hagar's search for water for Ishmael is an example of that.

And, typical of the *Qur'an*'s frequently shifting with no transition between specific injunctions or descriptions to more general doctrine, this *surah* next says God rejects those who hide the proofs and guidance he sends down. It says that, for those who use their minds, the creation of heaven and earth, the alternation of day and night, ships sailing the seas with goods for people, and the action of water, wind, and clouds are signs. And it says that, regardless of the signs, some choose to worship and love with the love due to God others besides God.

It asks that those idolaters see, as they will when they face the restraint, that all power belongs to God and that he punishes severely. It says that then, when what those the idolaters have followed disown the followers, the followers will say that, if they'd had one last chance, they'd have disowned those they followed. And it says God will make them see their deeds as a source of bitter regret and that they'll not leave the fire.

Next, telling the believers to eat what's good and lawful from the earth and not to follow the steps of their enemy Satan, it tells them God has forbidden them nothing other than carrion, blood, pigs' meat, and animals over which a name other than God's has been invoked, but it says God is merciful and forgiving and that eating those things is no sin if hunger forces them to eat them.

And it says goodness isn't turning one's face east or west, that the good are those who believe in God, the last day, the angels, the scripture, and the prophets, that they're those who, however much they cherish their wealth, give some of it to their relatives, orphans, the needy, travelers, and beggars and to liberate those in bondage, that they're those who keep up the prayer, pay the

prescribed alms, keep pledges, and are steadfast in misfortune, adversity, and danger, and that the good are true and aware of God.

This *surah* also tells believers that the retribution for murder is a free man for a free man, a slave for a slave, and a female for a female, but it also says that, if the culprit's aggrieved brother pardons him, he may pay in a good way, and it calls that an act of mercy from God.

Concerning bequests of people nearing death, it says making them to parents and close relatives is incumbent on those mindful of God and that guilt will fall on anyone who alters the bequest, but not if the alteration is to correct a mistake.

And it tells believers that, if fasting is prescribed for them as it was for those before them, they may delay it if they're ill or on a journey. And it says those for whom fasting is great difficulty may instead feed a needy person. But it says that, for those doing good of their own accord, fasting is better.

And, as though the revelation of the *Qur'an* were in a month and not over decades, it says its revelation was during the month of Ramadan.

And it tells the believers that the rules concerning fasting also apply to fasting during Ramadan, that God wants them to fast to glorify him thankfully for guiding them, and that the reason for the exceptions is that God wants ease for them and not hardship.

It tells the believers that, because their wives are as close to them as are garments and God, they're permitted to lie with their wives during nights of fasts but not during their devotional retreat in the mosques. And it tells them not to consume their property wrongfully or use it to bribe judges with the sinful intention of consuming parts of others' property, and it tells Muhammad to tell people asking about crescent moons that they show times for people's appointments and for the pilgrimages, and it tells the believers goodness isn't in entering houses by the back and that good persons are mindful of God. It tells them to enter their houses by the door and, to prosper, to be mindful of God.

And it tells them to fight in God's cause against those who fight them. But, telling them not to overstep the limits, it tells them God doesn't love those who overstep the limits, and it tells them not to fight in the sacred mosque, unless those who fight them fight them there. But it tells them, because persecution is more serious than killing, to kill them wherever they encounter them and to drive them from wherever they've been driven by them. That is, it tells them to kill those who fight them. And it says disbelievers deserve that.

Telling them God's forgiving and merciful, it tells them to stop fighting if the disbelievers stop fighting, but it tells them to fight them until persecution ends with worship devoted to God, and it tells them hostility can't continue after the aggressors' hostility ends.



It also tells them not to contribute to their own destruction by their own hands, and it includes in behavior it forbids during pilgrimages indecent speech and quarreling, and it gives other rules concerning pilgrimages and fasting, but it asserts some exceptions to the rules. It says those who ask God to give them good in this world will have no share in the hereafter but that those who pray for good both in this world and in the hereafter and pray for protection from the restraint of the fire will have the share for which they've worked. And it says seeking bounty from God isn't an offense, but it tells the believers to enter wholeheartedly into submission to God.

And it tells Muhammad to ask the children of Israel how many clear signs God brought them. It tells him that, if anyone alters God's blessings after receiving them, God's stern in punishment, that the life of this world is made to seem glamorous to disbelievers, and that they laugh at the believers. And it tells him that, on the day of resurrection, those who are mindful of God will be above those disbelievers.

It says that, before God sent prophets to bring good news and warning and sent with the prophets the scripture with the truth to judge between people disagreeing, humanity was a single community. It says that only those to whom the scripture was given disagreed about it, and it says the cause of that disagreement was rivalry between them after clear signs had come to them, but it says God guided the believers to the truth about which they'd differed. And it says God guides to a straight path whomever he will.

But, asking Muhammad whether he supposes he'll enter the garden before suffering the misery and hardship those before him suffered, it tells him that, while he doesn't like fighting, it's ordained for him and is good for him, that God knows while Muhammad doesn't, and that the disbelievers won't stop fighting before they've made him revoke his faith.

And it tells the believers that, if they revoke their faith, their deeds will come to nothing, either in this world or in the hereafter. And it tells them those who've believed, migrated, and struggled for God's cause can expect God's mercy. And the Arabic word meaning "struggle" in this context is "*jihad*".

This *surah* tells Muhammad that great sin and some benefit for people is in intoxicants and gambling but that the sin is greater than the benefit. It tells him to tell people asking him how much to give to give what they can spare, to tell people asking him about orphans that setting things right for them is good, and to tell them to remember that orphans are their brothers and sisters and that God knows who spoils things and who improves things. And it tells him God could have made him vulnerable also.

It tells the believer not to marry idolaters until they believe, not to give their women to idolaters for marriage, and that, while idolaters may please them,

believing slaves are better than idolaters. It tells Muhammad to tell people asking him about menstruation that it's painful and to keep away from women during it, but it also tells him to tell them their wives are their fields. And it tells him to tell the believers to go into their fields in whatever way they wish.

And, telling believers not to allow their oaths in God's name to hinder their doing good, it tells them God will call them to account for what they mean in their hearts but not for what they say unintentionally. And, concerning divorce, it directs, for those swearing not to approach their wives, a waiting period of four months, and it directs remembering, if they go back from divorce, that God's merciful. And it says divorced women, if they believe in God and the last day, must wait three months before remarrying.

It says concealing what God has created in their wombs is unlawful, that, if they wish to make things right, their husbands might well take them back during the waiting period, and that husbands and wives have reciprocal responsibilities in that regard. It says that, if they do it before the woman marries and divorces another man, husbands and wives may divorce one another lawfully twice. And it says those are the bounds God sets.

It forbids believers, if their intent is to harm women, from holding onto them after the waiting period, and, permitting mothers to suckle children for two years, it requires fathers or their heirs to provide clothing and financial support, but it permits engaging a wetnurse if the couple agrees on how to pay for it.

It also stipulates that widows wait four months and ten days before remarrying, and it permits believers to divorce before consummating marriages. And it requires them to provide for the woman, if they haven't decided on a bride gift, and to give the woman half of the bride gift, if they have. But it says waiving that right is nearer to godliness.

And it also requires believers who die and leave widows to bequest to their widows a year's maintenance in their home, but it permits the widow to leave the home of her own will, and next it says more of fighting.

Telling Muhammad to consider some people who abandoned their homeland in fear of death, it says God told them to die and that he resurrected them, though they were thousands. It doesn't say who those people were or what their homeland was, but next, telling Muhammad to fight in God's cause, it says God will repay many times those who give God a good loan. And it tells Muhammad that God both withholds and abundantly gives and that Muhammad will return to God.

And next this *surah* mixes several comparable stories from the *Miqra*.

Telling Muhammad to consider the children of Israel, their being driven from their homeland, and their promising to fight but refusing to fight, it says they have more right to rule than has Talut, the king their prophet said God

appointed for them, that the prophet of the children of Israel told them a sign of his authority would be the ark carried by angels, and that relics of Moses and Aaron were in the ark.

*Talut* is the Arabic name for Saul, but the Qur'an provides no name for Samuel, and presumably the angels carrying the ark are the two gold cherubim the *Torah* says spread their wings over the place of the ark of the covenant. And this *surah* also mixes the story of David and Goliath with the story of Gideon and the men lapping water, refers to Jesus in the context of Israelites fighting one another as the *Miqra* says Saul and David did, and says God favors some messengers above others. And it mentions no contention between Saul and David.

After those stories, this *surah* tells the believers that, with no bargaining, friendship, or intercession, God has provided for them before the coming of the day. It says God never sleeps, that no compulsion is in religion, that true guidance has become distinct from error, and that God brings the believers out of the darkness and into the light. And it says the disbelievers' allies are false gods who take them from the light into the darkness.

And next it tells of a dispute between Abraham and a disbeliever. In it Abraham tells the disbeliever that God gives life and death, and the disbeliever says so can he. And Abraham, saying God brings the sun from the east, tells the disbeliever to bring it from the west, and the disbeliever's dumfounded.

Next it tells Muhammad of God making a man die for a hundred years, resurrecting him, and asking how long he thinks he was that way. The man says he thinks he's been that way a day or less, and God, telling him he's been that way a hundred years, tells him to look at his food and his donkey, and they're as they might have been after a day or less. Then God tells the man to look at the bones and see how he's brought them back together and clothed them with flesh, and the man says that then he knows God has power over all.

And next is a conversation between Abraham and God in which Abraham asks God to show him how he gives life to the dead, and God, telling him to train four birds to return to him and place them on separate hilltops and call them back, says they'll fly back to him and tells him to know God's all powerful and wise.

Next this *surah* says those who spend their wealth in God's cause will have multiple return. But it tells the believers not to cancel their charity by reminders of their benevolence and by hurtful words as do people who spend their wealth only for appearances and don't believe in God and the last day. Saying such people receive no reward for their works, it tells the believers Satan promises the prospect of poverty and commands such people to do foul deeds.

And it says giving openly is good but that giving secretly is better and will atone for bad deeds.

And this *surah* also says those who take usury will rise up like one tormented by the touch of Satan. Saying God allows trade but has forbidden usury, it directs delaying debts for people in difficulty, and it says forgiving debts is better. But it says those who stop their usury may keep their past gains.

It directs, if a scribe is available, putting debts and other trade agreements in writing, and it directs calling two men to witness the transaction. But it permits one man and two women to witness the transaction, with one of the women witnessing it to remind the other if the other forgets, and, if the parties are on a journey, and no scribe is available, it permits collateral in lieu of writing, and it permits guardians to dictate transactions for people mentally unable. And it proscribes scribes' from refusing to write.

And it says the messenger believes in what his lord sent down to him, that the faithful believe in God, his angels, his scriptures, and his messengers and make no distinction between God's messengers, that the faithful hear, obey, and ask their lord to grant them his forgiveness, and that God never burdens a soul with more than it can bear.

And this *surah* closes with a prayer to the faithful's lord. It asks him not to task them for forgetting their mistakes, not to burden them as he burdened their predecessors, and not to burden them more than their strength can bear. And it ends with the believers, after telling the lord he's their protector, asking him to help them against the disbelievers.

The title of the third *surah* is The Family of Imran, and it also begins with the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim*, and it's also a Medina *surah*. Telling Muhammad God has sent the scripture down to him with truth confirming the *Torah* and the Gospel that went before as a guide for people, it says God has sent down the distinction between right and wrong. But it says that, while some of the scripture's verses are definite in meaning and are the mother of the scripture, others are ambiguous. And it says the perverse at heart pursue the ambiguities to make trouble and specify meaning of their own.

It says that neither the disbelievers' possessions nor their children will be of use to them against God and that they'll be fuel for the fire as God punished Pharaoh's people and their predecessor who denied God's revelations. Telling Muhammad to tell the disbelievers they'll be driven together into the foul resting place that's hell and that they've already seen a sign in the two armies meeting in battle, one army fighting for God's cause while the other was made of disbelievers, it says the former saw that the latter was twice its number

but that God helps whom he will. And it says true religion is submission to God.

Telling Muhammad to ask both those who were given the scripture and those with no scripture whether they devote themselves only to God, it says that, if they do, they'll be guided. But, telling Muhammad to turn away if they don't, it says his only duty is to convey the message, and it tells him to give news of agonizing restraint for those who ignore God's revelations. Telling him those who are ignorant say the fire will touch them for but a limited number of days, it says the lies they've invented have led them astray in their own religion. And it says the believers shouldn't make disbelievers, rather than believers, their allies. But it excepts doing that for protection from the disbelievers.

And it says that, over all other people, God chose Adam, Noah, Abraham's family, and the family of Imran, in one line of descent. And that begins a story in which Imran's wife tells God that, if he'll accept it from her, she's dedicated what's growing in her womb entirely to him. And, in the story, when she gives birth, she tells God she's given birth to a girl.

Next this *surah* says males aren't like females and that God knew best to what Imran's wife had given birth, and next in this story she tells God she's naming the child Mary and is commending the child and the child's offspring to God's protection from the rejected Satan, and God accepts the child graciously, makes her grow in goodness, and entrusts her to the charge of Zachariah.

Next this *surah* says that, whenever Zachariah visited Mary in her sanctuary, he found her supplied with provisions. In the story he asks her how, and, replying that the provisions are from God, she says God provides limitlessly for whomever he will. And next this *surah* tells of the birth of John the Baptist and next of the birth of Jesus.

Angels, in this *surah*, tell Zachariah John will be noble, chaste, a prophet, and one of the righteous. And angels tell Mary that God has made her pure and has chosen her above all women, that her child's name will be Messiah and Mary's son Jesus, and that he'll be held in honor in this world and the next. Zachariah asks God how he can have a child when his wife is barren, and Mary asks God how she can have a son when no man has touched her. And God tells Zachariah he does what he will and tells Mary that what he tells to be is.

And the angels tell Mary that God will teach Jesus the *Torah* and the Gospel. They tell her God will send Jesus as a messenger to the children of Israel, that he'll tell them he's come to them with a sign from their lord, and that he'll make from clay the shape of a bird and breathe into it and, with God's permission, make it a bird. And they tell her he'll tell the children of Israel that with God's permission he'll heal the blind and the lepers and bring the dead back to life, that her god will tell the children of Israel what they may eat and

what they may store in their houses, and that, if the children of Israel are believers, a sign is in all that.

This *surah* also says that, when Jesus realized the children of Israel didn't believe, he asked who would help in God's cause. It says the disciples replied that they would, but that the disbelievers schemed, but that God also schemed. And it says God's the best of schemers.

And it says God told Jesus he'd take him back to him, raise him to him, and purify him of the disbelievers, that, until the day of resurrection, he'd make those who follow him superior to the disbelievers, that on that day he'd return him to him and judge between him and the disbelievers, that he'd make the disbelievers suffer in this world and the next, and that no one would help them.

Saying Jesus is like Adam in God's eyes and that God created him from dust and told him to be and that he was, it tells Muhammad to tell the people of the book to let all arrive at a common statement, to ascribe no partner to God, and to worship only him. And, asking the people of the book why they argue about Abraham while the revelation of the *Torah* and the Gospels was after Abraham's time, it tells Muhammad that, were he to entrust some people of the book with a heap of gold, they'd return it intact. But it tells him that, were he to entrust others with one dinar, they'd not return it if he didn't stand over them, and he says that's because they say they're under no obligation to the gentiles.

It says those who sell God's covenant for a small price will have no share in the life to come, that no person to whom God has given the scripture and wisdom and prophethood would tell people to be that person's servants and not God's, and that, because they've taught the scripture and studied it closely, such persons should be devoted to God. Saying God would never command them to take angels or prophets as lords, it asks how, after they've devoted themselves to God, God could command them to be disbelievers. And it says God took a pledge from the prophets.

Saying the pledge was for the people of the book to believe in a messenger confirming the scripture and wisdom after he bestowed it on them, it asks whether they seek anything other than submission to God. It says God doesn't reject people who repent but that God won't accept the repentance of those who, after they repented and believed, increase their disbelief. And it says offering enough gold to fill the earth won't save those who die disbelieving.

Presumably referring to the Kaaba, this *surah* says the first house established for people was the one in Mecca. It says it's a blessed place and a source of guidance for all people, that clear signs are in it, that Abraham stood in it to pray, and that whoever's in it is safe. And it says pilgrimage to it is a duty people able to undertake it owe to God.

And it tells the believers to hold onto God's rope together and not split into factions. It tells them not to be like those who, after being given clear revelations, split into factions and fall into dispute, but to be a community calling for good, urging what's right, and forbidding what's wrong. And it tells the believers they're the best community singled out for people and that believing would have been better for the people of the book.

And it tells the believers that most of the people of the book are lawbreakers. But it tells them the people of the book won't do them much harm, that most of them will turn tail if they come out to fight, and that they'll receive no help. And it says they've drawn God's wrath on them and that, because of their disobedience and boundless transgression, weakness overshadows them, but that some of them are upright and among the righteous and won't be denied for their good deeds. And, exemplifying the *Qur'an's* referring to events in some *surahs* while not further describing them until later *surahs*, this *surah* also tells Muhammad to remember the five thousand swooping angels who helped the believers at the battle of Badr.

And it tells the believers a garden as wide as the heavens and earth is prepared for the righteous. Telling them to travel through the land and see what was the end of those who disbelieved, it asks them whether they thought they'd enter the garden before proving which of them would struggle for God's cause, and, telling them Muhammad's but a messenger, it asks them whether, if Muhammad died or were killed, they'd revert to their old ways. And it says their doing that wouldn't harm God but that he'd reward the grateful.

And it says that, because the disbelievers attribute partners to God, God will strike panic into their hearts. But it tells the believers that, when God brought them in sight of their goal, they faltered and disobeyed while routing the disbelievers with God's permission, that they fled and didn't look back while Muhammad was calling to them from behind them, and that some of them desire the gains of this world while others desire the world to come. And it tells them God punished them by preventing their success but that he's gracious to the believers and has forgiven them, that he calmed them after their sorrow, and that sleep overtook some of them.

And it says some of them told Muhammad that some of them conceal things in their hearts and say none of them would have been killed if Muhammad had listened to them. And it tells Muhammad to tell them their resolving to stay at home wouldn't have kept them from going out to meet their deaths and that Satan caused those who turned away to slip. And it says God will make such thoughts a source of anguish in the disbelievers' hearts.

And, telling Muhammad he was gentle with the faltering believers by an act of mercy from God, it tells him, because they'd have dispersed and left

him if he'd been harsh with them, to pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. And it also says a prophet's dishonestly taking from the battle gains is inconceivable and that anyone who does that will take it with him on the day of resurrection. And it says God's gracious in sending the believers a messenger of their own to recite his revelations.

But, referring again to the fighting, it says those who, after telling Muhammad they'd follow him if they knew fighting would occur, refused to fight, were closer to disbelief than to believing. And it tells Muhammad to tell the believers, when they ask how a calamity befell them after they inflicted twice as much damage on the disbelievers, that they brought it upon themselves. It says that, for God to know which were hypocrites and not believers, it happened with God's permission.

And it says that what those who are miserly with what God has granted them from his grace withhold will be hung around their necks on the day of resurrection, that God hears those who, presumably in response to requests for giving in God's cause, sneer that God is poor while they're rich, and that God will tell them to taste the restraint of the scorching fire.

It tells Muhammad to say, to those who say God commanded them not to believe a messenger who doesn't bring them an offering fire consumes, that the messengers to whom they're referring came to them with clear signs. Telling Muhammad to ask them why they killed them, it says every soul will taste death, that he'll be paid in full on the day of resurrection, and that the present world is only illusory pleasure. And it tells him not to be deceived by disbelievers trading in the land, that their trading is but a brief enjoyment, and that hell will be their home.

The title of the fourth *surah* is Women, and it's also a Medina *surah*. It begins by telling its audience to be mindful of God, who created them from a single soul, created its mate, and from that pair spread countless men and women far and wide, and it tells them to beware of severing the womb relationships.

Next it gives more stipulations concerning orphans. It tells its audience to give them their property, not to replace good things with bad things, and not to consume orphans' property with theirs. And next it gives more marriage stipulations

It tells its audience that, if they fear they won't deal fairly with orphan girls, they may marry up to four women. It tells them, if they feel they can't then be equitable, to marry but one woman or a slave, and it tells them to give women their bridal gift. But it tells them that, if the women are happy to relinquish some of it, they may enjoy it with a clear conscience, and next it tells



people not to entrust their property to the feeble minded but to make provision for them from it. And next it returns more directly to the concerns of orphans.

It tells its audience to test orphans until they reach marriageable age and then, if they find the orphans to have sound judgement, give them their property. It tells its audience not to consume their property hastily, and, saying wealthy guardians should abstain from the orphans' property, it says the poor should use of it only what's fair. And it both tells its audience to call witnesses when they give orphans their property and tells them God takes full account of all they do.

Next it tells them men and women shall have a share in what their parents and closest relatives leave. But it tells them that, if orphans and other relatives and the needy are present at the distribution, they should give something to them also. And it tells them to speak kindly to them.

Next, asking that those who would fear for the future of their own helpless children after their death show that concern to orphans, it tells them that those who consume the property of orphans unjustly are swallowing fire into their own bellies and will burn in the blazing fire, and next it turns to concern for their own children.

It says a son should have the equivalent of the share of two daughters, that, if daughters and no sons remain, two or more daughters should share two thirds of the inheritance, that, if no son remains, an only daughter should receive half, and that, if the decedent leaves children, the parents should receive a sixth. And, listing many other stipulations for inheritance, this *surah* says a law from God is that people can't know which of their parents or children is more beneficial to them and that the stipulations are bounds set by God. But generally the stipulations favor males over females, and this *surah* tells its audience, if their women act lewdly, to keep them at home until they die, or until God shows the women another way.

It tells them to punish both of two men who act lewdly but to leave them alone if they repent and mend their ways, and, while not saying how to punish them, it says repentance isn't true if people don't mend their ways.

It tells believers that inheriting women against their will is unlawful. It tells them that, if their wives aren't guilty of something clearly outrageous, they shouldn't, hoping to retrieve part of the bridal gift they've given them, treat them harshly. And it tells them not to retrieve any of a wife's bridal gift to replace her with another wife.

It tells them not to marry women their fathers have married. It forbids taking wives who are their mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, nieces, milk mothers, women their milk mothers have nursed, their wives' mothers, or stepdaughters in their care. And it forbids their marrying daughters of women

with whom they've consummated marriage, wives of their begotten sons, or their wives' sisters.

Forbidding marrying married women who aren't their slaves, it tells believers to marry a believing slave if they lack the means to marry a free woman and fear that otherwise they'll sin. And it tells them that, if the slave commits adultery during the marriage, her punishment will be half of the punishment of a free woman. But it tells them self-restraint is better for them than marrying a believing slave.

And it tells believers not to consume one another's wealth wrongfully but to trade by mutual consent, and it tells them not to kill one another, and it tells them that, if any of them violates those stipulations from hostility and injustice, God will make them suffer the fire, but it tells them that, if they avoid the great sins they've been forbidden, God will wipe out their minor deeds and let them through the entrance of honor.

It tells them men and women have the portion they've earned. It tells them not to covet that some have more than others but instead to ask God for some of his bounty. And it tells them husbands receiving more than what others receive should care well for their wives with that and with other money they spend, that, in their husbands' absence, righteous wives guard what God would have them guard, and that, if husbands fear high-handedness from their wives, they should remind them, next ignore them in bed, and next hit them.

But it says that, if their wives obey them, they have no right to act against them. And, telling the believers that, if they fear a husband and wife may separate, they should appoint an arbiter from the family of each, it says that then, if the husband and wife wish to put things right, God will bring a reconciliation between them. And it tells them to be good to their parents, their relatives, orphans, persons in need, neighbors near and far, travelers in need, and their slaves. And it says God doesn't like boastful people.

It tells believers, until they know what they're saying, not to approach the prayer intoxicated. It tells them that, if they're ritually impure, they may pass through the mosque before they've bathed but may not then approach the prayer. And it tells them that, if they can't find water and are ill or traveling or have relieved themselves or had sexual intercourse, they should find some clean sand and wipe their faces and hands with it.

It tells the people of the book that God will send to the fire those who reject his revelations, and that, when their skin has burned away, he'll replace it with new skin for them to continue feeling the pain, but that God will send those who believe and do good deeds to gardens graced with flowing streams, where, with pure spouses, they'll remain forever, and that he'll admit those believers to cool refreshing shade.

Telling the believers to refer any dispute among them to God and his messenger, it asks them whether they don't see that those who claim to believe in what was sent down to the believers and in what was sent down before continue to turn to unjust tyrants for judgement, and it tells them that, if disaster strikes those who do that, they'll come to them swearing by God that they only wished to do good and achieve harmony.

It tells Muhammad the hypocrites won't be believers until they let him decide between them in disputes. Telling the believers who restrain themselves from fighting that death will overtake them in high towers or anywhere else they are, it says that, while saying good fortune coming their way comes from God, they say harm befalling them comes from Muhammad. And it tells Muhammad to tell them that both come from God.

But it also tells Muhammad that anything good that happens to him is from God but that anything bad that happens to him is from himself. And, while saying that whoever obeys the messenger obeys God, it tells Muhammad that God didn't send him to be anyone's keeper and that he'll never find the way for a person if God leads the person astray, and it says Muhammad's responsible only for himself. And it says that, if anyone other than God had sent the Qur'an, people would have found much inconsistency in it.

It tells the believers to respond to a greeting by returning it or by responding with a better one, but it tells Muhammad to take no hypocrites as allies, until they migrate to Medina for God's cause. And it tells him to seize and kill, wherever he encounters them, those who turn on him, but it tells him God gives him no way against those who seek refuge with people with whom he has a treaty or against those who come to him because their heart shrinks from fighting against him or their own people. It tells him that, if they offer him peace, withdraw, and don't fight, God could have given them power over him, and that then they'd have fought him.

And next it gives more rules concerning killing. It says the punishment for anyone who kills a believer deliberately is hell. It forbids that a believer kill a believer, but it says the punishment for doing it by mistake is to free a Muslim slave and, unless they charitably forgo payment, to compensate the victim's relatives. And it says the same of victims of people with whom the Muslims have a treaty, but it says the punishment for a killer who lacks the means to do that is fasting for two consecutive months. And it says that, if the victim is of people at war with believers, the punishment is only to free a believing slave.

And it says that accordingly one should be careful while fighting in God's way, and, forbidding responding to an offering of a greeting of peace by telling the person, in the hope of the chance of gains in this life, that he's not a

believer, it tells the believers God has plenty of gains for them and that they were in the same position as those offering the greeting.

And it says that, when angels take people who didn't migrate to Medina, they'll ask them what were their circumstances, that they'll ask those who say they were oppressed whether God's earth wasn't spacious enough for them to migrate, and that hell will be the refuge of those who were able to migrate but didn't.

