must, to be acceptable, be without blemish; there must be no defect in it. 22 Anything blind, or injured, or maimed, or with a wen, boil-scar, or scurvy—such you shall not offer to the Lord; you shall not put any of them on the altar as gifts to the Lord. 23 You may, however, present as a freewill offering an ox or a sheep with a limb extended or contracted; but it will not be accepted for a vow. 24 You shall not offer to the Lord anything [with its testes] bruised or crushed or torn or cut. You shall have no such practices in your own land, 25 nor shall you accept such [animals] from a foreigner for offering as food for your God, for they are mutilated, they have a defect; they shall not be accepted in your favor.

26 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 27 When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall stay seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day on it shall be acceptable as a gift to the Lord.

28 However, no animal from the herd or from the flock shall be slaughtered on the same day with its young.

29 When you sacrifice a thanksgiving offering to the Lord, sacrifice it so that it may be acceptable in your favor. 30 It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall not leave any of it until morning: I am the Lord.

31 You shall faithfully observe My command-
23 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

2. Speak to the Israelite people and say to them:

These are My fixed times, the fixed times of the Lord, which you shall proclaim as sacred occasions.

3. On six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there shall be a sabbath of complete rest.

**THE CALENDAR OF SACRED TIME (23:1–44)**

Chapter 23 presents a calendar of the annual festivals celebrated in biblical times.

**SHABBAT** (vv. 1–3)

2. Speak to the Israelite people

These sacred occasions are to be observed by all the people, not only by the priesthood.

which you shall proclaim as sacred occasions

Although the dates of the festivals and the regularity of *Shabbat* were set by God, the Israelites also must proclaim them as sacred.

3. On six days work may be done

This statement emphasizes three norms of conduct basic to the observance of *Shabbat*: (a) the prohibition of *m'lakhah* (work), (b) the sanctity of *Shabbat*, and (c) the requirement that *Shabbat* be observed in all Israelite settlements.

**sabbath of complete rest** Hebrew: *shabbat*

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32. in the midst of the Israelite people

The public performance of a *mitzvah* not only benefits the one who does it but has an effect on those who see it, even as a violation of the Torah in public is more damaging than similar behavior done privately (Hoffman). This lead the Sages to view the sanctifying of God's name (*Kiddush ha-Shem*) as essentially a public act. Thus, for example, a *minyan* is required for recitation of the mourner's *Kaddish* and for other prayers proclaiming God's holiness. The faith of the congregation is strengthened when a newly bereaved man or woman, who might have reason to feel angry with God, stands up in its midst to praise God. The Talmud states that there is no greater achievement for a Jew than acting in a way that causes people to think less of Israel's God and Israel's laws (BT Yoma 86a). The term *Kiddush ha-Shem*, sanctifying God's name in public, is often linked to, but not limited to, acts of martyrdom.

**CHAPTER 23**

2. The festivals of the Jewish year are listed first in Exod. 34. The list is repeated here to set out the special role and responsibilities of the *kohanim*, again in Num. 28–29 to present the special offerings brought on each festive occasion, and once more in Deut. 16 to emphasize the obligation of pilgrimage to the central shrine. The Israelites find the presence of God in the sanctuary, which represents the permanent holiness of sacred space, and on the festivals, which represent the recurring holiness of sacred time.

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**HALAKHAH L’MA-ASEH**

23:3. do no work

The Hebrew word *m'lakhah* (work) signifies any creative endeavor. One should refrain not only from paid labor but also from many actions that today may be considered leisure activities, such as gardening, cooking, sewing, arts and crafts, building, and writing.
rest, a sacred occasion. You shall do no work; it shall be a sabbath of the Lord throughout your settlements.

4These are the set times of the Lord, the sacred occasions, which you shall celebrate each at its appointed time: 5In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, there shall be a passover offering to the Lord, and on the fifteenth day of that month the Lord’s Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread for seven days. 7On the first day you shall celebrate a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations. 8Seven days you shall make gifts to the Lord. The seventh day shall be a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations.

