

The Order and the Ordering of Biblical Books

How did the Bible end up in the order it's in today?

By Prof. Marc Zvi Brettler | July 11, 2011



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For the many centuries before Jewish scribes published books in codex form, they preserved books in the form of separate scrolls. In certain cases, the scribes put several books in a single scroll—and in a particular order. This was true of the Torah, which needed to be ordered because

Jews read it ritually in order, as part of their worship. Similarly, the scribes grouped Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings in sequence since they tell a more or less continuous story in chronological order. However, for the rest of the Bible, even in Rabbinic times, there was a varying order of the Prophets (except for the “Minor Prophets”) and the Writings.



Certain people and groups (especially professional scribes!) love order. Mesopotamian scribes often copied series of cuneiform tablets in standard orders. The resulting predictability made it easier for readers to find what they were looking for, no matter which copy they consulted. Similarly, perhaps ancient Israelite librarians may have kept biblical scrolls in ordered cubbyholes, so that they could locate the right text easily. This may be the original function of ordering the books of the

Bible.

The Bible shows evidence of ordering at both the macro and the micro level. On the micro level, its text is divided into books—typically, what can fit on a scroll. (Thus the 12 Minor Prophets constitute a single book or scroll, even though it is made up of many books.)

On the macrolevel, this large collection comprises smaller collections. Exactly how and when this was done are subjects of intense current debate: How early is the three-part division of the Bible into Torah, *Nevi'im*, and *Kethuvim*? When and why did this tripartite division develop? Rabbinic sources—though not any of the earliest such sources—do attest to a three-part (what scholars call a “tripartite”) Bible. Scholars have found allusions to this structure in the New Testament and among the Dead Sea Scrolls. However, these references do not decisively prove that the Bible was organized into three parts as early as the 1st century C.E. Indeed, Jews clearly employed a variety of orders and ordering schemes in the Second Temple period.

The tripartite ordering was likely one of the early ordering schemes, for its classifications are not obvious ones. Daniel properly belongs with the Latter Prophets; Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles, and perhaps some other books belong with the Former Prophets. Thus their present classification seems to reflect an evolution: by the time those later books were composed, the set of books known as Prophets had already been determined, so they could not be included in that section. That is, over time the Torah became authoritative first, then *Nevi'im*, and finally *Kethuvim*.

This hypothesis for the evolutionary development of the tripartite canon would also explain the stability—and lack of stability—of order within each section.

The Torah—authoritative first—is fully stable: all manuscripts have the order as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. (Of course, given the contents of these books, their order is not really flexible.) Within Nevi'im, the same is true for the Former Prophets. Concerning the order of the Latter Prophets, there is more flexibility; most manuscripts do not follow the Talmudic order. Within Kethuvim, manuscripts show a tremendous variation in the order of its books. Quite surprisingly, the ancient sources do not indicate what the last—culminating—book of the Bible should be!

Prophets (Nevi'im)

By MJL Staff | October 2, 2003



Nevi'im (Prophets) presents Israel's history as a nation on its land. The Israelites conquer and settle; they are beset by local enemies and eventually by imperial powers. Political and prophetic leaders vie for hearts; the supporters of God's covenant do battle against the paganism of neighboring groups and among the Israelites themselves. A kingdom, a capital, and a Temple are built and eventually destroyed. At the end of *Nevi'im*, prophets who experienced the exile teach a renewed monotheism to a chastened Israel.

Historically, *Nevi'im* begins with the conquest of *Eretz Yisrael* under the leadership of Joshua, Moses' successor (c. 1200 BCE) and concludes with the prophecies of Malachi to those rebuilding the Temple after their return from Babylonia (c. 515 BCE). Jewish convention divides the books into *Nevi'im Rishonim*, "Former Prophets," and *Nevi'im Aharonim*, "Latter Prophets." *Nevi'im Rishonim* consists of prose works built around a historical narrative—Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. *Nevi'im Aharonim* encompasses the "literary prophets," such as Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah.

How much do you
know about

Bible

Two voices are heard in *Nevi'im Rishonim*. One is a nationalist voice, trumpeting heroic leaders such as Joshua and David and the empire briefly consolidated under Solomon. More dominant is a covenantal voice, which explains the fortunes of leaders and the nation on the basis of their fidelity to God.

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Scholars refer to *Nevi'im Rishonim* as the "Deuteronomistic History"—history from the perspective of the thinkers behind the book of Deuteronomy. All together, the *Nevi'im Rishonim* describe the transition from a loose tribal confederation to a monarchy under Saul and David, the division into two kingdoms after Solomon, the conquest of the northern kingdom of Israel by the Assyrian Empire in 722 BCE, and the end of the southern kingdom of Judah at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian Empire in 586 BCE.

Within the narrative of *Nevi'im Rishonim* we encounter the first individual prophets, known to scholars as "preclassical" prophets. Samuel was known as a "seer"; Elijah and Elisha foretold drought and famine and called forth miracles from God. What links these prophets with the classical prophets of the *Nevi'im Aharonim* is their role vis-a-vis the political leaders of Israel. Nathan confronted David over his affair with Bathsheba; Elijah stood against Ahab when the king confiscated Naboth's vineyard.



Nevi'im Aharonim contains the prophecies and teachings of individual prophets, mostly recorded in verse. The books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel are the longest. They are followed by the books known collectively in Jewish tradition as the *Trei Asar*, "the 12"—shorter books of other prophets such as Amos, Micah, Hosea, and Jonah.

Amos and Hosea were prophets in the northern kingdom of Israel. Both prophets warned the nation that its turn away from God's covenant would lead to destruction by the Assyrians. Isaiah and Micah carried a

Elijah

similar message in Judah. Jeremiah delivered his prophecies of doom as the Babylonians approached and captured Jerusalem.

From exile in Babylonia, Ezekiel envisioned the restoration of Israel to its land. The last half of the book of Isaiah contains words of comfort and promise from one or two anonymous prophets speaking in exile. The last prophets spoke in Judea to those who had returned to rebuild the Temple.

The prophets before the exile spoke against idolatry and injustice. They saw God's people trusting in the Canaanite god Baal, in alliances with foreign powers, and in the power of Temple sacrifices to manipulate God's protection. They targeted the corruption of kings and elites who were recreating Egyptian oppression in the Promised Land. They critiqued not only the monarchies but the Temple cult as well, with the message that without justice and fair treatment in society, God would find sacrificial devotion to be hypocrisy.

Yet the prophetic role in the Nevi'im Aharonim was not simply to critique leaders and society. The prophets intercede with God on behalf of the people and argue their case. They imagine the eventual revival of Israel in a messianic future of peace and justice—though to some later prophets, an unsparing divine judgment would come first.

With exile and the destruction of the "House of the Lord" came a theological crisis: Had Israel's God been defeated? Had God abandoned the nation? Out of catastrophe, the last of the prophets worked out a new monotheism: Israel's God was the creator of the cosmos, not merely the protector of a small nation. God's order was built on justice and faithfulness—and if Israel lived up to these demands, she would be safe in God's favor. For centuries afterward, the Jewish people would see God's judgment in its national fortunes.