It tells believers to take turns while praying. It directs that some pray while others keep their weapons with them and stand in the back to guard those praying and their weapons. And it tells Muhammad not to be an advocate for those who betray trust and not to argue for those who betray their own souls. And it tells him that, but for God's grace and mercy, he'd be a partisan of those who've tried to lead him astray.

And this *surah* says God doesn't forgive those who worship anyone other than him but that he forgives whom he will for lesser sins, and it says idolaters invoke only females and Satan in God's place. And it lists some promises it says Satan has made and includes in the list that Satan would take his share of God's servants and command them to slit the ears of cattle. Presumably that's a pagan rite.

And, asking who could do better in religion than to direct himself wholly to God and follow the religion of Abraham, it says Abraham was true and faithful and that God took him as a friend.

Next it repeats some of what it's said of women, and next it tells Muhammad that, however much he wishes to, he'll never be able to treat his wives with equal fairness, but next it tells him not to leave any one of his wives in suspense by completely ignoring her, and next it tells him that, if a husband and wife separate, God, from his bounty, will provide for both.

Next, asking the believers whether those who ally themselves with disbelievers but not with believers seek power from the disbelievers, it tells them that all power is God's to give. Saying that, if they sit with people they hear denying and ridiculing God's revelation, they'll become like disbelievers, it tells them not to sit with those people unless they start to talk of other matters. And it tells them God has already revealed that to them, that God bears witness to what he's sent down to them, and that the angels also bear witness to it. But it says God is sufficient witness.

Telling the people of the book not to go to excess in their religion and to say of God only truth, it says that, for the wrong behavior of the Jews, God forbade them things he'd previously permitted them, and the behavior it mentions includes worshipping the calf, slandering Mary, and saying they'd killed the messiah, the messenger of God, Mary's son Jesus. It says they neither

killed Jesus nor crucified him and that those events were but made to appear to them to have occurred. But it also tells the people of the book that Jesus was nothing more than a messenger of God. It says he was but God's word, a spirit from him directed to Mary.

And, telling them to believe in God and his messengers and stop speaking of a trinity, it says God's but one god and is far above having a son. It says neither the messiah nor the angels close to God would disdain being a servant of God's, that God will gather to him all who disdain his worship and are arrogant, and that he'll give them agonizing restraint. And it says God will give due rewards and his bounty to those who believe and do good works.

And at the end of this *surah* are stipulations for inheritance from one who dies childless and parentless. Generally the stipulations require twice as much for brothers than for sisters, and it tells Muhammad that people ask him about that and that, for him not to make mistakes, God makes the stipulations clear. And it closes by saying again that God has full knowledge of all.

The title of the fifth *surah* is The Feast, and it's also a Medina *surah*. It forbids allotting shares by drawing marked arrows, but, beyond saying that's heinous, it doesn't say why. And it also forbids killing game while on pilgrimage, and, if the believer doesn't also slaughter it, it forbids eating any animal that's strangled, is a victim of a violent blow or a fall, or is gored or savaged by a beast of prey.

But it says God's merciful and that, if believers have no intention of doing wrong, and hunger forces them, he's forgiving of eating forbidden food. And it tells them that, if they pronounce God's name over what they've taught their birds of prey to catch, as God has taught them to teach the birds, eating it's lawful. And it tells them the food of the people of the book is lawful for the believers and that the believers' food is lawful for the people of the book.

And it says the same of chaste women, if either the believers or the people of the book give them their bridal gifts and marry them, and if they don't make them paramours or secret mistresses.

It tells the believers, when they're about to pray, to wash their hands to their elbows, to wash their feet to their ankles, and to wipe their heads, and, when they can, also to wash their whole bodies with water, or, when they can find no water, with clean sand.

And it says God took a pledge from the children of Israel, made twelve leaders arise among them, and told them that, if they keep up the prayer, pay the prescribed alms, believe in his messengers, support them, and lend God a good loan, he's with them and will admit them into gardens graced with flowing streams. But it says they broke their pledge, that God distanced himself from

them and hardened their hearts, and that they distort the meaning of words and forget some of what they were told to remember. And it tells Muhammad he'll always find treachery in all but a few of them, but it tells him to overlook that and pardon them.

Next it says God also took a pledge from those who say they're Christians, that they also forgot some of what they were told to remember, that accordingly God stirred up enmity and hatred among them until the day of resurrection, and that then God will tell them what they've done.

And, telling the people of the book that God's messenger has come to overlook much but to make clear to them much of the scripture they've kept hidden, it tells them a light and a scripture have come to them from God to make things clear and guide them by his will on a straight path.

Saying those who say God's the messiah who's the son of Mary defy the truth, it tells Muhammad to ask whether anyone could have prevented God from destroying the messiah and his mother and everyone else on earth, if he'd wished. And, saying the Jews and the Christians say they're the children of God and are his loved ones, it tells Muhammad to ask them why, if that's true, God punishes them for their sins. And it tells the people of the book that, after a break in the sequence of messengers, God's messenger has come to them to make things clear for them.

Next it tells a version of the story of Moses sending the two spies into the land of Canaan in which, suggesting that Samuel preceded Moses, it says Moses told his people to remember how God raised prophets among them and appointed kings for them.

Next it tells Muhammad to tell the people of the book the truth about the story of Adam's two sons. But, in this version, one threatens to kill the other, and the other replies that God accepts the sacrifice of only those who are mindful of him. And it says God sent a raven to scratch up the ground to show the killer how to cover his brother's corpse.

And, saying that, because of that event, God decreed that killing a person, if it isn't retribution for murder or for spreading corruption in the land, is like killing all mankind, it says saving a life is like saving all mankind and that those who wage war against God and his messenger and try to spread corruption in the land should be punished by death, crucifixion, amputation of an alternate hand and foot, or banishment from the land.

And, saying that, if the disbelievers have three times all that's in earth and offer it to ransom themselves from the restraint on the day resurrection, it won't be accepted from them, it says their restraint will last. And next it directs punishing both male and female thieves by amputating their hands. But it says God will accept repenting and making amends.

While saying God prescribed in the *Torah* a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for tooth, and an equal wound for a wound, it says forgoing that from charity will serve as atonement for one's bad deeds.

And, while saying that, to confirm the *Torah*, God gave Mary's son Jesus the Gospel, it tells Muhammad that God sent Muhammad the scripture with the truth confirming with final authority the scriptures that came before it. And it tells him God has assigned a law and a path to all people and that he could have made all of them one community but wished to test them through what he's given them. And it says that accordingly all should race to do good, that all shall return to God, and that God will make clear to them the matters about which they've differed.

But it tells the believers not to take Jews and Christians as their allies. It says they're allies only to one another and that anyone who takes them as an ally becomes one of them. And it tells the believers God will replace, with people he loves and who love him, any believers who revoke their faith.

Asking why the rabbis and scholars of the people of the book don't forbid the people of the book from speaking sinfully and consuming what's unlawful, it says that, while God's hands are wide open, the Jews are tight-fisted and have said God's tight-fisted. And it says God has sown enmity and discord among the Jews until the day of resurrection. But it says that, when they kindle the fire of war, God will extinguish it.

It says that, were the people of the book to believe and be mindful of God, God would take away their sins and bring them into the gardens of delight. And it says that, had they upheld the *Torah*, the Gospel, and what was sent down from their lord, they'd have been given abundance from above and below. But it says again that, while many of them do evil, some are on the right path.

And, saying again that those who say God's the messiah, the son of Mary, defy God, it says the messiah told the children of Israel to worship God, that he called God his lord and theirs, that people saying God's the third of three are defying, and that both the Messiah and his mother ate food as do humans.

But it says that, because they persisted in overstepping limits and didn't forbid one another to do wrong, the children of Israel who defied were rejected through the words of David and of Mary's son Jesus. And it tells Muhammad he'll find that those who are most hostile to the believers are Jews and those who associate other deities with God, and it tells him that, because among those who say they're Christians are ascetics and people devoted to learning, he'll find them to be closest in affection to the believers. And it tells him they aren't given to arrogance and that, because, when they listen to what's been sent down to him, they recognize the truth, he'll see their eyes overflowing with tears.

And it says that, telling their lord they believe, they'll ask him to include them in the company of the righteous, that, for their saying that, God has rewarded them with gardens graced with flowing streams where they'll stay, that that's the reward for doing good, and that those who reject the truth and deny God's messages will inhabit hell fire.

It also tells believers that the atonement for breaking an oath is to feed ten poor people with the equivalent of what they normally feed their families, or to clothe them, or to free a slave. But it permits the believers, if they lack the means to perform any of those alternatives, instead to fast for three days. And it says seafood is an exception to the stipulation against killing game while on pilgrimage.

Perhaps alluding to Jesus' last supper, it says Jesus' disciples asked him whether, for them to eat from it to have their hearts reassured that he's told them the truth, his lord could send down to them a feast from heaven for them to be witness to it. It says that Jesus, for him and his disciples to have their first and last festival, asked God to send down a feast from heaven and send down a sign, and it says God said he'd send it down but that anyone who disbelieved after that would be punished by a punishment he wouldn't inflict on anyone else in the world. But next it says that, when God asks Mary's son Jesus whether he told people to take him and his mother as gods beside God, Jesus will ask that God be exalted and will tell him he'd never have said anything he had no right to say. It says he'll tell God that God would know if he had, that God knows all that's in him while he doesn't know all that's in God, and that he told people only what God commanded people to tell them. And it says he'll tell God he told them to worship his lord and theirs, God.

The sixth *surah* is a Mecca *surah*, and its title is Livestock. Asking whether the disbelievers don't know how many generations God destroyed before them, it says God established the previous generations more firmly on earth, sent down abundant rain, and made rivers flow at their feet, but that he destroyed them for their misdeeds and raised other generations after them. And it tells Muhammad that, had God sent him a book written on parchment, the disbelievers would say it's only sorcery.

It tells him they'd ask him why no angel was sent down to support him, that, if God had sent down an angel, judgement of them would have been immediate with no respite, that, had God sent down an angel as a messenger, he'd have sent him in the form of a man, and that doing that would increase their confusion, and, telling him messengers were mocked before he was mocked and that the mockers were engulfed in the punishment they mocked, it tells him to



tell the disbelievers to travel through the earth and see what befell those who rejected the truth.

It says God knows what we've done in the daytime, calls souls back at night, and raises them up again in the daytime until our fixed term is fulfilled, that God sends out recorders to watch us until they take our souls when death takes us, and that then we'll all be returned to God.

And, telling Muhammad to remember when Abraham asked his father how he could take idols as gods, it says Abraham told his father he saw that all his people had gone astray. And it says that, by Abraham's seeing a star and the moon and the sun, God showed Abraham God's mighty dominion over the heavens and the earth. And it says that, when Abraham saw a star when the night grew dark over him, he said it was his lord.

But it says that, when the star set, he said he didn't like things that set, that, when he saw the moon rising, he said the moon was his lord, that, when the moon set, he said that, if his lord wouldn't guide him, he'd be one of those who go astray, and that, when he saw the sun rising, he said it was greater and was his lord.

But it says that, when the sun set, he told his people he disowned all of them who were worshiping others besides God, that he'd turned his face as a true believer to the creator of the heavens and the earth, and that he wasn't one of the polytheists.

But it says Abraham's people argued with him, that he told them those who have faith and don't mix it with idolatry will be secure and are rightly guided, and that such was the argument God gave Abraham against his people.

And it says God gave Isaac and Jacob to Abraham and guided them as he'd guided Noah, that among Abraham's descendants were David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron, and that, in that way, God rewards those who do good. And it says Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elijah were righteous, that God also favored Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah, and Lot over other people, and that he also favored some of their forefathers, offspring, and brothers. But it tells the people of the book that they hid parts of the scripture they received.

Asking how one can turn from the truth, it asks who could be more wicked than a person who lies against God, claims that a revelation not sent to him has come to him, or says he can reveal something equal to God's revelation. And, saying God splits open the seeds and the fruit stones, brings the living from the dead, and brings the dead from the living, it says those are signs, but it says that, though God created the jinn, people made the jinn partners with God. And it also says God assigned to each prophet enemies, evil humans or evil jinn.

The jinn are a kind of people in Arabic myth, and this *surah* also says disbelievers call the *Qur'an* ancient fables. And, saying people attribute sons

and daughters to God, it asks how God could have children when he has no spouse, created all things, and knows all. And, to keep disbelievers from reviling God, it forbids believers from reviling what disbelievers call on besides God. And it tells people the word of their lord is true and complete in its justice and that no one can change God's words.

It says evil ones incite their followers to argue with them, that, when God wishes to guide people, he opens their breasts to Islam, that, when he wishes to lead people astray, he closes and constricts their breasts as though they were climbing to the sky, and that, in that way, God makes disbelievers' foulness rebound against them.

It says that, on the day God gathers everyone together and tells the company of jinn they've seduced many humans, the jinn's human adherents will tell God that they and the jinn have profited from one another but that the time God decreed for them has come, that God will reply that the home of both is the fire and that, if he doesn't will otherwise, they'll remain there, and that God in that way makes some evildoers have power over others through their misdeeds, and, asking the company of jinn and humans whether God didn't send messengers from among them to recite his revelations and warn them of that day, it says they'll reply that they testify against themselves.

It says evildoers apportion to God a share of the produce and livestock he created, that they say a portion is for God while a portion is for their idols, and that, while idols' portion doesn't reach God, God's portion reaches their idols. And it says that, in that way, their idols have induced many pagans to kill their own children, and that doing that brings them ruin and confusion in their faith, but that, if God had willed otherwise, they wouldn't have done that. And it tells Muhammad to leave them to their devices.

Saying evildoers also exempt some livestock from labor and don't pronounce God's name over some and that God will repay them for the falsehoods they invent, it says evildoers say the contents of those animals' wombs are reserved for men and not for women but that men and women may share it if it's stillborn. And it says those who, from folly and with no basis, kill their children, forbidding in ignorance what God has provided for them and making lies about him, are lost. It says that, heeding no guidance, they've gone far astray.

Saying God produces trellised gardens and gardens not trellised, listing various kinds of produce, and telling people to eat some of it but not to be wasteful, it says God doesn't like wasteful people. But, saying God also provides, as beasts of burden and as food, livestock both male and female, it tells people to eat what God has provided and not to follow in the footsteps of Satan. And it calls Satan their sworn enemy.

It says that, excepting what's on their backs and in their intestines and what sticks to their bones, God forbade Jews animals with claws and the fat of cattle and sheep, but it says God did that to penalized them for their disobedience. And it says idolaters say that neither they nor their fathers would have ascribed partners to God, but that, if God had willed that they not do that, they wouldn't have declared anything forbidden. And it tells Muhammad to tell them to bring witnesses to testify that God forbade all that.

And, also telling him to tell them what God forbids, it includes in the list killing their children from fear of poverty and tells him to tell them God will provide for them and their children. And it tells them, excepting by right, not to take the life God has made sacred. But it doesn't say by what right.

And it tells Muhammad to have no interaction with those who've divided their religion into factions.

The title of the seventh *surah* is The Heights. It's a Mecca *surah* beginning with the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim Sad*. And it asks how many towns God has destroyed.

It says God's punishment came on the towns at night or while they slept in afternoons and that their only cry when the punishment came was of how wrong they were. It says God will question both the messengers and those to whom he sent them, that he'll tell them what they did, that the weighing of deeds on that day will be true and just, that those whose good deeds are heavy on the scales will prosper, and that those whose good deeds are light shall have lost their souls through their rejection of God's messages. And it elaborates on the story of Iblis refusing to bow to Adam.

It says Iblis told God he'd lie in wait for those on God's straight path and that God would find most of them ungrateful. And, saying that, when their nakedness was exposed to them, Adam and his wife put together leaves from the garden to hide it, it tells the children of Adam that God has given them garments to hide their nakedness and for adornment but that the garment of consciousness of God is the best garment. And, telling them not to let Satan's causing them to leave the garden and stripping them of their garments similarly seduce them, it tells them to eat and drink and dress well when they're at worship. But, saying God doesn't like extravagant people, it tells them not to be extravagant.

But, telling Muhammad to ask who's forbidden the adornment and nourishment God has provided for his servants, it tells him to say they're for those who believe in this world and that they'll be theirs on the day of resurrection. And it says that, when the angels arrive to take the children of Adam back to God and ask the disbelievers where are those on whom they called besides God, they'll say they've deserted them, and it says every such

crowd of jinn and humans will curse its fellow crowd as it enters the fire and that they'll tell God the other crowds led them astray and tell him to give the others double punishment. But, saying God will tell them that all of them will have double punishment, it say the first to enter will tell the last that they were no better and will tell them to taste the punishment they've earned.

And it says that, were a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, those who rejected and arrogantly spurned God's revelations wouldn't enter the garden. It says a barrier will divide the two groups, that men on the heights of the barrier will recognize each group by their marks, and that they'll call peace to the people in the garden, see the people of the fire, and ask God not to let them join the evildoers. And it says they'll ask the evildoers they recognize by their marks what use were their great numbers and false pride and whether the other group is the people they swore God would never bless.

It says the people of the fire will call to the people of the garden and ask them to give them some water or some of the sustenance God has granted them and that the people of the garden will tell the people of the fire that God has forbidden both to the disbelievers who took their religion as a distraction and a game and were deluded by worldly life.

It says that, as, denying his revelations, they ignored their meeting with him that day, God will ignore them, that, on the day on which the scripture is fulfilled, those who ignored it will say their lord's messenger spoke the truth, and that they'll ask whether anyone can intercede for them then and whether they can be sent back to behave differently than they had, but that they'll have squandered their souls and that all they invented will have deserted them.

This *surah* also says Noah told his people to serve God, that they had no other god, that he feared for their punishment on a fearsome day, that their leaders told him they believed he was far astray, that Noah told them he wasn't astray, was a messenger from God, and knew things from God they didn't know, that they called Noah a liar, and that God saved him and those with him on the ark and drowned those who rejected God's revelations and were willfully blind.

And it says God sent to the people of Ad their brother Hud, that, in a conversation similar to Noah's with his people, Hud told the people of Ad to remember how, after Noah's people increased their stature, God made them heirs, but that God also destroyed the people of Ad who denied his revelations and wouldn't believe.

It says the leaders of the people of Thamud had a similar conversation with their brother Salih and that Salih, telling them a she camel was a sure sign from God, to let her graze, and that they'd be struck by a painful restraint if they harmed her, told them to remember God made them heirs of the people of Ad and settled them in the land to build themselves castles on the plains and carve

houses from the mountains. And it says those leaders asked the people whether they believed Salih, that the people said they did but that the leaders hamstringed the camel, that an earthquake seized them, and that, by the next morning, they were lying dead in their homes. And it says that Salih, telling his people he'd given them sincere advice but that they didn't like those who gave sincere advice, turned away.

And next this *surah* says Lot asked his people how they could practice the outrage of lusting after men rather than women. It says their response was to direct one another to drive from the city men who wished to keep themselves chaste. And it says God showered on them a rain but saved Lot and his kin, apart from Lot's wife, who stayed behind.

And next it says God sent to the people of Midian their brother Shu'ayb. It says Shu'ayb told them to give full measure and weight, not to undervalue people's goods, not to cause corruption in the land after it's been set in order, not to sit in every pathway, and not to threaten and bar from God's way those who believe in God, and it says he told them to remember when they were few and that God made them multiply. And, saying Shu'ayb spoke as it says other messengers spoke to their people, it says the leaders and others of Midian responded as other leaders and people had responded to messengers, and it says an earthquake seized them also.

But it doesn't say what Moses did to the Midianites, and it doesn't say the *Torah* says Midian was as much a son of Abraham's as were Ishmael and Isaac, and it doesn't mention Balaam.

But it says that, whenever God sent a prophet to a city, he afflicted its people with hardships and suffering for them to humble themselves. And it says that then God changed their hardship into prosperity until they multiplied, but that they responded by saying hardship and affluence also had befallen their forefathers, and that then God took them suddenly with no warning. And it says that, had the people of those cities believed and been mindful of God, God would have showered them with blessings from the heavens and the earth, but that, because they rejected the truth, he punished them for their misdeeds.

And, saying that only the losers feel secure against God's plan and that, after God destroyed those other people, he sent Moses to Pharaoh, it tells a version of the story of Moses and the snakes and the sorcerers.

In this version, the sorcerers fall to their knees and say they believe in the lord of the worlds, the lord of Moses and Aaron. And Pharaoh, asking the sorcerers how they dared to believe in God before he gave them permission, tells them he'll amputate their alternative hands and feet and crucify them. And, replying that Pharaoh's only grievance against them is that they believed in the

signs of their lord, they tell him they pray to God for God to pour steadfast devotion on them and let them die in devotion to God.

Then Pharaoh tells the leaders of his people that, sparing only the females, he'll kill Moses' people's children. And Moses' people tell Moses they've been persecuted since long before he came and that they're also persecuted since he came. And Moses tells them that, to see how they behave, God may destroy their enemy and make them successors to the land.

And next this *surah* says that, for Pharaoh's people to heed, God inflicted years of drought and crop failure on them, but that they said good things coming to them were their due while evil things coming to them were because of Moses and those with him.

And next in this *surah* is a version of the story of the plagues. In this version, not only does God drown Pharaoh's people in the sea for not heeding the plagues after breaking their promises during each plague to release the people if they'd end the plague, but also he destroys what Pharaoh's people were building. And next is a version of the story of Moses receiving the commandments on Mount Sinai, and it varies from the *Torah* in many ways.

One of the ways is God's response to Moses' asking to see him. God, replying that he never shall and telling him to look at the mountain, says he'll see God if the mountain stands firm, and then God reveals himself to the mountain. And the mountain crumbles with the revelation, and Moses falls unconscious, and, when Moses recovers, he calls for glory to God and tells God he turns to him in repentance.

And he also tells God he's the first to believe, and God, replying that he's raised him above other people, tells him to hold onto what he's given to him, to be one of those giving thanks, to hang on to the tablets firmly, and to teach his people to hold fast to their excellent teachings. And, also in this version, when Moses sees the people worshiping the golden calf, after throwing down the tablets, he seizes Aaron by his hair, and Aaron tells Moses the people overpowered him and nearly killed him. And, mixing that story with the story of Moses' father-in-law advising him to appoint judges, it says that when Moses's anger abated he chose seventy men for God's appointment.

Also in this *surah*, saying he'll ordain his mercy for those who follow the unlettered prophet they find described in the *Torah* and the Gospels, God tells Muhammad to tell his people to follow God's messenger who's the unlettered prophet who believes in God and his words.

And, in another version of the story of Moses striking the rock for water and the twelve springs gushing out, this *surah* says God divided into twelve tribes a group of Moses' people who guided truth and acted justly in accordance with truth.

In no instance does the *Qur'an* indicate that the children of Israel were the twelve tribes of Israel, that they descended from the twelve sons of Israel, or that Jacob was Israel. But in this *surah* God tells Muhammad to ask the twelve tribes how, when fish surfaced for them only on the sabbath, the people of a town by the sea broke the sabbath. And it says that, when they persisted in doing what they'd been forbidden to do, God told them to be like outcast apes.

And it says God dispersed them over the earth into separate communities, that some were more righteous than others, that, for them to return, God tested them with blessings and misfortunes, but that they took the fleeting gains of the lower world and said they'd be forgiven, and that, when God made a mountain loom over them as a shadow, he told them when they thought it would fall on them to hold fast to what he'd given them.

And, telling Muhammad that people ask him when the hour will happen, it tells him to tell them that only God knows and that only he will reveal when its momentous time will come. And it says God created all from one soul, that he made its mate for it to find comfort in her, and that, when one lies with one's wife, and she conceives a light burden and goes about freely and grows heavy, both pray to God and tell him that, if he gives them a good child, they'll be grateful. But it says that, if he does, they ascribe to others some of what God has given them.

And, telling Muhammad that, when he doesn't bring the followers of devils a fresh revelation, believers ask him whether he can't just ask for one, it tells him to reply that he only repeats what's revealed to him from his lord and that it brings guidance and mercy to those who believe, and it tells him to tell them, for them to be given mercy, to pay attention when the *Qur'an* is recited and to listen quietly.

The eighth *surah* is a Medina *surah*, and its title is Battle Gains. Telling Muhammad that people ask him about battle gains, it tells him to tell them they're a matter for God and his messenger and to tell them, if they're true believers, to obey God and his messenger.

This *surah* also tells Muhammad that God made him venture from home for a true purpose, and, referring to the battle of Badr, it tells him God told him he'd put terror into the hearts of the disbelievers and that, because they opposed God and his messenger, he told him to strike above their necks and strike their fingertips.

Telling the believers never in battle to turn their backs on the disbelievers, it tells them that not they but God killed the disbelievers. And, telling Muhammad his throwing sand at the disbelievers wasn't his throw but God's to favor the believers, it says God will weaken the disbelievers' designs.

And, saying the worst creatures in God's eyes are those who are deaf and dumb and don't use their reason, it tells the believers to know God comes between a man and his heart.

And it also tells them to remember that, when they were few and victimized in the land, God sheltered and strengthened them and provided them with good things for their gratitude, and it tells them to be aware that their possessions and children are only a test and that a tremendous reward is with God. And it says that, when God's revelation was recited to disbelievers, they told him to rain stones on them from heaven if it's true or to send some other painful punishment. And it tells Muhammad that God wouldn't send punishment on them while Muhammad's in their midst.

Asking why God shouldn't punish people who, when they're not the guardians of the sacred mosque, bar people from it, it says that only those mindful of God are its rightful guardians and that most of the disbelievers' prayers before the Kaaba are but whistling and clapping.

It tells the believers to know a fifth of their battle gains belongs to God and the messenger, close relatives, orphans, the needy, and travelers. It gives more details of the battle of Badr, of the cowardice of hypocrites in it, and of the will of God and how God determined the believers' behavior. And it says the disbelievers were like Pharaoh's people.

It says the worst creatures in God's sight are those who reject him, won't believe, and, because they have no fear of God, break treaties with Muhammad. It tells Muhammad, because God doesn't love the treacherous, to throw treaties back into the faces of people he learns are treacherous. And, for them to take heed, it tells him to make, when he meets them in battle, a fearsome example of them.

Telling the believers to muster war horses and any other forces they can, it tells them they should do that to frighten away God's enemies and theirs and to warn others not known to them but known to God, but it tells Muhammad to put his trust in God and incline toward peace with people who incline toward peace while urging the believers to fight. It says steadfast believers will overcome ten times their number, that God knows weakness is in them, that he's lightened the believers' burden for them, and that, by God's permission, they'll defeat twice their number. And, returning to the question of battle gains, this *surah* says a prophet's taking captives before conquering a battlefield isn't right.

