



Table of Contents

Maps & Illustrations

Jeremiah and Ruth's Journey to Bethlehem (**BLUE**)

Lampros's Caravan Route (**GREEN**)

Joseph and Mary's Journey to Bethlehem (**PURPLE**)

Joseph and Mary's Journey into Egypt (**ORANGE**)

Micah's Journey "In the Steps of the Master" (**RED**)

Book One

THE HISTORIC ROUTE:

A journey of a lifetime

**Chapter 1** - Jeremiah & Ruth Leave Nazareth

**Chapter 2** - Meeting With The Remodelers

**Chapter 3** - Anna Tells Rachel About Gabriel's Visits

**Chapter 4** - Mary and Joseph Leave For Bethlehem

Book Two

THE JESUS' BOYHOOD:

Growing up in the 1st Century

**Chapter 1** – Birth of Jesus

**Chapter 2** - Gabriel Visits Shepherds

**Chapter 3** - Joseph, Mary and Jesus Move Into Caleb's Former House

**Chapter 4** - Two Temple Visits; Meet Simeon and Anna

**Chapter 5** - Joseph Remodels Bethlehem Inn

**Chapter 6** - Visit From The Magi

**Chapter 7** - Joseph, Mary & Jesus Escape To Egypt

**Chapter 8** - After Herod Kills Innocent Baby Boys, (Joel's brother Abiel, included),  
Jeremiah and Ruth Leave Bethlehem

**Chapter 9** – Jesus Life in Egypt

**Chapter 10** – Herod's Death

**Chapter 11** - Leaving Egypt; Going To Nazareth

**Chapter 12** - Two Friends Growing Up

**Chapter 13** - "Lost" in Jerusalem

**Chapter 14** - Household Helper

**Chapter 15** – Working in Sepphoris

Book Three

THE SERVANT REVEALED

**Chapter 1** - The Beginning of the Gospel

**Chapter 2** - One Crying in the Wilderness

**Chapter 3** - Expectation of the Messiah

**Chapter 4** - "This is My Beloved Son"

**Chapter 5** - Which Wilderness?

**Chapter 6** - First Disciple, Andrew

**Chapter 7** - Jesus First Recorded Miracle

**Chapter 8** - 3 years of Teaching &  
Suffering, then Death & Resurrection

Book Four

THE DISCIPLESHIP CONTINUES

**Chapter 1** - Life and Times of Young Micah

**Chapter 2** - Visiting Disciples

**Chapter 3** - Micah Plans His Journey

**Chapter 4** - "IN THE STEPS OF THE MASTER"

**Chapter 5** - Damascus: Father Son Trip

**Chapter 6** - Saul Becomes a New Creature

**Chapter 7** - Paul's Companion

**Chapter 8** – Micah's Grandson Goes Undercover with the aid of Grandpa Micah (age 71)

**Chapter 9** - So, What Now?

Book Five

THE MASTER'S VICTORY

**Chapter 1** - "O Grave, Where is Thy Victory?"

**Chapter 2** - The Risen Lord

**Chapter 3** - His Ascension & Promise

## Preface

The story of the Nativity Scene will not be portrayed as it has been on Christmas cards. The historical facts surrounding this world-changing event have been interwoven with the best understanding of the culture and times of the first century; and what is told here, the events that are not Biblically based nor historically accurate are presented as close as possible to the Israeli culture of the times, with the expansion of the imagination of the author.

As this series unfolds, Joel, age 14 and Jesus, age 11 grow up as best friends when Jesus came up from Egypt.

Their adventures, while living in Nazareth, are presented closely based on the Jewish culture of that time. Later, Joel's son, Micah, takes over as the main character after he meets Jesus and watches his small lunch feed over 5,000 people. The events of Micah's life after that event are the subject of this series.

It is the desired hope of the author that this series will inspire the reader to seek out a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, to learn of His desire to show mercy to all who seek Him; go to the Holy Scriptures and read the stories as God has written them, and not only grow closer to the Creator of this world but reach out to others and share the unmerited love of God with them.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [John 3:16 – 1.22.1](#)

## Introduction

This series begins with the unique journey of Micah's grandparents, Jeremiah, and Ruth, 18-month-old son, Joel. (Joseph and Mary, the divinely chosen guardian and mother of Jesus, make a similar journey 2 years later.)

Jeremiah was born in Bethlehem in 33 BC, so he was glad to move back. At the age of 13, his family moved to Nazareth because his father needed to help Jabir, Jeremiah's older brother, supervise a large farm just south of the village.

Through the small farming community, Jabir had become friends with Nir, a wealthy olive grove owner and encouraged him to hire Jeremiah to work in his orchard in the Jezreel Valley. Nir hired him to work in his orchard; however, he perceived that Jeremiah had a connection with animals and had little interest in farming or working trees. He quickly transferred Jeremiah to work in the stables and was impressed as he so quickly adapted.

In the Spring of 9 BC, Caleb asked his uncle Nir to assist in finding a manager for his Bethlehem stable, inn, and café. Caleb, owned Hezekiah's Inn & Café located in Bethlehem and the larger one in Jerusalem, managed by his sister, Kalanit, and his father ChaCham until his recent death. Due to the immediate need for a manager, Caleb authorized his assistant manager to hire whoever his uncle recommended. Nir immediately recognized the family's need and recommended Jerimiah for the management of the stables and Inn and his wife Ruth, who worked in his kitchen, to oversee Caleb's café.

Jeremiah and Ruth moved to Bethlehem from Nazareth. They traveled with a merchant's caravan, owned by Lampros, who purchased olive oil and various fruits from Nir. Over the years, Lampros and Jeremiah became good friends, even though Jeremiah was a Jew and Lampros a Samaritan, although neither man was devoted to their religious heritage.

(Note: the devout Samaritans and Jews hated each other because of their dispute about worshiping the One True God, Yahweh.)

The family of Mary, the mother of Jesus, had just recently moved to Nazareth from Sepphoris, Anna Marie, her mother, worked for a wealthy landowner, but was paid a very meager wage.

When she married Heli, she moved to Nazareth to be with her husband. Ruth met Anna Marie, the maternal grandmother of Micah's adventures, though, began when he first met Jesus in Cana at the wedding of Peter and Shoshana.

A major turning point for Micah's life occurred in Bethsaida when Jesus used his small lunch to feed over five thousand people.

That miracle, followed by seeing Jesus and Peter walking on the water made a deep impression on this eight-year-old's life and he wanted to live the life that God had planned for him.

This decision drove him to learn all he could about Jesus. His teachings and miracles that led him to a life of service to God that provided an excellent Christian example.