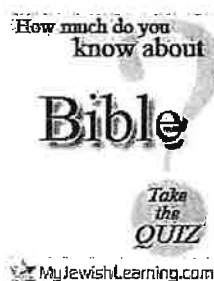
Ketuvim (Writings)

By MJL Staff | October 2, 2003



Ketuvim, the name of the third section of the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible), means simply “Writings”, which hardly does justice to the variety of religious expression found there. There is poetry—of Temple ritual, private prayer, wisdom, national tragedy, even love. There is philosophical exploration—of the wisest path in life, of God’s goodness and justice. There are historical retellings and short stories. Ketuvim might better be translated as “the anthology,” the canonical collection from the post-prophetic age.

Most of the individual books in Ketuvim were written or at least put in final form in Judea during the period of Persian and Hellenistic rule, from the fifth through the second centuries BCE. The Temple in Jerusalem, destroyed in the Babylonian conquest of 586, had been rebuilt around 515. The text of the Torah was standardized not long after, but there was no more prophecy after Malachi. Clues of language, literary style, and content have led scholars to see most of Ketuvim as “Second Temple” works.



Unlike the Torah and the books of Prophets (*Nevi'im*), the works found in Ketuvim do not present themselves as the fruits of direct divine inspiration. (Daniel is the one exception.) What makes books like Psalms and Job so remarkable is their humanity, the “I” who dares to voice questions and doubts about God in the face of danger or suffering. Ultimately, each of the Ketuvim affirms a hard-won commitment to God and covenant. Without divine miracles or national glory, there were only the words of Torah and Prophets to hold onto, proven reliable by Israel’s difficult history and carried forward by people of wisdom.

How the various works of Ketuvim came to be canonized together is not known. Fragments of every book except for Esther are found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, which date as early as the second century BCE. Not until the first century CE are there sources that hint at a recognized Jewish canon in three parts.

After the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in 70 CE, the rabbis of the following century canonized the books of Ketuvim. Certain of the Ketuvim were associated with figures from *Nevi'im*, probably from early on—Proverbs and Song of Songs with King Solomon, Lamentations with Jeremiah, and Psalms as a whole with King David. The Talmud records the rabbis’ disagreements over whether to include Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, and suggests that Esther too was not unanimously approved.

Ketuvim opens with Psalms (*Tehillim*). These poems include liturgies for public celebrations in the Temple, individual meditations at times of danger or suffering, and expressions of awe at Creation. Taken together the Psalms leave the impression of an “official theology” of Temple, priesthood, and nation, but what makes them timeless is the personal voice expressing peril, doubt, and celebration.

The books of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes (*Kohelet*) come out of what scholars term the “Wisdom tradition.” Wisdom was an international literature in the biblical Near East, nurtured by scribes in every culture from Egypt to Mesopotamia. Its characteristics included the observation of nature and the world as the source of understanding, and the use of reason to determine the

best course for human happiness.



Scene of the Book of
Ruth

Two stories and one poem are set at particular points in Jewish history. Ruth presents a narrative set in the time of the book of Judges about a Moabite woman who follows her mother-in-law back to Bethlehem when her own husband dies. She joins her destiny with Israel and becomes the ancestor of King David. Esther, set in Persia, is well-known as the *megillah* (scroll) that tells the story behind the holiday of Purim. Lamentations is a series of poems set in Jerusalem in the days after the Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians.

Unlike any of the other books are Song of Songs and Daniel. The former is a collection of passionate love poetry, by tradition an allegory of the love affair between God and Israel. Daniel is an eclectic book most often noted as the earliest apocalyptic text in Judaism.

Ketuvim concludes with Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles, two largely historical narratives. Ezra-Nehemiah tells the history of the return to Judea under the Persians and reflects the viewpoint of the priests and scribes who came to represent Temple and Torah in the renewed nation. Chronicles retells the earlier pre-exile history found in Kings, from a similar point of view as that of Ezra-Nehemiah.

Many of the texts in Ketuvim have become part of Jewish liturgy. Ecclesiastes, Esther, Song of Songs, Ruth, and Lamentations are known as the *Hamesh Megillot* (Five Scrolls). Each is chanted publicly in the synagogue on a holiday—Sukkot, Purim, Passover, Shavuot, and Tisha B'Av, respectively. Most prominent in Jewish life are the Psalms, which permeate the prayer book and are often recited by individuals as supplications or thanksgiving prayers.

וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶם-אֲעֹשֶׂה אֲנִי
וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-אוּרִיָּה
הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר אֲשַׁלַּח
בִּירוּשָׁלַם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּ
וַיִּקְרָא-לּוֹ דָּוִד וַיֹּאכֵל
וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ וַיֵּצֵא בָּעֶרְבַּ ל
עַם-עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָיו וְאֶל-בֵּית
וַהֲיִי בְּבֹקֶר וַיִּכְתֹּב דָּוִד
וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּיַד אוּרִיָּה: 15
לֵאמֹר הִבּוּ אֶת-אוּרִיָּה
הַמִּלְחָמָה הַחֲזָקָה וּשְׁבִתֶם
מִתּ: 16 וַהֲיִי בִשְׁמוֹרֵי
וַיִּתֵּן אֶת-אוּרִיָּה אֶל-הַמֶּמְקָה
בְּאֲנָשֵׁי-חֵיל שָׁם: 17 וַיֵּצֵא
לַחֲמוֹ אֶת-יוֹאָב וַיִּפְּל מִן
הַר וַיָּמָת גַּם אוּרִיָּה הַחַי
וַיִּשְׁלַח יוֹאָב וַיַּגֵּד לְדָוִד
הַמִּלְחָמָה: 19 וַיֵּצֵאוּ אֶת-הָעַם
מִבְּלֹתָם אֶת כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הָעַם
אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ: 20 וַהֲיִיה אִם-י
וַיִּמְלֹךְ וַאֲמַר לָהּ מִדּוּעַ נִגְשׁוּ
לַחֲמוֹ הַלּוֹא יִדְעֶתֶם אֶת-אֲנִי
הַיּוֹמָה: 21 מִי-הִכָּה אֶת-אֲנִי
וַיָּשֶׁת הַלּוֹא-אִשָּׁה הַשְׁלִיכָה
עַל מַעַל הַחֲזֹמָה וַיָּמָת
מִתָּם אֶל-הַחֲזֹמָה וַאֲמָרוּ
אִיָּה הַחַיִּי מִתּ:
לֵךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיָּבֹא וַיַּגֵּד
לְאִשָּׁר שָׁלְחוּ יוֹאָב: 23 וַיֵּא
אֲדָוָה כִּי-גִבְרוּ עָלֵינוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים
הַשָּׂדֶה וַנִּהְיֶה עָלֵיהֶם
עָר: 24 וַיִּרְאוּ וַיִּלְּדוּ הַמּוֹרָא

saw that they had been routed by Israel, they submitted to Israel and became their vassals. And the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites any more.

11 At the turn of the year, the season when kings go out [to battle], David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him, and they devastated Ammon and besieged Rabbah; David remained in Jerusalem. ²Late one afternoon, David rose from his couch and strolled on the roof of the royal palace; and from the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, ³and the king sent someone to make inquiries about the woman. He reported, "She is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam [and] wife of Uriah the Hittite." ⁴David sent messengers to fetch her; she came to him and he lay with her—she had just purified herself after her period—and she went back home. ⁵The woman conceived, and she sent word to David, "I am pregnant." ⁶Thereupon David sent a message to Joab, "Send Uriah the Hittite to me"; and Joab sent Uriah to David.