Saying people desire the transient goods of this world while God desires the hereafter, it says that, if God hadn't preordained it, a severe punishment would have come upon the people for what they'd taken. And it tells Muhammad to tell the captives that, if God knows of any good in their hearts, he'll forgive them and give them something better than what's been



taken from them. But, telling him God has given him mastery over them, it says they've betrayed God before.

Returning to the question of alliance and saying allies are believers who emigrated and struggled for God's cause with their possessions and persons and those who gave refuge and help, it tells Muhammad that, until the emigration of those who believed but didn't emigrate, if they don't seek his help against persecution, he's not responsible for protecting them, but it says that, excepting against people with whom Muhammad has a treaty, if they seek his help against persecution, assisting them is his duty.

And it says disbelievers support one another and that, if believers don't do the same, persecution and great corruption will be in the land. And it tells Muhammad that those who came to believe later and emigrated and struggled beside him are part of him. But it says that, in God's scripture, relatives have prior claim over one another.

Repentance is the title of the ninth *surah*, and it's the only *surah* not beginning with the first verse of the first *surah*. It's a Medina *surah* and begins by announcing to the believers a release by God and his messenger from a treaty they made with the idolaters. It tells the idolaters they may freely move about the land for four months but that they should bear in mind that they'll not escape God and that God will disgrace those who defy him.

It says that, on the day of the great pilgrimage, a proclamation of the release from the treaty will be from God and his messenger to all people. Telling the idolaters that better for them would be to repent, it tells them to know they can't escape God by turning away and to warn those who ignore him that they'll have a painful punishment. And it tells the believers, for those who honor the treaty, to fulfil their agreement to the end of its term.

But it tells Muhammad to kill the idolaters after the end of the four months and to seize them, besiege them, and wait for them at every outpost. But it tells him to hear the word of God and grant protection to those who seek protection. And it tells him to take them then to a place safe for them.

It also asks how idolaters who have no knowledge of the word of God could have a treaty with God and his messenger. But, before saying the idolaters were the aggressors and further deprecating them, it tells Muhammad to be true, as long as they remain true to him, to those who made a treaty at the sacred mosque. But it also asks how one couldn't fight a people who's broken its oaths, tried to drive out the messenger, and attacked him first.

Saying idolaters' tending to God's place of worship while testifying to their disbelief isn't right, it asks idolaters whether they consider giving water to pilgrims and tending to the sacred mosque to be equal to the deeds of those who

believe in God and the last day and strive in God's path, and it answers that they're not equal in God's eyes and that God doesn't guide such benighted people.

It tells the believers, if their fathers and brothers prefer disbelief to faith, not to take them as allies. It tells Muhammad to tell them, if their fathers, sons, brothers, wives, the wealth they've acquired, the trade they fear will decline, and the dwellings they love, are dearer to them than God and his messenger, to wait until God brings his punishment. And, saying God doesn't guide those who break away, it tells the believers God has helped them on many battlefields. And it refers to the battle of Hunayn.

It tells the believers their large number pleased them there but did them no good. It says they turned tail and fled, but that God sent calm down to them and his messenger and sent down invisible forces, and that God punished the disbelievers. And it tells them God turns in his mercy to whom he will.

And next this *surah* tells the believers that those who ascribe partners to God are unclean and, after that year, not to let them come near the sacred mosque. And it tells them the Jews said Ezra's the son of God but that the Christians said the messiah's the son of God. And it says they take their rabbis, monks, and Mary's son Jesus as lords.

It tells the believers that many rabbis and monks wrongfully consume people's possessions and turn people away from God's path. It tells Muhammad to tell those who hoard gold and silver instead of giving in God's cause that, on the day it's heated in hell's fire and used to brand their foreheads, sides, and backs, they'll be told it's what they hoarded for themselves. And it says they'll be told to feel the pain of what they've hoarded.

It says God decrees twelve months, that the months were ordained in God's book on the day when he created the heavens and earth, and that four of the months are sacred, and it tells the believers not to wrong their souls during the four sacred months but that, if the idolaters begin the fighting, they may fight the idolaters at any time.

And it says that, when the disbelievers drove the prophet from Mecca, God helped him if the believers didn't.

And it says that, when Muhammad and a companion were in a cave, Muhammad told the companion God was with them and not to worry. It tells the believers that, to bring down the disbelievers' plan, God sent his calm down to Muhammad and aided him with forces invisible to them. And it tells them to go out accordingly and fight, with their possessions and their persons, in God's way.

Referring to people who told Muhammad they'd go out with him but said the distance was too great for them, it says that, were the benefit in sight

and the journey short, they'd have gone out with him. Telling the believers that struggling in God's way with their possessions and their persons is better for them, it says God forgives Muhammad for, before which of them were lying was clear to him, permitting some to stay at home. And it says that, had they gone out, they'd have given him trouble by scurrying around trying to sow discord and succeeding with some who willingly would have listened to them.

It tells Muhammad that, until, to their disgust, God's will triumphed with the truth being exposed, some of them had tried to sow discord before and had devised plots against him, and, telling him not to let their possessions and children impress him, it tells him some of them find fault with his distribution of alms.

And it tells him to say alms are meant only for the poor, the needy, and those who administer them. Of course, by including the administrators in that list, that's similar to Paul's saying Jesus was a priest in the order of Melchizedek. But a difference is that Muhammad was a merchant.

And, saying others insult him by saying he'll listen to anything, this *surah* tells Muhammad to tell them he listens for their good, believes in God, trusts the believers, and is a mercy for them, and it says an agonizing restraint awaits those who insult God's messenger.

It says the hypocrites fear that a *surah* will be revealed exposing what's in their hearts. It says some, saying they'd give alms and be righteous if he'd give some of his bounty to them, pledged themselves to God but became mean and turned away when he gave them some. And it says that, because of their lies, God made hypocrisy settle in their hearts until the day on which they'll meet him, that such hypocrites scoff at believers who give freely, and that God scoffs at those hypocrites.

And, saying that some who happily stayed behind, hating the thought of striving in God's way with their possessions and persons, told one another not to go out in the heat, it tells Muhammad to tell them hell's fire is hotter and that, if God brings him back to a group of them, and they ask permission to go out, they'll never go out and fight an enemy with him, and it tells him not to hold prayers for any of them who die, and not to stand over their graves.

It says some of the desert Arabs also came to make excuses and request exemption and that, if the weak or sick or those who have no means to spend are true to God and his messenger, no blame is for them. And it tells Muhammad that no blame is for those who, when he told them when they came to him for riding animals that he couldn't find a mount for them, turned away with tears flowing from their eyes because they had nothing to contribute. It says blame is for those who, asking for exemption despite their wealth, prefer to be with those

who stay behind, and it says they're loathsome. And, saying God won't except people who rebel against him, it tells Muhammad to leave them alone.

And it says that, in their disbelief and hypocrisy, the desert Arabs are the most stubborn of all people. It tells Muhammad some of them consider what they give to be an imposition and that they're waiting for fortune to turn against him but that fortune will turn against them. But it says some of them believe in God and the last day and consider their contributions to be bringing them closer to God and the prayers of the messenger. And it says their prayers will do that and that God will admit them to his mercy.

Saying some of the people of Medina are also obstinate in their hypocrisy, it tells Muhammad he doesn't know them but that God knows them well. But it says God will accept the repentance of those who've done some wrong deeds but have confessed their wrongdoings and done some good deeds. And it tells Muhammad to cleanse and purify them by accepting a gift from their property and praying for them. And it says his prayers will comfort them.

Saying some people, in an attempt to cause harm and disunity and disbelief among the believers, built a mosque as an outpost for people who'd fought God and his messenger, it says they swear they intended good but that God bears witness that they're liars, and it tells Muhammad never to pray in that mosque, that he should pray in a mosque founded from its first day on the consciousness of God.

And, asking who's better, a person who founds his building on consciousness of God and desire for God's good pleasure, or a person who founds his building on the brink of a crumbling precipice that'll tumble into the fire of hell and take him with it, it says that, until their hearts are cut to pieces, the building those people founded will be a source of doubt in their hearts.

But, saying that, in return for the garden, God has purchased the possessions and persons of the believers and that those persons fight in God's way and kill and are killed, it says the purchase and the fighting and killing are a true promise God has given in the *Torah*, the Gospels, and the *Qur'an*, and, asking who could be more faithful to his promise than God, it tells the believers to be happy with the bargain they've made.

But it says that, after the idolaters have been shown the blaze, asking forgiveness for them isn't fitting for believers, that relatives of believers are no exception, that Abraham asked forgiveness for his father because he'd made a promise to him, that, when he realized he was an enemy of God's, Abraham washed his hands of his father, and that Abraham was tender and forbearing.

But it also says that, when they realized the only refuge from God was with God, God turned in mercy to three men who, when their souls and the earth for all of its spaciousness closed around them, stayed behind. It doesn't identify

the three men, but it says God never wastes the reward of those who do good and that, whether they spend a little or a lot or traverse a mountain pass, all the good, for God to reward them in accordance with the best of their deeds, is recorded to their credit. And, saying that all believers' going out together isn't right, it says a group from each community should go out to gain understanding of the religion. It says that, when they return, they should teach their people to guard themselves against evil.

And it says that, when a *surah* is revealed, some ask others whether it's strengthened their faith. It says it strengthens the faith of those who believe and that they rejoice but that each new *surah* adds to the perversity of the perverse at heart. It says the perverse at heart, looking at one another when a *surah* is revealed, ask whether anyone is watching them. It says that, because they're people who don't use their reason, God has turned their hearts away. And it says they die disbelieving.

And this *surah* ends by telling Muhammad to tell people who turn away from him that God's enough for him, that God's the only god and that he puts his trust in God, and that God's the lord of the mighty throne.

## Chapter 23

### Surahs Ten through 39

The title of the tenth *surah* is Jonah. It's a Mecca *surah*, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Ra*. Saying it's the verses of the book of wisdom, it asks whether surprising to people is that God revealed to a man among them that, for them to be on a sure footing with their lord, he should warn them and give glad news to those who believe. And it says those who disbelieve say the man is clearly a sorcerer.

It says God created people and, to reward those who believe and do good deeds, will do it again, that, for people to know the number of years and how to calculate time, he made the sun a shining radiance and the moon a light determining phases, that he explains his signs to those who understand, and that, in gardens of bliss, streams will flow at the feet of the believers.

It says that, when trouble befalls a man, he cries out to God, but that, as soon as God relieves him of his trouble, he goes on his way as though he'd never cried out. Saying that in that way deeds of heedless people are made attractive to them, it tells its audience that, to see how they'll behave, God made them successors of evil people he destroyed. And it says that, when God's clear revelations are recited to them, they ask that they be brought another *Qur'an*, or that it be changed.

Telling Muhammad to tell them that, because, were he to disobey his lord, he'd fear the restraint of an awesome day, he only follows what's revealed to him, it tells him to tell them he lived a whole lifetime among them before it came to him, and it tells him to ask them how they can't use their reason.

Concerning intercession and worshiping things that can neither harm them nor benefit them, it tells Muhammad to ask them whether they think they can tell God about something God knows is neither in heaven nor in earth.

And it tells him to tell people who, after God gives them some mercy after some hardship afflicts them, scheme against God's revelations, that God schemes more quickly. And, telling him to tell them God enables them to travel

on land and sea until a storm arrives while they're rejoicing in favoring wind, it says that, after arriving safe on land, after praying to God for salvation and professing devotion, they behave outrageously against all that's right. And it tells them their outrageous behavior works only against them.

It says rain God sends down from the sky is absorbed by the plants of the earth from which humans and beasts eat, that, when people think they have power over the earth after it's taken on its finest appearance and adorned itself, the fate God commands comes to it, that, by night or day, God then reduces it to stubble as though it hadn't flourished the day before, that the life of this world is like that, and that, for those who reflect, God explains his revelations in that way.

It says God invites to the home of peace and guides whom he will to a straight path but that those who do evil are inmates of the fire and shall remain there. Telling Muhammad to ask disbelievers whether any of their partner gods originated creation and can bring it to life again in the end or can show the way to truth, it says God originates creation, brings it back to life, and shows the way to truth. And, asking disbelievers how they can be misled and how they judge, it says the day on which God gathers them together will be as though they'd stayed in the world but an hour, and he says they'll recognize one another.

Saying every community is sent a messenger and that when the messenger comes they'll be judged justly and won't be wronged, it tells Muhammad to ask people what part of the punishment the guilty wish to hasten, and, telling him to ask them whether they'll believe it when it happens, it tells them that then they'll be told that what they sought to hasten is then.

It says that neither the weight of a speck of dust in earth nor anything lesser or greater escapes God. It says it's all written in a clear record and that all in the heavens and on earth belongs to God. And it asks those who call on partners besides God how they can dare to say God has children.

And it tells Muhammad to tell them the story of Noah. It says Noah told his people that, if his presence among them and his reminding them of God's signs has been too much for them, he puts his trust in God. It says he told them to agree on their course of action with their partner gods and to carry it out on him with no respite. And it says God saved Noah and those with him on the ark and drowned those who rejected his revelations.

And this *surah* tells another version of the story of Moses and Pharaoh. In this version Pharaoh cries as he's drowning that he believes the god in whom the children of Israel believe is the only god and that he submits to him. And it tells Pharaoh that, because he's always been a rebel and a troublemaker, God will save only his corpse, as a sign to all posterity.

And, briefly referring to Jonah to say that only his people believed and benefited from their belief, this *surah* says that, if every sign comes to people, those against whom God's sentence is passed won't believe until they see the agonizing restraint.

The title of the eleventh *surah* is Hud, and it's also a Mecca *surah* beginning with the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Ra*. It says the provision of the creatures moving on earth is God's concern but that people will ask what, if God defers it, is holding back the punishment. And it exclaims how desperate and ungrateful man becomes when God, after letting him taste his mercy, withholds it.

And it tells a version of the story of Noah in which Noah tells his people he's not telling them he's holding God's treasures or that he's an angel. Also saying Noah was told that, excepting those people who already believed, none of his people would believe, this version says God told him not to be distressed by what they do and not to plead with him for those who'd done evil. And it says God told him they'd be drowned.

It says that, when God's command came, and water gushed up from the earth, God told Noah to place on the ark a pair of each species and, excepting those against whom the sentence already had been passed, to place his family on it. And, saying God told him to place on the ark all those who believed, it says but a few believed with him. And it says one of Noah's sons stayed behind.

It says Noah called out to him and told him to come aboard and not stay with the disbelievers but that the son said he'd seek refuge on a mountain, that Noah replied that, excepting those on whom God has mercy, no refuge from God's command would be that day, that waves cut Noah and that son of his from one another, and that the son was among the drowned.

And, saying the ark settled on Mount Judi, it says Noah called out to God that his son was one of his family, that God replied that he wasn't one of Noah's family and that what he did wasn't right, that, telling Noah not to ask him for things about which he knows nothing, God warned him not be foolish, and that Noah replied that he takes refuge in God from asking for things about which he knows nothing.

And this *surah* tells Muhammad that those accounts are part of what was beyond his knowledge and that neither did Muhammad's people know them previously, and, telling him to be patient, it says the future belongs to those who are aware of God. And next it elaborates on the stories of Hud and Salih and the destruction of their people. And next it tells more of Abraham and Lot.

It says God's messengers brought good news to Abraham and greeted him by wishing him peace, that Abraham replied in kind and brought the



messengers a roasted calf, that Abraham saw that the messengers' hands didn't reach for the meal, and that he found that strange and then was afraid of them.

It says that, telling him not to be afraid, they said they'd been sent against Lot's people, that, while Abraham's wife stood and laughed, God gave her good news of Isaac and Jacob, that she asked how she was to bear a child when she was an old woman and her husband an old man, that the messengers replied by asking her whether what God ordains astonished her, and that, because God's worthy of praise and glory, they asked for the grace of God and his blessing to be on the people of that house.

And it says that, when the fear left Abraham, he pleaded with God for Lot's people, that then the good news came but that, because he was forbearing, tenderhearted, and devout, he pleaded, and it says the messengers replied that what God had ordained had already come and that the punishment couldn't be turned back. And it says that, when the messengers came to Lot, he was anxious for them, felt powerless to protect them, and said it was a terrible day, that, when his people rushed toward him, he offered them his daughters and told them they were more wholesome for them, and that they replied that Lot knew they had no right to his daughters. And it says he knew what they desired and replied that he wished he had the strength to stop them or could rely on strong support

And it says the messengers told him they were God's messengers and that the people wouldn't reach him, that they told him to leave his household in the night and told him only his wife would suffer the fate of the others, and that God turned their town upside down and rained stones of baked clay on it.

And next this *surah* gives more details concerning Shu'ayb and the people of Midian. It says again that Shu'ayb told his people to give full weight and measure, but it adds that he told them they should do that in fairness and shouldn't withhold from people what's rightly theirs, and it also says he told them he saw that they were prospering. A question is whether any of that refers to Joseph and his brothers and the Midianite traders, but this *surah* also says God saved Shy'ayb and his fellow believers, while a mighty blast struck the wrongdoers.

And this *surah* also tells Muhammad, because good drives bad away, to keep up the prayer at both ends of the day and during parts of the night. And, saying that's a reminder for those who are unaware, it expresses a wish that people of good sense who forbid corruption on the earth had been in generations before Muhammad. And it says God saved but a few people of those generations, while the unjust persisted in sin, while enjoying plenty.

And, telling Muhammad God told him the stories of the prophets to make his heart firm, it tells him that truth and lessons and reminders for the believers have come to him in those accounts. It tells him to tell the disbelievers

to do what they can and tell them he and others also are doing what they can. And it tells him to tell them to wait and to tell them he and others also are waiting.

The title of the twelfth *surah* is Joseph, and it's also a Mecca *surah* beginning with the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Ra*. Saying it's the verses of the scripture that makes things clear, it tells people God sent it down as an Arabic *Qur'an* for them to understand. And, telling Muhammad that, in revealing it to him, God tells him the best of stories, it says that, before that, Muhammad was one of those knowing nothing of the stories.

And next it says Joseph told his father he'd dreamed of eleven stars and the sun and the moon bowing down to him, that, because, if he told them of the dream, they might plot to harm him, his father told him not to tell his brothers of it, and that his father told him Satan's man's sworn enemy.

It says his father told him the dream was about how God would choose him, teach him to interpret dreams, and perfect his blessings on him and the house of Jacob as he had on his forefathers Abraham and Isaac. And, telling of Joseph's brothers talking of whether to kill him or leave him in a well where a caravan might pick him up, it says they told Jacob they wished Joseph well, that, for him to enjoy himself and play, they asked Jacob to send him with them, and that they told him they'd take good care of him. And it says Jacob told them he was afraid a wolf might eat him while they weren't paying attention and that they replied that, were a wolf to eat Joseph when they were so many, they'd be losers.

And it says God inspired Joseph and told him he'd tell his brothers, at a time when they didn't realize it, all they'd done. It says that, weeping, they returned to Jacob and told him that what he'd said might happen had happened, that they showed him Joseph's shirt stained with blood, and that their father told them their souls had prompted them to do wrong but that best was to be patient. And it says he told them that, to bear what they were saying, he sought help only from God.

And it says travelers sent one of their company to draw water from the well, that he let down his bucket and exclaimed that good news was that a boy was hidden there as a piece of merchandize, and that the travelers valued Joseph so little that they sold him for the small price of a few pieces of silver, and it doesn't say they were either Ishmaelites or Midianites. It says God settled Joseph in the land and that the Egyptian who bought him, telling his wife to take care of him and that he might be useful for them, said they might adopt him as a son. And it says that, when Joseph reached maturity, God gave him judgement and knowledge. And it says that's how God rewards those who do good.

And it tells a version of the story of Joseph and the Egyptian's wife. In this version, after the wife tries to seduce him, the Egyptian sees Joseph's garment torn in back, says it's another instance of women's treachery, tells his wife she's done wrong and to ask forgiveness for her sin, and tells Joseph to overlook it. And some women of the city say the governor's wife is trying to seduce her slave.

The wife holds a banquet for them and shows Joseph to them, and, stunned by his beauty, they cut their hands and exclaim that he couldn't be mortal but must be an angel, and the wife says that, if he doesn't do what she commands, he'll be put into prison and be degraded. And Joseph tells God he prefers prisons to what the women are asking him to do and that, if God doesn't protect him from their treachery, he'll yield to them and do wrong, and God answers his prayer. The people see Joseph's innocence and think imprisoning him for a while is best, and then this version tells of the baker and the butler.

But it doesn't say they were a baker and a butler, and in it Joseph tells them God has taught him to interpret dreams, that he rejected the faith of those who disbelieved in God and denied the life to come, that he followed the faith of his forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that, because of God's grace to all, he'd never worship anything other than God, and he tells them doctrine particular to the *Qur'an*. And, telling them one of them will serve wine to his master, that the other will be crucified, and that birds will peck at his head, he tells the one he knows will be saved to mention him to his master. But Satan makes him forget, and Joseph remains in prison for years.

This version doesn't say the master of the prisoner who was saved was a pharaoh, but in it he's a king and has dreams his counselors can't interpret, and then in it the prisoner who's been freed remembers Joseph, and, asking the king for permission to go, he tells him he'll tell him what the dream means. So he goes to Joseph, and Joseph tells him the meaning of the dream, and he returned to the king and tells him its meaning. And then then the king sends for Joseph.

But Joseph, telling the messengers to ask their master about the women who cut their hands, tells the king God knew the women's treachery, and the king asks the women what happened when they tried to seduce Joseph, and the women say they knew nothing bad of Joseph, and the wife says she tried to seduce him and that the truth is out, and the king again sends for Joseph.

He says Joseph will serve him personally and have his trust and favor, and Joseph, asking him for charge of the nation's storehouses, says he'll manage them prudently and carefully. And this *surah* says that in that way God settled Joseph in that land, to live wherever he wished. And next it tells of Joseph's brother's coming to Joseph for provisions.

But it doesn't say Benjamin's name or the names of any of Joseph's other brothers. And it says that, when Joseph told his brothers to bring his family to him, he told them that, if they'd lay his shirt over their father's face, he'd recover his sight. And it says that, when Jacob's sight returned, when the bearer of good news laid Joseph's shirt over his face, he asked them whether he hadn't told them he had knowledge from God that they didn't have.

And it doesn't say who was the bearer of good news, but it says Jacob's sons asked him to forgive their sins, that he replied that he'd ask God to forgive them, and that he told them he'd told them God is the most forgiving and merciful.

And this *surah* tells Muhammad that the account of that is part of what was beyond his knowledge.

The title of the 13<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Thunder, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim Ra*, and it's a Medina *surah*. It says it's the signs of the scripture, that God raised up the heavens with no visible supports and then established himself on the throne, and that God regulates all things and makes the revelations clear, for us to be certain of meeting our lord. And it says he spread out the earth, placed firm mountains and rivers on it, and made two of each kind of fruit.

It says God draws the veil of night over the day, that in the land are neighboring plots, gardens of vineyards, cornfields, and palm trees in clusters or otherwise, all watered with the same water, that yet God makes some of them taste better than others, and that, for people who reason, signs are in all of that.

And, telling Muhammad that people asking whether they'll be created anew after they've become dust should amaze him if anything can, it says the people asking him that are the people who deny God and will have iron collars around their necks and remain in the fire.

It says God knows what every female bears in her womb and how much her womb shrinks or swells, that thunder and the angels sound God's praise in awe of him, that God sends thunderbolts to strike whomever he will and, filling riverbeds to overflowing, each to its measure, sends water from the sky, that streams carry on their surfaces a growing layer of froth like the froth appearing when people melt metal in fire to make ornaments and tools, that that's how God illustrates truth and falsehood, and that the froth disappears while what benefits man stays behind.

And it says steadfast obedient believers in the revelations from their lord will enter perpetual gardens with their righteous ancestors, spouses, and descendants, and that the angels will also go into the gardens, from every gate.

And it says God sent down the *Qur'an* to give judgement in the Arabic language and that, excepting with God's permission, no messenger was given power to produce a miracle.

The title of the 14<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Abraham, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Rah*, and it's also a Medina *surah*. And it says God has never sent a messenger who didn't use his people's language to make things clear for them. But it says that, while God guides whomever he will, he leaves to stray whomever he will.

It says disbelievers in the communities God destroyed told God's messengers they were men like them but that the messengers wanted to turn them from what their forefathers believed. And it says hell awaits each of those disbelievers, that they'll be given foul water to drink and will try to gulp but hardly will be able to swallow, that death will encroach on them from every side, and that, while more intense suffering will lie ahead, they won't die. And it says Satan will tell them he can't help them, that God gave them a true promise, and not to blame him but themselves.

And it says Abraham told God that, for them to keep up the prayer, he'd established some of his offspring in an uncultivated valley near God's sacred house, that, for them to be thankful, he asked God to make peoples' hearts turn to him and to provide them with produce, that, for granting him Ishmael and Isaac in his old age, he praised God, and that he asked God to forgive, on the day of reckoning, him, his parents, and the believers.

And, telling Muhammad that one day, when the earth is turned into another earth and the heavens into another heaven, he'll see the guilty bound together in fetters and in garments of pitch with their faces covered in fire, it says that, for all people to be warned and know God's the only god, that's the message to them.

The title of the fifteenth *surah* is *Al-Hijr*, and its first verse is also the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Ra*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*.

It says God sent down the *Qur'an*, that he'll guard it, that people of communities he's destroyed told his messengers they were mad and asked them why, if they were telling the truth, they didn't bring down angels, that God sends down the angels only to bring justice, and that, if he opened a gate into the heavens for those people to rise through it, they'd say they were hallucinating and were bewitched.

It says God set constellations in the sky and made it beautiful for all to see, that he guards the sky from every stoned Satan, and that any eavesdropper

will be pursued by a clearly visible flame, and it says God created man of dry clay formed of dark mud and created jinn from the fire of scorching wind.

It says the messengers God sent to Lot told him they brought him what people said would never happen and that they brought him the truth, and it says the forest dwellers were also wrongdoers, that God also took retribution on them, and that they remain on the highways plain for all to see, and it says the people of al-Hijr also rejected God's messengers, that God gave them signs but that they turned their backs, and that they carved dwellings in the mountains and lived securely, but that the blast overwhelmed them early one morning.

And, telling Muhammad that God has given him the seven often-repeated verses and all of the *Qur'an*, it tells him to lower his wings over the believers and tell them he's there to give plain warning.

Presumably the seven often-repeated verses are those of the first *surah*.

The title of the sixteenth *surah* is The Bee, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It directs that, because God's judgement is coming, we not ask that it be brought sooner. And it says God created man from a drop of fluid and that he also created livestock.