## Who You Will Meet in Booklet One

**Abiel** - Younger brother of Joel

**Abiriam** – “my father is exalted” a shepherd

**Aharon** - Micah's pet lamb

**AKL** – “Intelligent” Egyptian bazaar booth owner

**Anna Maria** – “\_\_\_\_\_” Mother of Mary, grandmother of Jesus

**Asa** - helper at Uncle Jabin stable in Nazareth

**Asaph** – “shepherd”.

**Augustus Caesar** – Emperor in Rome

**Aviyah** – “my father is Yahweh”.

**Alexia** – “understanding, intelligence, wisdom” Lampros’s wife

Bina -

**Boaz** – “Strength within,” Ruth’s kinsman redeemer

**Caleb** – “all heart” Owner of the Inn where Jesus was born

**Chacham** – “wise one” Caleb’s father; expanded Inns to Jerusalem

**Cyrus** – young, farsighted, Lampros’ assistant

**Eitan** - “one who is strong & steady, very bold”, Micah's cousin

**Elizabeth** – “God swore an oath” Mary’s cousin,

Mother of John the Baptist

**Enitan** - "gift from God", Micah's maternal grandfather

**Farrah** - Mother of Shoshana, Joel’s babysitter

**Gabriel** – “God is my strength” God’s angel

**God** – “I am that I AM” Creator of the world

**Heli** - Joseph’s father Luke 3:23

Herod the Great

**Hiram** – “\_\_\_\_\_” Caleb’s great, great, grandfather

**Jabir** - Jeremiah's older brother, works in Nazareth

**Jeremiah** – Paternal grandfather of Micah

**Jesus** – “Emanuel” Messiah”

**Joachim** - Jesus' maternal grandfather

**Joel** - Micah's father, Jesus' best friend

**John** - the Baptist

**Joseph** – “may God add” Chosen earthly guardian of young Jesus

**Kalanit** - Caleb's younger sister, helps Caleb to manage the inn at Jerusalem

**Kallisto** – wife of Cyrus, “most beautiful”. younger sister of Alexia

**Kefir** – “Lion cub”

**Keren** – “ray of sunlight,” a widow whose son Jesus raised from **the** dead; she is Rebecca’s neighbor in Nain.

**Lampros** – Caravan owner, friend of Jeremiah, “Shining, bright”

**Lucius** – “\_\_\_\_\_” Roman Centurion friend of Joseph

**Malachi** - Miriam's father, Micah' maternal grandfather

**Mary** – “\_\_\_\_\_” Chosen Mother of Jesus

**Miriam** – “a lady of great perseverance and leadership”, Micah's mother

**Moriei** - "God is my guide", learningreligion.com, Caleb's great grandfather, 1st to lease shepherd's field in Bethlehem

**Nachman** – “comforter,” Elisha’s young helper after Gehazi left

**Netanel** – “Known for his scholarliness” Ruth’s brother-in-law in Nain

**Netanya** - "God gave", i.22.87, Ruth's helper at the inn/café

**Nir** - Caleb's uncle in Nazareth, wealthy orchard owner

**Lampros** – “young mountain goat” Samaritan friend of Jeremiah, Caravan Master

**Rachael** – “tenderness” Micah’s maternal grandmother

**Rafa** – “to heal” Luke’s father, Mary’s doctor

**Rebecca** – “\_\_\_\_\_” Ruth’s sister in Nain

**Ro’I** – “my shepherd” Caleb’s grandfather

**Ruth** - Micah's paternal grandmother, manages Bethlehem Inn/Cafe

**Shlomo** – “God gives peace,” Shoshona’s father

**Shoshana** - Joel's babysitter at the Inn

**Uri** – “my light,” chief architect for Caleb

**Cyrus** – “he will sing” Lampros’s caravan assistant

**Zacharias** – "remembering God", [learningreligion.com](http://learningreligion.com), Priest, father of John the Baptist



# Book 1 Chapter 1

*Jeremiah & Ruth Leave Nazareth in 9 B.C.*

*The move to Bethlehem was a major leap of faith.*

## DAY 1 Sunday

As they entered the Jezreel Valley, a glance at each other, as their eyes met, the couple knew this was it; there was no turning back; the life they shared in Nazareth was gone. An unpredictable future lay ahead for the young couple and their 18-month-old son.

“A new world is about to open for us,” Jeremiah told Ruth, as they watched Joel, toddle through the spring flowers.

Jeremiah, who was born in Bethlehem, wondered what the village would be like and what history he could learn. He knew Bethlehem was an important village to God, but he had never taken the time to learn of its significance.

Ruth had never been to Bethlehem; however, she was excited to accompany her husband wherever God would lead them.

A house, owned by Caleb’s family, was being prepared for them, five miles south of Jerusalem, in the village of Bethlehem, Judea, and only half a mile from the Inn & Café where they would be working.

The move, the long journey, and the small village culture were not the only things they would be facing.

One hour into their journey, Ruth said, “Joel is getting hungry.”

“We will stop before Nain to rest the donkeys,” Jeremiah replied, “I need to rearrange the load, too.”

The couple sat under the shade of an oak tree for a few moments while Joel was playing in the sand after eating his fill of bread and fruit.

“Thank you,” Jeremiah complimented Ruth, “for packing our provisions for this journey.”

“Little Joel was a great help too,” she replied. “He slept most of the time.”

“He is a lot of fun,” replied Jerimiah. “There is something special about him. He will grow up very wise, he has a good teacher

in his mother.”

“I agree he will be very special when he grows up. Our son will be like his father. Your skills and talents, Jeremiah, have always amazed me.”

Jeremiah laughed, “When I was younger, I wanted to build a boat and take it out to the sea. It was a childish dream of mine to work with my hands and create something from a dead tree, but the result was good firewood.”

“I remember,” she said “how your life changed when you began working with the animals. You have a special talent for taking care of them, they understand you.”

“I was seventeen years old when I began working with Nir in his orchards southeast of Nazareth. He quickly transferred me when he saw I was better with horses than trees! My new job was to maintain the stables for the farm animals; however, my care for them proved I had the talent to go above and beyond any expectations of an employer.”

“Nir was extremely pleased with your work. We best be going now. Netanel and Rebecca are expecting us for dinner. She is preparing a special meal of lamb especially for you,” Ruth reminded Jeremiah.

“Wonderful,” Jeremiah replied. “She can cook almost as good as you. I look forward to my visits with Netanel, your very intelligent brother-in-law. I've been wanting to ask him about some of the battles that occurred in the Jezreel Valley.”

“You'll have plenty of time after we eat.” Ruth encouraged him, “and I must get some of Rebecca's recipes has collected from foreign countries.”

After loading their few things on one of the donkeys, they headed up the northwestern slope of Mount Moreh, approaching Netanel and Rebecca's home. She had a light meal of barley bread, olives, lentil stew, grapes, figs, and fish already prepared.

“Shalom,” Netanel greeted them.

Ruth and Rebecca hugged as only sisters can, knowing it may be a long time before they see each other again.

“Wow, little Joel has grown so much,” Rebecca exclaimed, as she snatched up her little nephew, Joel, and the trio went inside leaving the men to talk about things of lesser interest to the

ladies.

“Soon he will be two,” Ruth said.

“He is so cute, and those beautiful eyes!” Rebecca continued bragging about her nephew, “you could leave him here if he is too much to handle on the trip,” she teased her older sister.

“Not a chance,” grinned Ruth as they sat at a table outside to eat.

“Serving this with the mint jelly was a wonderful idea, Rebecca,” Ruth commented.

After the evening meal, Netanel and Jeremiah sat outside on the porch, enjoying the setting sun.

“What a beautiful view of the Jezreel Valley, I shall remember this site for a long-time,” remarked Jeremiah.

“But the valley’s beauty is also marred by the many wars that were fought down there,” Netanel replied.

“I’ve been meaning to ask you about that,” Jeremiah said.

Netanel continued to answer him, “major battles have stained the valley.”

“To the south was the battle of Saul and the Ammonites where Saul and his three sons died.”

“The Ammonites found their bodies, cut off their heads, and hung the bodies on the walls of Beth Shan but the valiant men of Jabesh-Gilead came in the night and removed their bodies, burned them, and buried their bones under a tree in Jabesh”<sup>2</sup>

Jeremiah said, “Netanel you have studied well; I’m always amazed by your research. But why did the men from Jabesh-Gilead risk their lives to get Saul’s body and those of his sons?”

“Thank you,” he replied, “God has blessed me with time and talent to learn the many battles our people have suffered in the past.

The prophet Samuel told us of the bravery of Saul and the power of God when Nabash, the Ammonite, wanted to conquer Jabesh-Gilead, he proposed an agreement with the men of the village to spare them:

***“On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.”<sup>3</sup> “The Spirit of God came upon Saul when he***

---

<sup>2</sup> [1st Samuel 31:1-13](#) i.22.1

<sup>3</sup> **1st Samuel 11:2** i.22.1

*heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.”<sup>4</sup>*

He rallied the others of the Israelites, and 300,000 men came from Israel and 30,000 came from Judah. And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.”