9The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 10Speak to the Israelite people and say to them:

shabbaton; literally, “the most restful cessation” from assigned tasks. The word shabbat means “to desist, cease, be idle.”

sabbath of the Lord A day that belongs to God.

FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (vv. 4–8)

4. Each festival is to occur at the same time every year.

5. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month This is the dating system that was in use during much of the biblical period. The unit of time was the lunar month (hodesh), not the week; and the months of the year were designated by ordinal numbers: the first month, the second month, and so forth. The counting of months began in the spring.

twilight The period of time between sunset and nightfall, approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes in duration.

passover offering Here the term “pesah” refers to the sacrifice, not to the festival (see Exod. 12:6).

7. On the first and seventh (or last) days of the festival, work is forbidden. The community celebrates together. During the intervening days, necessary normal work may be done, but the celebration continues.

NEW GRAIN CROP (vv. 9–14)

New grain is to be regarded as belonging to God and may not be eaten until certain offerings are taken from it and presented before God. Those offerings remove the sanctity from the crop, thereby releasing the remainder for ordinary human use.

7. you shall not work at your occupations The Jewish festivals challenge us: Do we define ourselves primarily by our work? Or do we define ourselves primarily by our total humanity, our ability to celebrate, to sanctify time, to share special moments with our families?

HALAKHAH L’MA-ASEH

23:6. seven days Traditionally, Pesah is observed for eight days in the Diaspora. See Comment to Exod. 12:16.

23:7. not work at your occupations Most categories of mlakhat (activities prohibited on Shabbat and Yom Kippur) are also prohibited on the three pilgrimage festivals and Rosh ha-Shanah; the permitted activities are those necessary for the preparation of food (okhel nefesh), such as cooking, carrying, and the transfer of fire (M Betz. 5:2).
When you enter the land that I am giving to you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest. \[11\] He shall elevate the sheaf before the LORD for acceptance in your behalf; the priest shall elevate it on the day after the sabbath. \[12\] On the day that you elevate the sheaf, you shall offer as a burnt offering to the LORD a lamb of the first year without blemish. \[13\] The grain offering with it shall be two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in, a gift of pleasing odor to the LORD; and the libation with it shall be of wine, a quarter of a hin. \[14\] Until that very day, until you have brought the offering of your God, you shall eat no bread or parched grain or fresh ears; it is a law for all time throughout the ages in all your settlements.

15 And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering—the day after the sabbath—you shall count off seventy days. They must be complete: \[16\] you must count until the day after the seventh week—fifty days; then you shall bring an offering of new grain to the LORD.

17 You shall bring from your settlements two libations (nesekh), as prescribed here. The measure of grain required here is twice the usual amount, to emphasize the importance of grain in this celebration.

14. Until God receives a share of the new grain crop, none of it may be used by humans.

**SHAVUOT FESTIVAL** (vv. 15–22)

17. No leaven could be brought up on the
loaves of bread as an elevation offering; each shall be made of two-tenths of a measure of choice flour, baked after leavening, as first fruits to the Lord. With the bread you shall present, as burnt offerings to the Lord, seven yearling lambs without blemish, one bull of the herd, and two rams, with their grain offerings and libations, a gift of pleasing odor to the Lord.

You shall also offer one he-goat as a purification offering and two yearling lambs as a sacrifice of well-being. The priest shall elevate these—the two lambs—together with the bread of first fruits as an elevation offering before the Lord; they shall be holy to the Lord, for the priest. On that same day you shall hold a celebration; it shall be a sacred occasion for you; you shall not work at your occupations. This is a law for all time in all your settlements, throughout the ages.

And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the Lord am your God.

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the Israelite people thus: In the seventh month you shall hold a celebration; it is a sacred occasion for you; you shall not work at your occupations. This is a law for all time in all your settlements.