It says we derive warmth and other benefit from livestock, that we receive food from it, and that it carries our loads to lands we couldn't reach but by great hardship. It says God made the sea beneficial to us, that we eat fresh food from it and bring jewelry from it, and that we see ships cutting through its waves for us to search God's bounty and give thanks. And it says that, to keep the earth from shaking, God has made mountains to stand firm on it, and that, if we tried to count God's blessings, we couldn't take them all in.

And it says that, to give warning to whichever of his servants he chooses, God sends down angels with inspiration, and it says that what people invoke besides God don't create but are created, are dead and not living, and don't know when they'll be raised up.

Directing traveling through the earth to see the fate of those who denied the truth, it says God will raise the dead to life to make people's disagreements clear to them and for the disbelievers to realize the falsity of what they've said. It says that, while the reward hereafter will be greater, God will give a good home in this world to those who, after being wrong, emigrated in God's cause. And it asks whether those who plan evil are certain God won't make the earth swallow them.

It says people assign daughters to God but that, when they're given news of the birth of a baby girl, they're filled with gloom, and it says those people hide from people and ask whether they should keep the daughter or bury

her in dust, that, while they lie that the best belongs to them, they attribute to God what they dislike, and that the fire belongs to them.

It says a lesson is in that God gives us, between waste matter and blood, pure milk from livestock's bellies, that, telling bees to feed on all kinds of fruit and build houses for themselves in mountains and trees and in what people construct, God inspired bees to follow the ways God has made easy for them, and that from bees' bellies comes a drink of different colors, in which is healing for people.

It says God has created us and will cause us to die and that some of us, after having knowledge, will be reduced in old age to an abject state. It says God has given some of us more provision than others and that those given more are unwilling to pass their provisions on to the slaves they own, for the slaves to become their equals. And it asks how those people can refuse to acknowledge God's blessings.

And, saying God presents the illustration of a slave controlled by his master, it asks whether the master and the slave can be considered equal and says one of the two has no power over anything, while God's supplied the other with provisions from which he gives alms.

And, saying God presents the illustration of a man who's deaf and unable to do anything, is a burden to his caretaker, and achieves no good by whatever his caretaker directs him to do, it asks whether that man can be considered equal to one who commands justice and is on the straight path.

And it asks whether people don't see the birds flying through the sky with only God holding them up. It says that one day, when the disbelievers won't be allowed to make excuses or amends, God will raise up a witness from every community. And, telling Muhammad that God will bring him as a witness, it says that then the idolaters will see the partners they joined with God, that they'll tell God they're the partners they invoked besides him, and that the partners will call them liars and desert them.

Forbidding using oaths to deceive one another, in the manner of a woman who unravels thread she's firmly spun, only because one party is more numerous than another, this *surah* says its forbidding that is to keep one's foot from slipping after it's firmly placed, to keep one from tasting the penalty for having hindered others from the path of God, and to keep one from suffering a terrible restraint.

It tells Muhammad to seek, when he recites the *Qur'an*, God's protection from Satan. But it says Satan has no power over those who believe and trust in their lord, that his power is over no one other than those who ally themselves with him and those who, because of him, join partners with God. And, saying that, when God substitutes one revelation for another, those over

whom Satan has power say Muhammad's only fabricating it, it tells Muhammad to tell them the spirit has brought the revelation with the truth step by step from their lord and that God does that to strengthen believers and as guidance and good news for the devout.

And, saying God knows that, while the revelation is in clear Arabic, they say a man is teaching Muhammad and that the man to whom they're referring is foreign, it says falsehood is fabricated only by liars who don't believe in God's revelations.

And it tells people who worship God to eat of the good and lawful things God has provided for them.

The seventeenth *surah* is a Mecca *surah*, and its title is The Night Journey. It calls for glory to him who, to show his servant some of God's signs, made his servant travel by night from the sacred place of worship to the furthest place of worship whose surroundings God has blessed. Presumably, the antecedents of those pronouns are God and Muhammad, and the places of worship are the mosque in Mecca and the temple in Jerusalem.

But this *surah* also says God told the children of Israel that twice they'd spread corruption in the land and become arrogant. And it tells them that, when the first of those warnings was fulfilled, God sent servants of his with great force and ravaged their homes, that then God allowed them to prevail against their enemy, increased their wealth and offspring, and made them more numerous, and that the fulfillment of the second warning was to send the servants of God to shame their faces, enter the place of worship again, and destroy all that fell into their power. And, after that summary of prophesies and destruction of Israel, it tells the children of Israel that God may yet have mercy on them, but that he'll do the same again, if they do the same again.

And, asking them how many nations God has destroyed since Noah, it tells them God has made hell a prison for those who defy, that, if they set up gods beside God, they'll end up disgraced and forsaken, and that their lord commanded them to worship only him.

And it tells them to be kind to their parents, to speak no word showing impatience to either of their parents in their old age, to speak to them patiently and not be harsh with them, to lower their wing in humility toward them, and to ask God to have mercy on their parents, as their parents cared for them when they were little.

And next it directs giving relatives, the needy, and travelers their due, but it says those who squander are brothers of Satan and that Satan is ungrateful to his lord. And it directs speaking kindly to those one refuses while they're seeking bounty one expects from one's lord, and it directs being neither tight-



fisted nor so open-handed that one's blamed and overwhelmed with regret. And it says God gives abundantly or sparingly to whomever he will.

And it forbids strutting arrogantly about the earth. It says one can neither break open the earth nor match its mountains in height. And it says the evil of strutting arrogantly about the earth is hateful to God.

But it tells Muhammad that, when he's reciting the *Qur'an*, God puts an invisible barrier between him and those who don't believe in the life to come, and it says those disbelievers ask whether, when they're turned to bones and dust, they'll be raised up in a new creation, and it tells Muhammad to tell them they'd be raised up if they were stone, iron, or any other substance they think is difficult to bring to life.

And it tells him to tell them, when they ask who'll bring them back, that the one who first created them will. And it says God gave some more than he gave others, that he gave David a book of psalms, that those other than God to whom people pray are also seeking a way to their lord, and that all that keeps God from sending miraculous signs is that previous people denied them. And it says the camel God gave to the people of Thamud was a clear sign.

And it tells Muhammad the vision God showed him was but a test for people and that so was the cursed tree in the *Qur'an*. Presumably the tree is the tree of Zaqum that's in the 37<sup>th</sup> surah. And presumably the vision was the night journey.

This *surah* also says that, when Iblis refused to bow to Adam, God told him to rouse with his voice Adam's descendants who follow him, to muster his cavalry and infantry against them, to share their wealth with them and their children, and to make promises to them, but that he'd have no authority over God's true servants.

Asking people who pray for God to return them to land from distress at sea whether they can be sure that, when they've returned to land, God won't have them swallowed into the earth, send a sandstorm against them, or send them back to sea and send a violent storm to drown them for their ingratitude, it says God has honored the children of Adam, carried them by land and sea, provided good sustenance to them, and favored them specially above many others he's created, and it tells them that on the land they'll find no help against God.

It says that, on the day on which God summons each community with its leader, those given their record in their right hand will read it and that no one will be wronged, and it says those who were blind in this life will be blind in the hereafter and will be further from the path.

And, telling Muhammad to perform the regular prayer from noon until dark but to recite the *Qur'an* at dawn, it says dawn recitation is always

witnessed, and it tells him, for God to raise him to a praised status, to awaken in the night and pray an extra offering of his own. Telling him to ask God to make him go in and come out truthfully and to grant him supporting authority, it tells him to say that the truth has come out and that falsehood has passed away. And it says that, while the *Qur'an* only increases the loss of the disbelievers, falsehood is bound to pass away.

Presumably referring to Gabriel, telling Muhammad the disbelievers ask him about the spirit, it tells him to tell them the spirit's part of God's domain, that they've been given but a little knowledge, that God could take away what he's revealed to him, and that then he'd have no one to plead for him against God, but that God's favor to him has been great.

And it says that, if man and jinn came together to produce something like the *Qur'an*, they couldn't help each other enough to do it. But it says disbelievers tell Muhammad they won't believe him until he makes a spring gush out of the ground for them, has a garden of date plums and vines and makes rivers pour through it, makes the sky fall on them in pieces as he said it would, brings God and angels face to face before them, has a house of gold, or ascends to the sky. And it says they also say they won't believe until he sends a book for them to read and that yet then they wouldn't believe.

It says that, when guidance came to those disbelievers, all that kept them from believing was that they asked how God could have sent a human messenger. And it says that anyone God guides is truly guided, that we'll find no protector for anyone God leaves astray, and that God will gather those people lying on their faces blind and deaf and dumb. And it says he'll be their home.

But this surah says that, after God drowned Pharaoh and those with him, he told the children of Israel to live in the land. And it says God told them that, when the promise of the hereafter was fulfilled, he'd bring them to the assembly of all people. And it tells Muhammad that, whether he believes it or not, those given knowledge earlier will fall on their faces weeping with their humility increasing.

And it says that, for Muhammad to recite the *Qur'an* to people at intervals, God has revealed it in parts, and it tells him not to pray too loudly or too quietly but to seek a middle way.

The title of the eighteenth *surah* is The Cave, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says scripture warns people who assert that God has offspring that neither they nor their forefathers have knowledge of that and that it's a monstrous assertion. And, saying that what they say is but lies, it asks Muhammad whether, if they don't believe that message, he's going to worry himself to death.

It says that God, to test people to learn which do best, adorned the earth with attractive things, and it says he'll reduce the earth to dust. And it asks Muhammad whether he finds al-Raquin and the companions in the cave wonderous among God's other signs. And it tells him their story.

In the story the companions ask God to grant them mercy and find them a way from their ordeal. They're young men who believe in their lord, and, when they stand up and say they believe in their lord and ask why their people have taken gods other than God, God gives them strength. But they decide to take refuge in the cave from their people and what their people worship.

To make clear which of them is best able to learn how long they've been there, God seals their ears in the cave for years, and this *surah* tells Muhammad that he could have seen the light shifting in the cave, that, as God turned them over to right and left as their dog stretched out his forelegs at the entrance to the cave, he would have thought the companions were awake, and that, if he'd seen them, he'd have turned and run, full of fear of them.

Next, in the story, when they awaken, they discuss how long they've been there, and, saying God knows that best, one of them tells the other to have one of them go to the city with his silver coins and find the best food there and bring it back. But he tells him, because they'd stone him or force him to return to their religion, to be careful to let no one there know anything of him. And this *surah* says that's a way God reveals the truth of his promise to people arguing among themselves.

Next it says people discussed what to do with them and asked whether to construct a building over them and that those who prevailed said they should build a place of worship over them. But, in the story, they disagree over how many of them they and the dog were, and this *surah*, saying that but a few know of the companions, tells Muhammad to say God knows best and not to argue but to stick to what's clear, not to ask any of those people about them, and not to say anything. And it tells him, if he doesn't add the condition that God be willing, not to say what he'll do tomorrow, and it tells him to ask his lord, when he forgets, to guide him closer to what's right.

And it says the sleepers stayed in the cave three hundred years but that some add nine years. And it says believers in the garden of lasting bliss with flowing streams will be adorned with bracelets of gold, that their clothing will be green garments of silk and brocade, and that they'll be comfortably seated on soft chairs. And it tells a parable of two men.

One's wealthier than the other and says he doesn't think his wealth ever will perish. The other's also wealthy but tells the wealthier one that no power is greater than God. And, in the parable, the less wealthy one tells the other that

God may give him something better and destroy the wealthier one's garden. And God does.

And this *surah* also tells a story of Moses that isn't in the *Torah*. In this story, Moses tells his servant that, if it takes years, he won't rest until he reaches the place where the two seas meet, and they reach that place. But they forget a fish they had, and the fish makes its way to the sea.

The servant, asking Moses whether he remembers when they were resting by a rock, tells him Satan made him forget to attend to the fish there and that the fish made its way to the sea, and Moses says the place where they'd rested was the place they were seeking. So they turn back and find a servant of God whom God has granted mercy and given knowledge, and Moses, asking the man for permission to follow him, asks him to teach him some of the guidance he's been taught, and the man tells Moses that Moses won't be able to bear with him patiently. So Moses, telling the man he'll find him patient, promises not to disobey the man in any way, if God's willing.

And they travel on and enter a boat. But the man drills a hole in the bottom of the boat, and he also kills a boy they meet. And, after people of a town whose wall is falling refuse them hospitality, the man repairs the wall. So Moses asks the man whether he wants to drown the passengers in the boat and how he could kill an innocent person, and he tells him he could have taken payment for repairing the wall. And, in each instance, the man reminds Moses that he'd told him he wouldn't be able to bear with him patiently.

In the first instance, Moses, asking the man to forgive him, asks him not to make following him too difficult for him. In the second, he tells the man to banish him from his company, if he questions him further. And, in the third, the man tells Moses they'll then part company. But he tells Moses why he did what Moses questioned.

He says a king was coming and seizing every boat by force. He says the boy's parents were people of faith, that he feared the boy would trouble them through wickedness and disbelief, and that he wished that God give them a child more pure and compassionate. And he says the wall belonged to two young orphans in the town, that treasure belonging to them was buried beneath it, that their father had been righteous, and that God intended the orphans to reach maturity and dig up the treasure, a mercy from their lord.

And next this *surah*, telling Muhammad that people ask him about the two-horned one, tells him to tell the people he'll tell them about him. It tells him God established the two-horned one's power in the land, that he traveled a road, came to the setting sun, and found it setting into a muddy spring, that God told him he could choose either to punish some people there or to show kindness to them, and that he told God he'd punish those who did evil. And it says God

would punish them more severely when they return to him, that those who believe and do good deeds will have the best rewards, and that he'll command them to do what's easy for them.

And then, in this story, the two-horned one travels on to the rising sun. There, people who can hardly understand him tell him Gog and Magog are ruining the land there, and they ask him whether, if they pay him tribute, he'll build a barrier. The two-horned one tells them the power his lord has given him is better than any tribute but that, if they'll lend him their strength, he'll put up a fortification for them, and he tells them to bring him lumps of iron and molten metal. And with their help he fills the gap between two mountains and tells them the barrier is a mercy from their lord, and the people's enemies can't break or scale it.

But the two-horned one also tells them that, when his lord's promise is fulfilled, his lord will raze the barrier and that on that day God will let them surge against one another as waves, and this *surah*, saying that then the trumpet will be blown and that God will gather them all together, asks whether they thought they could take God's servants as masters instead of God.

And it tells Muhammad to say that, if the ocean were ink for writing the words of his lord, and if God added another ocean to the ocean, it'd run dry before those words were exhausted.

The two-horned one may be a reference to a mistranslation in what was the Roman Catholic Church's standard Latin translation of the Bible during the life of Muhammad. It uses a Latin word meaning "horns" to translate the Hebrew word meaning "light" referring to Moses' face shining when he descended from Mount Sinai with the Commandments the second time, and many artists, including Michelangelo nearly a millennium later, responded to that by depicting Moses with two horns on his head. And the ocean of ink may refer to John's writing similarly of the deeds of Jesus at the end of his Gospel.

And the title of the nineteenth *surah* is Mary. Its first verse is the Arabic letters *Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Sad*, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says it's a record of God's grace toward his servant Zacharia, that Zachariah told God he feared what his kinsmen might do when he was gone, and that accordingly he asked God to grant him a successor to be his heir and the heir of the family of Jacob. It says God told him he was bringing him good news of a son whose name would be John and that God had chosen that name for no one before him. And it directs mentioning in the *Qur'an* the story of Mary.

In the version of the story of the birth of Jesus it tells next, she withdraws from her family to a place in the east. God sends his spirit to appear before her there in the form of a perfect man, and she tells the spirit she seeks

God's mercy's protection against him, if he has any fear of God. And he replies that he's a messenger from her lord to announce to her the gift of a pure son.

In the distant place to which she's withdrawn, the pains of childbirth drive her to the trunk of a palm tree, and she exclaims that she wishes she'd been dead and forgotten long before then. But a voice crying to her from below the tree and telling her not to worry tells her that her god has provided a stream at her feet and that, if she shakes the trunk of the palm tree toward her, he'll deliver fresh ripe dates to her. And it tells her to eat and drink and be glad.

And it also tells her to tell anyone she may see that she's vowed to the lord of mercy to abstain from conversation and won't talk to anyone that day. And she carries the child to her people, and they tell her she's done a terrible thing, that her father wasn't evil, and that her mother wasn't unchaste. And she points to the child.

They ask how they can converse with a child, but the child tells them he's a servant of God, that God has granted him the scripture and made him a prophet blessed wherever he may be, and that God commanded him to pray, give alms as long as he lives, and cherish his mother. He says God didn't make him domineering or graceless and that peace was on him on the day of his birth and would be on the day of his death and on the day on which he's raised to life again. And this *surah* says that such was Mary's son Jesus.

And in this version of the story, suggesting more directly than do the Gospels that Mary was a Levite, her people call her a sister of Aaron. But, immediately following this story, this *surah* says a statement of truth about which some are in doubt is that having a child wouldn't befit God and that whatever God tells to be is. And, suggesting that Christians in Muhammad's time disagreed about the evangel John's saying Jesus was God's begotten son, it says factions differ on that question.

And this *surah* also tells more details of the disagreement between Abraham and his father. It says Abraham asked his father how he could worship what can't hear or see or benefit him. And it says knowledge came to Abraham that hadn't come to his father.

It says he told his father he feared that punishment from the lord of mercy might afflict his father and feared that his father might become Satan's companion, and it says that Abraham's father, replying by asking Abraham whether he rejected his father's gods, told him he'd stone him if he didn't stop.

And this *surah* directs mentioning that in the *Qur'an* also. And it also directs mentioning that God granted to Moses that his brother Aaron would be a prophet, that Ishmael was a messenger and a prophet and true to his promise and commanded his household to pray and give alms, and that Ishmael's lord was well pleased with him. And, directing mentioning the story of Idris, it says Idris

was a man of truth and a prophet God raised to high position, but it doesn't otherwise identify him.

But it says those are the prophets God blessed from the seed of Adam, and it tells Muhammad that God will gather the devils and those who question the resurrection together and set them on their knees around hell, and it asks him whether he hasn't seen how God sends devils to incite disbelievers to sin.

And it says the disbelievers' saying the lord of mercy has offspring nearly causes the heavens to be torn apart, the earth to be split asunder, and the mountains to crumble to pieces.

The twentieth *surah* is a Mecca *surah*, and its title is the Arabic letters *Ta Ha*, and they're also its first verse. It tells a version of the story of Moses and the burning bush in which God, telling Moses to remove his shoes and saying he's in the sacred valley of Tuwa, tells him the hour is coming for each soul to be rewarded for its labor, but to keep that hidden. And, also in this version, God tells Moses a summary of Moses' life from his birth in Egypt to his staying years with the people of Midian after killing a man.

But, other than those variations from the *Torah* and that this version also contains variants from *surahs* earlier in the *Qur'an*'s presentation of the *surahs*, that version is much like the *Torah*. And this *surah* treats similarly a version of the beginning of the exodus, from Moses confronting Pharaoh to the Israelites creating the golden calf. And it does the same with another version of the story of Adam.

The title of the 21<sup>st</sup> *surah* is The Prophet, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. Saying some say the *Qur'an* is muddled dreams while some say Muhammad is but a poet, it tells Muhammad that all the messengers God's sent were but men God inspired, that God didn't give them bodies that ate no food, and that they weren't immortal. But it says God kept his promise to them in the end, that he didn't create the heavens and the earth and all between playfully, and that, if he wished for a pastime, he could have found one within himself. And, saying God hurls the truth against falsehood and obliterates it, it tells people to see how falsehood vanishes.

Saying that, if any gods other than God were in the heavens or earth, the heavens and earth would be in ruins, it asks whether people don't know the heavens and earth were joined together and that God ripped them apart and made every living thing from water. It says God put firm mountains on earth to keep it from swaying under them, that he set broad paths on it for people to follow the right direction, and that he made the sky a secured canopy. And it

says God created the night and day, and that he created the sun and moon, each floating in its path.

Telling Muhammad that before him God hadn't granted everlasting life to anyone, it asks Muhammad whether people will live forever if Muhammad dies. But it says every soul is certain to taste death, and, saying man was created hastily, it directs not asking God to hasten his signs. And it asks whether sinners don't see that God's shrinking their borders.

It says Abraham asked his father and his people what were the images to which they were devoted and that they replied that they'd found their fathers worshipping them. It says Abraham told them he'd scheme against their idols as soon as they turned their backs, that he broke all but the biggest one to pieces, and that they asked him who did that to their gods. It says he told them the biggest one did it, that he told them to ask the biggest one, and that they told him he knew the idols couldn't talk. And it says they told one another to burn him to avenge their gods but that God told the fire to be cool and safe for Abraham.

And, directing remembering when David and Solomon gave judgement regarding a field into which sheep strayed at night and grazed, it says God gave sound judgement to both David and Solomon and witnessed their judgement, but that he made Solomon understand the case.

Saying God made the mountains and birds celebrate his praise with David and that he taught David how to make coats of mail to benefit people and protect them in their wars, it asks whether people are grateful for that. It says God harnessed the stormy wind for Solomon, for it to speed by his command to the land God blessed. And it says God made some of the jinn subservient to Solomon.

And, briefly mentioning people to whom it refers in more detail in other *surahs*, it tells people their community's one community and that God's their lord, and it tells them to serve him.

And it says that, when the peoples of Gog and Magog are let loose and swarm swiftly from every highland, the true promise is drawing near. But it says those for whom God has decreed paradise will be kept from hell and hear no murmur from it, that they'll have no fear of the great terror, that the angels will receive them and tell them it's the day they were promised, and that on that day God will roll up the scrolls and produce creation as he did the first time. And it says God wrote in the psalms and scriptures that his righteous servants will inherit the earth.

The title of the 22<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is The Pilgrimage, and it's a Medina *surah*. Directing being mindful of God because the earthquake of the last hour will be mighty, it says that then every nursing mother will think no more of her baby,



that every pregnant woman will miscarry, and that we'll think people are drunk when they aren't. But it says anyone who thinks God won't support him in this world and the next should stretch a rope to the sky and climb it to see whether that removes the cause of God's anger, and it says such is how God sends down the *Qur'an* with clear messages and guides whom he will.

Saying of the believers that, on the day of resurrection, God will judge between the Jews, the Sabians, the Christians, the Magians, and the idolaters, it asks Muhammad whether he doesn't realize that all in the heavens and earth submits to God, and he says the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, and the animals submit to God, and that so do many humans.

It says God showed Abraham the site of the house and told him not to assign partners to God and to purify his house for those who circle around it, those who stand and pray, and those who bow and prostrate themselves, and to proclaim the pilgrimage to all people. It says God told him people would come to him on foot and on every kind of swift mount, that, to attain benefits, they'd emerge from every deep mountain pass, and that, on specific days, they'd celebrate God's name over the livestock he's provided for them. And it tells people to feed themselves and the poor and unfortunate, to let the pilgrims perform their acts of cleansing and fulfill their vows, and to circle around the ancient house.

It tells them livestock's useful to them until the time set, that then the livestock's place of sacrifice is near the ancient house, and that God has made camels part of God's sacred rites for them. And it tells them, because much good for them is in the camels, to invoke God's name over camels as they're lined up for sacrifice, and, telling them to feed themselves and both those who ask and those who don't ask, it says that in that way, for them to be thankful, God has subjected the camels to them. But it tells them that their piety, and not the camels' meat or blood, reaches God.

And this *surah* says God will defend the believers, that, because they've been wronged, those who've been attacked are permitted to take arms, and that God has power to help those who've been driven from their homes only for saying God's their lord. And it says that, if God didn't repel some people by means of others, many monasteries and churches and mosques where God's name is much invoked would have been destroyed. And it says that what's blind isn't people's eyes but their hearts within their breasts.

It tells Muhammad people will challenge him to hasten the punishment, that God has never sent a messenger or prophet before him into whom Satan didn't insinuate something, but that God removes what Satan insinuates, and that God then affirms his message, and it says God makes Satan's insinuations a

temptation for no one other than the sick at heart and those whose hearts are hardened.

It says God will give a generous portion to those who migrated in God's way and were killed or died and that God will help those who retaliate against aggression only commensurately and are wronged again. It asks Muhammad whether he hasn't considered how God has made everything on earth of service to him, how ships sail at God's command, and how God keeps the heavens from falling onto the earth. And it says God gave people life and will cause them to die and give them life again but that man is ungrateful.

It says God has appointed acts of devotion for each community, that on the day of resurrection he'll judge between them regarding their differences, that, were those upon whom people call besides God to combine all their forces, they couldn't create a fly, and that, if a fly took something from them, they couldn't retrieve it.

And, saying God chooses messengers from among the angels and from among men, it tells believers God has chosen those messengers and placed no hardship in their religion, and it tells them God's their protector and an excellent protector and helper.

The title of the 23<sup>rd</sup> surah is The Believers, and it's a Mecca surah. It exclaims how prosperous are the believers who pray humbly, shun idle talk, pay the prescribed alms, and guard their chastity. But it says they're not to blame for not being chaste with their spouses and slaves.

It says God produced from Mount Sinai a tree producing oil and seasoning for people's food and that God gave Mary and her son shelter on a peaceful hillside with flowing water.

And it tells messengers to eat good things and do good deeds, and it asks that God, the true king, be exalted.

The title of the 24<sup>th</sup> surah is Light, and it's a Medina surah. It directs striking adulterers and adulteresses a hundred time, not letting compassion keep people from carrying out God's law, and having a group of believers witness the punishment. Directing striking eighty times people who falsely accuse chaste women of fornication and fail to provide four witnesses, it directs rejecting those people's testimony ever after, but not if they repent and make amends. And it says only adulterers, adulteresses, or idolaters are fit to marry adulteresses or adulterers.

For those who accuse their wives of adultery but have no other witnesses, it directs letting both the husband and the wife call God four times to witness that the husband or the wife is telling the truth, and, directing calling

God to reject whichever is lying, it directs averting punishment from the wife if she follows that procedure to affirm that the husband's lying, and next it deprecates a group of people for not following that procedure and not calling the accusation monstrous slander.

And this *surah*, excepting houses no one occupies, also tells believers not to enter houses before asking permission, and it directs greeting those inside. Telling Muhammad to tell believing men and women to lower their glances and guard their private parts, it directs him to tell believing women they should let their headscarves fall to their necklines, not to reveal their charms. But it excepts them from that restriction for their husband and father, their husband's father, their sons and their husband's sons, their brothers and their brothers' and sisters' sons, their women folk, their slaves, men attending them with no sexual desire, and children not yet aware of women's nakedness. And it tells Muhammad also to tell believing women they shouldn't stamp their feet to draw attention to any hidden charms.

And it also directs that single believers and male and female slaves marry if they're fit. And, directing, if they're poor, providing for that from God's bounty, it says those unable to marry should remain chaste until God gives them enough of his bounty. But it doesn't define fitness or say how the bounty's to reach them.