“No wonder these men wanted to get King Saul’s body and bury it properly.’ Jeremiah said. “I have so enjoyed our discussions. However, it's getting late but tell me again of the great battle of **“The sword of the Lord and Gideon”**<sup>5</sup> and why did he take on such a large army with so few men,” asked Jeremiah.

“That was a true ‘Miracle Battle” that God won with just the three hundred men,” Netanel explained. “They were handpicked by God for Gideon; and He gave Gideon the wisdom to go directly into battle against odds that far outnumbered his troops. What the Midianites did not consider was the spiritual strength and wisdom that only the One true God could provide for such a battle as this.”

“I have a scroll for you that lists the major battles fought outside my front door in the Valley of Jezreel over many years. Our tradition tells us the great prophet Samuel wrote the story about Gideon. Netanel continued.

*“The children of Israel did evil in the site of the Lord, so God delivered them into the hands of the Midianites seven years.”<sup>6</sup>*

“Because of this oppression, the Israelites hid in the mountains, caves, or strongholds. The Midianites were so cruel they would destroy the Israelite’s crops just before harvest.

They were bent on destroying the land. The Midianites were as many as a multitude of grasshoppers so many they could not be counted.

The Israelites were greatly impoverished because of the

---

<sup>4</sup> 1st Samuel 11:6 i.22.1

<sup>5</sup> Judges 7:18 i.22.1

<sup>6</sup> Judges 6:1 i.22.1

Midianites, and they cried unto the Lord. He sent a prophet that reminded them that God brought them out of Egypt out of bondage and delivered them out of the hands of the Egyptians and all those who oppressed the.

Then the prophet told them why the Midianites were so aggressive, God told the Israelites not to fear the gods of Amorites, but they did not obey God's command.

God had mercy on this disobedient people that had truly repented, and He sent an angel to talk to a hard-working man named Gideon. This young man was about to see God in action as He would use a very poor person to save the Israelites from the countless Midianites.

The angel said to Gideon "***The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor***" 7

Gideon asked the question we all ask so often ask: "If God is with us, why are we in this mess?"

"Did he really ask that?" Jeremiah wondered.

"Okay, let me quote him."

***"Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of...?"***8

The angel did not answer him, but God did: ***"Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?"***9

Gideon did not comprehend how he could deliver Israel out of the clutches of the Midianites, being poor and the least in his father's house.

God said. ***"I will be with thee and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."*** 10

Gideon, knowing that he was talking with the one true God, one on one., then and there he asked some very bold questions.

---

7 **Judges 6:12** i.22.1

8 **Judges 6:13** i.22.1

9 **Judges 6:14** i.22.1

10 **Judges 6:16** i.22.1

God met his requests, and Gideon was now confident. The Lord would deliver Israel from the Midianites, and he, Gideon would be their leader. The details are in the scroll I made for you.<sup>11</sup>

He had heard the voice of God further encourage him, “**Peace unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.**” <sup>12</sup>

Gideon called in the leaders of the community and organized a large group of men to fight. The Israelites from surrounding areas met, camping by the hill of Moreh, just south of where the host of the Midianites were joined by the Amalekites and were camped in the valley of Jezreel<sup>13</sup>

God spoke again to Gideon and told him he had too many fighters to take on the countless multitudes of Midianites and Amalekites, who were numbered in the thousands having so many camels as the sand of the seaside.

Gideon understood what God had said. If all these men attacked and won, their ego would brag: “We have won by our own hand.” [Judges 7:2](#)

Gideon sorted out the fearful ones and sent them home.

God had him divide the rest of the men and told him how to choose who else to send home. Gideon looked at his remaining troops and saw only 300 remaining.

He was reassured by God: “**By the three hundred men ... will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand...**” [Judges 7:7](#)

That night, God told Gideon to spy on the camp, “**For I have delivered them into your hand.**” [Judges 7:8](#)

Gideon still had questions, but he trusted God completely.

Again, he heard the encouraging voice of God say: “**And thou shalt hear what they say, and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down into the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host.**” [Judges 7:11](#)

Unsettled in his campaign, he took his servant Phurah with him.

---

<sup>11</sup> [Judges 6:17 and 18](#) i.22.1

<sup>12</sup> [Judges 6:23](#) i.22.1

<sup>13</sup> [Judges 6:33](#) i.22.1

Arriving at the edge of the camp, they heard two men talking about a dream one of them had about how a Midianite tent that was crushed by a loaf of bread.

His companion explained the dream: **“This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.”**  
[Judges 7:14](#)

Gideon worshipped the Lord and returned to his camp, dividing the men into three groups of one hundred each and told them to take a trumpet in the one hand and to put a lamp in the empty pitcher, thus hiding the light from it.

He commanded them to do exactly what he did. The attack began in the dark of the night.

When the men were in place flanking the host of the enemy on three sides, Gideon and his men all blew their trumpets and shouted: **“The sword of the Lord and Gideon”** then they broke the pitchers to let their light shine. [Judges 7:21](#)

God won the victory. The men continued to blow their trumpets and shout over and over again, **“The sword of the Lord and Gideon.”**

The host of the Midianites fled to the hills.

And that my dear brother-in-law was another miracle of the one true God.

Seven years under that oppression taught them not to disobey God. But when they truly repented, God in his infinite mercy, delivered them.

That scroll would be wonderful,” said Jeremiah. “Because I know when I get to Bethlehem and folks find I'm from Nazareth some will talk about these battles and your research will help me tremendously.”



The men decided to continue their discussion of the warfare history of Israel for until morning; little Joel was fast asleep, and the two sisters had excitedly exchanged recipes of foreign origin for another hour.

“The recipes that you have picked up from travelers in different

parts of the world will be very helpful,” said Ruth. “At the Inn we will have folks from the Via Maris<sup>14</sup> road from Rome to Egypt and from other faraway places: China and India traveling the Silk Road. We will be just a short distance off the main road to Jerusalem.”<sup>15</sup>

“We must talk more of the different foods for China, India, Rome, and Ethiopia in the morning, but you need to get some rest, Ruth.”

Rebecca had prepared a special bread for their journey, from a new recipe she received from her friend Anna Marie of Sepphoris<sup>16</sup>. She mixed up the regular wheat bread dough, rolled it out flat, then added a thin layer of honey, cinnamon, and a very small amount of nutmeg. She prepared her large pottery oven over the hot coals from the evening’s fire. Next, she rolled the flattened dough into a log and with a large sharp knife cut the log in pieces at an angle to make them even larger.

## **DAY 2 Monday**

*Left Nain Monday Morning, arrived at dusk at Jenin.*

The next morning, Rebecca gave the bread and recipe to her sister and told her it was from a recipe her friend from Sepphoris had given to her.

“Anna’s little girl, Mary, figured out the process and came up with the ingredients. A very smart young girl she is,” explained Rebecca.

“These are very tasty. I hope to meet Anna and Mary someday when we return for a visit,” said Ruth.

“We must get going,” said Jeremiah “Lampros and Cyrus will meet us in Jenin tonight.”

Following an abundance of hugs and good-byes, Rebecca reluctantly surrendered Joel to his mother, with a kiss on his cheek.

---

<sup>14</sup> [1.22.24](#) One of the most important trade routes in the Middle East during ancient times

<sup>15</sup> [1.22.83](#) “The Silk Road was the most enduring trade route in human history, being used for about 1,500 years. Its name is taken from the prized Chinese textile that flowed from Asia to the Middle East and Europe, although many other commodities were traded along the route.”