When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab and the troops were faring and how the war was going. ⁸Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and bathe your feet." When Uriah left the royal palace, a present from the king followed him. ⁹But Uriah slept at the entrance of the royal palace, along with the other officers of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰When David was told that Uriah had not gone down to his house, he said to Uriah, "You just came from a journey; why didn't you go down to your house?" ¹¹Uriah answered David, "The Ark and Israel and Judah are located at Succoth, and my master Joab and Your Majesty's men are camped in the open; how can I go home and eat and drink and sleep

יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁלַמוּ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲבְדוּם
וַיִּרְאוּ אֹרֶם לְהוֹשִׁיעַ עוֹד אֶת-בְּנֵי
עַמּוֹן: פ

י א וַיְהִי לְתַשׁוּבַת הַשָּׁנָה לַעֲת
צֹאת הַמִּלְחָמָה* וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶת-
יוֹאָב וְאֶת-עַבְדָּיו עִמּוֹ וְאֶת-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיִּשְׁחָתוּ אֶת-בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן וַיִּצְרוּ עַל-רַבָּה
וְדָוִד יוֹשֵׁב בִּירוּשָׁלַם: 2 וַיְהִי לַעֲת
הָעֶרֶב וַיָּקָם דָּוִד מֵעַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹ וַיִּתְּהַלֵּךְ
עַל-גֹּג בֵּית-הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּרְא אִשָּׁה רַחֲצָה
מֵעַל הַגֹּג וְהָאִשָּׁה טוֹבַת מְרָאָה מְאֹד:
3 וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד וַיִּדְרֹשׁ לָאִשָּׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הַלּוֹא-
זֹאת בֶּת-שֶׁבַע בַּת-אֱלִיעָם אִשְׁתּ אוּרִיָּה
הַחַיִּי: 4 וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד מַלְאָכִים וַיִּקְחָהּ
וַתָּבֹא אֵלָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִמָּהּ וְהִיא מִתְקַדֶּשֶׁת
מִשְׁמֵמָתָהּ וַתִּשָּׁב אֶל-בֵּיתָהּ: 5 וַתַּהַר
הָאִשָּׁה וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתַּגֵּד לְדָוִד וַתֹּאמֶר הִרָה
אֲנִי: 6 וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶל-יוֹאָב שְׁלַח אֵלַי
אֶת-אוּרִיָּה הַחַיִּי וַיִּשְׁלַח יוֹאָב אֶת-
אוּרִיָּה אֶל-דָּוִד:

7 וַיָּבֹא אוּרִיָּה אֵלָיו וַיִּשְׁאַל דָּוִד לְשָׁלוֹם
יוֹאָב וּלְשָׁלוֹם הָעָם וּלְשָׁלוֹם הַמִּלְחָמָה:
8 וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְאוּרִיָּה רֵד לְבֵיתְךָ וּרְחֹץ
רַגְלֶיךָ וַיֵּצֵא אוּרִיָּה מִבֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וַתֵּצֵא
אַחֲרָיו מִשְׁאֵת הַמֶּלֶךְ: 9 וַיִּשְׁכַּב אוּרִיָּה
פֶּתַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת כָּל-עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָיו
וְלֹא יָרַד אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ: 10 וַיַּגֵּדוּ לְדָוִד לֵאמֹר
לֹא-יָרַד אוּרִיָּה אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד
אֶל-אוּרִיָּה הַלּוֹא מְדַרְךָ אִתָּהּ בָּא מִדּוּעַ
לֹא-יָרַדְתָּ אֶל-בֵּיתְךָ: 11 וַיֹּאמֶר אוּרִיָּה
אֶל-דָּוִד הָאָרוֹן וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוּדָה יֹשְׁבִים
בְּסֻכּוֹת וְאֲדֹנָי יוֹאָב וְעַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָי עַל-פְּנֵי
הַשָּׂדֶה חֲזִים וְאֲנִי אָבֹא אֶל-בֵּיתִי לֵאכֹל
וּלְשִׁתּוֹת וּלְשָׁכַב עִם-אִשְׁתִּי חֵיל* וְחַי

v. 1. יתיר א, ומנוקד לפי נוסחים מקובלים

v. 11. חסר י

with my wife? ^a-As you live, by your very life, -^a I will not do this!" ¹²David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will send you off." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. The next day, ¹³David summoned him, and he ate and drank with him until he got him drunk; but in the evening, [Uriah] went out to sleep in the same place, with his lord's officers; he did not go down to his home.

¹⁴In the morning, David wrote a letter to Joab, which he sent with Uriah; ¹⁵He wrote in the letter as follows: "Place Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest; then fall back so that he may be killed." ¹⁶So when Joab was besieging the city, he stationed Uriah at the point where he knew that there were able warriors. ¹⁷The men of the city sallied out and attacked Joab, and some of David's officers among the troops fell; Uriah the Hittite was among those who died.

¹⁸Joab sent a full report of the battle to David. ¹⁹He instructed the messenger as follows: "When you finish reporting to the king all about the battle, ²⁰the king may get angry and say to you, 'Why did you come so close to the city to attack it? Didn't you know that they would shoot from the wall?' ²¹Who struck down Abimelech son of Jerubbesheth?^b Was it not a woman who dropped an upper millstone on him from the wall at Thebez, from which he died? Why did you come so close to the wall?' Then say: 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite was among those killed.'"

²²The messenger set out; he came and told David all that Joab had sent him to say. ²³The messenger said to David, "First the men prevailed against us and sallied out against us into the open; then we drove them back up to the

הַיָּמָיִם אִם-אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת-הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-אוּרִיָּה שֶׁב־בֵּיתָה גַּם-הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ וַיֵּשֶׁב אוּרִיָּה בִּירוּשָׁלַם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וּמִמָּחָרֶת: וַיִּרְאֵהוּ דָּוִד וַיֹּאכַל לִפְנָיו וַיִּשָּׂא וַיִּשְׂכְּרוּ וַיֵּצֵא בַעֲרֵב לִשְׁכַב בְּמִשְׁכְּבוֹ עַד-עֶבְרֵי אֲדָנָיו וְאֶל-בֵּיתוֹ לֹא יָרָד:

וַהֲיָה בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּכְתֹּב דָּוִד סֵפֶר אֶל-יוֹאָב וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּיַד אוּרִיָּה: ¹⁵וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּסֵפֶר לֵאמֹר הִבּוּ אֶת-אוּרִיָּה אֶל-מוֹל' פְּנֵי הַלְחָמָה הַחֲזָקָה וּשְׁבַתֶּם מֵאַחֲרָיו וּנְפֹחַ הַתֵּת: ¹⁶וַיְהִי בִשְׁמוֹר יוֹאָב אֶל-הָעִיר וַיִּתֵּן אֶת-אוּרִיָּה אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יָדַע כִּי אֲנָשֵׁי-חַיִל שָׁם: ¹⁷וַיֵּצְאוּ אֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר וַיִּלָּחֲמוּ אֶת-יוֹאָב וַיַּפֵּל מִן-הָעָם מַעֲבְדֵי דָוִד וַיָּמָת גַּם אוּרִיָּה הַחֲתִי:

וַיִּשְׁלַח יוֹאָב וַיַּגִּד לְדָוִד אֶת-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַלְחָמָה: ¹⁹וַיֵּצֵא אֶת-הַמַּלְאָךְ לֵאמֹר בְּלוֹתְךָ אֵת כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַמַּלְחָמָה לְדָבָר לַהֲמָלֶכֶ: ²⁰וְהָיָה אִם-תַּעֲלֶה חֲמַת הַלֵּךְ וַאֲמַר לְךָ מִדּוּעַ נִגַּשְׁתָּם אֶל-הָעִיר הַזֶּה הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתָּם אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יָרָו מֵעַל הַחֹמָה: ²¹מִי-הִכָּה אֶת-אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ בֶּן-נִיֶּשֶׁת הַלּוֹא-אִשָּׁה הִשְׁלִיכָה עָלָיו פֶּלֶחַ יָב מֵעַל הַחֹמָה וַיָּמָת בְּתִבֹץ לְמָוֶה זֶהָם אֶל-הַחֹמָה וַאֲמַרְתָּ גַּם עֲבָדְךָ אִיָּה הַחֲתִי מָת:

וְלֵךְ הַמַּלְאָךְ וַיָּבֵא וַיַּגִּד לְדָוִד אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר שָׁלְחוֹ יוֹאָב: ²³וַיֹּאמֶר הַמַּלְאָךְ דָּוִד כִּי-גִבְרוּ עָלֵינוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּצְאוּ בְּנוֹ הַשָּׂדֶה וְנִהְיָה עֲלֵיהֶם עַד-פֶּתַח הָעִיר: ²⁴וַיִּרְאוּ וַיָּרֻוּ הַמּוֹרָאִים הַמּוֹרָאִים

^{a-a} Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Emendation yields "As the LORD lives and as you live" (cf. 1 Sam. 20.3; 25.26; etc.). Lit. "as you live and as your being lives."

^b The earlier form is Jerubbaal (another name for Gideon), Judg. 7.1: on -bosheth/hesheth for -baal see note at 2 Sam. 1.4. En-

מעט ואספה לך כהנה
בית. את דבר יהוה לך
בעיני את אוריה החו
ואת אשתו לקחת לך
הרגת בחרב בני עמון
חסור חרב מביתך עד
בזנתי ותקח את אשה
להיות לך לאשה: ס
יהוה הנני מקים עלי
ולקחת את נשיך לעיני
ושכב עם נשיך לעיני
וכי אתה עשית בסו
את הדבר הזה נגד
השם: ס

ט ואמר דוד אל נתן ח
ואמר נתן אל דוד:
האמת לא תמות:
נאצת את איבי יהוה ב
הילד לך מות ימות:
ט וילך נתן אל ביתו ויגן
אשר ילדה אשת אורי
ויבקש דוד את האל
ונצם דוד צום ובא ול
ט ויקמו זקני ביתו על
הארץ ולא אבה ולא
ויהי ביום השביעי ו
עבדי דוד להגיד לו:
אמרו הנה בהיות הילד
ולא שמע בקולנו ואיך
הילד ועשה רעה: 19 ו
מתלחשים ויבן דוד כי
דוד אל עבדיו המת הי

entrance to the gate. ²⁴But the archers shot at your men from the wall and some of Your Majesty's men fell; your servant Uriah the Hittite also fell." ²⁵Whereupon David said to the messenger, "Give Joab this message: 'Do not be distressed about the matter. The sword ^dalways takes its toll. ^dPress your attack on the city and destroy it!' Encourage him!"

²⁶When Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she lamented over her husband. ²⁷After the period of mourning was over, David sent and had her brought into his palace; she became his wife and she bore him a son.

12 But the LORD was displeased with what David had done, ¹and the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said, "There were two men in the same city, one rich and one poor. ²The rich man had very large flocks and herds, ³but the poor man had only one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He tended it and it grew up together with him and his children: it used to share his morsel of bread, drink from his cup, and nestle in his bosom; it was like a daughter to him. ⁴One day, a traveler came to the rich man, but he was loath to take anything from his own flocks or herds to prepare a meal for the guest who had come to him; so he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

⁵David flew into a rage against the man, and said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! ⁶He shall pay for the lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and showed no pity." ⁷And Nathan said to David, "That man is you! Thus said the LORD, the God of Israel: 'It was I who anointed you king over Israel and it was I who rescued you from the hand of Saul. ⁸I gave you your master's house and possession of your master's wives; and I gave you the House of Israel and Judah;

d-d Lit. "consumes the like and the like."

אל עבדך מעל החומה וימותו מעבדי
המלך וגם עבדך אוריה החתי
מת: ס ²⁵ ויאמר דוד אל המלאך כה
תאמר אל יואב אל ירע בעיניך את
הדבר הזה כי כזה וכזה תאכל החרב
החזק מלחמתך אל העיר והרסה
וחזקהו:

²⁶ ותשמע אשת אוריה כי ימת אוריה
אשה ותספד על בעלה: ²⁷ ויעבר האבל
וישלח דוד ויאספה אל ביתו ותהי לו
לאשה ותלד לו בן

יב וירע הדבר אשר עשה דוד בעיני
יהוה: פ ¹ וישלח יהוה את
נתן אל דוד ויבא אליו ויאמר לו שני
אנשים היו בעיר אחת עשיר ואחד
ראש: ² לעשיר היה צאן ובקר הרבה
מאד: ³ ולרש אין כל כי אם כבשה אחת
קטנה אשר קנה ויחיה ותגדל עמו
ועם בניו יחדו מפתו תאכל ומכסו
תשתה ובחיקו תשכב ותהי לו כבת:
⁴ ויבא הלך לאיש העשיר ויחמל לקחת
מצאנו ומבקריו לעשות לארץ הבא לו
ויקח את כבשת האיש הראש ויעשה
לאיש הבא אליו:

⁵ ויחר אף דוד באיש מאד ויאמר אל
נתן חיה יהוה כי בן מות האיש העשה
זאת: ⁶ ואת הכבשה ישלם ארבעתים
עקב אשר עשה את הדבר הזה ועל
אשר לא חמל: ⁷ ויאמר נתן אל דוד
אתה האיש כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל
אנכי משחתך למלך על ישראל ואנכי
הצלתך מיד שאול: ⁸ ואתנה לך את
בית אדניך ואת נשי אדניך בחיקך
ואתנה לך את בית ישראל ויהודה ואם

י. 1. יתיר א'

י. 4. יתיר א'

19Thus said the LORD to me: Go and stand in the People's Gate, by which the kings of Judah enter and by which they go forth, and in all the gates of Jerusalem, 20and say to them: Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter by these gates!