It directs, if slaves wish to pay for their freedom, and one knows they have good in them, making a contract with them. And it forbids, in one's quest for short term gain in this world, forcing slave girls, when they wish to remain honorable, into prostitution. But it says that, if the slave girls are forced, God will be forgiving and merciful to them.

And it says God's the light of the heavens and earth, that God's light is like a lamp in a glass in a niche, that the glass is like a glittering star fueled from a blessed olive tree from neither east nor west, that the oil nearly gives light when no fire touches it, that it's light within light, and that God guides whom he will to the light, draws such comparisons for people, has full knowledge of all, and shines out in houses of worship.

But it says the deeds of the disbelievers are like a mirage in a desert, that thirsty persons expect water but find there only God, and that God pays their full account, that the disbelievers may be like shadows in a deep sea covered by waves on waves with clouds above layers of darkness, that, if the disbelievers hold out their hands, they can hardly see it, and that those to whom God gives no light have no light.

And this *surah* says God has promised the believers that he'll make them successors in the land as he did those who came before them and that he'll empower the religion he's chosen for them.

It tells the believers that, when they lay aside their garments in the noon heat, after the evening prayer, and before the dawn prayer, their slaves and those who haven't reached puberty should ask permission to come to them, that those are their times of privacy, that at other times they may move around one another freely and with no blame, and that, when their children have reached puberty, they should ask permission to enter as their elders do.

It says that, if elderly women not hoping for sex remove their outer garments but don't flaunt their charms, no blame will be to them, but it says their not doing that is preferable. It says that, whether the blind, lame, or sick eat in company or separately, no blame will come to them while they're eating in their house, in the houses of relatives or friends, or in houses to which they have keys. And it directs greetings of blessing and goodness upon entering any house as God enjoins.

It directs that, when those who believe in God and his messenger gather with God's messenger on a communal matter, they ask permission before departing. It tells Muhammad, if he sees it's fitting, to give permission to those who, when they ask him for permission to attend to their private affairs, ask God to forgive them. And it tells others not to regard a summons from the messenger as though they're summoning one another.

And it says that, to keep from receiving a painful punishment, those who go against Muhammad's order should beware of keeping a trial from afflicting them.

The title of the 25<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Differentiator, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It begins by saying that exalted is he who sent down the differentiator to his servant to be a warning to all people. It also says God released the two bodies of flowing water and made one sweet and fresh and the other salty and bitter, that he put an insurmountable barrier between them, and that God creates humans from fluid and makes them kin by blood and marriage. And it tells its audience to put their trust in the living god who never dies, says God created the heavens and earth in six days and then established himself on the throne, and says God's servants bypass frivolity with dignity.

The title of the 26<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Poets, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Ta Sin Mim*, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says Pharaoh asked Moses whether Pharaoh's people didn't bring him up among them and that he told Moses he was so ungrateful that he committed that crime of his. And it says Moses replied that he was misguided when he did it and fled from Pharaoh in fear but that later God gave him wisdom and made him one of his messengers.

And it extends that version of Moses' confrontation with Pharaoh into saying Pharaoh told Moses he'd imprison him if he took any god other than Pharaoh. It says Pharaoh sent messengers to all cities to proclaim that the children of Israel were a puny band while Pharaoh's people were a large alert army and had made the children of Israel leave their gardens and springs. And it says that later God gave things to the children of Israel and that he told Moses to strike the sea with his staff.

Directing telling people the story of Abraham, it says that, in reply to Abraham's asking his father and his people what they worship, they said they worshiped idols and were constantly in attendance on them, that Abraham told them God would make him die, give him life again, and forgive his faults on the day of judgement, that he asked God to give him a good name among later generations, and that he asked God to make him one of those given the garden of bliss.

And it says Noah's people asked Noah why, when the worst sort of people follow him, they should believe him, that he replied by asking them what knowledge he had of what they formerly did and by telling them bringing them to account was only for his lord, that he also told them he wouldn't drive believers away and was only there to give them clear warning, and that accordingly God saved Noah and his followers in the heavily laden ship and drowned the others. It says Hud asked the people of Ad how they could be vain enough to set up monuments in every high place, that Salih told the people of Thamud that they and the camel should have their turn to drink, and that Noah, Hud, Salih, Shu'ayb, and Lot told their people that, because their only reward was with the lord of the worlds, they asked no reward from them. And it says the *Qur'an* was sent down from the lord of the worlds.

Telling Muhammad the trustworthy spirit brought the *Qur'an* down to his heart for him to bring warning in clear Arabic language and that scriptures of earlier religions foretold that, it asks whether the learned men of the children of Israel recognize that isn't enough proof for people, and it says people wouldn't have believed it if God had sent it down to someone who wasn't an Arab and recited it to them.

And, saying that accordingly God makes the *Qu'ran* pass through the hearts of the guilty and that they won't believe it until they see the grievous restraint, it asks how they can ask for God's punishment to come to them sooner.

It says the jinn didn't bring down the *Qur'an*, that it's neither in their interest nor in their power, and that they're prevented from hearing it. Telling Muhammad to warn his nearest kin and lower his wing tenderly over the believers who follow him, and telling him those to whom the jinn come down are every lying sinner who readily lends an ear to them, it says most of the jinn

are liars. And, telling him that only those lost in error follow the poets, it asks him whether he doesn't see how the poets rove aimlessly in every valley and whether he doesn't see how they say what they don't do.

The title of the 27<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Ants, and it's first verse is the Arabic letters *Ta Sin*, and it's a Mecca *surah*. In it, in a version of the story of Moses and the burning bush, Moses tells his family he's seen a fire and will bring either good news from there or a burning stick for them to warm themselves. And it says God gave knowledge to David and Solomon, that both praised God, and that God favored them over his believing servants.

And it says Solomon succeeded David and told people that he and David had been taught the speech of birds, that they'd been given a share of everything, and that it was a great favor, and, in this *surah*, Solomon's hosts of jinn, men, and birds are marshalled in order before him, and they come to the valley of the ants.

There an ant tells the other ants to go into their homes to keep Solomon and his hosts from unwittingly crushing them. And Solomon smiles broadly at her words and asks God to inspire him to be thankful for the blessings God granted to him and his parents. And, asking to do deeds that please God, he asks God to admit him by his grace into God's ranks of righteous servants.

And next Solomon inspects the birds and asks why he doesn't see the hoopoe. And, asking whether the hoopoe is absent, he says that, if the hoopoe doesn't bring him a convincing excuse for his absence, he'll punish him severely or kill him. But the hoopoe isn't absent long and tells Solomon he's come from Sheba with firm news and that he's learned something Solomon doesn't know.

He tells Solomon he's found a woman who's been given a share of everything, has a magnificent throne, and is ruling over people, but that he's found that she and her people worship the sun instead of God, and, saying they do that because of Satan, he summarizes some Islamic notions of God and asks Solomon whether they shouldn't be worshiping God, and Solomon, telling the hoopoe he'll see whether the hoopoe's telling the truth, tells him to take a letter of his to the people of Sheba and withdraw and see what they answer.

The Queen of Sheba, telling her counsellors she's received a gracious letter from Solomon telling her to be Islamic, asks them to advise her. So, advising her to consider what orders to give them, they tell her they have force and power in war but that she's in command. And she says that, when kings go into cities, they ruin them and humiliate their leaders.

But she also says she'll send a gift and see what answer her envoys bring back, and Solomon, asking her envoys whether they're bringing him wealth, tells them that what God has given him is better than what God has

given them and that he'll come upon them with irresistible forces and drive them, disgraced and humbled, from their land.

And, after telling them to go back to their people, he asks his counsellors which of them, before they come to him in submission, can bring him the queen's throne, and a powerful and crafty jinn says he's strong and trustworthy enough and can bring it before Solomon can rise from his seat. But a jinn who knows some scripture says he'll bring the throne in the twinkling of an eye, and, seeing the throne before him, Solomon says it's a favor from his lord, to test his gratitude. And then he directs disguising the throne to see if the queen recognizes it.

When she arrives, she asks whether it's her throne and says it resembles it, and Solomon says he and others there were given knowledge before she, that they devoted themselves to God, and that, because she came from a disbelieving people, what she worshiped besides God prevented her from that. He tells her to enter the hall, but, when she sees it, she thinks it's a deep pool of water and bares her legs, and Solomon explains that it's but a hall paved with glass, and, calling him her lord, she says she's wronged herself and devotes herself with Solomon to God, the lord of the worlds. And next this *surah* tells another version of the story of Salih and the people of Thamud.

In this version the people divide into rival factions, and nine men direct one faction to swear by God that they'll attack Salih's household in the night and tell his next of kin they didn't witness the destruction. But the other faction makes a plan of which the nine men aren't aware, and a result is the destruction of the nine men and their people and their homes. And next in this *surah* is version of the story of Lot that says God made Lot's wife stay behind.

And this *surah* also tells Muhammad to ask whether a god besides God created a barrier between fresh water and salt water and to say that, excepting God, no one in the heavens or on earth knows the unseen, and, to tell disbelievers their knowledge can't comprehend the hereafter, sends the winds as heralds of good news before his mercy.

And it says the *Qur'an* explains to the children of Israel their disagreement with one another. But it tells Muhammad that, excepting those who believe in God's signs and submit, he can't make anyone hear him. And it says that, when the verdict is given against the disbelievers, God will bring a creature out of the earth to tell them people had no faith in God's revelations, that, because of the disbelievers' wrongdoing, the verdict will be given against them, and that they won't then speak. And it tells people they'll see the mountains and think they're firmly fixed but that they'll float away like clouds.

The title of the 28<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Story, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Ta Sin Mim*, and it's a Mecca *surah*.

Telling Muhammad it's recounting to him part of the story of Moses and Pharaoh, it contains many details of that story that aren't in other *surahs*, and one detail is reference to a servant of Pharaoh's it calls Haman. Another is mixing the *Miqra*'s story of Moses finding refuge with the Midianites with the *Miqra*'s story of Jacob in Mesopotamia, and an element of that mixture is its saying Moses' father-in-law asked Moses to serve him eight years to marry his daughter. And it also tells Muhammad he wasn't present when God gave his commands to Moses, but that he was sent as an act of grace to warn people, and that he didn't live among the people of Midian or recite God's revelation to them.

And it says that, because they're steadfast, repel evil with good, and give to others from what God has provided for them, people who've responded to God's revelation's being recited to them by saying they believe in it and had devoted themselves to God before it came would be given their rewards twice. And also, with those reasons for rewards, it lists people's turning away when they hear frivolous talk, telling those who frivolously talk that their deeds are different from theirs, and not seeking company of ignorant people but asking that peace be with them. And, in the context of its saying God destroyed communities that had wallowed in their wealth and easy living, this *surah* tells Muhammad that people tell him that, were they to follow his guidance, they'd be swept from their land.

And it says one of Moses' people it calls Qarun had treasures whose keys would have weighed down a company of strong men, that Moses told him not to gloat but to seek the life to come by means of what God granted him, that Qarun replied that his wealth had been given to him because of his knowledge, and that God caused the earth to swallow him.

Perhaps that's a version of the story of Korah in the *Torah*.

The title of the 29<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Spider, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim*, and it's a Mecca *surah*.

It says God has commanded people to be good to their parents. But it forbids their obeying parents' striving to make them serve anything besides God of which they have no knowledge. And it says God doesn't need his creatures and that, when some people suffer for God's cause, they say they believe in God but think human persecution is as severe as God's punishment.

It says God sent Noah to his people and that Noah lived among his people for 950 years but that they were still doing evil when the flood overwhelmed them. It says the only answer Abraham's people gave him was to



direct killing or burning him, that Lot said he'd flee to his lord, and that his people told him, if what he said was true, to bring God's punishment down on them. And it refers again to the people of Midian and Thamud and to Qarun, Pharaoh, and Haman.

It says those who take protectors other than God can be compared to spiders building themselves houses that are the frailest of all houses, and it tells Muhammad to argue with the people of the book only in the best way, to tell them Muslims believe in what was revealed to them and in what was revealed to the people of the book, and to tell them the Muslims' god and their god are one god and that Muslims devote themselves to him.

It tells Muhammad he never recited a scripture before he recited the *Qur'an*, that he never wrote one with his own hand, and that, if he had, those who follow falsehood would have had cause to doubt, and it says the *Qur'an* is clear to the hearts of those with knowledge.

It tells Muhammad that people challenge him to hasten the punishment and that, if God hadn't set a time for it, they'd have received it already. It says God shall lodge believers who've done good deeds in lofty dwellings in the garden graced with flowing streams, and it says they'll remain there. And it says the life of this world is but an amusing diversion.

The title of the thirtieth *surah* is The Byzantines, and it's first verse is the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim*, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says the Byzantines have been defeated in a nearby country but that they'll reverse the defeat in a few years. And it says that on that day the believers will rejoice.

It says one of God's signs is that he created spouses from among people for them to live in tranquility and that he ordained love and kindness between them, and it says that among God's signs are people's sleeping by night and day and their seeking his bounty. It says an example of God's wisdom is the question of whether people make their slaves full partners with an equal share in what God has given them, and, asking whether people fear their slaves as they fear one another, it says that, in that way, to those who use their reason, God makes his messages clear. And it says that what people lend in usury to gain value through other people's wealth won't increase in God's eyes but that what people give in charity in their desire for God's approval will earn multiple rewards.

And, saying God sends the winds, that they stir up the clouds, that he spreads the clouds across the skies as he pleases and makes them break up, and that we see rain falling from them, it directs seeing how, while people may lose hope before rain is sent, they rejoice when God makes it fall upon any of his servants, as he wills.

Directing looking at the imprints of God's mercy in how he restores the earth to life after death, it says the same god will return people to earth after death. But, saying that, if they see their crops turn yellow if God sends a wind, disbelievers will continue to disbelieve in God, it tells Muhammad he can't make the deaf hear after they've turned their backs and leave, and that he can't lead the blind from their error. And it tells him God creates him weak and gives him strength and that after strength he gives him weakness with his grey hair. But it tells him not to let those with no firm beliefs discourage him.

The title of the 31<sup>st</sup> *surah* is Luqman, and its first verse is also the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It says a sort of person, intending with no knowledge to lead others from God's way and hold it to ridicule, pays for distracting tales. And it says that, when God's verses are recited to that sort of person, God turns disdainfully away as though he hadn't heard them, and it says a humiliating restraint will be for that sort of person.

But it says God endowed Luqman with wisdom. It says Luqman told his son not to attribute partners to God, that doing that is a terrible wrong, and that, because God's all subtle and all aware, if the weight of a mustard seed were hidden in a rock or anywhere in the heavens or earth, he'd show it. It says that, because God doesn't love arrogant or boastful people, Luqman told his son not to turn up his nose at people or walk about arrogantly, and it says that, because the ugliest of all voices is the braying of asses, he told his son to go at a moderate pace and lower his voice. And, saying Luqman also told his son other Islamic doctrines, this *surah* also repeats others to Muhammad.

The title of the 32<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is Bowing Down in Worship, and its first verse is also the Arabic letters *Alif Lam Mim*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It says God created man from clay, that he made man's descendants from an extract of underrated fluid, and that he molded man and breathed his spirit into him. And it says he gave us hearing, sight, and minds.

It says the only people believing in God's messages are those who bow down in worship, celebrate their lord's praises, and, when they're reminded of God's messages, don't think they're above that.

And it says that, to pray to their lord in fear and hope, their sides shun their beds.

The title of the 33<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is The Joint Forces, and it's a Medina *surah*. It says God doesn't put two hearts in a man's breast, that he doesn't turn into men's mothers the wives men reject and say are like their mothers' backs, and

that he doesn't make men's adopted sons into their sons. And it says those are words from people's mouths while God speaks truth.

Directing naming adopted sons for their fathers, it says doing that is equitable in God's eyes and that, if one doesn't know the adopted sons' fathers, the adopted sons remain one's proteges and brothers in religion. It says Muhammad's more protective toward believers than they are to themselves and that Muhammad's wives are believers' mothers but that in God's scripture blood relatives have a stronger claim than have other believers and emigrants. And it says that, while that's written in scripture, one may bestow gifts on one's proteges.

It tells Muhammad that God took a solemn pledge from him, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Mary's son Jesus, and that God will question the truthful about their sincerity. It describes a situation at Medina exemplifying what it's previously said of God's help, God's rewarding, and people's cowardice and dishonesty concerning fighting. And it says God knows who hinders others from fighting.

It tells believers to remember God's goodness to them when he sent a violent wind and invisible forces against mighty armies massed against them, and, telling Muhammad he sees those hindering others when fear comes, as he sees their looking at him with eyes rolling as though they're in death throws, it tells him that, when their fear has passed, they attack him with sharp tongues.

And it tells him such people don't believe, that God brings their deeds to nothing, that they think the joint forces haven't gone, and that, were the joint forces to come again, they'd wish they were in the desert, wandering among the Bedouin and seeking news of Muhammad. But it says that, when the believers saw the joint forces, they said it was what God and his messenger had promised them. And it says seeing them increased their faith and submission to God.

It says that among the believers are some men who honored their pledge to God by death and some who are yet waiting. It says God sent back the disbelievers with their rage and spared the believers from fighting, that he brought the people of the book who supported the disbelievers down from their strongholds, and that he put panic into their hearts. And it tells the believers they killed some of them and captured some and that God passed on to the believers their houses and other possessions and their land where the believers hadn't set foot. Presumably the joint forces are the disbelievers and the people of the book who supported them.

And this *surah* also tells Muhammad to tell his wives that, if their desire is for the present life and its finery, he'll make provision for them and release them with kindness, but it tells him to tell them that, if they desire God and his messenger and the final home, God has prepared great rewards for those

of them who do good. And it tells the wives of the prophet that any of them who do something clearly outrageous will be doubly punished, that God will give those who obey God and his messenger and do good deeds a double reward, and that God has prepared a generous provision for those who do that. And it tells them they're not like other women.

It tells them not to speak too softly, for the sick at heart for them to lust after them. It tells them to stay at home and not flaunt their finery as they did in the pagan past, and it tells them God wishes to keep uncleanness away from them and the people of the house and to purify them thoroughly, and it tells them to remember what, of God's revelations and wisdom, is recited in their houses. And it says whoever disobeys God and his messenger is far astray.

But next it tells Muhammad that, when he told a man favored by him and God to keep his wife and be mindful of God, Muhammad hid what was in his heart that God would reveal later. And it tells him that, when Zayd no longer desired his wife, God, for no fault to be in believers' marrying the wives of their adopted sons after they no longer desire them, gave her to Muhammad in marriage. Presumably Zayd is the man Muhammad and God favored and the man Muhammad told to keep his wife, and, presumably, before marrying the wife after the divorce, Muhammad adopted him.

And this *surah* says Muhammad isn't the father of any man, that he's God's messenger and the seal of the prophets, and that God sent him as a witness and bearer of good news and warning, as one who calls people to God by God's leave, and as a light-giving lamp. And it tells him God has made lawful to him the wives whose bride gift he's paid, any slaves God has assigned through war, and the daughters of his uncles and aunts who migrated with him. And it also says that, if he wishes to marry her, God has made lawful to him any believing woman who offers herself to him. But, saying that provision isn't for other believers, it restricts it to Muhammad.

And this *surah* also tells Muhammad he may receive any of his wives or make any of them wait, as he wishes. It tells him he won't be at fault for receiving a wife whose previous turn he's set aside and that doing that will increase the likelihood of his wives' being satisfied and not distressed. And it says it'll increase the likelihood of all of them being content with what he's given them.

But it tells him he's not permitted to take any further wives or to exchange the wives he has for others, and it says those who attract him with their beauty are no exception, but it excepts his slave girls from that.

And it tells believers, if they haven't received permission, not to enter Muhammad's rooms for a meal, and it tells them not to linger until the meal is ready. And, telling those believers to leave when they've taken their meal, it

says staying and talking would offend the prophet. But it says he'd shrink from asking them to leave.

It tells believers their requests from the prophet's wives should be from behind a screen and that compliance with that is purer for their hearts and the hearts of the prophet's wives. And it tells believers that offending God's messenger isn't right and that they shouldn't marry his wives after him. And it says those who insult God and his messenger will be rejected in this world and the next.

For Muhammad's wives and daughters and other female believers to be recognized but not be insulted, it tells Muhammad to tell them to make their garments hang low over them. And it tells him that, if the hypocrites, the sick at heart, and those spreading lies in the city don't desist, God will rouse him against them. And it says they'll be arrested and killed wherever they're found.

And it tells Muhammad that such has been God's practice with his predecessors and that he'll find no change in God's practice.

The title of the 34<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Sheba, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says God made a fountain of molten brass for Solomon and that, with God's permission, some of the jinn worked under his control. And it says that, if one of them deviated from God's command, God let him taste the suffering of the blazing fire.

And, specifying palaces, statues, basins, and cauldrons, it says the jinn made for Solomon anything he wanted. But it says that, when God decreed Solomon's death, only a creature of the earth eating at his stick showed the jinn Solomon was dead. And, saying they realized it when the creature fell down, it says that, if they'd known, they wouldn't have continued their labor.

It says God made a sign for the people of Sheba, that the sign was a garden on the left of their dwelling place and another on the right, and that he told them to eat what their lord provided and to give him thanks. But it says they didn't heed and that he let loose a flood from a dam and replaced the gardens with gardens yielding bitter fruit, tamarisk bushes, and a few lote trees. And it says God placed, between them and towns God had blessed, towns within sight of each other to which they could travel easily.

And it says he told them to travel in the land safely by night and day. But it says they complained of the distance between the towns and that God scattered those people in countless fragments. And it says that, while Satan had no authority over them, he was right in his opinion of them.

It says that, on the day on which God gathers people together, he'll ask the angels whether the disbelievers worshiped them. It says the angels, asking that God be exalted, will tell him he's their supporter against the disbelievers,

that the disbelievers worshiped the jinn, and that most of them believed in the jinn. And it says that then God will tell the disbelievers and the jinn that on that day neither has power to benefit the other.

And it tells Muhammad to tell people he advises them to do but one thing, to stand before God singly or in pairs and think no madness is in their companion, and it tells him to tell them he's only warning them before severe suffering arrives.

The title of the 35<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Creator, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It praises God, the creator of the heavens and earth who made angels with two, three, or four wings, and it says God adds to creation as he will. And it asks whether any other creator gives us sustenance from the heavens and earth.

Saying Satan's our enemy, it tells us to treat him as an enemy, and it says God created us from dust and later from a drop of fluid. It says the two bodies of water aren't alike, that one's palatable, sweet, and pleasant to drink while the other's salty and bitter, but that we eat fresh fish and extract ornaments to wear from each and see ships plowing their course in each, for us to seek God's bounty and be grateful. And it says no burdened soul will bear another's burden, not if a heavily laden soul cries for help, and not if it's a close relative. And it says God keeps the heavens and earth from vanishing.

And, asking whether the disbelievers haven't traveled the land and seen how their predecessors ended, it says that, if God punished people for the wrong they've done, no creature would remain on the surface of the earth.

The 36<sup>th</sup> *surah* is a Mecca *surah*, and its title and its first verse are the Arabic letters *Ya Sin*. It tells Muhammad that, by the wise *Qur'an*, he's one of the messengers sent on a straight path, with a revelation from the almighty lord of mercy, to warn people whose forefathers weren't warned. And it says God will bring the dead back to life and record both what they send ahead of them and what they leave behind.

It says God sent two messengers to a town and sent a third, that people of the town told them they were men like themselves and were a lying evil omen, that a man came running to them from the furthest part of the city and told them to follow the messengers, and that the man was told to enter the garden.

It says night's a sign for people, that God strips light from it for people to be in darkness, that the sun can't overtake the moon, that the night can't outrun the day, that another sign is that God carried people's seed in the ark, and that God made things similar to the ark for them to ride, but that they ignore every sign that comes to them from their lord.

It says that, while they're awaiting a blast to overtake them while they're arguing with one another, they'll have no time to make bequests or to return to their people, that the trumpet will sound, that they'll run from their graves to their lord and ask who resurrected them from their resting places, that the lord of mercy promised them that, that the messengers told the truth, and that God will ask the children of Adam whether he didn't tell them to serve him and not to serve Satan.

It says that on that day God will seal up their mouths but that their hands will speak to God and that their feet will bear witness to all they've done. And it says that, if God had willed it, he could have paralyzed them to keep them from moving backward or forward. And it says that, if God extends anyone's life, he reverses his development.

And it says God hasn't taught the prophet poetry, that the prophet could never have been a poet, and that God created fire for us from a green tree.

The title of the 37<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Ranged in Rows, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It swears, by those ranged in rows who rebuke reproachfully, that our God is one. It says God has adorned the lowest heaven with stars and made them a safeguard against every rebellious devil and that the rebellious devils can't eavesdrop on the higher assembly. It says that, pelted from every side and driven away, those devils will have perpetual restraint. And it says that, if one of them steals a fragment, a flame will pursue him.

But it says God's servants will be honored and have familiar provisions of fruits in gardens of delight, that they'll be seated on couches facing one another, that drinks from a flowing stream, drinks that are white and delicious to those tasting them and that cause no headiness or intoxication, will be passed among them, and that with them will be spouses with modest gazes and beautiful eyes like protected eggs.

It says God's servants will turn to one other and say they had a companion on earth who asked them whether they believed they'd be brought to judgement after dying and becoming dust and bones, that they'll ask whether they should look for that companion, that they'll look down and see him in the fire and tell him that by God he nearly brought them to ruin, that they'll ask one another whether they'll never die again and never suffer, that everyone should strive to attain that, and that they'll call it the supreme triumph.

And it says it's better than the tree of Zaqqum, a tree with fruit like devils' heads that's growing in the heart of the fire, that God made that tree a test for the evildoers, and that they'll fill their bellies from it, drink scalding water on top of it, and return to the fire.

And it also tells a version of the story of God commanding Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. In this version Abraham tells his son he dreamed of sacrificing him and that God told him to do it, and the son tells Abraham to do what God commanded and says that, God willing, he'll find him steadfast. And, when Abraham lays his son down, God tells him he's fulfilled the dream.

And, saying that in that way God rewards those who do good, this *surah* says it was a test and that God ransomed the son with a momentous sacrifice and let him be praised by future generations, and it says God gave Abraham the good news of the prophet and righteous man Isaac, that he blessed Abraham and Isaac and some of their ancestors, and that some of them were good while some wronged themselves.

Saying Elijah was one of God's messengers people rejected and that Elijah asked his people how they could invoke Baal and forsake the most gracious creator, it asks that Elijah be praised by succeeding generations and that peace be upon him, and it says that in that way God rewards those who do good. And, asking whether we won't take heed, it says that morning and night we pass the ruins of the people of Lot, whom God destroyed.