<sup>16</sup> [B.22.29](#) “the supposed site of the home of the parents of the Virgin.” page 48.



Joel tired quickly of the early morning walk and soon Jeremiah lifted him up and put him on one of the donkeys to ride. He was much happier up there because he could see more than just donkey knees.

The little lad enjoyed seeing the valley. He had no knowledge of the battles of the past that Jeremiah and Netanel discussed for hours the previous evening. The walk across Jezreel Valley was very refreshing. Springtime brought out the abundant colorful Anemone wildflowers and off in the distance the orange and lemon trees of Nir's orchards could be seen blooming as the couple paused to look back for one last view of home.

As they gazed back at the distant orchards near Nazareth, Jeremiah continued, "We may return here someday."

Resumed their walk, southward toward Jenin, Jeremiah said.

"Many of our family and friends thought it was foolish of us to leave. Rabbi Tamir told me something I still do not understand: '***But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.***'<sup>17</sup> Maybe it's similar to what God did with Gideon, He took a few men to win a major battle. It may be that God has a specific plan for our lives."

What seemed like a short walk through the beautiful valley took the family four hours to arrive near Sandala, just as the noon sun began to heat up everything around.

Joel had fun playing in the shallow stream that flowed gently past a large oak tree where Ruth and Jeremiah sat in its shade.

"We'll rest here in Sandala until a gentle breeze comes, then we will know the chill of the evening will follow in a few hours. We should have our campsite set up in Jenin by the time Lampros and Cyrus arrive."

Joel came from chasing fish in the stream to join his parents in the shade, only to fall fast asleep.

All too soon, the anticipated cool breeze drifted in from the east. Jeremiah prepared the donkeys for the next part of the long journey.

---

<sup>17</sup> 1:22,1 [1 Corinthians 2:27](#)

Ruth asked if Jeremiah was concerned about going by the way of Jenin, as it was the northern most border of Samaria and was settled exclusively by Samaritans.

“No,” he replied. “Lampros has many friends in Samaria and as long as we travel with him, we should not face any problems.”

Arriving in Jenin brought an end to a beautiful day’s walk. The hills behind them were very colorful in the evening sunset, and their former home was hidden somewhere in the mist. After giving Joel his bowl of vegetables, Ruth began preparing the evening meal for Jeremiah and the soon-to-arrive caravanners. Her thoughts wandered back to their home, and she was instantly saddened by the realization that her family was going to live so far from her sister, Rebecca. “Goodbye, Nazareth; we are on our way,” Ruth’s thoughts were interrupted by Jeremiah’s statement:

“It will not be long before it is dark,” Jeremiah said as he pitched their tent. “Lampros and Cyrus should be here soon.”

He anxiously watched the northwestern horizon in anticipation of Lampros’ caravan coming from Megiddo.



*Lampros and Cyrus Caravan coming to meet Jeremiah and Ruth in Jenin*

The golden sun was sinking slowly behind the hills when the silhouette of camels and donkeys appeared just before dark. The caravan arrived at Jeremiah's campsite in time for the evening meal.

Lampros operated his caravan differently than most other caravans. Others were in a hurry to get to their distribution points; Lampros

preferred to travel slower and peddle his wares along his route. This was great for Jeremiah as he met many of Lampros' customers and Ruth enjoyed the visits with the ladies of the caravan, discussing recipes.

“So good to see you again my friend, you have quite a large cargo,” greeted the caravanners.

“Thanks to Cyrus's hard work, he purchased a considerable amount of goods while he was in Acco. After traveling a bit by ship, I think he forgot how much our camels could carry, so we purchased another donkey,” Lampros teased Cyrus.

“Thank you, Ruth, for preparing such a refreshing meal,” he continued.

“Morning will come all too soon,” Lampros said confidently, “the day will be busy for us. At Jenin we have four faithful accounts; I hope to pick up the other two as well.”

“At the bazaar, we will sell a lot of spices and a considerable number of various types of material because we are at the major crossroads running to Haifa, Afula, Nazareth, and Sychar and our buyers have a large geographical customer base. We also sell a wide variety of vegetables and fruits.”

“This will also lighten our burden on the animals, so we will stock up with specialty items in Sychar for Jericho and Jerusalem. Our clients west of here buy differently than the ones that live south of Sychar.”

“You were wise in traveling this early in the spring. By Nissan, the weeds will be overgrown in the uncultivated areas and the pesky bugs would be your continual torment,” Lampros commented to Jeremiah.

“Tell me about your journey from Tyre,” he continued. “The camels seem more heavily laden than when you would stop in to purchase from Nir's orchards.”

“Going north, we sell more fruits, vegetables, and

olive oil. At Sychar we load up with the special soaps they are



famous for. I will have lots of room for the oranges and lemons from our good friend Nir, when they are almost ripe. Coming back from the north, we carry extra products, most of which we will sell at Sychar.”

The unanimous decision was quickly made to retire to their tents because the next day's visits to the bazaar in Jenin would take up most of the day. Lampros had two new clients he wanted to have sign contracts.

### **DAY 3 TUESDAY**

“Ruth and I are so grateful that you have allowed us to join you in this caravan. We are blessed to be able to travel with safety and wonderful companionship, but also quite leisurely. While you and Cyrus go about earning your living, I have the honor of escorting your wives and Ruth around Jenin and, thanks to Netanel, along with a bit of Jezreel Valley history,” said Jeremiah.

Alexia, Lampros’s wife, led the procession through the bazaar shopping expedition while Jeremiah kept a watchful lookout for anyone who might attempt to harm the ladies.

“One would think,” he surmised, “these three are like young girls out for a shopping spree.”

Even though she enjoyed shopping with the girls, Alexia’s focus, not revealed by her actions, was to survey the various vendors for prospective clients for Lampros and Cyrus.

Ruth was glad to see an Egyptian booth offering a wide variety of easily preserved foods. After introducing herself, she obtained several important recipes to incorporate in the menu at the Inn’s Cafe in Bethlehem. The booth owner, Akl, promised to bring her a special Egyptian ingredient on his next trip from Egypt. He told her he vacationed at Mt Carmel, but this year he and his family are returning to Memphis, Egypt, his hometown, and would stop at the Bethlehem Inn on their way back to Jenin.

She purchased two of his unique Egyptian clay pots that will be used to store food and drink.

“In Sychar,” Kallisto, Cyrus’s wife, said, “you will find vendors

from India and China. The village has some very unscrupulous people living there.

“We will introduce you to our good friends there.” Alexis said. “In Sychar there are plenty of people of low character.”

Ruth was very appreciative as she was not familiar with business dealings with foreigners and realized she could be a gullible target for a dishonest peddler.

As they neared the end of the bazaar area, Jeremiah was distracted by a sign “**Camels For Sale**”.<sup>18</sup>



*Pekinese camel MARNI bought by Jeremiah from the rancher.*

He could not resist checking this one out, hoping the brief detour would not offend the ladies.

“Not at all, Jeremiah, camel buying is at the top of my list!” Kallisto said, causing all to laugh.

The rancher had 20 camels to choose from and Jeremiah was surprised at the quality of one in particular:

young, about 5 years old, very healthy and seemed to have a good nature about her.

Upon further inspection for parasites<sup>19</sup>, he checked the camel’s ears and tail and watching the gait of the camel as she walked away from him, he could tell the quality of the animal was just exceptional and very healthy.

He knew to stand behind the camel and watch it walk, checking the gait for irregularities, the ears and tail also have telltale signs about the health and strength of the camel. “It’s all about the hump,” he whispered to himself. He then spoke out loud, more to himself than those in his immediate company.