21Thus said the LORD: Guard yourselves for your own sake against carrying burdens^h on the sabbath day, and bringing them through the gates of Jerusalem. 22Nor shall you carry out burdens from your houses on the sabbath day, or do any work, but you shall hallow the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. (23But they would not listen or turn their ear; they stiffened their necks and would not pay heed or accept discipline.) 24If you obey Me—declares the LORD—and do not bring in burdens through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day and do no work on it, 25then through the gates of this city shall enter kings who sit upon the throne of David, with their officers—riding on chariots and horses, they and their officers—and the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And this city shall be inhabited for all time. 26And people shall come from the towns of Judah and from the environs of Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the Shephelah, and from the hill country, and from the Negeb, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, meal offerings and frankincense, and bringing offerings of thanksgiving to the House of the LORD. 27But if you do not obey My command to hallow the sabbath day and to carry in no burdens through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then I will set fire to its gates; it shall consume the fortresses of Jerusalem and it shall not be extinguished.

^h Or "merchandise."

19 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַלֵּךְ וְעִמְדָה בַּשַּׁעַר
בְּנִי-עַם הָעָם אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ בּוֹ מִלְכֵי יְהוּדָה
וְאֲשֶׁר יֵצְאוּ בּוֹ וּבְכָל שַׁעְרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם:
20 וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם שְׁמְעוּ דְבַר-יְהוָה מִלְכֵי
יְהוּדָה וְכָל-יְהוּדָה וְכָל יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם
הַבָּאִים בַּשַּׁעְרִים הָאֵלֶּה: ס
21 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הִשְׁמְרוּ בְּנַפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם
וְאַל-תִּשְׂאוּ מִשָּׂא בְיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וְהִבֵּאתֶם
בַּשַּׁעְרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם: 22 וְלֹא-תוֹצִיאוּ מִשָּׂא
מִבֵּיתֶכֶם בְּיּוֹם-הַשַּׁבָּת וְכָל-מִלְאָכָה לֹא
תַעֲשׂוּ וְקִדְשְׁתֶּם אֶת-יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת כַּאֲשֶׁר
צִוִּיתִי אֶת-אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם: 23 וְלֹא שְׁמַעְוּ וְלֹא
הִשְׁמוּ אֶת-אָזְנָם וַיִּקְשׂוּ אֶת-עַרְפָּם לְבַלְתִּי
שׁוֹמַע שְׁמוֹעַ וּלְבַלְתִּי קָחַת מוֹסֵר: 24 וְהָיָה
אִם-שָׁמַע תִּשְׁמָעוּן אֵלַי נָאִם-יְהוָה
לְבַלְתִּי הִבֵּיאוּ מִשָּׂא בַּשַּׁעְרֵי הָעִיר הַזֹּאת
בְּיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וּלְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת-יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת
לְבַלְתִּי עֲשׂוֹת-כֹּה בּוֹ כָּל-מִלְאָכָה: 25 וְבָאוּ
בַּשַּׁעְרֵי הָעִיר הַזֹּאת מְלָכִים וְיֹשְׁרִים
יֹשְׁבִים עַל-כִּסֵּא דָוִד רֹכְבִים וְכָרֶב
וּבִסּוּסִים הֵמָּה וְיֹשְׁרֵיהֶם אִישׁ יְהוּדָה
וְיֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם וְיֹשְׁבֵי הָעִיר-הַזֹּאת
לְעוֹלָם: 26 וְבָאוּ מֵעַרְי-יְהוּדָה וּמִסְבִּיבוֹת
יְרוּשָׁלַם וּמֵאֶרֶץ בְּנִימִן וּמִן-הַשְּׁפֵלָה וּמִן-
הַהָר וּמִן-הַנֶּגֶב מִבָּאִים עוֹלָה וְזֶבַח
וּמִנְחָה וּלְבֹנָה וּמִבְּאֵי תוֹדָה בֵּית יְהוָה:
27 וְאִם-לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ אֵלַי לְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת-יּוֹם
הַשַּׁבָּת וּלְבַלְתִּי שְׂאֵת מִשָּׂא וּבָא בַּשַּׁעְרֵי
יְרוּשָׁלַם בְּיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וְהִצַּתִּי אֵשׁ
בַּשַּׁעְרֵיהָ וְאָכְלָה אֶרְמְנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְלֹא
תִכָּבֶּה: פ

For soon My salvation shall come,
And My deliverance be revealed.

²Happy is the man who does this,
The man who holds fast to it:
Who keeps the sabbath and does not profane
it,
And stays his hand from doing any evil.

³Let not the foreigner say,
Who has attached himself to the LORD,
"The LORD will keep me apart from His peo-
ple";

And let not the eunuch say,
"I am a withered tree."

⁴For thus said the LORD:

"As for the eunuchs who keep My sabbaths,
Who have chosen what I desire
And hold fast to My covenant—

⁵I will give them, in My House

And within My walls,

A monument and a name

Better than sons or daughters.

I will give them an everlasting name

Which shall not perish.

⁶As for the foreigners

Who attach themselves to the LORD,

To minister to Him,

And to love the name of the LORD,

To be His servants—

All who keep the sabbath and do not profane

it,

And who hold fast to My covenant—

⁷I will bring them to My sacred mount

And let them rejoice in My house of prayer.

Their burnt offerings and sacrifices

Shall be welcome on My altar;

For My House shall be called

A house of prayer for all peoples."

⁸Thus declares the Lord God,

כִּי קִרְבִּי וְשׁוּעָתִי לָבוֹא
וְצִדְקָתִי לְהַגְלוֹת בְּעֵינֵי כָל בָּשָׂר

אֲשֶׁר־אֲנֹכִי יַעֲשֶׂה וְאֵת

וּבְנֵי אָדָם וְחֹזֵק בְּיָד

שֹׁמֵר שַׁבָּת מִחֲלָלוֹ

וְשֹׁמֵר יְהוָה מִמַּעֲשׂוֹת כָּל־רָע: 8

וְאֵל־יֹאמַר בֶּן־הַנָּכֹר

הַנִּלְוֶה אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר

הִבְדֵּל יִבְדִּילֵנִי יְהוָה מֵעַל עַמּוֹ

וְאֵל־יֹאמַר הַסָּרִיס

הֵן אֲנִי עֵץ יָבֵשׁ: 5

כִּי־כֹה אֵלֵךְ יְהוָה

לְסָרִיסִים אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־שַׁבְּתוֹתַי

וּבָחָרוּ בְּאֲשֶׁר חָפְצָתִי

וּמְחֻזְקִים בְּבְרִיתִי:

וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם בְּבִיתִי

וּבְחֻמּוֹתַי

יֵד וְשֵׁם

טוֹב מִבָּנִים וּמִבָּנוֹת

שֵׁם עוֹלָם אֶתֶּן־לָו

אֲשֶׁר־לֹא יִכָּרֵת: 6

וּבְנֵי־הַנָּכֹר

הַנִּלְוִים עַל־יְהוָה

לְשִׁרְתוֹ

וְלֹא־הִבִּיחַ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה

לִהְיוֹת לוֹ לַעֲבָדִים

כָּל־שֹׁמֵר שַׁבָּת מִחֲלָלוֹ

וּמְחֻזְקִים בְּבְרִיתִי:

וְהִבִּיאוֹתִים אֶל־הָר קֹדֶשׁ־י

וְשִׁמְחָתִים בְּבֵית תַּפְלֹתַי

עוֹלָתֵיהֶם וְזִבְחֵיהֶם

לְרָצוֹן עַל־מִזְבְּחִי

כִּי־בֵיתִי בֵּית־תַּפְלָה יִקְרָא

לְכָל־הָעַמִּים:

כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי־יְהוָה: 8

הלכך באגמון ראשו
ושק ואפר יציע
הלזה תקרא צום
ויום רצון ליהוה:
הלוא זה צום אבחר
פתח חרצבות רשע
התר אגדות מוטה
ושלח רצוצים חפשיב
וכל-מוטה תנתקו:
הלוא פרס לרעב לח
ועניים מרודים תביא
כי-תראה ערם וכסיתו
ומבשרו לא תתעלם:

אז יבקע כשחר אורו
וארכתה מהרה תצמח
והלך לפניך צדקה
כבוד יהוה יאסף:
אז תקרא ויהוה יענד
תשוע ויאמר הנני
אם-תסיר מתוך מוטו
שלח אצבע ודבר-און:
ותפק לרעב נפש
ונפש נעה תשביע
ורח בחשך אורו
ואפלתה כצהרים:
ונחך יהוה תמיד

והשביע בצחצחות נפש
ועצמותיך יחליץ
והיית כגן רוה
וכמוצא מים אשר לא-
יבנו ממנה חרבות עול
מוסדי דור-דור תקומם

I will guide them and mete out solace to them,
And to the mourners among them ¹⁹hearten-
ing, ^qcomforting words:

It shall be well,
Well with the far and the near

—said the LORD—

And I will heal them.

²⁰But the wicked are like the troubled sea
Which cannot rest,
Whose waters toss up mire and mud.

²¹There is no safety

—said my God—

For the wicked.

58 Cry with full throat, without restraint;
Raise your voice like a ram's horn!
Declare to My people their transgression,
To the House of Jacob their sin.

²To be sure, they seek Me daily,
Eager to learn My ways.
Like a nation that does what is right,
That has not abandoned the laws of its God,
They ask Me for the right way,
They are eager for the nearness of God:

³"Why, when we fasted, did You not see?
When we starved our bodies, did You pay no
heed?"

Because on your fast day

You see to your business

And oppress all your laborers!

⁴Because you fast in strife and contention,

And you strike with a wicked fist!

Your fasting today is not such

As to make your voice heard on high.

⁵Is such the fast I desire,

A day for men to starve their bodies?

^q Lit. "the vigor of"; cf. Eccl. 12.1 and postbiblical bori.

^r The Heb. nib is otherwise unknown; its meaning is inferred from that of nid (cf. the verb nad "to condole") in the parallel expression in Job 16.5.

ואנחהו ואשלם נחמים לו
ולאבליו: ¹⁹ בורא נוב גיב שפתים
שלום

שלום לרחוק ולקרוב
אמר יהוה

ורפאתיו:

²⁰ והרשעים כים נגרש

כי השקט לא יוכל

ויגרשו מימיו רפש וטיט:

²¹ אין שלום

אמר אלהי

לרשעים: ס

נח קרא בגרון אליהם

פשוט הרם קולך

והגד לעמי פשעם

ולבית יעקב חטאתם:

² ואותי יום יום ידרשון

ודעת דרכי יחפצון

כגוי אשר-צדקה עשה

ומשפט אלהיו לא עזב

ישאלוני משפטי-צדק

קרבת אלהים יחפצון:

³ למח צמנו ולא ראית

ענינו נפשנו ולא תדע

הן ביום צמכם

תמצאו-חפץ

וכל-עצביכם תנגשו:

⁴ הן לריב ומצה תצומו

ולהבות באגרף רשע

לא-תצומו כיום

להשמיע במרום קולכם:

⁵ הכזה יהיה צום אבחרהו

יום ענות אדם נפשו

Is it bowing the head like a bulrush
And lying in sackcloth and ashes?
Do you call that a fast,
A day when the LORD is favorable?
No, this is the fast I desire:
To unlock fetters of wickedness,
And untie the cords of ^athe yoke-^a
To let the oppressed go free;
To break off every yoke.
It is to share your bread with the hungry,
And to take the wretched poor into your
home;
When you see the naked, to clothe him,
And not to ignore your own kin.

⁸Then shall your light burst through like the
dawn

And your healing spring up quickly;
Your Vindicator shall march before you,
The Presence of the LORD shall be your rear
guard.

⁹Then, when you call, the LORD will answer;
When you cry, He will say: Here I am.

If you banish the yoke^a from your midst,

^bThe menacing hand, ^band evil speech,

¹⁰And you offer your compassion^c to the
hungry

And satisfy the famished creature—

Then shall your light shine in darkness,

And your gloom shall be like noonday.

¹¹The LORD will guide you always;

He will slake your thirst in ^dparched places-^d

And give strength to your bones.

You shall be like a watered garden,

Like a spring whose waters do not fail.

¹²Men from your midst shall rebuild ancient
ruins,

You shall restore foundations laid long ago.

הֲלֹכָהּ כְּאֶגְמוֹן רֹאשׁוֹ
וְשָׁק וְאֶפְרַח יָצִיעַ
הֲלֹוֹה תִקְרָא צוֹם
יוֹם רָצוֹן לַיהוָה:
הֲלֹוֹא זֶה צוֹם אֲבָחֶרְהוּ
פִתּוֹחַ חֲרָצִבוֹת רָשָׁע
חֲתֹר אֲגָדוֹת מוֹטָה
וְשִׁלַּח רָצוֹצִים חֲפָשִׁים
וְכָל-מוֹטָה תִּנְתְּקוּ:
הֲלֹוֹא פָרַס לָרֹעַב לַחֲמֶה
וְעֲנִיִּים מְרֹדִים תִּבְיֵא בֵּית
בֵּית-רָאִי עָרֹם וְכִסְיוֹ
וּמִבְשָׂרָה לֹא תִתְעַלֵּם:

יֵאָזֵב יִבְקַע כְּשַׁחַל אוֹרָה
וְאַרְכָּתָה מִהֲרָה תִצְמַח
הֲלֹה לִפְנֵיהֶם צִדְקָה
כְּבוֹד יִהְיֶה וְאַסְפָּף:

יֵאָזֵב תִּקְרָא וִיהְיֶה יַעֲזָה
תִּשְׁמַע וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי
אִם-תִּסִּיר מִתּוֹכָה מוֹטָה
שִׁלַּח אֶצְבֶּע וְדַבֵּר-אֲנִי:

וְתִפְקַח לָרֹעַב נַפְשָׁה
נֶפֶשׁ נַעֲנָה תִשְׁבִּיעַ
וְרוּחַ בְּחֹשֶׁךְ אוֹרָה
אִפְלֹתָה בְּצֹהָרִים:

וְנִחַח יִהְיֶה תָמִיד
הַשְׁבִּיעַ בְּצִחְצִחוֹת נַפְשָׁה
עֲצֻמְתֶּיהָ יִחְלִיץ
הֵייתָ כְּגֵן רוּחַ

נִמְצָא מֵיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִכְזָבוּ מִיָּמֶיךָ:
וְכִנּוּ מִמֶּךָ חֲרָבוֹת עוֹלָם
וְסִדֵּי דוֹר-דּוֹר תִּקְוָמָם

^{a-a} Change of vocalization yields "lawlessness"; cf. mutteb, Ezek. 9.9.