Further, the gleanings of the harvest mentioned here, interrupting the list of festivals? Perhaps because they were gathered at the Shavuot harvest season, as we read in the Book of Ruth, or because, as the Sifra suggests, when one shares one’s bounty with the poor, it is as if it were offered on God’s altar.

The Torah never refers to the first day of the seventh month as Rosh ha-Shanah. That term first appears in Ezek. 40:1. In the Torah,
month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts. You shall not work at your occupations; and you shall bring a gift to the Lord.

26The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you; you shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring a gift to the Lord; you shall do no work throughout that day. For it is a Day of Atonement, on which expiation is made on your behalf before the Lord your God. Indeed, any person who does not practice self-denial throughout that day shall be cut off from his kin; and whoever does any work throughout that day, I will cause that person to perish from among his people. Do no work whatever; it is a law for all time, throughout the ages in all your settlements. It shall be a sabbath of complete rest for you, and you shall practice self-denial; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall observe this your sabbath.

Atonement. The Hebrew term "zikron t’ru•ah" means, literally, “commemoration by blasting” the shofar.

DAY OF ATONEMENT  (vv. 26–32)
See Comments to 16:29–34.

it is called “a day of remembrance” or “a day of sounding the shofar.” Readers may be surprised to learn that Rosh ha-Shanah begins the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar rather than the first. It commemorates the creation of the world, which traditionally is believed to have happened in the fall, the beginning of the new agricultural cycle. But the people Israel date their calendar from the Exodus, which happened in the spring (cf. Exod. 12:2, designating the month of the Exodus as the first month of Israel’s calendar).

32. on the ninth day…at evening  The Yom Kippur fast does not start until the evening (after sunset, at night) after the ninth day. “Eating and drinking responsibly on the day before and the day after Yom Kippur are as much of a mitzvah as fasting on Yom Kippur” (BT Yoma 81b).

HALAKHAH U’MA-ASEH
23:24. commemorated with loud blasts  This is the source for the ruling that the shofar is not sounded on Rosh ha-Shanah when it coincides with Shabbat, which is itself a commemoration (BT RH 29b). On such a Shabbat, we “remember the blasting” in our prayers. It is also the source for the practice during the Musaf service on Rosh ha-Shanah of reciting 10 biblical verses about each of the themes of God’s kingship, God’s remembrance, and the shofar (BT RH 32a).
The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 34 Say to the Israelite people:

On the fifteenth day of this seventh month there shall be the Feast of Booths to the Lord, [to last] seven days. 35 The first day shall be a sacred occasion; you shall not work at your occupations; 36 seven days you shall bring gifts to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall observe a sacred occasion and bring a gift to the Lord; it is a solemn gathering: you shall not work at your occupations.

Those are the set times of the Lord that you shall celebrate as sacred occasions, bringing gifts to the Lord—burnt offerings, grain offerings, sacrifices, and libations, on each day what is proper to it—apart from the sabbaths of the Lord, and apart from your gifts and from all your votive offerings and from all your freewill offerings that you give to the Lord.

Mark, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the yield of your land, you shall observe the festival of the Lord [to last] seven days: a complete rest on the harvest in the autumn to last through the winter months, even as animals store food for the winter, the Israelites are urged to store up the feelings of gratitude and dependence that mark the holiday season—to last them through the months that will follow, months without festival days. (In the biblical period, Hanukkah did not exist. It celebrates events that took place after the time of the Torah.)
the first day, and a complete rest on the eighth day. On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. You shall observe it as a festival of the Lord for seven days in the year; you shall observe it in the seventh month as a law for all time, throughout the ages. You shall live in booths seven days; all citizens in Israel shall live in booths, in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelite people live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I the Lord your God.

So Moses declared to the Israelites the set times of the Lord.

40. hadar trees  Literally, “beautiful trees.” They symbolize the abundance of water and oases and the beauty of the land of Israel. In horticulture, there are no particular trees designated as hadar. Traditionally, the “product of hadar trees” has been taken to be the citron (etrog).

you shall rejoice  Rejoicing is explicitly commanded in this chapter only for the celebration of Sukkot. The pressing of the grapes had been completed, and there was no labor to be done until the beginning of the next agricultural cycle. The people had leisure time as well as ample food and wine with which to rejoice.