“The hump is a fat store—not water, as is sometimes believed—

---

<sup>18</sup> i.23.61 [The Pekingese Camel](#), Public domain

<sup>19</sup> [i.22.36 Common Parasitic Diseases of Camel](#)

and there should be space behind it. This indicates good breeding. Then there's the question of personality. Camels will not display too many unique characteristics until about the age of four or five but after that, by watching how they interact with other camels (as well as humans) one should get an idea of whether it is generally cheery...or whether they are inherently grumpy, and therefore best passed on.”<sup>20</sup>

He decided to purchase the animal and named her Marni<sup>21</sup>, he felt that she would bring joy to their camp and the ladies were rejoicing because now they had sufficient help to carry their purchases back to the camp.

Jeremiah took the opportunity during the walk back to share some of Jenin's great geography. He pointed out the abundance of spring water and the fertile soil of the vicinity “that provided nutrition for the olive groves. Agriculture was a main source for the thriving city.”

Later that morning, Jeremiah joined Lampros and Cyrus; the wives stayed at the campsite to prepare for the upcoming journey to Sychar.



*Jeremiah & Ruth load supplies on Marni*

Ruth was anxious to see how the famous Nabulus soaps were made. <sup>22</sup>

#### DAY 4 WEDNESDAY

When they came to the crossroads leading to Dotham, Jeremiah told the story of Joseph. He pointed out the area where Jacob sent young Joseph to look for his brothers and shared the powerful life experiences of God watching out for Joseph, which proved that even the evil things that continued to happen to him, God was always in control.

Soon they arrived at shady spot with a spring nearby and Jeremiah

---

<sup>20</sup> i.22.174 [A beginner's guide to shopping for a camel](#)

<sup>21</sup> Marni means “joy, rejoicing.”

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPsYOnGPOZk> <https://www.parsintl.com/publications/insider/> i.23.234

continued,

“Somewhere along that route is the pit Joseph’s brothers threw him in and sold him as a slave to a traveling caravan of Ishmaelites, who then took him to Egypt. Joseph suffered many highlights and disasters in his lifetime,” he continued.

“However, throughout his life he always believed God oversaw the events in his life.

“He went from being sold into slavery as a young man to become second in power only reporting to Pharaoh, who gave him control to save Egypt from starving because of the coming famine,”<sup>23</sup> shared Cyrus.

***“He told his brothers:” “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”***<sup>24</sup>

“Nearly a thousand years later,”<sup>25</sup> Cyrus declared, “Elisha the prophet lived here, and another miracle occurred. Syria’s King sent horses, chariots, and a great host<sup>26</sup> to Dothan to bring Elisha to him. Syria’s King Benhadad believed Elisha could read the minds of other kings. God had other is in control, all the time. He allows tough times to come for a reason.”<sup>27</sup>

“That sounds interesting,” said Kallisto, “Please tell us more.”

“Elisha lived up there in Dothan,” Cyrus continued as he pointed toward the little village on the hill. “His assistant, Nachman<sup>28</sup>, was watching the sunset after Elisha retired from a long day’s walk, thinking to himself: “I don’t think I have ever seen such a beautiful evening as this one,” he thought to himself.

However, during the early hours of the morning, he was awakened by strange sounds and when he looked out of the tent into the pre-dawn light, he was immediately horrified and scared.

The Syrians were all around the base of the hill, many right where we are today! He quickly woke up Elisha and when he saw what Nachman saw, he smiled. Elisha did not care who was against him, he knew God’s strength and that God was there

---

<sup>23</sup> [Genesis 41:41 i.22.1](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Genesis 50:20 i.22.1](#)

<sup>25</sup> [2 Kings 6:13 i.22.1](#)

<sup>26</sup> [2 Kings 6:14 i.22.1](#)

<sup>27</sup> [2nd Kings 6:8-12 i.22.1](#)

<sup>28</sup> Nachman means “comforter.”

with them.

“I imagine Nachman was a little more than just worried,” said Jeremiah.

“Oh, yes,” Cyrus went on. “When he saw the host compassed the city both with horses and chariots.”<sup>29</sup>

He said to Elisha, *“Alas, my master! how shall we do?”*<sup>30</sup>

*And he answered,* “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”<sup>31</sup>

*“And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”*<sup>32</sup>

Elisha knew with great confidence and experience that *if God be for us who can stand against us?*<sup>33</sup>

“There’s more,” he continued. “Elisha prayed and asked God to “blind” the Syrians, and He did it in such a way that they could not see where they were. Elisha convinced them they were in the wrong place and should follow him. He led them on a twelve-mile journey into the capital of Samaria! And then he prayed asking God to “open” their eyes and they saw where they were and feared for their lives, but Elisha kept the King of Samaria from killing the Syrians because by feeding them and sending them home, it would show their King that the Israeli God is the true God. The Syrians realized any battles with the Israelites would be a spiritual battle,<sup>34</sup> not fought with conventional weapons and they left them in peace.

*“So, the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.”*<sup>35</sup>

“After a four-hour walk, the weary travelers stopped at Jacob’s Well, just outside of Sychar a few hours before sunset for a brief rest, then went closer to the city, giving them enough time to set up a camp before dark.

“In the morning, Ruth and I are going to Jacob’s well with Marni

---

<sup>29</sup> [2nd Kings 6:15](#) [i.22.1](#)

**30** [2nd Kings 6:15](#) [i.22.1](#)

<sup>31</sup> [2nd Kings 6:15](#) [i.22.1](#)

<sup>32</sup> [2nd Kings 6:17](#) [i.22.1](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Romans 8:31](#) [i.22.1](#)

<sup>34</sup> [Ephesians 6:12](#) [i.22.1](#)

<sup>35</sup> [2nd Kings 6:23](#) [i.22.1](#)



and bring back plenty of water. I can join you before noon to help inspect the livestock you are considering” Jeremiah said, “Thank you, both of you have been a real help making this journey so special to us, my friend,” stated Lampros.

Arriving at the top of the great hill of Samaria, the weary couple from Nazareth rested; Lampros’s crew completed the set-up of their camp. The women started the evening meal as Lampros spoke of the importance of the sites below. Jeremiah could easily see Shechem to the Southwest.

In Sychar, Lampros and Cyrus sold a large quantity of their wares and purchased a fresh supply of local items. Sychar was located at the major crossroads leading up from Egypt; one road headed west northwest toward Caesarea the other northeast toward Damascus. Lampros also purchased in Shechem pottery and livestock; grateful he had Jeremiah to go with him to inspect the livestock. He was surprised to see that Cyrus’s purchases in Acco sold well in Shechem.

He bought Nablus soaps, wheat, and grapes, to sell in Jericho to the bazaar booths that catered to travelers going North along a different route to Damascus.

While having their evening meals at Shechem, Lampros and Jeremiah discussed the best routes to Bethlehem.

The ridge route would be quicker; however, he could sell his wares in other cities on the way to Jericho. The major caravans did not want to go out of their way to provide for the other off-road bazaars.

“We will leave Shechem to go down the western bank of the Jordan River to Gilgal and finally to Jericho. We’ll set up camp at Fatsa” el.

“Will we pause at Gilgal?” asked Jeremiah. “I would really like to see where Joshua led our ancestors across the Jordan River on dry ground.”

“Yes, we’ll see the camp site near Joshua’s stone altar,<sup>36</sup> the first camp site of Israel after crossing the Jordan River,” Lampros replied.

“I was worried about going to Jerusalem with just Ruth and baby

---

<sup>36</sup> [Joshua 4:19-20](#)

Joel, but you came along at just the right time. Our journey has been a very pleasant one,” Jeremiah shared.

“When we get to Jericho, I will arrange for you to travel to Jerusalem with a small group of soldiers that are friends of mine. You’ll be able to travel the treacherous route without worry. We will be up and gone from camp to leave for Sychar before the sunrise, goodnight my friends,” Lampros said as he departed for his tent.