And it says Jonah was one of God's messengers but fled to an overloaded ship. It says the people cast lots, that Jonah suffered a loss, and that, because he'd committed blameworthy acts, a great fish swallowed him. But it says that, if he hadn't been one who glorified God, he'd have stayed in the fish's belly until the day we're all raised up, but that God cast him out sick onto a barren shore, made a gourd tree grow above him, sent him to a hundred thousand or more people, and let them live out their lives because they believed.

Telling Muhammad to ask the disbelievers whether their lord has daughters while they choose sons for themselves, it asks whether God created the angels as females while the disbelievers were watching, and it says he didn't and that one of their lies is that God has begotten. And, asking whether God chose daughters in preference to sons, it tells the disbelievers, if they're telling the truth, to bring their scriptures. And it says they claim God has kinship with the jinn while the jinn know they'll be brought before God.

And it says the angels say each angel has his appointed place, that they're arranged in ranks, and that they glorify God.

The title and the first word of the first verse of the 38<sup>th</sup> *surah* is the Arabic letter *Sad*. Saying God gave David wisdom and a decisive way of speaking, it mixes the story of Solomon and the two harlots' babies with the story of Nathan rebuking David for what he did to Uriah by telling David the story of the wealthy man who took the lamb from the man who had but one and raised it as his daughter, and this version doesn't mention the harlots, the baby,



or Uriah. It says two litigants who were brothers went to David to dispute the right of the wealthy man to take the lamb, that David, realizing God was testing him, asked for his lord's forgiveness and fell to his knees and repented, and that God forgave him. And this *surah* says many partners treat one another unfairly but that those who believe and do good deeds don't.

And it also tells a story of testing Solomon. In this story, when well-bred light-footed horses are paraded before Solomon at the end of a day, he says his love of fine things is part of his remembering his lord, but the horses disappear, and Solomon asks that they be brought back and begins stroking their necks, and God reduces him to a skeleton on this throne. So Solomon asks God to forgive him and grant him more power than anyone after him would have, and God responds by giving him power over the wind, the jinn, every kind of builder and diver, and people in fetters.

And next this *surah* directs bringing to mind God's servant Job. It says Job cried to his lord that Satan had afflicted him with weariness and suffering, that God, telling Job to stamp his foot, told him cold water was there for him to wash and drink, and that God restored his family to him with many more like them. And it says that, for Job not to break his oath, God told him to strike with a small bunch of grass. But it says neither whom or what Job was to strike nor what was his oath.

The title of the 39<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Throngs, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says those who've rejected the truth will be led to hell in their throngs and that those who were mindful of their lord will be led in throngs to the garden. And generally it's a summary of Islamic doctrine.

## Chapter 24

### Surahs Forty through 114

The title of the fortieth *surah* is The Forgiver, and its first verse is the Arabic letters *Ha Mim*, and it's a Mecca *surah*.

Telling Muhammad not to be dazzled by the disbelievers' movement back and forth across the land, it says those who carry the throne and those who surround it praise the lord and have faith in him, and it tells Muhammad to beg forgiveness for the believers.

And it also says that, when Pharaoh told his people to kill the sons of those who believed in Moses but to spare their daughters, he told them to leave killing Moses to him. It says a secret believer from Pharaoh's family asked Pharaoh how he could kill a man only for saying his lord is God, that the believer told his people that he feared their fate would be that of the people of Noah, Ad, Thamud, and others who came after them, and that he also told them Joseph came to them with clear signs. And it says he told them they never stopped believing the message Joseph brought them and that they said when Joseph died that God would bring them another messenger.

And it says Pharaoh told Haman he was convinced Moses was lying. But it says that, to look for the God of Moses, Pharaoh also told Haman to build him a tower for him to reach the ropes leading to the heavens. And it says that in that way the evil of Pharaoh's deed was made alluring to him, that he was barred from the right path, and that his scheming led only to ruin.

And this *surah* says the secret believer also summarized Islamic doctrine for his people. It says that, on the day on which the hour comes, Pharaoh's people will be directed to be thrown into the worst restraint, that they'll quarrel with one another, and that the weak, telling the haughty they were the haughty's followers, will ask them to relieve them from a share of the fire. And it says the haughty will reply that they're all in it together and that God has judged between his creatures.

It says that those in the fire will ask the keepers of hell to lessen their suffering for one day, that the keepers will ask them whether their messengers

didn't come to them with clear evidence of the truth, that they'll reply affirmatively, that the keepers will tell them they can plead but that the pleas of disbelievers will always be in vain, that, on the day when excuses won't profit the evildoers, it'll be their rejection, and that they'll have the worst of homes.

And it also says the creation of the heavens and earth is far greater than the creation of mankind. And it tells Muhammad to say that, since clear evidence has come to him from his lord, he's forbidden to serve those upon whom people call besides God and that he's commanded to submit to the lord of the worlds. And it tells him to tell people that God created them from dust, then from a drop of fluid, and then from a tiny clinging form, that then he brought them forth as infants and allowed them to reach maturity and grow old but that some of them die sooner, and that God's letting them reach their appointed term is for them to reflect.

The title of the 41<sup>st</sup> *surah* is Made Distinct, and it's first verse is also the Arabic letters *Ha Mim*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It says it's a scripture whose verses are made distinct as a *Qur'an* in Arabic for people who understand, but that most turn away and don't hear. And it says those who turn away tell the believers to do whatever they want and that so shall they.

It says God created the earth in two days and that, in two more days, he placed mountains on it. It says the sky was smoke, that God turned to it and told it and the earth to come into being, willing or not, and that the sky and the earth said they'd come willing. And it says that, in two more days, God formed the seven heavens, assigned an order to each, and made the nearest heaven beautifully illuminated and secure.

And it says the fire will be the lasting home of the disbelievers, that they'll tell God to show them the jinn and men who misled them, and that, for them to be the lowest of the low, they'll trample them. But it says that, for those who say their lord is God and take the straight path toward him, angels will come down and tell them to have no fear or grief and to rejoice in the good news of paradise they've been promised. And it says the angels will also tell them they're their allies in this world and in the world to come.

It says the angels will also tell them that in the world to come, as a gift from the most forgiving and most merciful one, they'll have everything they desire and request. And, saying good and evil can't be equal, it tells Muhammad that, if he repels evil with good, his enemy will be as close as an old and valued friend. But it tells him that only those who are steadfast in patience and blessed with great righteousness will attain such goodness. And it tells him, if a promise from Satan stirs him, to seek refuge with God.

And, saying the day, the night, the sun, and the moon are but a few of God's signs, it tells its audience not to bow down in worship to the sun and the moon but to bow down to God, who created them.

The title of the 42<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is Consolation, and its first and second verses are the Arabic letters *Ha Mim* and *'Ayn Sin Qaf*, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says that, as the angels proclaim the praises of their lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth, the heavens are nearly broken apart from above. And it tells Muhammad that God has revealed an Arabic *Qur'an* to him for him to warn the mother of cities and all who live near it.

Saying the keys of the heavens and the earth are God's, it tells people God has laid down for them the commandment he gave to Noah, and it tells Muhammad he's revealed it to him and enjoined upon Abraham, Moses, and Jesus to uphold the faith and not divide into factions within it. It tells Muhammad that what he calls upon the idolaters to do is difficult for them, that they didn't divide out of rivalry until knowledge had come to them, and that, if God hadn't already passed a decree to reprieve them until an appointed time, they'd have been judged already. And it says those who inherited the scripture after Abraham, Moses, and Jesus are in disquieting doubt about it.

Saying God has sent down the scripture with truth and balance, it says the arguments of those who argue about God after he's been acknowledged have no weight with their lord, that anger will fall upon them, and that an agonizing restraint awaits them.

And it says no mortal has granted that God should speak to him other than through revelation, from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger to reveal, by God's command, what God wills.

The title of the 43<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is Ornaments of God, and its first verse is also the Arabic letters *Ha Mim*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*.

Saying God has made a *Qur'an* in Arabic for people to understand and that it's exalted in the original scripture, it says disbelievers ask why the *Qur'an* wasn't sent down to a distinguished man from either of the two cities. And, asking whether they're the ones who share God's grace, it says God gives them their share of livelihood in this world, that he's raised in rank some of them above others, and that, if mankind might not have become a single nation, God could have given disbelievers houses with rooves of silver, sweeping staircases to ascend, massive gates, couches on which to sit, and golden ornaments. But it says those are but enjoyments of this life and that God reserves the next life for those who heed him.

And it also says Pharaoh and his courtiers called Moses a sorcerer and told him they'd accept guidance if by his pledge he called upon his lord for them, but that, as soon as God relieved their restraint, they broke their word. It also says Pharaoh asked his people whether the kingdom of Egypt and the rivers flowing at his feet weren't his and that he asked whether they couldn't see and whether he wasn't better than that contemptible wretch who could hardly express himself. And it says he asked why God hadn't give Moses gold bracelets and why no angels had accompanied him, that in that way Pharaoh moved his people to accept and obey him, and that they were a perverse people.

And it tells Muhammad that, when the son of Mary is cited as an example, Muhammad's people laugh and jeer. And, saying they ask whether their gods or the son of Mary are better, it tells Muhammad that his people cite the son of Mary only to challenge him and that they're contentious people. But it also tells him the son of Mary was but a servant God favored and made an example for the children of Israel.

And it says God could have made us angels on earth succeeding one another.

The title of the 44<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Smoke, and it's first verse is also the Arabic letters *Ha Mim*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It swears by the scripture that makes things clear that God sent it down on a blessed night when every matter of wisdom was made distinct by God's command. And it tells Muhammad to watch for the day when the sky brings forth clouds of smoke for all to see.

It says the smoke will envelop people and that they'll cry that it's a terrible restraint, cry to God for him to relieve them from it, and cry that they believe. And, asking how that faith will benefit them, it says God shall restrain the restraint, for a time. But it says that, on the day on which he seizes mightily, he'll exact retribution.

Presumably referring either to this world in general or to Mecca, it says people here say nothing is beyond their only death and that they tell Muhammad, if what he says is true, to bring back their forefathers. And, asking whether they're better than the people of Tubba and their predecessors who flourished, it says the people of Tubba were guilty and that God destroyed them, and it says that, when God created the heavens and the earth and everything between, he wasn't playing a purposeless game but created them for a true purpose most people don't comprehend, and it says the day of decision is the time appointed for all and that the tree of Zaqqum will be food for all sinners. But it says God shall wed those who are mindful of God to maidens with large dark eyes.

The title of the 45<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Kneeling, and its first verse is also the Arabic letters *Ha Mim*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It says God gave wisdom and prophethood to the children of Israel, provided them with good things, favored them above others, and gave them clear proof in matters, but that, out of rivalry, after knowledge came to them, they differed among themselves. And it says that, on the day of resurrection, God will judge between them regarding their differences.

It says the true purpose for which God created the heavens and earth is to reward each soul in accordance with its deeds, that they won't be wronged, that every community will be summoned to its record, and that we'll see every community kneeling.

And it says they'll be told there's a record telling the truth about them and that on that day they'll be repaid for what they did.

The title of the 46<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Sand Dunes, and its first verse is also the Arabic letters *Ha Mim*, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It says God created the heavens, the earth, and everything between for a true purpose and a specific term. And it says Hud of Ad warned his people among the sand dunes.

The title of the 47<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Muhammad, and it's a Medina *surah*. It says God will bring to nothing the deeds of those who disbelieve and bar others from the way of God, but it says he'll overlook the bad deeds of those who do good deeds and believe in the truth from their lord, what's been sent down to Muhammad. And it says God will put them into a good state.

And it directs striking the disbelievers in their necks when they meet them in battle, and it directs binding defeated captives firmly until the toils of war have ended, but it permits then releasing the captives, either by grace or for ransom.

It says God could defeat the disbelievers but that his purpose is to test some people by means of others. It says he won't let the deeds of those killed for his cause come to nothing and that he'll guide them, put them into a good state, and admit them into the garden he's made known to them. And it tells the believers that, if they help God, he'll help them and make them stand firm.

And it describes the garden promised to the pious. It says rivers of forever pure water and forever fresh milk, rivers of wine that are a delight to those who drink, and rivers of clarified and pure honey flow in it. And it says that there the believers will find fruit of every kind and find forgiveness from their lord.

It asks how disbelievers will feel when the angels take them in death and beat their faces and their backs, and it tells Muhammad that God could point out the corrupt at heart to him and that he could identify them by their marks, but that he can recognize them by the tone of their speech.

And it tells the believers they have the upper hand and not to cry for peace. It tells them God doesn't ask them to give up their possessions, that they'd begrudge him if he asked or pressed them for them, and that God will bring their ill will to light but won't begrudge them the reward for their good deeds. And it says some are called upon to give for the sake of God but that some are grudging.

And it tells them the life of this world is but a game and a pastime, but that, if they believe and are mindful of God, he'll recompense them. And it tells them that, if they turn away, God will substitute for them people not like them. And it says people who grudge only grudge themselves.

The title of the 48<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Triumph, and it's a Medina *surah*. It tells Muhammad that God has opened a path to clear triumph for him for God to forgive him his past and future sins, complete his grace on him, guide him on a straight path, and help him mightily. And it says that, to add faith to the believers, God made his tranquility descend on them.

It tells Muhammad that those who pledge their loyalty to him are pledging loyalty to God, that God has placed his hand on theirs, that anyone who breaks his pledge does it to his own detriment, and that God will give a great reward to those who fulfil their pledge. It tells Muhammad that God was pleased with believers who swore allegiance to him beneath a tree, that he knew what was in their hearts and sent tranquility down to them, and that he gave them a great and speedy triumph. And it tells him to tell the desert Arabs who stayed behind that they'll be called upon to face mighty people in war and that God will reward them well if they fight. But it tells him to tell them God will punish them severely if they turn away as they have.

And it tells the believers that God hastened the triumph. It tells them that, had the disbelievers fought against them, they'd have fled and found no one to protect or support them. And it promises them future gains over which they'll have no power.

It tells the believers that God held the disbelievers' hands back from them in the valley of Mecca, that those were the disbelievers who barred them from the sacred mosque and prevented offerings from reaching the place of sacrifice, that they didn't know that among the disbelievers were some believing men and women or that they'd have incurred guilt by trampling them, and that God brings to mercy whomever he will.

And it tells them God fulfilled his messenger's vision that they might, with no fear and with their heads shaved or their hair cropped, safely enter the sacred mosque, and it tells them God knew what they didn't know and granted them a speedy triumph.

Saying again that Muhammad's the messenger of God, it says those who follow Muhammad are harsh toward the disbelievers and compassionate with one another, and, telling the believers that the disbelievers see them kneeling and prostrating and seeking God's bounty and pleasure and that the believers bear on their faces the marks of their prostrations, it says the *Torah* and the Gospel pictures them thus, that they're like a seed putting forth its shoot, becoming strong, growing thick, and rising on its stem to delight its sowers, and that God infuriates the disbelievers through them.

The title of the 49<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Private Rooms, and it's also a Medina *surah*. It tells believers not to push themselves forward in the presence of God and his messenger and not to raise their voices above the prophet's as they do to one another. And it tells them that, if they do, their deeds may be cancelled.

It says God has proved to be aware of those who lower their voices in the presence of God's messenger. It says they'll have forgiveness and a great reward but that most of the people who shout to him from outside his private rooms lack understanding, and it says that better for them would be waiting patiently for him to come out to them. But it says God's forgiving and merciful.

It also tells believers, for them to avoid wronging others unwittingly and regretting that, to verify news from troublemakers. And it tells them to be aware that God's messenger is among them and that, were they to follow their wishes, they'd suffer in many matters. And it tells them to try to reconcile groups of believers who were fighting one another.

It tells believers, if one group is clearly oppressing the other, to fight the oppressors until they submit to God's command, and then to make peace. It tells them no group of men or women should jeer at other groups who may be better than they, and it tells them not to speak ill of one another behind one another's backs or otherwise, and it tells them not to use offensive nicknames. And it asks how bad is being called a mischief-maker after accepting faith.

It says God created people from a single man and woman and, for them to recognize one another, made them into races and tribes. Saying the desert Arabs say they have faith, it tells Muhammad to tell them they don't have faith and instead should say they've submitted. And it tells him to tell them that, if they obey God and his messenger, God will diminish any of their deeds.



And, telling him those desert Arabs think they've favored him by submitting, it tells him to tell them not to consider their submission favor to him but that God has favored them by guiding them to faith.

The fiftieth surah is a Mecca *surah*, and the Arabic letter *Qaf* is both its title and the first word of its first verse. It says the disbelievers, amazed that a warner has come from among them, exclaim that returning to life after becoming dust is strange. It says God keeps a comprehensive record, is closer to man than his jugular vein, and knows what his soul whispers to him, and it says a receptor set to record is on each side of a man, that the trance of death will bring the truth, and that we try to escape that.

It says that, on the day the trumpet sounds, each person will arrive with one attendant to drive him and one to bear witness, that, as the attendants direct which to hurl into hell, God will tell them not to argue in his presence, and that he'll tell them he sent them a warning.

And it says God will ask hell whether it's full and that hell will reply by asking whether no more are there, but it says paradise will be brought close to the righteous and will be no longer distant.

The title of the 51<sup>st</sup> *surah* is Scattering, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It swears by what scatters far and wide, is heavy laden, speeds freely, and distributes as ordained, that the judgement we're promised will come and is true. It swears by the sky with its pathways that we differ in what we say and that those who turn from it are deceived. And it says God created jinn and mankind only to worship him.

The title of the 52<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is The Mountain, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It swears by the mountain, by scripture in unrolled parchment, by the much-visited Kaaba, by the raised canopy, and by the always full ocean, that our lord's punishment is coming and, on the day when the sky sways back and forth and the mountains float away, can't be put off. And it says the believers will be matched with beautiful-eyed maidens and that devoted youths like hidden pearls will wait on them.

The title of the 53<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is The Star, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It swears to people by the star when it sets that their companion hasn't strayed, isn't deluded, and doesn't speak from his own desire. And it says the *Qur'an*'s nothing less than a revelation sent to him and taught to him by one with mighty powers and great strength who sat on the high horizon and approached until he

was two bow lengths away or closer and revealed to God's servant what he revealed.

And, asking them whether they're going to dispute with him what he saw with his own eyes, it tells them their companion didn't distort what he saw, that he saw the mighty one again near the lote tree beyond which one may never pass, that, when it was covered indescribably, it was near the garden of restfulness, that the companion's sight neither waivered nor was too bold, and that he saw some of the greatest signs of his lord.

And it tells people to consider al-Lazat, al-Uzza, and Manat. Asking the people whether they're to have the male while God has the female, it tells them those names are names they and their forefathers invented and that those who deny the life to come give the angels female names. And it says that in heaven are many angels whose intercession will be of no use until God gives permission. And, suggesting that Sirius is the star on which this *surah* swears, it says God's the lord of Sirius.

The title of the 54<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Moon, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It says the hour draws near, that the moon is split in two, and that disbelievers seeing a sign turn away and say it's sorcery. And it says that, on the day on which the summoner summons them to a horrific event, they'll come swarming from their graves like locusts rushing to the summoner with their eyes cast down.

The title of the 55<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Lord of Mercy, and it's a Medina *surah* saying the lord of mercy taught the *Qur'an* and that God created mankind from dry clay and created jinn from smokeless fire, and, asking them which of God's blessings they then both deny, it repeats many other events and circumstances and notions of the *Qur'an* and repeats concerning each of them the question of which of God's blessings both humanity and the jinn deny.

The title of the 56<sup>th</sup> *surah* is That Which is Coming, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It says that, when that which is coming arrives, no one will be able to deny that it's come. And it says that, when the earth is shaken violently, when the mountains are ground to powder and turned to scattered dust, we'll be sorted into three classes.

It says those in front will be brought closest to God in gardens of bliss, that many will be from generations earlier than the generations of a few, that they'll be on couches of well-woven cloth, that everlasting youths will go among them with glasses, flagons, and cups of a pure drink causing no headache or intoxication and with any fruit they choose and the meat of any bird they like,

that beautiful companions like hidden pearls will be a reward for what those in front used to do, and that they'll hear no idle or sinful talk but only clean and wholesome speech.

And it says many of those on the right will be from generations earlier than the generations of a few and that they'll dwell among thornless lote trees, clustered acacia with spreading shade, constantly flowing water, abundant fruits unfailing and unforbidden, and incomparable, virginal, loving companions of matching age, whom God has created specially.

But it says those on the left will dwell amid scorching wind in the shadow of black smoke that's neither cool nor refreshing. And it says God ordained death among us and made the *Qur'an* noble in a protected record only the purified can touch and that, when the soul of a dying man comes to his throat while we gaze on, God's nearer to him than are we but that we don't see him. And, asking why, if our saying we're not to be judged is true, we don't restore the dying man's soul to him, it says that, if he's on the right, he'll have rest and ease and a garden of bliss. But it says that, if he denied the truth and went astray, he'll burn in hell.

The title of the 57<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Iron, and it and the next nine *surahs* are Medina *surahs*, and the 57<sup>th</sup> says God's the first and the last and the outer and the inner.

Asking who will make God a good loan, it says God will double the loan for that person and reward him generously. It tells Muhammad that, on the day he sees believing men and women with their light streaming ahead of them and to their right, a wall will be erected between them and the hypocrites, both men and women. And it says the hypocrites will ask the believers for some of their light and that the believers will tell them to go back and look for a light.

It says a wall with a door will be erected between the believers and the hypocrites, that the hypocrites will ask the believers whether they weren't with them, and that the believers will reply that they were but that the hypocrites allowed themselves to be tempted. And it says the believers will tell the hypocrites they were hesitant and doubtful and deceived by false hopes until God's command came, that the deceiver tricked them about God, that on that day no ransom will be accepted from them or from other disbelievers, and that their home will be the fire and a miserable destination where they belong. And it says no misfortune can happen in earth or in ourselves that wasn't set down in writing before God brought earth into being.

And it says that, for God to be able to mark those who'd help him and his messengers, he also sent iron with its great strength and many uses for humanity. And it says God sent Mary's son Jesus, gave him the Gospel, and put

compassion and mercy into the hearts of his followers, but that they invented monasticism, and that God didn't ordain it. It says God ordained only that they seek God's pleasure and that Jesus' followers didn't observe it properly.

And it says the people of the book should know they have no power over God's grace, that God's grace is only in God's hands, that he gives it to whomever he will, and that it's immense.

The title of the 58<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Dispute. Telling Muhammad God heard the woman who disputed with him about her husband and complained to God and that God also heard Muhammad's words, it repeats what the *Qur'an* earlier says of husbands' telling wives they're like their mothers' backs, and it also repeats other divorce doctrine. And it asks Muhammad whether he doesn't know God's in every secret conversation among three or five persons.

It tells believers not to converse secretly in ways that are sinful, hostile, or disobedient to the messenger, and it says secret conversation is the work of Satan and is designed to cause the believers trouble, but it says it can't harm them with no permission from God.

And it tells believers to offer some charity when they come to speak privately with the messenger, but it says that, if they lack the means, God's forgiving and merciful. And it says that, when God has relented toward people who are afraid to give charity before coming to the prophet, they should pray, pay the prescribed alms, and obey God and his messenger. And it says, as the *Qur'an* frequently does, that God's well aware of our actions.

Asking Muhammad whether he hasn't seen those who give their loyalty to people with whom God is angry, it tells him they're not with him, that he's not with them, and that they swear to lies. And it says that neither their wealth nor their children will be of use to them against God, that, on the day on which God raises them from the dead, they'll swear to God as they swear to Muhammad, that Satan has gained control over them and made them forget God, that they're on Satan's side, that those on Satan's side will be the losers, and that they'll be the inhabitants of hell and remain there. And it says God has written that he and his messengers shall win.

The title of the 59<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Gathering. It says that, at the first gathering of forces, God drove from their homes the people of the book who broke faith and that the believers never thought they'd go. It says the people of the book thought their fortifications would protect them against God but that God came upon them from where they least expected and put panic into their hearts. And it says their homes were destroyed by their hands and by the hands of the believers.

And it tells all with insight to learn from that. It tells them that, had God not decreed exile for the people of the book, he'd have restrained them in this world. And it says that, because they set themselves against God and his messenger, in the hereafter they'll have the restraint of the fire.

And it tells the believers that whatever they did to palm trees, whether they cut them down or left them standing on their roots, was done by God's leave to disgrace those who defied him, that they needn't spur their horses or camels for the gains from the defiant that God turned over to his messenger, and that those gains belong to God, the messenger, kinfolk, orphans, travelers, and others in need, and it says the purpose of that is to keep the gains from circulating among the believers already rich.

It says those who are established in their homes in Medina and are firmly rooted in their faith show love, that they give preference over themselves to the poor emigrants who were driven from their homes and possessions, and that they seek God's favor and approval and help God and his messenger.

And it tells Muhammad that God bears witness that hypocrites who tell the faithless among the people of the book that, if they're driven out, they'll go with them and, if they're attacked, will help them, are liars.

And it tells the believers that, because those hypocrites are devoid of understanding, their fear of the believers is more intense than their fear of God.

The title of the sixtieth *surah* is Women Tested, and most of it argues against taking God's enemies as allies, but it also tells believers to test emigrant believing women who come to them. It permits marrying them in accordance with marriage requirements the *Qur'an* stipulates in earlier *surahs*, but it tells the believers not to hold to marriage ties with disbelieving women, and it directs asking them to return bridal gifts believers have paid. But it also directs letting disbelievers ask for the return of bridal gifts.

And, similarly stipulating concerning women who leave believers for disbelievers, it tells Muhammad to accept the pledging of believing women who come to him and pledge that they'll not ascribe partners to God, steal, commit adultery, kill their children, lie about who's fathered their children, or disobey him in any righteous matter, and it says he should pray to God to forgive them.

And it closes by telling believers not to take as allies those with whom God's angry and that those people despair of the life to come as the disbelievers despair of those buried in their graves.

The title of the 61<sup>st</sup> *surah* is Solid Lines, and it says God loves those who fight for his cause in solid lines as in a well-compacted wall. It says Moses

asked his people why they hurt him while knowing God sent him. And it says God doesn't guide rebellious people.

And it says Mary's son Jesus told the children of Israel he was sent to them confirming the *Torah* that came before him and brought good news of a messenger who would follow him with the name Ahmad.

The name Ahmad, like the name Muhammad, means praised.

The title of the 62<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is The Day of Congregation. Saying that those who've been commanded to obey the *Torah* but don't are like asses carrying books, it tells Muhammad to tell people who follow the Jewish faith that, if they claim that only they are friends of God, they should be hoping for death. And it says that, because of what they've stored up for themselves with their own hands, they'd never hope for death.