43. I made the Israelite people live in booths  According to Exod. 12:37, Sukkot (literally, Booths) is the name of the first stop on the Exodus route from Egypt.

41. you shall observe it in the seventh month as a law for all time  Through the ages.

42. You shall live in booths seven days; all citizens in Israel shall live in booths, in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelite people live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I the Lord your God.

44. So Moses declared to the Israelites the set times of the Lord.
you shall observe a sacred occasion when you shall practice self-denial. You shall do no work.

8You shall present to the Lord a burnt offering of pleasing odor: one bull of the herd, one ram, seven yearling lambs; see that they are without blemish. 9The grain offering with them—of choice flour with oil mixed in—shall be: three-tenths of a measure for a bull, two-tenths for the one ram, 10one-tenth for each of the seven lambs. 11And there shall be one goat for a purification offering, in addition to the purification offering of expiation and the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, each with its libation.

12On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, you shall observe a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations.—Seven days you shall observe a festival of the Lord.—13You shall present a burnt offering, a gift of pleasing odor to the Lord: Thirteen bulls of the herd, two rams, fourteen yearling lambs; they shall be without blemish. 14The grain offerings with them—of choice flour with oil mixed in—shall be: three-tenths of a measure for each of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each of the two rams, 15and one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs. 16And there shall be one goat for a purification offering—in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering and libation.

and performed exclusively by the high priest (Lev. 16).


You shall do no work Literally, “you shall not do any work.” The same phrase is used for Shabbat (Lev. 23:3). It indicates a more severe prohibition of work on these days than on the other festivals.

THE 15th TO THE 21st OF THE SEVENTH MONTH (vv. 12–34)

This sacred occasion is called “the Feast of Booths” (Hag ha-Sukkot) in Lev. 23:34 and Deut.

CHAPTER 29

13. Offerings for the week of Sukkot are staggering in number, a total of 98 lambs and 70 bullocks. (Pesah week requires only 16 bulls; no other holiday requires more than 2.) The Talmud teaches that the 70 bulls represent thanksgiving offerings on behalf of the 70 nations of the world (BT Suk. 55b). In case some nations forget to be grateful to God, Israel brings a bullock offering (the most extravagant of the sacrifices) on their behalf on Sukkot, the festival of thanksgiving. One of Israel’s tasks in the world is to remind other nations to be grateful to God.
This reading is one of the latest examples of biblical prophecy. Dating from sometime after 518 B.C.E. (see Zech. 8:9), it originally concluded the visions and oracles anthologized as the prophecies of Zechariah. This haftarah is marked by a strong tone of impending doom and purification. A repeated emphasis on “that day” of divine judgment conveys a tone of expectation and inevitability. The city of Jerusalem stands at the center of these prophecies, having a pivotal place in the wars to come and in the universal pilgrimage proclaimed for all nations. When the battles conclude, the Lord will be acknowledged king, and all peoples will be invited to celebrate the festival of Sukkot in Jerusalem.

This haftarah begins with the siege of Jerusalem by “all the nations,” and it ends with their survivors being invited to Jerusalem for a sacred convocation and worship at the feast of Sukkot. Looting and plunder (14:1–2) give way to a forecast of the security of Jerusalem and its religious centrality for all (14:11,20–21). Marking this transition is a shift from the wars of the Lord and His army of “holy beings” (k’doshim; v. 5) to the peace of Jerusalem, in which even the most common objects and utensils will be “holy (kadosh) to the Lord” (v. 21). Significantly, little is said here of the Israelites themselves, or of their worship, whereas much is made of the nations who will bow before the Lord in Jerusalem “year by year.” The elevation of the Lord as “king over all the earth” is clearly of major concern to the prophet, as is the centrality of “the House of the Lord” for all nations. “In that day there shall be one Lord with one name” (v. 9).