^{b-b} Lit. "Extending the finger."

^c Some Heb. mss. and ancient versions read "bread."

^{d-d} Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

השחיתו התעוּבוּ עַל
אֵין עֲשֶׂה-טוֹב:

יְהוָה מִשְׁמִים הַשְׁקִי
אֲדָם

לִרְאוֹת הִישׁ מִשְׁפִּיל
וְדַשׁ אֶת-אֱלֹהִים:

הַכֵּל סָר
יִחְדּוּ נִאֲלָחוּ

אֵין עֲשֶׂה-טוֹב
אֵין גַּם-אֲחֵד:

וְהֵלֹא יִדְעוּ כָּל-פְּעָלֵי
אֲכָלֵי עֵמִי אֲכָלוּ לֶחֶם

יְהוָה לֹא קָרָאוּ:
שָׁם | פָּחַדוּ פָּחַד

כִּי-אֱלֹהִים בְּדוֹר צָדִיק
עֲצַת-עֲנִי תִבְיֹשׁוּ

כִּי יְהוָה מִחֲסֵהוּ:
מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן יִשְׁעוֹ

בָּשׁוּב יְהוָה שְׁבוֹת עַפְּ
יִגַּל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂרָאֵל

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד

יְהוָה מִי-יִגּוֹר בְּאַהֲלָהּ
מִי-יִשְׁכֵּן בְּתֵר קִדְשָׁהּ:

הוֹלֵךְ תַּמִּים
וּפְעֵל צֶדֶק

וְדִבֵּר אֱמֶת בִּלְבָבוֹ:
לֹא-רָגַל | עַל-לִשְׁנוֹ

לֹא-עָשָׂה לְרַעְהוֹ רָעָה
וְחִרְפָּה לֹא-נִשְׂא עָלָהּ:

נִבְּחָה | בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָס
וְאֶת-יִרְאֵי יְהוָה יִכְבֹּד

נִשְׁבַּע לְהִרְעוֹ וְלֹא יִמָּר
כִּסְפוֹ | לֹא-נָתַן בְּנֶפֶשׁ

They say, "By our tongues we shall prevail;
with lips such as ours, who can be our master?"

"Because of the groans of the plundered poor
and needy,
I will now act," says the LORD.
"I will give help," He affirms to him.^a
The words of the LORD are pure words,
silver purged in an earthen crucible,
refined sevenfold.

You, O LORD; will keep them,
guarding each ^afrom this age-^a evermore.

On every side the wicked roam
^awhen baseness is exalted among men.^a

For the leader. A psalm of David.

How long, O LORD; will You ignore me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?

How long will I have cares on my mind,
grief in my heart all day?
How long will my enemy have the upper hand?

Look at me, answer me, O LORD, my God!
Restore the luster to my eyes,
lest I sleep the sleep of death;

lest my enemy say, "I have overcome him,"
my foes exult when I totter.

But I trust in Your faithfulness,
my heart will exult in Your deliverance.

I will sing to the LORD,
for He has been good to me.

For the leader. Of David.

The benighted man thinks,
^b"God does not care."^b

^{a-a} Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
^a Cf. Ps. 53.

^{b-b} Lit. "There is no God"; cf. Ps. 10.4.

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ | לְלִשְׁנֵנוּ נִגְבִּיר
שְׁפָתֵינוּ אֶתָּנוּ מִי אֶדוֹן לָנוּ:

מִשׁוֹר עֲנִיִּים מֵאַנְקַת אֲבִיּוֹנִים
עֲתָה אֲקוּם יֹאמֶר* יְהוָה

אֲשִׁית בִּישַׁע יִפְתֵּחַ לוֹ:
אֲמָרוֹת יְהוָה אֲמָרוֹת טְהוֹרוֹת

כַּסֵּף צָרוּף בַּעֲלִיל לָאָרֶץ
מוֹקֵק שִׁבְעָתַיִם:

אֲתָה יְהוָה תִּשְׁמְרֵם
תִּצְרְנוּ | מִן-הַדּוֹר וְזוֹ לְעוֹלָם:

סָבִיב רַשָּׁעִים יִתְהַלְכוּ
כִּרְם זֵלוֹת לִבְנֵי אָדָם:

יג לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:

עַד-אֵנָה יְהוָה תִּשְׁכַּחֲנִי נֶצַח
עַד-אֵנָה | תִּסְתִּיר אֶת-פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי:

עַד-אֵנָה אֲשִׁית עֲצוֹת בְּנִפְשִׁי
יִגוֹן בִּלְבָבִי יוֹמָם

עַד-אֵנָה | יָרוּם אִיְבֵי עָלַי:
הִבִּיטָה עֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי

הָאֵרִירָה עֵינַי
פֶּן-אִישָׁן הַמּוֹת:

פֶּן-יֹאמֶר אִיְבֵי יִכְלֹתִיו
צָרִי יִגִּילוּ כִּי אֲמוּט:

וְאֵנִי | בַּחֲסִדְךָ בְּטַחֲתִי
יִגַּל לִפְנֵי בִישׁוּעֶתְךָ

אֲשִׁירָה לִיהוָה
כִּי גָמַל עָלַי:

יד לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד

אָמַר נָבֵל בִּלְבוֹ
אֵין אֱלֹהִים

אָמַר נָבֵל בִּלְבוֹ
אֵין אֱלֹהִים

י. 6. סְבִירָן וּמִטְעוֹן "אָמַר"

24

Do not envy evil men;

Do not desire to be with them;

For their hearts^a talk violence,

And their lips speak mischief.

A house is built by wisdom,

And is established by understanding;

By knowledge are its rooms filled

With all precious and beautiful things.

A wise man is strength;

A knowledgeable man exerts power;

For by stratagems you wage war,

And victory comes with much planning.

Wisdom is too lofty for a fool;

He does not open his mouth in the gate.

He who lays plans to do harm

Is called by men a schemer.

The schemes of folly are sin,

And a scoffer is an abomination to men.

If you showed yourself slack in time of trouble,

Wanting in power,

If you refrained from rescuing those taken off to death,

Those condemned to slaughter—

If you say, "We knew nothing of it,"

Surely He who fathoms hearts will discern [the truth],

He who watches over your life will know it;

And He will pay each man as he deserves.

My son, eat honey, for it is good;

Let its sweet drops be on your palate.

Know: such is wisdom for your soul;

If you attain it, there is a future;

Your hope will not be cut off.

^a See note to 15.28.