It tells Muhammad to tell them the death from which they run will come to meet them, that they'll be returned to the one who knows both the seen and the unseen, and that he'll tell them everything they've done. And it tells believers, when, on the day of congregation, the call to prayer is made, to leave their trading and hurry toward the reminder of God. But it says that they leave the prophet and, whenever they see trade or entertainment, hurry toward it.

The title of the 63<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is The Hypocrites, and it tells Muhammad that the hypocrites come to him and tell him they bear witness that he's the messenger of God, while God knows Muhammad's his messenger and bears witness that the hypocrites are liars. But, telling Muhammad that their appearance pleases him and that he listens to what they say, it tells him to beware of them and asks that God confound them. And it says that, whether or not Muhammad asks God to forgive them, God won't.

The title of the 64<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Mutual Neglect. It says that, when God gathers us on the day of mutual neglect, he'll cancel the sins of those who believed in him and admit them into gardens with flowing streams, but that those who disbelieved and rejected God's signs will be inhabitants of the fire. And it tells believers that they have enemies among their spouses and children and to beware of them, but that, if they overlook their offenses and forgive and pardon them, God's forgiving.

The title of the 65<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Divorce. It repeats divorce stipulations in earlier *surahs* and briefly repeats various other Islamic doctrine. And it says God created seven heavens and a similar number of earths.

The title of the 66<sup>th</sup> surah is Prohibition. It asks Muhammad why, in his desire to please his wives, he prohibits what God has made lawful to him. And it says Muhammad spoke confidentially to one of his wives, that she disclosed what he told her, and that God told him she did.

It says Muhammad confronted the wife who broke the confidence, that she asked him who told him, and that he replied that the all-knowing and all aware told him. And it tells Muhammad's wives that, if they collaborate against him and don't repent to God, God, Gabriel, and all the believers and angels will support Muhammad, and that his lord may replace them with better wives. And it tells the believers to guard themselves and their families against stones and a fire fueled by people over whom angels who never disobey God's commands stand firm and strong.

Saying God has given examples of disbelievers, it cites the wives of Noah and Lot and says they betrayed their husbands and that their husbands couldn't help them against God. And, saying God has also given examples of believers, it cites Pharaoh's wife asking God to build her a house near God in the garden and save her from Pharaoh's actions and from the evil doers, and it also cites Mary. It says that, because Mary guarded her chastity, God breathed his spirit into her, that she accepted the truth of her lord's words and scriptures, and that she was truly devout.

The title of the 67<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Control, and it and the next six are Mecca *surahs*. The 67<sup>th</sup> says we won't see a flaw in what the lord of mercy creates, that God has adorned the lowest heaven with lamps and made them for stoning devils, and that only the lord's mercy holds up the birds. And it says that he who holds all control in his hands is exalted.

The title of the 68<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Pen, and the first word of its first verse is the Arabic letter *Nun*. It swears to Muhammad, by the pen and all that people write, that God's grace doesn't make Muhammad a madman. And it tells him he has strong character and that he and the people who write will soon see which of them is afflicted with madness. And it tells him not to yield to any contemptible swearer.

And it says that the owners of a garden swore they'd harvest fruits one morning but that a disaster from God struck the garden as they slept, that, in the morning as they walked to the garden before seeing it had been stripped to desolation, they told one another not to let any poor person enter the garden that day, but that, when they saw the destruction, the wisest of them asked the others whether he hadn't asked them whether they'd glorify god.

The title of the 69<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Inevitable Hour, and, asking what will explain to us what the inevitable hour is, it describes it in ways in which earlier *surahs* describe it and says eight angels will bear the throne of God above them.

The title of the seventieth *surah* is The Ways of Ascent, and, saying the punishment will fall from God, the lord of the ways of ascent by which the angels and the spirit ascend to him, it says the disbelievers think the punishment is distant while God knows it's near. The title of the 71<sup>st</sup> *surah* is Noah, and it tells a version of the story of Noah in which Noah asks God not to leave any of the disbelievers on earth. And the title of the 72<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is The Jinn, and it tells of a group of repentant jinn who say other jinn aren't also repentant.

The title of the 73<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is Enfolded. And, excepting its twentieth verse, it's also a Mecca *surah*. After its first verse addresses Muhammad enfolded in his cloak, it tells him to stay up through most of the night and recite the *Qur'an* slowly and distinctly, and it tells him God will send a momentous message to him, that night prayer makes a deeper impression, and that it sharpens words.

Its twentieth verse is of Medina and is its final verse and nearly a third of it and begins by telling Muhammad that his lord's well aware that he spends nearly two thirds of some nights, half of some, and a third of some, in prayer, as do his followers. And it tells him God determines the division of day and night and that he knows Muhammad won't be able to keep a measure of it. But, telling all the believers that God has relented toward them, it tells them to recite as much of the *Qur'an* as is easy for them.

And it tells them God knows some of them will be sick while some of them will be traveling through the land seeking God's bounty and fighting in God's way.

The title of the 74<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Wrapped in His Cloak, and it's a Mecca *surah*. It addresses Muhammad wrapped in his cloak and tells him to arise and give warning. And it tells him to leave to God a wealthy person who was hostile to God's revelation. It says God created the wealthy person helpless.

The title of the 75<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Resurrection, and it's also a Mecca *surah*. It swears by the day of resurrection and asks whether man doesn't think God won't put his bones together again, and it says God will also reshape his fingertips. And, telling Muhammad not to rush his tongue to hasten the revelation, it says God will assure its safe collection and recitation and tells him



to repeat the recitation after God has recited it, and it says God will make it clear.

And it says that, when the soul of a disbeliever reaches his collarbone with people asking whether any charm healer could save him, when he knows that what's occurring is his final parting, and when his legs are brought together, he'll be driven on that day toward his lord, and, asking whether the man thinks he'll be left alone, it says the occurrence comes nearer and nearer.

And, briefly describing the development of humans from a drop of sperm to sexuality, it asks whether God can do that but can't return the dead to life.

The title of the 76<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Man, and it's a Medina *surah*. Saying God created man from a drop of mingled fluid and tested him, it asks whether no time ever was when man was nothing of which to speak. And it says that, whether or not man was grateful, God gave him hearing and sight and guided him to the right path.

The title of the 77<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Sent Forth, and it and the next twenty *surahs* are Mecca *surahs*. The 77<sup>th</sup> swears, by what's sent forth in quick succession, violently storming, scattering, forcefully separating, and delivering a reminder as a proof or warning, that what we're promised will come. And it says that, if people have any plots against God on that day of decision, he'll ask them to try them.

The title of the 78<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Announcement, and, asking about what people are asking, it says they're asking about the momentous announcement about which they differ and that they'll find out in the end.

The title of the 79<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Forceful Chargers, and it swears by the forceful chargers rearing to go and sweeping ahead at full stretch to bring the matter to an end that, on the day when a blast follows a reverberating blast, eyes will be downcast as hearts tremble.

The title of the eightieth *surah* is He Frowned, and, saying that, when a blind man came to him, Muhammad frowned and turned away, it tells him the man might have grown in spirit or taken something useful from him, that, while he's not to blame for the lack of spiritual growth of a self-satisfied person, he went out of his way for the person to whom he turned, and that he allowed that to distract him from the one who came to him with eagerness and awe. And it says the *Qur'an*'s a lesson from which those who wish to be taught should learn

and that it's on honored, exalted, and pure pages by the hands of noble and virtuous scribes. And, bidding woe to man, it exclaims how ungrateful man is.

The title of the 81<sup>st</sup> *surah* is Shrouded in Darkness. It says that, when the sun is shrouded in darkness, the stars are dimmed, the mountains are set in motion, pregnant camels are abandoned, wild beasts are herded together, the seas boil over, souls are sorted into classes, the baby girl who's buried alive asks for what sin she was killed, the records of deeds are spread open, the sky's stripped away, hell's made to blaze, and paradise is brought near, every soul will know what it's brought about. And it asks where we're going.

The title of the 82<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is Torn Apart. And it says that, when the sky's torn apart, the stars are scattered, the seas burst forth, and graves are turned inside out, each soul will know what it's done and what it's left undone. And it asks humanity what has lured it away from God, its generous lord who created and shaped and proportioned it in whatever form he chose.

And the title of the 83<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is Those Who Give Short Measure. It bids woe to those who give short measure and demand full measure of others but give less than they should when they weigh or measure for others. And it says the numbered list of the deniers is in prison and that the list of the good is in height.

The title of the 84<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Ripped Apart, and it says the day on which we'll meet God shall be when the sky's ripped apart.

The title of the 85<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Towering Constellations. It swears, by the towering constellations, the promised day, and the witness, that the makers of a trench and a fuel-stoked fire will be damned. And it says they sat down to watch what they were doing to the believers.

And the title of the 86<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Night Comer, and it swears by the night comer that the night comer is a piercing star in which is a watcher over every soul.

The title of the 87<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Most High, and it tells Muhammad to glorify the name of his lord, the most high.

The title of the 88<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Overwhelming Event, and, asking Muhammad whether he's heard of it, it briefly describes the day of judgement.

And the title of the 89<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Daybreak. It swears by the daybreak, the ten nights, the even and odd, and the passing night, that its oath is strong enough for a rational person. And it refers to the destruction of several peoples.

The title of the ninetieth *surah* is The City, and it swears by Mecca that God created man for toil and trial, but it says the steep path is to free a slave and feed at a time of hunger an orphaned relative or a poor person in distress and to be a believer who urges other believers to steadfastness and compassionate.

The title of the 91<sup>st</sup> *surah* is The Sun, and it swears by the sun in its morning brightness, by the moon that follows it, by the night as it conceals it, by the sky and how God built it, by the earth and how God spread it, and by the soul and how God formed it and inspired its rebellion and piety, that the person who purifies his soul succeeds and that the one who corrupts it fails.

And the title of the 92<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is The Night. It swears by the enshrouding night, the radiant day, and God's creation of males and females, that the ways we take differ greatly. And it briefly contrasts people mindful of God with people who deny goodness.

And the title of the 93<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is The Morning Brightness. It swears by the morning brightness and the night when it's still that Muhammad's lord hasn't forsaken him and doesn't hate him and that the future will be better than the past. Telling Muhammad his lord will give him more and that he'll be well satisfied, it asks him whether God didn't find him an orphan and shelter him, find him lost and guide him, and find him in need and make him self-sufficient. And it tells him accordingly not to be harsh with orphans and not to chide one who asks for help, but to talk of the lessons of his lord.

The title of the 94<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Relief. It asks Muhammad whether God didn't relieve his heart and remove the burden that weighed heavily on his back and raise his reputation high. And it tells him to rely on his lord for everything.

The title of the 95<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Fig, and it swears by the fig, the olive, Mount Sinai, and safe Mecca that, excepting those who believe and do good deeds, God created man in the finest state and reduced him to the lowest of the low.

And the title of the 96<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Clinging Form, and it directs reading that God created man from a clinging form and that God's the most bountiful one who taught man by the pen what he didn't know.

The title of the 97<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Night of Glory, and it says the night of glory is better than a thousand months. It says that, with their lord's permission, the angels and the spirit descend again and again. And it says that, on the night of glory, God sent down the *Qur'an*.

And the 98<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> *surahs* are Medina *surahs*.

The title of the 98<sup>th</sup> is Clear Evidence, and it says the disbelievers among the people of the book weren't to change their ways until they were sent clear evidence, a messenger from God reading pure pages containing true scriptures.

The title of the 99<sup>th</sup> is The Earthquake, and it says that, when the earth is shaken violently in its last quaking, when it throws out its burdens, when man cries asking what's happening to it, it will, because God inspired it, tell all.

And the next ten *surahs* are Mecca *surahs*.

The title of the hundredth *surah* is The Charging Steeds, and it swears by the charging steeds that pant, strike sparks with their hooves, make dawn raids raising a cloud of dust, and plunge into the midst of the enemy, that man's ungrateful to his lord.

The title of 101<sup>st</sup> *surah* is The Crashing Blow, and, asking what a blazing fire is and what will explain what the crashing blow is, it briefly describes the day of judgement.

And the title of the 102<sup>nd</sup> *surah* is Striving for More, and it says striving for more distracts us until we go into our graves.

The title of the 103<sup>rd</sup> *surah* is The Declining Day, and it swears by the declining day that man, excepting those who believe, do good deeds, and urge one another to the truth and steadfastness, is in deep loss.

The title of the 104<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Backbiter. It bids woe to every fault-finding backbiter who, thinking wealth will make him live forever, amasses it and counts it. And it says they'll be thrown into the crusher and that the crusher is God's fire that rises over people's hearts and closes in on them in towering columns.

And the title of the 105<sup>th</sup> *surah* is The Elephant, and it asks Muhammad whether he sees how his lord dealt with the army of the elephant and whether God didn't confound its plans by sending birds against it pelting it with pellets of hard-baked clay, and it says they made it cropped stubble.

The title of the 106<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Quraysh, and, saying God made the Quraysh feel secure in their journeys, it directs letting them worship the lord of the Kaaba, who provides them with food to ward off hunger and with safety to ward off fear.

The title of the 107<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Common Kindness, and it bids woe to those who pray but are heedless of their prayer, those who all display and forbid common kindness.

And the title of the 108<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Abundance, and, telling Muhammad God has given him abundance, it tells him to make his sacrifice only to God.

The title of the 109<sup>th</sup> is The Disbelievers, and it tells Muhammad to tell the disbelievers he doesn't worship what they worship, that they don't worship what he worships, that such will always be so, and that they have their religion while he has his.

The title of the 110<sup>th</sup> is Help, and it's the last Medina *surah* in the *Qur'an* and tells Muhammad to celebrate the praise of his lord and ask his forgiveness when he sees people embracing God's faith in crowds and when God's help comes, when God opens his way.

And the title of the 111<sup>th</sup> is Palm Fiber, and, asking that Abu Lahab and his hands be ruined, it says that neither his wealth nor his gains will help him, that he'll burn in the fire, and that so will his wood carrier wife, with a palm fiber rope around her neck.

The title of the 112<sup>th</sup> *surah* is Purity, and it says God's the one god, is eternal, has begotten no one, and wasn't begotten, and that no one's comparable to him.

The title of the 113<sup>th</sup> is Daybreak, and it tells Muhammad to say he seeks refuge with the lord of daybreak against the harm in what God has created, the harm in the night when darkness gathers, the harm in witches when they blow on knots, and the harm in the envier when he envies.

And the title of the 114<sup>th</sup> and final *surah* of the *Qur'an* is People, and it directs seeking refuge with the lord and controller and god of people against the harm of the slinking whisperer, either jinn or human, who whispers into the hearts of people.

Chapter 25  
*Taiji and Wuji*

*Taijiquan* is a Buddhist Daoist alternative to martial arts the Indian Buddhist monk Bodhidharma originated at the Shaolin Monastery in China's eastern mountains about a century before Muhammad originated Islam in Mecca.

Bodhidharma's trek to the Shaolin monastery from southern India was across the Himalayas to Tibet and on to Persia, back along the silk road to Dunhuang, and on across China. And, also at the Shaolin Monastery, centuries before his followers took Zen to Japan, Bodhidharma originated Zen. But neither *taijiquan* nor Zen is particular to the Shaolin Monastery now.

"Zen" is a Japanese pronunciation of "*chan*", which is a Chinese pronunciation of "*dhyana*", which is Sanskrit for "meditation". And "*tai*" is a Chinese word meaning "excessive", and "*ji*" is a Chinese word that originally referred to poles or polarity and came to mean "extreme", and "*quan*" means "fist". But, by fists being the folding into unity of the excessive polarity of pole-like fingers, in *taijiquan* they're a metaphor for harmony.

So the purpose of *taijiquan*, when Bodhidharma originated it, wasn't to defeat enemies but to defeat enmity. *Taijiquan* practitioners, by moving with their opponents and not against them, established harmony with the opponents to make them no longer opponents. So the original martial arts function of *taijiquan* was to return from *taiji* to *wuji*.

"*Wuji*" is a Chinese phrase meaning "having no polarity" or "having no extremes", and the original martial arts purpose of *taijiquan* was to fold opponents into unity, and training for *taijiquan* involves a form of what Hindus call *hatha yoga*.

"*Hatha*" is a Sanskrit word meaning "force". And, as "*yoga*" is a Sanskrit word meaning "union" that Hindus use to refer to realizing the unity of the universe, both *hatha yoga* and *taijiquan* training involve paying attention to one's posture and breathing to force oneself to realize that the space and air

outside oneself is the same as the space and air inside oneself. And a link between that and Buddhism is the *Satipatthana Sutta*.

But Bodhidharma didn't call his discipline *taijiquan*, and many people practicing what that discipline has become and calling it *taijiquan* ignore the metaphor of the fist, as many people misunderstand the metaphor of *yin* and *yang*. *Yin* and *yang*, before referring to polarity, also referred to harmony and unity. And both perversions have a long history

Most *taijiquan* practitioners say the Daoist monk Zhang Sanfeng originated their discipline. But probability suggests that Zhang Sanfeng was a Buddhist monk at the Shaolin Monastery who, after leaving that monastery because of perversion of *taijiquan* into a martial art like the aggressive martial arts people now call kung fu all over Earth, trekked to the Daoist monastery on Wudang Mountain about three hundred miles southwest of the Shaolin Monastery. And, probably, there he became a Daoist monk and reestablished Bodhidharma's discipline.

Bodhidharma, probably having learned of both Daoism and Chinese martial arts during his trek across China, originated both Zen and *taijiquan* by way of synthesizing into Buddhism that learning he acquired during that long trek, and that synthesis may have been how Zhang Sanfeng found himself welcome at the Daoist monastery, but now others are perverting the discipline again toward the aggressiveness of kung fu. And, probably, such perversion is also why, also during the century in which Zhang Sanfeng lived, other followers of Bodhidharma left the Shaolin Monastery and took Zen to Japan. But, in China, the perversion of the meaning of the Chinese words “*yin*” and “*yang*” may epitomize such perversion

“*Yin*” originally referred to the northern side of a mountain while “*yang*” referred to the southern side of a mountain. The northern side of a mountain is generally shadier than its southern side, and Chinese people came to represent *yin* and *yang* with a circular diagram that's half black and half white. So, with the two sides curving into one another, essentially the diagram is a schematic representation of a view of a mountain from above it.

And so, originally, considering that the shady side of a mountain and its sunny side are two sides of but one mountain, and that the shadiness and sunniness move across the whole mountain as the day passes from dawn to dusk, both the diagram and the words “*yin*” and “*yang*” symbolized unity and harmony as does the circular fist in *taijiquan*.

But people came to call *yin* and *yang* the *liang yi* and use the diagram as a symbol of polarity. “*Liang yi*”, in Chinese, means “two instruments”, and, in light and color, black and white are polar opposites, and so the diagram also came to symbolize both the original function of *taijiquan* and the perversion of

it. But the perversion of the meaning of the *liang yi* into symbolizing discord occurred more than a millennium before any perversion or reversion of *taiji* fists into excessive aggression.

And the artificial complication of the *liang yi* that culminated perhaps with Confucius during China's Zhou Dynasty is analogous to the development of any language and accordingly to the perversion of any scripture.

Effectually treating “*yin*” and “*yang*” as mathematicians treat zero and one in the binary number system, people began using those words to count kinds of polarity, and so they gave the numbers names.

And next, to use the *liang yi* as instruments of augury, they abstracted them into auspicious or inauspicious meanings. Examples are that they assigned to *yang* words indicating that it's positive, strong, good, and male, while they assigned to *yin* words indicating that it's negative, weak, bad, and female. So they made societal bias inherent to the interpretations and the augury.

And, by using a solid line segment to represent *yang* and a line segment with a gap in its center to represent *yin*, they made that valuation visually more apparent. And, for more abstraction, further extending their graphic representations of that numbering, they combined the lines into stacks they called *gua* and, beginning with three *yin* or *yang* line segments per *gua*, gave them names and interpretations also. And next they extended the abstraction into calling those *gua* primary and calling stacks of six secondary.

Understanding the binary number system will tell you that, as a hundred combinations of two Arabic digits are possible in the decimal system, eight combinations of three *yin* or *yang* line segments are possible. And each Chinese word is a name of one or more of what linguists call pictographs, and “*gua*” was the name of a pictograph representing a device or instrument like a coat hanger, and the name the augurs assigned to the *gua* with three *yang* line segments is a Chinese word meaning “sky”, while the name they assigned to the *gua* with three *yin* line segments is a Chinese word meaning “earth”. And, of course, they continued such through the 64 possible secondary *gua*.

And, for the augury, they developed a system of casting yarrow stalks to select which of those 64 combinations to combine into more abstraction. And monarchs of the Zhou Dynasty interpreted their selections to decide how to deploy military aggression to subordinate all of China to them. And they recorded their selections and decisions in a book they called the *Yi Jing*. And they compiled the book in order by secondary *gua*. And they began with the one with six *yang* line segments.

“*Yi*” in that context means “change”, and “*jing*” in that context means “abiding writing”, and a common English translation of the title of that book is “*The Book of Changes*”. And people came to use the book for augury beyond



the purpose of the Zhou monarchs, and now people attribute to Confucius some interpretations of the Zhou monarchs' interpretations and call those additional interpretations the *Da Zhuan*, and they often include them in printings of the *Yi Jing* and consider them in their augury. And "*da zhuan*" in that context means "great commentary".

So, because development of any language is a process of abstraction, consider the etymology of the word "abstract". It's origin is Latin meaning "out of touch", and we humans say that what makes us superior to what we call the dumb animals is our ability to reason abstractly, and some anthropologists say the difference between humans and dumb animals began with the first use of a tool. They say the difference between us and dumb animals began when one dumb animal picked up a stick or a stone during a drought and used it to kill another dumb animal to eat it for lack of vegetation.

The hypothesis is that sticks or stones permitted the then dumb humans to kill the other dumb animals while not touching them. And some of those anthropologists say that eventually that abstraction led to the creation of words. Words enable us humans to use language to manipulate one another while touching nothing.

And, calling intellect the ability to understand relationships and differences, both anthropologists and lexicographers ignore the actuality that difference is a relationship.

So all of that may be a metaphor for sectarian religion. It may be a metaphor for Rudyard Kipling's assertion that "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet, Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment seat." And his saying that was after his birth in England, his early childhood in India and education in England, and his return to India.

So note that, of the six religions whose scripture this book summarizes, three originated in what humans call the Middle East, and three originated in what we call the Far East, and none in what we call the West.

But the Middle East is west of the Far East. And a difference between the three of those religions that originated there and the three that originated east of there is in regard to the relationship between words and the persons or places or things to which words ostensibly refer. And scripture of the most popular of the three Middle Eastern religions says the word is God, while the scripture of each of the Far Eastern religions says in various ways that words are too abstract to be real, and yet the Middle Eastern religions are more materialistic.

But, rather than argue that question, let's try to answer it by some examples of words of the West. The fiction writer Mark Twain, while not saying to which schoolboy he was referring, said the schoolboy says that "faith is believing what you know ain't so." And the word "philosophy" is a

combination of Greek words meaning “love” and “knowledge”, and the word “logic” is from a Greek word meaning “word”, but humans use it to mean “reason”.

And the French philosopher René Descartes said that all we can know is that we exist and that the reason we can know we exist is that we think, but his saying that is in an essay in which he argues ironically and perhaps satirically that we can progress from knowing that to knowing more than that, and western philosophers generally say he didn’t intend satire or irony.

And the word “science” means “knowledge”, and people calling themselves physical scientists say the universe began with a big bang. And, to the question of what banged, if nothing existed before that big bang, they reply that “the god particle” banged, but they don’t say where it banged. And neither do they say what the god particle is or whether consciousness began with the bang.

And all of that’s part of humanity’s historical quest for knowledge, and earlier in that quest physical scientists designated the “cell” and next the “molecule” and next the “atom”, and they continued on to postulating and designating “subatomic particles.”

And, continuing apparently *ad infinitum*, they effectually say abstraction is *ad infinitum*, and a logical inference from that would be that it’s infinitely purposeless. But, since logic is inherently abstract, reasoning shouldn’t need a quantum physicist to deduce that. And the word “god” is also inherently abstract.

The English word “god” etymologically means “good”. But, in English translations of the Bible, it designates the Hebrew word “*el*”. And the Hebrew word “*el*” doesn’t mean “good”.

And such is true of other languages. Most of the English language is a mixture of dialects of German and French, and French translations of the Bible deploy the French word “*dieu*” to mean “*el*”, and the French language originated as a dialect of Latin. And Latin translations of the Bible deploy the Latin word “*deus*” to designate “*el*”, and the Latin word “*deus*” etymologically by way of Sanskrit means “gleam”, and neither does the Hebrew word “*el*” mean “gleam”.

So English translations of the Bible don’t mean what French or Latin translations of the Bible mean, and none of them means what the *Torah* means, in that definitively religious way. And one of the elements the junior William Strunk includes in his book *Elements of Style*, a book that informed students of the English language in countless universities across the United States through decades, is common diction. Essentially he asserted the common sense that agreeing on terms is essential to linguistic communication.

That is, if you create your own definitions for words and don't inform your communicants of them, only you can know about what you're speaking or writing. But another question relevant to that is how many people calling themselves Christians have read all of the Bible in any language, either in its original Hebrew and Greek, or in any translation. And, in regard to the *Upanishads*, the *suttas* and *sutras*, and the *Qur'an*, that question is also pertinent to people calling themselves Hindus, Buddhists, or Muslims.

But, incidentally, because both Hebrews and Arabs are Semitic, both Hebrew and Arabic are Semitic languages, and so “*allah*” and “*el*” are cognates. So some of the pertinence of the abstraction of words isn't relevant to the disagreement between Muslims and Jews. And less of it is relevant to the problem of the perversion of *taijiquan*.

What Jews, Christians, or Muslims call *El*, *Deus*, or *Allah* is a person who created the heaven, the earth, and life on earth and is separate from his creation. Hindus and Buddhists, postulating no such person, instead effectually say all being is one eternal and infinite entity imagining all differences, while Jews, Christians, and Muslims call those differences reality. And, ultimately, Daoists postulate only that happiness depends on accepting whatever doesn't differentiate.

Yet Jews, Christians, and Muslims say Daoists are abstract and that Buddhists and Hindus are idol worshipers. And, because Hindus, thinking everything is ultimately one glorious gleam, worship anything and everything, Jews, Christians, and Muslims call Hindus polytheistic, meaning that they worship many deities. But “Poly” and “theistic” are from Greek words meaning “many” and “deistic”, making “polytheistic” perhaps etymologically mean “sparkling”, by way of the language of the *Upanishads*.

And the perversion or reversion of *taijiquan* is a perversion or reversion from Hindu Buddhist Daoist monistic efforts to revert from abstraction. It's a reversion from the monism that's fundamental to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Daoism to the dualism that's fundamental to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. But, while the perversion of *taijiquan* may be an effective metaphor for that, it isn't the only instance of it.