Just before sunrise Lampros, Cyrus and a few helpers left the campsite and went to meet with the merchants. The rest of his crew were busy preparing the items to be delivered to the merchants in town.

Soon Ruth was up; Jeremiah put Joel on Marni’s special saddle that one of Lampros’s men had made for the tiny lad. He and Ruth walked with Marni to Jacob’s well to fill their goat skin jugs.

Marni was so funny, she seemed to enjoy carrying Joel, he liked the ride and Marni liked the companionship of young Joel.

“The ladies were telling me about so many things that happened around this well and in Shechem” she shared with her husband as they walked. “Hundreds of years ago, Alexander the Great destroyed the city of Shechem due to an uprising that resulted in his prefect in Syria being burned to death. Many of Shechem’s leading citizens hid in a nearby cave and were later captured and massacred by Alexander’s forces.”<sup>37</sup>

“Sanballat, an Horonite<sup>38</sup> built a Temple on Mount Gerizim after Nehemiah banished his son in law, Eliashib, from Jerusalem. When Nehemiah *“understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.”*<sup>39</sup>

Arriving back in camp, Jeremiah said, “We have a lot to learn about our history”. Jeremiah introduced a Bedouin they met at Jacob’s well.

“My name is Mahdi, which means ‘guided to the right path.’<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> book 28 page 415

<sup>38</sup> Nehemiah 13:28 and 13:7 i.22.1

<sup>39</sup> Deuteronomy 23:3 i.22.1

<sup>40</sup> i.23.59

“Several years ago,” he told them, “I converted to belief in the God of the Hebrews. Now, my name has true meaning. Jeremiah and I have been visiting about the religious history of this area. I was surprised to see a Hebrew traveling through Samaria.”

Ruth responded, “It is very strange about these Samaritans. They claim to worship the one true God, but in their teaching, they do not accept the writings of His prophets or kings. They won’t worship in Jerusalem, but rather worship on Mount Gerizim.”

“We Greeks don’t get it either,” Lampros interjected. “I don’t see the difference in what god or gods you believe in.” He and Cyrus were packing the animals for going to market in Fatsa’ el.

“That, Lampros, is because you do not understand who the one true God is. ***“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”***<sup>41</sup> No other god can claim this, either: ***“Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;”***<sup>42</sup>

***“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”***<sup>43</sup>

***“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”***<sup>44</sup>

***“Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”***<sup>45, 46</sup>

“I have known Jeremiah for many years,” said Lambros. “And I have found him to be a righteous man. Now I can see why. He believes in a God who can change things. I have yet to see any of our gods do anything.”

“I believe more now, because I know more; thanks to Mahdi’s

---

<sup>41</sup> [Genesis 1:1](#) i.22.1

<sup>42</sup> [Isaiah 44:24](#) i.22.1

<sup>43</sup> [John 1:3](#) i.22.1

<sup>44</sup> [John 1:4](#) i.22.1

<sup>45</sup> [Isaiah 44:6](#) i.22.1

<sup>46</sup> [Biblereasons.com](#) i.23.124

discussions.”

“Your words, Mahdi, make a lot of sense, I will talk more with Jeremiah, another time. I must get the men ready for tomorrow’s work”

Mahdi understood his need to leave and wanted to give him a closing thought: “In the scroll of Genesis, the first words are: ***“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”***<sup>47</sup>

“Yes, Lampros, our God changes things! No other god can make such a claim.”

Lampros left to finish helping Cyrus with Wednesday’s inventory.

Mahdi told his companions, ***“And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.”***<sup>48</sup>

“That’s where he built his first Altar west of the Jordon River?” asked Jeremiah.

“Yes,” Mahdi replied. ***“And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.”***<sup>49</sup> I too must journey on to my camp. I rejoice that God has introduced us, Jeremiah, Ruth, and young Joel. May He bless you through the rest of your journey.”

“Thank you so much for your encouragement and especially your knowledge of our religion,” Jeremiah said.

“When you come near Bethlehem, please come to our inn and café. Your will be most welcome.” Ruth told him as she bid him farewell.

Very few Bedouins believe as I do. You will be blessed to learn more about the One true God, creator of all. I leave you with something Isaiah wrote, I mentioned it earlier: ***“...I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;”***<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> [Genesis 1:1 i.22.1](#)

<sup>48</sup> [i.22.1 Genesis 12:6-8](#)

<sup>49</sup> [i.22.1 Genesis 12:9](#)

<sup>50</sup> [i.22.1 Isaiah 44:24](#)

Mahdi smiled as he waved good-bye and said again: The Lord made all things, by himself!”

“Shalom, Mahdi, my friend and brother.” Jeremiah said.

Jeremiah continued his conversation with Ruth, “I was never raised to hate the Samaritans like some of many other Jews; I still have issues with understanding some of the laws of Moses and I am even embarrassed by a few of them.<sup>51</sup>

“I understand,” Rebecca commented. “I just wish I had faith like my sister Rebecca. She believes in God completely, constantly telling me: ***“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”***<sup>52</sup>

Ruth began her food preparation; Jeremiah and young Joel became the water boys, distributing water for those in the camp.

Joel was not old enough to speak with intelligible words, but Jeremiah seemed to understand the strange gibberish of a nearly two-year-old. He knew when Joel spoke; it was certainly important to Joel.

As they rested from the day’s ride, the aroma of Ruth’s fabulous cooking drifted their way with the cool evening breeze. Once the camp was set up, the only sound that could be heard was the grunting of the camels as their masters had them kneel to remove their heavy loads.

Watching the sunset, Jeremiah was amazed how the extreme heat of noon dropped 50 degrees as darkness captured the sky. The tranquility of such an awe inspiring, star-studded sky highlighted by the brilliance of the full moon was a memory he would rehearse for a long time, recalling what Jacob told Laban, ***“Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night;”***<sup>53</sup>

---

51 . B.23.28, page 419

52 [Proverbs 4:11](#) i.22.1

53 B.21.4, page 53; i.22.1 [Genesis 31:40](#)

## DAY 5 Thursday

Morning bazaar at Fats 'el then off to Jericho, stopping at Gilgal

Everyone ate an early breakfast. Cyrus took three men into the small bazaar in Fatsa' el and returned an hour later. Lampros had prepared everything for Friday's big day in Jericho; Jeremiah and Ruth were anxious to see Gilgal along the way and looking forward to meeting Caleb in Jerusalem.

They were able to arrive in Gilgal seven hours later. Perhaps the excitement of their plans gave them a false concept of the temperatures, but they only stopped briefly for water at a small spring along the way.

Lampros was, however, glad to see Gilgal because he knew his camels and donkeys needed to rest from their heavy burdens.

### Insert Gilgal info

As they began to eat their evening meal, a stranger approached them.

“Shalom,” he greeted them.

“Shalom,” Jeremiah replied. “Welcome. Are you hungry? Please join us.”<sup>54</sup>

“Thank you, my name is Nathaniel.”

“I am Jeremiah this is my wife, Ruth; we are traveling to Bethlehem and just came through Gilgal.”

“Do you know the details about Jericho?” the stranger asked.

“I recall that Joshua fought a major battle and God performed a miracle and the wall fell down flat.”<sup>55</sup>

“That's very true, Jeremiah,” Nathaniel said, “The story neither starts nor ends there. Having left the area of Gilgal (the word gilgal means a rolling or a wheel indicating something circular round or ringed) <sup>56</sup>you saw the pillar of twelve stones from the Jordan River because God instructed Joshua to have one man from each tribe bring from the dry riverbed when they crossed the Jordan river.”

“Yes, that was very impressive.”