כד

אל תקנא באנשי רעה

ואל תתאו תתאיו להיות אתם:

כי שד יהגה לבם

ועמל שפתיהם תדברנה:

בחכמה יבנה בית

ובתבונה יתכונן:

ובדעת חדרים ימלאו

כל הון יקר ונעים:

גבר חכם בעוז

ואיש דעת מאמץ כח:

כי בתחבולות תעשה לך

מלחמה

ותשועה ברב יועץ:

ראמות לאויל חכמות

בשער לא יפתח פיהו:

מחשב להרע

לו בעל מזמות יקראו:

ומת אולת חטאת

ותועבת לאדם לץ:

התרפית ביום צרה צר

בחכה:

הצל לקחים למות

ומטים להרג אם תחשוף:

כי תאמר הן לא ידענו זה

הלא תכן לבות הוא נבין

ונצר נפשך הוא נדע

והשיב לאדם בפעלו:

אכל בני דבש כי טוב

ונפת מתוק על חפך:

כן דעה חכמה לנפשך

אם מצאת ויש אחרית

ותקותך לא תפרת:

בשנת תורה לבשר מלכא די בבל בורש
מלכא שם טעם בית אלהא דנה לבנא:
14 ואן מאנא די בית אלהא די דנה
וכספא די נבוכדנצר הנפל מדיכלא
די בירושלם והיכל המלך להיכלא די
בבל הנפל המלך בורש מלכא מדיכלא
די בבל והיכל לששבר שמה די פחה
15: ואמר לה 1 אלה אל מאנא שא
אזל אחת המלך בהיכלא די בירושלם
ובית אלהא יתבא על אותה: 16
16 אזין ששבר די אתא יתב אשא
די בית אלהא די בירושלם ומדיכלא
ועדינא מתבא לא שלם: 17 ובען הן
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בורש מלכא שים טעם למבא בית
אלהא די בירושלם ויעות מלכא עלי
דיה ישלח עלינא: 18

באזין דירוש מלכא שם טעם ובקרו
בבית ספרא די גנאי מהותין תמור
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במדי מדינא מגלה חרה וכו' פתיב
בגנא דכורא: 3 בשנת תורה לבשר
מלכא בורש מלכא שם טעם בית אלהא
בירושלם ביתא יתבא אתר די בבירא
דיבא ויאשוהי מסובלין רמה אמין
שמין פתחא אמין שמין: 4 נבוכדנצר
גלל חלחא ונדר די אע חרת ונפמא
מזבית מלכא תחיה: 5 ואן מאנ
בית אלהא די תבא וכספא די
נבוכדנצר הנפל מדיכלא די בירושלם
והיכל לבבל יתחיהב ויתר להיכלא
די בירושלם לאחור ותחת בבית
אלהא: 6

to rebuild this House of God. 14 Also the silver
and gold vessels of the House of God that Neb-
uchadnezzar had taken away from the temple
in Jerusalem and brought to the temple in
Babylon—King Cyrus released them from the
temple in Babylon to be given to the one called
Sheshbazzar whom he had appointed governor.
15 He said to him, "Take these vessels, go, deposit
them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the
House of God be rebuilt on its original site."
16 That same Sheshbazzar then came and laid the
foundations for the House of God in Jerusalem;
and ever since then it has been under construc-
tion, but is not yet finished. 17 And now, if it
please the king, let the royal archives there in
Babylon be searched to see whether indeed an
order had been issued by King Cyrus to rebuild
this House of God in Jerusalem. May the king
convey to us his pleasure in this matter."

6 Thereupon, at the order of King Darius,
they searched the archives where the treasures
were stored in Babylon. 2 But it was in the citadel
of Ecbatana, in the province of Media, that a
scroll was found in which the following was
written: "Memorandum: 3 In the first year of
King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued an order con-
cerning the House of God in Jerusalem: 'Let the
house be rebuilt, a place for offering sacrifices,
with a base built up high. Let it be sixty cubits
high and sixty cubits wide, with a course of un-
used timber for each three courses of hewn
stone. The expenses shall be paid by the palace.
4 And the gold and silver vessels of the House
of God which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away
from the temple in Jerusalem and transported
to Babylon shall be returned, and let each go
back to the temple in Jerusalem where it be-
longs; you shall deposit it in the House of God.'

6 באזין תתני פתח עבר תורה שתר בורש
וכנוראזין אפוסכא די בעבר נהר
רוחין הן מן תמור: 7 שלכו לעבד
בית אלהא די פתח ויהיא ולשבי
יהיא בית אלהא די יבנו על אותה:
8 ואן שים טעם למא די מעבדיו עב
שבי יהיא אלף למבא בית אלהא די
ומנכס מלכא די מדי עבר תורה
אספרא נפמא: 9 יהיא מתיהבא
לנכרא אלף דיכלא לכסל: 9 ומה
השתן ובני תורין וזכרין ואמרין
לעלן לאלה שמיא חנני מלך חמר
ומשו במאמר פהנא די בירושלם
להא מתיהב להם וים: 10 ביום דיכלא
של: 10 די יתרון מהדורין ניהוין לאלה
שמיא ומצלין להי מלכא ובקרו:
11 ומנ שים טעם די כל אש די יהשא
פתמא דנה תנחא אע מדינה וזקין
יתמא עלי וביתה גלל ותעבר על
דנה: 12 ואלהא די שכן שמה תמור ומר
למלך ועם די ישלח יהא להשניה
לחבלא בית אלהא די די בירושלם
אנא דירוש שמת טעם אספרא
יתעבר: 13

13 אזין תתני פתח עבר תורה שתר
בורש וכנוראזין לקבל די שלח דירוש
מלכא פמא אספרא עבר: 14 ושבי
יהיא פמא ומצלין בנבואת חגי נביא
נביא חכרדי ברעדיא ובנו ושלכל
מז טעם אלה ישראל ומשעם בורש
וירוש ואז תתני פתח עבר:

6 Now^a you, Tattenai, governor of the prov-
ince of Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and
colleagues, the officials of the province of Be-
yond the River, stay away from that place. 7 Al-
low the work of this House of God to go on; let
the governor of the Jews and the elders of
the Jews rebuild this House of God on its site.
8 And I hereby issue an order concerning what
you must do to help these elders of the Jews re-
build this House of God: the expenses are to be
paid to these men with dispatch out of the re-
sources of the king, derived from the taxes of
the province of Beyond the River, so that the
work not be stopped. 9 They are to be given daily,
without fail, whatever they need of young bulls,
rams, or lambs as burnt offerings for the God
of Heaven, and wheat, salt, wine, and oil, at the
order of the priests in Jerusalem, 10 so that they
may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of
Heaven and pray for the life of the king and his
sons. 11 I also issue an order that whoever alters
this decree shall have a beam removed from his
house, and he shall be impaled on it and his
house confiscated. 12 And may the God who es-
tablished His name there cause the downfall of
any king or nation that undertakes to alter or
damage that House of God in Jerusalem. I, Da-
rius, have issued the decree; let it be carried out
with dispatch."

13 Then Tattenai, governor of the province of
Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their
colleagues carried out with dispatch what King
Darius had written. 14 So the elders of the Jews
progressed in the building, urged on by the
prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zech-
ariah son of Iddo, and they brought the building
to completion under the aegis of the God of Is-
rael and by the order of Cyrus and Darius and
King Artaxerxes of Persia. 15 The house was
finished on the third of the month of Adar in

a This introduces the text of the reply of Darius that doubtless
narrated the preceding narrative (vv. 1-5) as a preliminary.