So, while considering the varieties of perverse abstract waffling between *taiji* and *wuji*, lets repeat and extend some of the questions in the chapters of this book between this one and the one raising the question of what was the actual religion of a sixteen-year-old farm girl who called herself a Christian while fighting to save her homeland from the excessive polarity of a century of effort to eliminate by force the excessive polarity between another homeland and hers, while the people of both homelands were dominantly Christian.

Originally the main difference between Hinduism and Buddhism was that Buddhists didn't use metaphorical personifications or rituals in their effort to extinguish abstraction. And Buddhists, whether or not they understood Hinduism, called those metaphorical personifications and rituals but more abstraction. But eventually many Buddhists developed their own rituals.

So, as Zhang Sanfeng did with taijiquan, other Buddhists tried to reverse that reversion. And many people calling themselves Hindus regard those metaphorical personifications as Jews, Christians, and Muslims say Hindus do. And the *Bhagavad Gita*, with Vyasa being a sort of Aruni, may be part of the reason for that.

And some Buddhist scripture, both *suttas* of Theravada Buddhism and *sutras* of Mahayana Buddhism, also refer to Hindu metaphorical personifications as though they're actual, and now many people calling themselves Buddhists worship the Buddha as though he's a god.

So Yajnavalkya might have said their heads shattered apart. And Jews and Christians and Muslims cite that deviant abstraction to justify the epistemological bias of their abstraction of the words "Hinduism" and "Buddhism". And similar misunderstanding is now ordinary between Theravada Buddhists and Mahayana Buddhists.

Theravada Buddhists say Mahayana Buddhists say *bodhisattvas* postpone *nirvana* in order to help others achieve *nirvana* or *nibbana*. But the original premise of Mahayana Buddhism was the absolutely monist notion that *nirvana* is the extinguishing of all differences by realizing that no otherness is. That is, the premise of Mahayana Buddhism was that *bodhisattvas* realize that, because all is but one infinitely large vehicle that's always everywhere, others are they.

The Lotus Sutra is an indication that people calling themselves Mahayana Buddhists reverted or perverted that precept into such as the metaphorical personifications of Hinduism, and both people calling themselves Mahayana Buddhists and people calling themselves Theravada Buddhists now practice rituals, and they've also instituted praying to the Buddha.

And, comparable to practices of Roman Catholics in regard to what they call saints, Theravada Buddhists' ritual and prayer include what they call relics of the Buddha, and they place them in what Roman Catholics call reliquaries, what Buddhists call *stupas*.

And, while Hindus say the self is all, people calling themselves Buddhists also deprecate Hindus by saying the Buddha denied the existence of a self. But Siddhartha Gautama denied only the separateness of the self, and Mahayana Buddhists say that being a *bodhisattva* is realizing that in the way in

which Hindus say a *yogi* realizes that the atman is Brahman, the self of all. So that disagreement epitomizes the abstraction of words and the *tai* of *ji*.

And an especially *tai* parallel of all that with the perversion of *taijiquan* is that some people calling themselves Buddhists kill people for not calling themselves Buddhists, and that emulates the bigotry that's fundamental to Judaism and has extended into Christianity and Islam, effectually making "religion" a metaphor for terrorism.

And, in each of those religions, its hypocrisy. In Buddhism it contradicts the Metta Sutta, while in Judaism and Christianity it contradicts the Ten Commandments, while in Islam it contradicts the *Qur'an's* forbidding killing for any reason other than defense. So it's *taiji* all around.

But, of the scriptures of those religions, it's plainly inherent only to Bible. And, while it's more explicit in the Judaic part of the Bible, Christianity claims belief in all of the Bible and is the most popular of those six religions while Judaism is the least popular. So, in this regard, let's reconsider some particularities of Christianity.

While Jesus of Nazareth, whom Christians call the Christ, is nominally the founder of Christianity, Saul of Tarsus developed the doctrine of Christianity after the Crucifixion, after saying Jesus spoke to him from the sky and after changing his name to Paul.

And the authors of two of the Gospels were Jesus' disciples while the other two were Paul's apostles, and the Bible gives no indication that those two apostles of Paul's ever encountered Jesus in any way, and the Bible gives no indication that any more than five of Jesus' twelve main disciples ever were Paul's.

So that may explain much of the contradiction in the New Testament. Saul was a Pharisee, a member of a Judaic sect that demanded the crucifixion, and he says he was in epistles he wrote more than a decade after the crucifixion, words he wrote to dictate Christian doctrine. And the writing of the Gospels was after the writing of Paul's epistles.

But the Gospels say Jesus told his disciples to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees. So, because John was both a disciple of Jesus' and an apostle of Paul's, and because the 16<sup>th</sup> verse of the third chapter of his Gospel is the verse of the Bible that's most definitive of Christianity, let's also reconsider the gospel according to John. And, because Luke was an apostle of Paul's and not one of Jesus' twelve disciples, and because he also wrote the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, let's reconsider the Gospel According to Luke.

John begins his gospel by saying that in the beginning was the word, that the word was with God, and that the word was God. And his Gospel is the

only Gospel saying Jesus said directly that he was the Christ. And, in his Gospel, John calls himself the disciple Jesus loved.

And that assertion contradicts words from Jesus directly to John in other gospels. Jesus' disciple Matthew says in his Gospel that John's mother asked Jesus to have John and his brother James sit on thrones beside him in his kingdom, and Paul's apostle Mark contradicts Matthew to say in his Gospel that John and not his mother made that request of Jesus, and both say Jesus replied by saying John and James didn't understand the nature of the kingdom of God. But, in both of those Gospels, Jesus replies by telling John both that only God would decide who'd sit beside him in his kingdom and that none of the disciples should be ahead of any of the others.

So one question is why, after Jesus told him all that, John called himself the disciple Jesus loved, as though Jesus didn't love the other disciples. And another question is why neither Paul nor any other evangel said the word is God, and another is why people calling themselves Christians generally call the Bible the word of God, while the Bible doesn't. But the most grotesque contradiction may be in Luke's Gospel.

Luke says in it that Jesus, replying to a lawyer asking him how he reads the law, said one should love God with all of one's soul, strength, and mind and should love one's neighbor as oneself. And he also says in his Gospel that Jesus told Pharisees that one shouldn't ask where the kingdom of God is but see that it's within them, and both of those assertions are expressions of the monism of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Daoism. But Luke also says in his Gospel that Jesus said he didn't come to give peace but to divide people against one another,

But also Jesus' disciple Matthew says in his Gospel that Jesus said both that he came to bring a sword to do that dividing and that loving God and loving one's neighbor are the first and second great commandments and that the second is like the first. And that second assertion, on which Matthew says Jesus said hangs all the law and the prophets, is essentially the same as Hindus' saying the atman is Brahman. So Luke's contradictions aren't particular to him.

And John says in his gospel that Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, kept the purse. That is, he says Judas held the funds for Jesus and his disciples, and Matthew's gospel also says Jesus said one can't worship both God and money. And Luke, both in his Book of Acts and in Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, indicates apostolic demand for money.

That epistle is essentially a fundraising letter. And both Luke and Paul's apostle Titus, whose epistle ends with a note saying he was ordained Bishop to the Cretians, acted as Paul's scribes in writing it. And Luke's Book of the Acts of the Apostles says Peter required that the apostles combine their wealth and that he and a few others administered it, effectually that they held the

purse. And the Book of Acts also says God killed a husband and wife for selling a possession and not bringing all the proceeds to Peter. But the question here is how all that discordance came to be. And Paul's epistle to the Galatians may explain much of it.

In that epistle Paul says his first meeting with Peter was three years after Jesus spoke to him from the sky and that he wrote the epistle eleven years after that. And, while Luke's Book of Acts refers to his Gospel, none of Paul's epistles refers either to the Book of Acts or to any of the four Gospels. And that suggests that Paul supervised the writing of them after he wrote his epistles.

So, by indicating that the writing of both the Gospels and the Book of Acts was at least fourteen years after the Crucifixion, he suggests that the writing of them was a component of his founding of Christianity. But it doesn't explain why he permitted the contradictions, and neither does it explain why he'd permit including in the Gospels Jesus' monist remarks, but a possible explanation is that he didn't understand them. His abstraction is labyrinthine.

And inconsistencies in the other five of the six most popular religions is more easily explicable.

The *Qur'an*'s misrepresenting the *Torah* and the Gospels while saying it confirms them detracts from the credibility of its saying the angel Gabriel recited it to Muhammad. And people calling themselves Muslims violate the *Qur'an* in ways ranging from dividing into factions and killing themselves to kill others to nearly conquering Europe a few centuries after the death of Muhammad. But the *Qur'an* has no substantial internal inconsistencies in doctrine.

And the *Upanishads* are inconsistent in their deific personifications, and people calling themselves Hindus worship those personifications separately and try to enforce the caste system, but the general doctrine the *Upanishads*' express indicates that the personifications and the caste system are metaphorical. And people calling themselves Buddhists while worshiping the Buddha, and people calling themselves Daoists while establishing temples and rituals, are examples of misrepresentation of Buddhist and Daoist scripture. But, excepting calling the *Bhagavad Gita* a remembered scripture, neither do Hindus, Buddhists, or Daoists incorporate misrepresenting their scriptures into their scriptures. And Buddhists say they have no scriptures.

And, while the perversion of *taijiquan* is an extension of misrepresentation of Buddhism and Daoism into misrepresenting *taijiquan*, neither Buddhist nor Daoist scripture mentions *taijiquan*.

So another question, one that isn't direct in any of the other chapters of this book, is why Christianity's the most popular religion. And the answer to that question may be in the answer to the question of why the other religions to

which this book refers are less popular. And relevant may be that Judaism, the least popular of those six religions, doesn't promise eternal life.

And relevant to that factor also may be that Paul was a Pharisee. Judaic Pharisees interpreted *Miqra* prophecies of a descendant of David resurrecting the kingdom of Judah to mean he'd resurrect all the Israelites who'd obeyed God's commandments. But the doctrine of the Pharisees has never been a doctrine of Judaism generally.

And also relevant may be that obstruction to conversion to Judaism is in that the word "Judaic" means "of Judah". While one can convert one's religious beliefs to accord with one's reasoning, one can't convert one's genealogy. And the *Miqra* calls people who otherwise comply with the *Miqra* strangers among us. So, besides the racial requirement, it imposes social exclusion. So, either way, Judaism inherently alienates.

And, while none of the others of the six most popular religions is as exclusive as Judaism, both factors are relevant to each.

The *Dao De Jing* stipulates no genealogical restriction. But, while it explicitly refers to inevitable return from *taiji* to *wuji*, it doesn't promise eternal life explicitly. And it stipulates tolerance that may be difficult for many.

And, while Buddhist *suttas* and *sutras* explicitly promise eternal life and stipulate no genealogical restriction, they require absolute common decency with no exceptions.

The *Upanishads* also effectually promise eternal life for all. But weeding through them far enough to understand that its personifications and rituals are metaphorical is difficult. And, until readers take that trouble, the caste system may seem to them to be a genealogical restriction. And each of the approaches to *yoga* the *Upanishads* designate is more difficult than prayer.

But a reasonable question may be why Islam isn't more popular than Christianity. Islam, with no genealogical restriction, promises eternal life with less difficulty than Christianity requires. The *Qur'an* promises eternal life to anyone who complies with it, and its rituals are simpler than the rituals of the Roman Catholic Church, and its ethics are the ethics of the *Torah*. And, as do the *Torah* and the Gospels, it permits redemption by repentance, and its shorter than the Bible. But the answer may be in the growth in popularity of Islam since it began nearly six centuries after the Crucifixion. Soon it may be more popular than Christianity.

So, for now, since the Protestant reformation removed for many people calling themselves Christian the requirements of the complex rituals of the Roman Catholic Church, the answer to the question of why Christianity's the most popular religion may be in its similarity to Islam, but another factor is proselytizing.



Christians preach more publicly, in mega churches and on TV and knocking on anyone's door, while Muslims promulgate Islam mainly in the way by which communists promulgated communism. They take it to nations citizens of predominantly Christian capitalist democracies call undeveloped. Christians also do that but not on a nearly equal scale.

And another factor is military force. Muslims, unlike the Christian colonizing conquistadores, now emphasize military defense of the peoples who convert to Islam. After Christian colonists from Boston Common to the Halls of Montezuma emulated the Judaic model of the promised land, and we the people of the predominantly Christian United States called it our manifest destiny, Muslims stopped most of their military imperialism.

But the bottom line of this use of words in an effort to explicate the relationship between words and sticks and stones is that bickering about religion is a way of using words to excuse anything a separate *atman* wishes to do.

In other words, while humans say humans' ability to reason makes them superior to the dumb animals, actuality is that humans' ability to talk themselves into anything they wish to do makes them inferior to their own ideals, and other words are that both Lucifer and Michael are angels whose message is the abstraction of discord.

Fundamental to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Daoism is the notion that essential to responsibility is trying to understand how everything relates to everything through cause and effect. And fundamental to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is the notion that everything is inexplicable to anyone other than God. But, regardless of any of that, most humans tend to hang everything on rules.

And, while the difference between those two fundamental notions is that the first is essentially *wuji* while the second is effectually *taiji*, their being different from one another is also *taiji*. We humans, either despite or because of our ability to reason abstractly, tend to hang everything on the horns of the dilemma of arbitrary rules. And names for that monstrous dilemma are prejudice and bigotry.

But we also call it Godliness. And a problem with that, the defining factor of religious bigotry, is differences of opinions on what or who is God. The scriptures of the three of those six religions that originated in western Asia say God's loving, merciful, vindictive, and murderous, while the scriptures of the religions that originated in eastern Asia effectually say God's one and all.

And that's another way of saying that the three western Asian religions idealize *taiji* while the three eastern Asian religions idealize *wuji*. Yet the perversion of *taijiquan* is but one of many examples of the susceptibility of the ostensibly monistic religions to the epistemology of the explicitly dualistic religions. That is, ways lose their way, all around Earth.

But, yet and still, scripture of each of those six religions, essentially if not effectually, says God is good.



## Bibliography

This bibliography refers to the definitive scriptures of each of the six most popular religions and also to other sources for the opening and closing chapters of this book.

Reading the original manuscripts of the scriptures requires learning a half dozen ancient languages. And, for reasons beyond that each of its 81 sections easily fits on one standard book page, I did that for the *Dao De Jing*. But, for the other five religions, I read translations.

So, because my native language is English, this bibliography mainly refers to English translations. But I read several translations of each scripture, and I read them carefully and compared them. So this bibliography not only lists them but also tells how I did or didn't find them useful.

The main problem with translations is that each is to some extent interpretation. No two words are completely synonymous in any language, and that problem is greater for two words in two different languages, but a larger problem is epistemological. Not only does each separate culture have its own system of thought that's both a cause and an effect of its language and its language's development, but also each religion is to some extent its own epistemology.

So, in selecting the translations, I considered both the religious background and the academic background of each translator. And, in this bibliography, I've also listed how I found those considerations to be relevant to how I found the translations useful. I did that to enable you to accept or reject them as reasonably as you can accept or reject this book.

Regine Pernoud's 1962 book *Jeanne d'Arc par elle-même et par ses témoins* quotes extensively from official documents, but I suspect that Mark Twain's book *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* more accurately conveys Jehanne's spirit, while neither book calls her by her name. And, because the Norman Conquest made the English language about half French, because of the difficulty of finding a copy of Pernoud's book in French, and because I found

but one translation of it, the translation of it I used is Edward Hyam's 1965 book *Joan of Arc: by Herself and Her Witnesses*. But other considerations could have been that both Pernoud and Jehanne of Domremy were French and that Hyams was English. And I also read translations I found on the World Wide Web of the transcripts of Jehanne's two trials.

Patrick Olivelle's 1996 book *Upanishads* both exemplifies epistemological problems and excellently works around them. His introduction and notes to that translation of twelve of the thirteen principal *Upanishads* indicate that his epistemology accords far more with the pluralistic materialism of Judaism than with the monistic spiritualism of Hinduism. And an especially indicative example of how such can misrepresent a scripture is that he often translates the word "*atman*" to mean "body". But, when he makes such interpretative translations, he puts the original word in parenthesis after the translation word. So readers can interpret for themselves.

But he omitted the *Maitri Upanishad* from his book. "*Mukhya*", in Sanskrit, means "principal", and the *Upanishads* Hindus call the *Mukhya Upanishads* are the thirteen *Upanishads* Hindus and others most study. And, in addition to the twelve *Upanishads* Olivelle includes in his book, they include the *Maitri Upanishad*.

So, for that *Upanishad*, I relied mainly on E. B. Cowell's 1935 book *Maitrayaniya Upanishad*. The translation of the *Maitri Upanishad* that's in the 1984 section of Max Müller's work he called *Sacred Books of the East* is the only other translation of it I found. And my reason for preferring Cowell's book is that it includes the original Sanskrit.

But, when I found either Olivelle's book or Cowell's book questionable, I compared the particular passage to Müller's translation.

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada's 1983 second edition of his book *Bhagavad Gita as It Is* is a translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* the Swami created especially for the Hare Krishna sect of Hinduism. So, while he may have been more likely than the University of Texas academic Olivelle to be sympathetic to Hindu epistemology, he also may have been more likely to bias his translation toward his sect. But I found several factors of his presentation extraordinarily useful.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is less than twice as long as the *Dao De Jing*. And many people have offered what they called translations of it but deviated far from the literal into their particular interpretations. And that problem includes the popular Swami Prabhavananda English translation in which Christopher Isherwood collaborated and to which Aldous Huxley provided an introduction.

So that and reading several such translations of *Upanishads* before finding Olivelle's and Müller's books made me wary of Swami Prabhupada's Hare Krishna effort. But Swami Prabhupada seems to me to have kept the promise of his title as well as anyone could.

He, like Cowell, includes in his presentation the original Sanskrit. But, unlike Cowell, he presents each stanza in four ways: first in the Nagari script ordinary to Sanskrit, second in transliteration into the Roman alphabet, third in word-by-word translation of the transliteration into English, and fourth in interpretive English syntax. So, with careful attention to all of that while comparing variants of phrases within his translation, one can make one's own translation from it and learn some Sanskrit by way of that process.

And that process validated my wariness of the Swami's sectarianism and motivated me to compare his translation to Barbara Miller's translation in her 1986 book *The Bhagavad-Gita*. But Miller, saying in her introduction to her book that people of the Abrahamic religions don't understand the "dualism" of the Bhagavad Gita, makes clear that she doesn't know the difference between monism and monotheism. And that makes clear that her epistemology is more Occidental than Oriental.

So, for this book, I compared her translation to Prabhupada's. And, when I found no way to reconcile the two by way of Prabhupada's word-by-word translation, I compared Prabhupada's transliteration of the pertinent word with the word's translation in John Denton's 2014 book *A Sanskrit Dictionary*. And Denton's book includes information on grammar.

For the *Miqra* I depended mainly on the King James Version of the Holy Bible. But I also read Robert Alter's translation of the *Torah* in his book *The Five Books of Moses*, and that book has more notes than translation. So I also read the notes, and he says in a note that the King James Bible is more accurate than other translations, but he also says in a note regarding the story of Dinah's marriage that he translated it not literally but to indicate that it was more of a rape than original manuscripts indicate. So I disregarded his translation but accepted his note regarding the KJV Bible.

I read no translation the Roman Catholic Church based on its Latin Vulgate translation. But, because the 115 scholars around Earth who translated the New International Version had the Dead Sea Scrolls available to them, I compared their version to King James' fifty Oxford scholars' version. And, with one exception, I found little substantial difference.

That exception is that, while the New International version of the epigraph to this book seems to me to be random prattle like much of the *Dhammapada*, the King James version of it I used for the epigraph seems to me

to be fundamental to all the scriptures I summarize in this book. And I suspect that an indication of the reason for that may be in the NIV translators' saying they tried to make their translation colloquial, sensible to people of the time in which they translated it, the 1970's. So I preferred the New International Version only for instances in which I found the King James Version incoherent.

Reading many translations of the *Dao De Jing*, I found each of them to be substantially different from each of the others, and notes and other commentary in them suggest a reason. Many of the translators make plain in their commentary that they say in their translations not what the *Dao De Jing* says but what they think it would say were they to understand it. And some, saying they tried to translate literally, in the same paragraph make plain that they don't know the meaning of the word "literal".

So, having begun to study the Chinese language for a trip to China several years before beginning to write this book, I accelerated that effort enough to translate the *Dao De Jing* in the process of writing this book. And, comparing my translation with other translations, I found that other translators often added or omitted words, and sometimes entire sentences. And I found some of their translations of some sentences to be opposite to their obvious original meaning.

So, while I compared more than a half dozen translations of the *Dao De Jing*, in the end the one I used for this book is the one in my book *Dao De Jing: a Literal Translation*. I expect to publish that book early next year, with an introduction further explaining my reasons and with annotation to help the reader correct any errors I may have made, and I include in that book the original Chinese. Chinese, while being a synthetic language, isn't synthetic enough to justify the variety of translation of that relatively simple little book.

For the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, I depended mainly on Soma Thera's translation in his 1960 book *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta (the Wheel of Law)*, but I compared it to Walpola Rahula's translation in his 1959 book *What the Buddha Taught*. And, while I found some of Rahula's commentary in his book to be discordant with his translations, I depended mainly on it for most of the other *suttas*. Most of his discordance was with the accordance of Buddhism with Hinduism.

He says Hinduism differs from Buddhism in asserting the existence of the *Atman*. That is, he doesn't recognize that the *suttas* don't argue that the self doesn't exist, but only that it isn't separate from anything else. So, of course, he doesn't understand that the notion of that unity is fundamental to both Hinduism and Buddhism.

So, while I found no substantial difference between his translation of the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* and Soma Thera's, I mainly used Thera's translation partly for that reason, but another reason is that he includes the original Pali in his book, and such is also why I mainly used an anonymous translation of the *Metta Sutta*.

I found it on the Website of The Nalanda Buddhist Society of Malaysia with an English translation of each of its ten stanzas beside a Roman alphabet transliteration of each stanza in Pali, and beneath that presentation is a list of each word in each stanza's original syntax, and beside that is an English translation of each word.

And, because I found Soma Thera's translation useful for the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, I also mainly used his 1999 translation of the *Satipatthana Sutta* he calls *Satipatthana Sutta: the Discourse on the Arousing of Mindfulness*.

So in the end, while I mainly used Walpola Rahula's translations for the *suttas* I summarize in Chapter 13, I mainly used others' translations for the *suttas* I summarize in Chapter 12.

And, being a Theravada Buddhist, Rahula includes no *sutras* in his book.

For the Lotus Sutra, I depended entirely on D. T. Suzuki's translation in his 1935 book *Buddhism*. And I also read his translation of the Diamond Sutra, but for the Diamond Sutra I mainly depended on the translation by Edward Conze in his 1958 book Random House edited in 2001 and called *Buddhist Wisdom*, and I also mainly used Conze's translation of the Heart Sutta in the same book. And that book presents both *sutras* in segments alternating English translation with Roman alphabet transliteration of the original Sanskrit.

As I did for the *Miqra*, I relied mainly on the King James Version of the Bible for the New Testament, but I used the New International Version for several purposes for that also. One purpose was that, because the New International Version has footnotes indicating Old Testament verses to which the New Testament refers, I used it to find and verify those references. And, as I also did for the *Miqra*, I looked to the New International Version when I found parts of the King James Version difficult to comprehend.

For the Gospel of Mary I compared the translation in Mark M. Mattison's 2013 book *The Gospel of Mary* to the translation on the Gnostic Society's website at <http://www.gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm>.

For the *Qur'an* I relied entirely on Abdel Haleem's translation in his book *The Qur'an*. Many of his footnotes indicate that he's Islamic and tried to defend Islam, but, suggesting that both his defense and his translation are honest, they also give literal translations of passages he doesn't translate literally. One example is his translation of the passage alluding to Jesus' saying a camel can pass through the eye of a needle more easily than a rich man can pass through the gates of heaven. Haleem's footnote says the Arabic word for "rope" is similar to the Arabic word for "camel" and is more reasonable. And he translates that passage accordingly. But he told us his readers he did.

My understanding of *taijiquan* comes most basically from my understanding of the Diamond Sutra and the *Dao De Jing* and Red Pine's translation of Bodhidharma's treatise *Èr Zhǒng Rù* that, in his 1987 book *The Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma*, Pine calls "Outline of Practice". But I also read Paul Brennan's 2011 translation of Yang Chengfu's 1931 book *Tàijǐ Quán Shǐyòng Fǎ* that Brennan calls *Methods of Applying Taiji Boxing* and Louis Swaim's translation of Yang Chengfu's 1934 book that Swaim calls *The Essence and Application of Taijiquan*. And I also read Benjamin Pang Jeng Lo and others' 1979 book *The Essence of Tai Chi Chuan: the Literary Tradition* and the 2010 edition of Yang Jwingming's book *Tai Chi Chuan: Classical Yang Style*. And I read Barbara Davis' 2004 book *The Taijiquan Classics: an Annotated Translation, Including Commentary by Chen Weiming*.

Yang Chengfu's 1931 book, besides including the five short dissertations English-speaking *taijiquan* practitioners call the *taijiquan* classics, traces the succession of teaching *taijiquan* from Zhang Sanfeng through Yang Chengfu's grandfather Yang Luchan to him and on to Chen Weiming and others, but he and the authors of the other books that have come to define *taijiquan* since his grandfather made it public describe it as a martial art, and none of them recognizes the relationship between *taijiquan* and Bodhidharma.

And Po also treats *taijiquan* as a martial art, and his commentary is far from factual, and his translation is far from literal.

Yang Jwingming is from Taiwan and thus probably has no familial relationship to Yang Luchan and Yang Chengfu. And he earned a doctoral degree in mechanical engineering at Purdue University and founded a martial arts academy in California he uses to publish his writing and sell for about the price of an automobile tire six-inch wooden balls he calls Tai Chi balls. And he says in *Tai Chi Chuan: Classical Yang Style* that he regrets regression from treating *taijiquan* as a form of combat.

And Barbara Davis' heritage is Judaic, and her book is mainly a hodgepodge of tritely pedantic pretentious nonsense and *non sequiturs*, and its



bibliography omits the Diamond Sutra and the *Dao De Jing* and anything by Bodhidharma but lists the books by Yang Chengfu, Swaim, Dr. Yang, and Po that I've listed here.

She refers, in her commentary, to the *Dao De Jing* and the Diamond Sutra, but those references are examples of her pedantic *non sequiturs*, and a quotation she says is of “the famous Diamond Sutra” is a misquotation of the Heart Sutra.

And an indication of Davis's bellicosity is her translation of the pictograph 人. She translates it to mean “opponent”. It means “human”.

But that indication of the perversion of *taijiquan* isn't unique.

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