---

<sup>54</sup> i.22.1 [Zachariah 7:10](#)

<sup>55</sup> i.22.1 [Joshua 6:20](#)

<sup>56</sup> i.23.210 Youtube vide: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LojBHMwWNQ>

“God has a reason for everything He does,” Nathaniel continued, “the stones were to be a constant reminder of the Jordan River crossing on dry land when God held back the flow of the river.”<sup>57</sup> The river Jordan stopped flowing from the city of Adam down to the Salt Sea, making it possible so that everyone crossed over on dry land and lastly those with the ark stepped onto the dry ground that was the flooded river. After everyone was safe on the western shore, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before,<sup>58</sup> flowing again to the Salt Sea.”<sup>59</sup>

“That's when they set up their camp in Gilgal?” Jeremiah questioned Nathaniel.

“Yes,” he replied. “The enclosure was in the shape of a footprint the shape of which is not directed by topography. There are about a half a dozen of these sandal-shaped enclosures in the Jordan Valley.”<sup>60</sup>



Figure 1i.23.204 <https://www.holylandsite.com/gilgal>

---

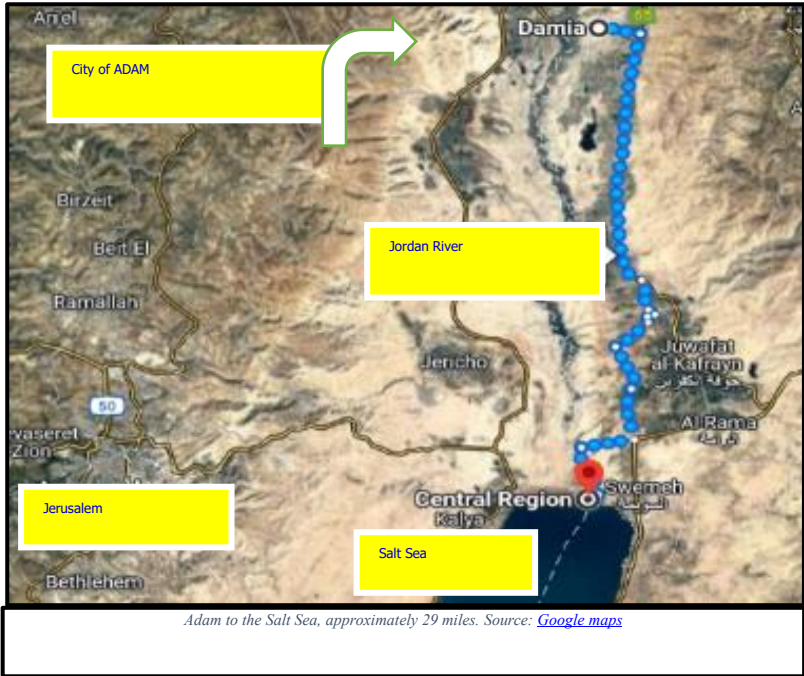
<sup>57</sup> i.22.1 [Joshua 3:15-17](#)

<sup>58</sup> i.22.1 [Joshua 4:18](#)

<sup>59</sup> i.22.1 [Joshua 4:15-17](#)

<sup>60</sup> i.23.210 Youtube vide: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqjBHMwWNQ>

“Quite right, and in this foreign land,” Nathaniel responded, “God intended these His people, the Hebrews, to be identified as a separate people, by the circumcision of every male.”<sup>61</sup>



Keeping their first Passover in the Promised Land was a most impressive celebration.

When they began to eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan the mana came no more. Joshua felt very blessed here, his feet standing on the ground of the promised land. Recalling what the Lord had said: <sup>62</sup>

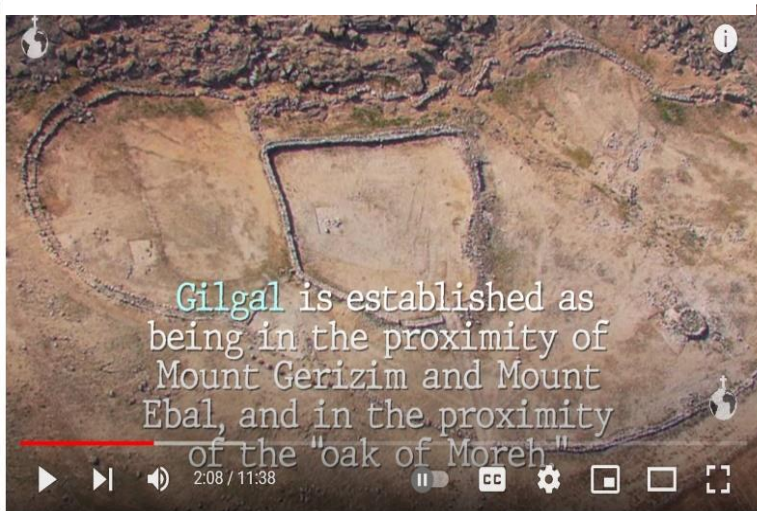
---

61 i.22.1 [Joshua 5:4-9](#)

62 i.22.1 [Joshua 1:3](#)



·Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you,  
as I said unto Moses.”



What lay ahead for Joshua was a mighty task. He rose early that first morning in the promised land watching the rising sun as it arose with a powerful glare on the surface of the Jordan River, it was as if God had reminded him:

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”<sup>63</sup>

These words were like a dream as he heard them in his head praising God for the miracle of the day before, rejoicing that everyone crossed the flooded Jordan River safely and on dry ground.

He turned his face towards Jericho to the South. It was not fear that overtook him; it was the great responsibility that lay ahead; the reality that he had the sandals of Moses to fill.

By now the morning light was bright and Joshua could clearly see the impenetrable city of Jericho. He was amazed to see the city's gate all shut.

---

<sup>63</sup> i.22.1 [Psalm 1:1-3](#)

*“And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.”<sup>64</sup>*

“God gave him detailed instructions to accomplish the impossible and capture Jericho. For six days, the men of war marched around the city wall in silence, then on the seventh day, they marched around the city seven times and the priests blew their trumpets.”

“The people in Jericho thought what a strange way these people wage war. They were surprised and overtaken So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.”<sup>65</sup> Nathaniel concluded.

“You left out an important part of the story,” Ruth interjected, “the redeeming story of how Rahab and her family were spared from destruction.”<sup>66</sup>

Nathaniel replied, “Ruth, that story is for another time, as is the sin of Achan.<sup>67</sup> With that I bid you a safe and blessed journey.”

“Farewell Nathaniel, this has been a most enjoyable evening.”

Ruth,” Alexia said. “We are so glad that you and Jeremiah joined up with us. Our husbands are too; I heard them talking after supper, and Lampros said, ‘Jeremiah is a really nice fellow, I met him years ago as I would buy produce from his employer Nir in Nazareth.’”

Kallisto smilingly added what she had overheard Cyrus tell Lampros. “His wife, Ruth, can cook almost as well as my Kallisto,” Cyrus may have been afraid I would hear him. Ruth, you are a much better cook than I am.”

“Thank you.” she replied “My mother worked for a Roman Centurion and his family. She picked up quite a few cooking tips from the Italians. Since I will be managing the café at the Bethlehem Inn, it is important that I learn how to prepare

---

64 i.22.1 [Joshua 6:2](#)

65 i.22.1 [Joshua 6:20](#)

66 i.23.1 [Joshua 6:23](#)

67 i.23.1 [Joshua 7:16 ff](#)

special foods from other countries.”

“In our travels, we meet many people from outside our culture,” assured Alexia. “We will be meeting with Akila, an Egyptian woman whose small caravan travels through Jerusalem on its way to and from Tyre. She is a businesswoman you must meet.”

As the caravan passed Ramah, they reached the major crossroads that lead to Caesarea and Damascus.