The immediacy of the forecast is registered by repetitions of the word “day.” There will be a “day . . . coming” (v. 1) says the prophet, a “day” of plunder and salvation (vv. 4,13), a “day” of continuous light and fresh waters (vv. 6–8), a “day” of divine kingship and the sanctification of everything in Jerusalem (vv. 9,20–21). These days combine in the course of the prophecy to produce one extensive day, when the darkness of doom will pass and a transcendent radiance will illuminate the earth.

Beyond the terrifying clamor of battles and death, Zechariah envisages a time of unearthly splendor, a day when “there shall be neither sunlight nor cold moonlight, but there shall be a continuous day” (vv. 6–7). Creation is therewith reversed and transformed. God’s first light will shine again and evermore, without setting or dawning. In this era, heavenly splendor will illumine all things. It is the time of God’s universal kingship (v. 9).

Along with the elemental quality of light, Zechariah’s prophecy focuses on the life-saving nature of water. It comes to first expression through a prediction that in the day that is coming “fresh water shall flow from Jerusalem” to the eastern and western seas, throughout the summer and winter seasons (v. 8). This image harks back to Ezekiel’s vision of a stream of water issuing from below the platform of the new Temple and flowing outward to heal the natural world (Ezek. 47:1–12). It recalls the primordial streams of Eden (Gen. 2:10–14) and dramatizes the Temple as a veritable paradise at the center of the world. Zechariah’s prophecy of Jerusalem is nourished by this mythic figure.

However, as an image of earthly bounty, the blessing of streams and flowing water derives from regions, like Mesopotamia, nourished by underground fountains and mountain torrents. Ancient Israel, where the waters above the heavens were the decisive source of sustenance, was not such a place. The prophet Zechariah, therefore, speaks to all when he promises God’s heavenly bounty of rain to all those who will worship the Lord.
in Jerusalem on the Feast of Booths (Zech. 14:16–19). This is the favor the Lord extends to those who acknowledge Him. It is the gift of life from the Lord of life. The survivors of death-dealing battles can appreciate its value (v. 16).

**RELATION OF THE HAFTAHAH TO THE CALENDAR**

This haftarah shows an old connection between the festival of Sukkot and rituals for rain. “Any of the earth’s communities that does not make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to bow low to the King of Hosts shall receive no rain” (v. 17). This pronouncement excludes only Egypt (a land that does not depend on rainfall), which is promised an appropriate scourge (Ibn Ezra, Radak). Rain rituals associated with water libations and with the four species gathered on Sukkot (Lev. 23:40) are mentioned separately in early Rabbinic sources (see Tosef. Suk. 3:18; BT Taan. 2b, respectively). Some of these rites may go back to early biblical times, but only during the era of the Second Temple do they seem to have been integrated into a multilevel service of celebration and supplication.

**Zechariah 14:1**

Lo, a day of the Lord is coming when your spoil shall be divided in your very midst! 2 For I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem for war: The city shall be captured, the houses plundered, and the women violated; and a part of the city shall go into exile. But the rest of the population shall not be uprooted from the city. 3 Then the Lord will come forth and make war on those nations as He is wont to make war on a day of battle. 4 On that day, He will set His feet on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall split across from east to west, and one part of the Mount shall shift to the north and the other to the south, a huge gorge. 5 And the Valley in the Hills shall be stopped up, for the Valley of the Hills shall reach up to Azal. You shall flee as you fled because of the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah.—And the Lord my God, with all the holy beings, will come to you.

Zechariah 14:4. He will set His feet God appears as a warrior in battle. The stark anthropomorphism recalls Amos 9:1, in which the prophet envisages the “Lord standing by [or: on] the altar” prophesying doom.

5. This translation vocalizes the verb נ DISCLAIM as [v']nastem, as in Targum, Septuagint, and an old Hebrew manuscript. (Like most manuscripts and printed editions, the Hebrew text above reads [v']nastem, that is, “You [pl.] shall flee [to] the Valley in the Hills, for the Valley of the Hills shall reach up to Azal. You shall flee as you fled because of the earthquake.”) [Transl.] the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah Mentioned also in Amos 1:1, but otherwise it is unknown.
In that day, there shall be neither sunlight nor cold moonlight, but there shall be a continuous day—only the Lord knows when—of neither day nor night, and there shall be light at eventide.

In that day, fresh water shall flow from Jerusalem, part of it to the Eastern Sea and part to the Western Sea, throughout the summer and winter.

And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord with one name.

Then the whole country shall become like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. The latter, however, shall perch high up where it is, and shall be inhabited from the Gate of Benjamin to the site of the Old Gate, down to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king’s winepresses. Never again shall destruction be decreed, and Jerusalem shall dwell secure.

As for those peoples that warred against Jerusalem, the Lord will smite them with this plague: Their flesh shall rot away while they stand on their feet; their eyes shall rot away in their sockets; and their tongues shall rot away in their mouths.

In that day, a great panic from the Lord shall fall upon them, and everyone shall snatch at the hand of another, and everyone shall raise his hand against everyone else’s hand. Judah

8. Eastern Sea . . . Western Sea The Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, respectively (see Joel 2:20).

9. one Lord with one name Prophesying universal monotheism, when God’s name will be proclaimed by all (cf. Rashi). It is cited at the end of the Aleinu prayer and thus serves as a liturgical climax to virtually every Jewish service. Note the literal resonance between the phrase “one Lord” and the conclusion to the Sh’mi proclamation (Deut. 6:4), which avers that “the Lord is one” or “the Lord alone [is our God].” Following a talmudic tradition, Ibn Ezra interpreted Zechariah literally: In the end of days there will no longer be two forms of the divine name but one alone (see BT Pes. 50a). The two forms are YHVH, written but not vocalized, and Adonai, vocalized but not written as pronounced. Jewish mystical tradition considered the unification of these two forms of God’s name a holy mystery. Hasidic masters developed penetrating homilies on the relations between the names, seeing in their difference the mystery of divine transcendence and divine immanence, or indwelling on earth.

10. become like the Arabah All the earth will be depressed, like the ‘Arabah, and Jerusalem will dominate all, like a high mountain (Rashi).
shall join the fighting in Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the nations round about—vast quantities of gold, silver, and clothing—shall be gathered in.

15 The same plague shall strike the horses, the mules, the camels, and the asses; the plague shall affect all the animals in those camps.

16 All who survive of all those nations that came up against Jerusalem shall make a pilgrimage year by year to bow low to the King Lord of Hosts and to observe the Feast of Booths. 17 Any of the earth’s communities that does not make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to bow low to the King Lord of Hosts shall receive no rain. 18 However, if the community of Egypt does not make this pilgrimage, it shall not be visited by the same affliction with which the Lord will strike the other nations that do not come up to observe the Feast of Booths. 19 Such shall be the punishment of Egypt and of all other nations that do not come up to observe the Feast of Booths.

20 In that day, even the bells on the horses shall be inscribed “Holy to the Lord.” The metal pots in the House of the Lord shall be like the basins before the altar; 21 indeed, every metal pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy to the Lord of Hosts. And all those who sacrifice shall come and take of these to boil [their sacrificial meat] in; in that day there shall be no more traders in the House of the Lord of Hosts.

from Geba to Rimmon  That is, from the northern border of the kingdom of Judah (1 Kings 15:22) to the southern border (Josh. 15:32).

14. in Jerusalem  Or: “on behalf of Jerusalem.”

19. the punishment  Hebrew: hattat, which normally indicates sin but is often used (as here) to indicate its consequences.

20. Holy to the Lord  This inscription was also on the gold plate attached to the high priest’s headdress (Exod. 28:36, 39:30). The phrase connotes consecration: It indicates Israel’s special status, and that the spoils of war can be dedicated to the Lord (Josh. 6:19).