On the large hill just ahead, was Gebeah, King Saul’s royal residence. From his house the King could look out to watch the caravans from Damascus traveling South toward Egypt and the Egyptians going northward. He had his eye on his kingdom; as commerce goes, so goes the country.

Arriving in Jericho, Lampros quietly planned with his soldier friends for Jeremiah, Ruth, and Joel to travel to Jerusalem providing protection through the thieving countryside from Jericho to Jerusalem. This required another early morning departure to arrive in Jerusalem before the Sabbath would begin at sunset. The soldiers were accustomed to early departures: Ruth was glad it would be her last.

## **DAY 6 FRIDAY**

is the beginning of the Sabbath, Jeremiah, Ruth, and Joel make an early start for Jerusalem with Roman soldiers; they meet with Caleb for Sabbath.

The sun was just peeking over the banks of the Jordan River and the grey light of dawn faintly lit up their campsite, the Roman soldiers arrived to escort Jeremiah and family to Jerusalem. The couple was more at ease after Lampros introduced the soldiers to them. Hearing rumors of the Jericho Road bandits concerned them; however, they were thankful for Lampros’ connections.

Ruth was up early and had prepared a meal for their guides. While they ate, Jeremiah finished packing up their stuff.

Virgil, the Captain, was impressed with young Joel’s alertness at so early an hour and Joel found an excellent playmate in the tall soldier.

“I have a son, back in Rome just a little older than your boy,” he explained his special interest in Joel.

“I imagine you miss him greatly,” Ruth said.

“Yes, next year, when I return from Jerusalem, I report back to Rome and will be with my family. My younger brother, Lucius, will be taking my place in Sepphoris.”

“He will be stationed at the fortress there?” she asked.

“Yes,” Virgil replied, then quickly changed the subject from a military conversation to talking with Joel again.

Not sure that Joel understood, Virgil said, “Look, Joel, the light of dawn has changed and now the hills look pink.”

Joel said something in response, no one seemed to understand, except perhaps Joel.

Captain Virgil smiled and replied, “You’re quite right, my young friend. The hills will all be brown, and the sun will come out in all its warmth and glory.”

“We’re ready,” Jeremiah announced.

The multitude of hugs and goodbyes of the caravanners was brief as the soldiers quickly mounted up and were ready to travel.

Jeremiah and Ruth rode on Marni’s back and Joel was happy to share a horse with Captain Virgil. This was Joel’s first ride on a horse; he enjoyed riding on Marni, but the horse was so less bouncy.

Looking back, Jeremiah said, “Jericho is an oasis in the midst of a desert.”<sup>68</sup>

Although Ruth found the Jericho Road to be exhausting, she felt safer with the soldiers leading the way.

She took special interest in visiting with the young Captain, Virgil. His mother worked in Rome in Caesar's kitchen, and he shared several of his favorite recipes with her. Ruth promised him a home cooked meal if he would visit them the next time he is in Bethlehem.

“Of course,” he told her with a grin, “Mom’s cooking is the best.”

“I will fix your mother's recipe for SHAKSHUKA<sup>69</sup> when you come.

“The palace guard loved it.” he told her. “I don't know if it is an

---

<sup>68</sup> i.22.12

<sup>69</sup> [Shakshuka recipe](#), i.23.76

Israeli specialty. Mom called it *UOVA E POLLO*.”  
“What does that mean?” she asked Virgil.  
He smiled and said, “Eggs and chicken.”  
Ruth laughed, “I would never see the connection.”

On and on they talked about food, which caused Ruth to be less tense about the treacherous trek to Jerusalem and Virgil’s men kept a watchful eye on the countryside.



Pausing in the shade of olive trees near a small spring, the travelers rested for a while, enjoying the distant view of Jerusalem’s skyline in the light of predusk. All the buildings had an orange glow about them as the bright sunlight reflected from them.

“How magnificent a view,” declared Jeremiah. “Another memory I will cherish,” thought Jeremiah to himself.

“We have seen the city often in the evening,” said Virgil “and the city seems to light up on its own. “We will arrive at Chacham’s Inn well before dark, but we must be up and going right away.”

Time passed quickly as every step took them closer to Jerusalem. Exhausted, the well-guarded group gained new energy when they saw the entrance to the Golden Gate <sup>70</sup>of the city. It was located on the eastern wall of the city, and as they neared the gate, a small rain shower welcomed them.

“Does it rain often in Jerusalem?” asked Jeremiah.

“More than in Jericho,” replied Captain Virgil. “Jericho averages 8 inches of rain per year, but Jerusalem get an average of 20

---

<sup>70</sup> [The Golden Gate that existed in Jesus' time i.23.180](#)

inches.”<sup>71</sup>

Arriving at Chacham’s Inn, Kalanit greeted the soldiers and invited them to enjoy a refreshing meal while resting their horses, but they politely refused.

“We must report in at the centurion headquarters, that is now our first priority.” Virgil explained. He promised to visit Jeremiah and Ruth in Bethlehem as soon as possible.

He turned his attention to young Joel, picked him up and told him goodbye, “Arrivederci.” he said to all as they rode away.

Caleb invited Jeremiah and Ruth to come in and refresh themselves.

“Kalanit has prepared a special Shabbat<sup>72</sup> meal for you, that we may welcome the Sabbath. We have plenty of food.”

Arriving at the table, Ruth was pleased to see the perfectly baked Challah, cucumber & tomato salad, and Bubbi’s Matza Ball soup. Kalanit explained that she made it from her grandmother’s recipe.<sup>73</sup> Jeremiah, however set his eyes on the sliced lamb in apricot mushroom sauce,<sup>74</sup> and the apple crumble dessert.<sup>75</sup>

They both were thankful that Kalanit served fresh grape juice in place of wine. Later they learned that wine was never served at Jerusalem and Bethlehem Inns.

After little Joel went to sleep and the foursome shared their backgrounds. Caleb spoke out first.

“Many years ago, the inn came up for sale. Hiram, my great, great grandfather purchased the inn and stables in Bethlehem because the previous owner had no living relatives to pass it to. It has been in our family ever since. My great grandfather leased the shepherd’s field outside of Bethlehem where the shepherds raised their special lambs for sacrifice in the temple.”

Kalanit joined in next, “Our father, Chacham, was able to buy the Inn at Jerusalem, it needed a lot of work, but he was able to do

---

<sup>71</sup> i.23.132

<sup>72</sup> [Shabbat dinner recipe](#) i.22.50

<sup>73</sup> [Allrecipes, Matzo Ball Soup recipes](#)

<sup>74</sup> [Sliced Lamb](#) i.22.50

<sup>75</sup> [Apple Crumble](#) i.22.50

most of the repairs himself. I left Bethlehem to help him and mother in Jerusalem.”

“That was when I hired an assistant and a cook for the Inn,” Caleb continued. “About three months ago, his wife resigned when my assistant accepted the position to manage a stable in Bethphage. I checked with Uncle Nir to help me find replacements, because I found no one in this area with competent skills and similar mindset as myself to replace him.”

“That’s where I came in,” Jeremiah spoke up. “Nir hired me to work in the orchards, but he quickly observed my natural talent was toward the animals. He transferred me to the stables. I had the privilege of working under Antigonus, the head stable master. He was a Greek and came from a family who trained horses.”

“How long did you work for Nir?” Caleb asked.

“I started at age seventeen, eight years later Ruth and I were married. So, a little over ten years,” Jeremiah replied. “Ruth has been a great supporter for me ever since.”

“You have such a beautiful son,” Kalanit commented.

“Thank you,” said Ruth. “He is the joy of our lives.”

“Jeremiah was bragging about your cooking; Ruth, please share with us some of your kitchen adventures” Caleb requested.

“My grandmother and two of my aunts would fix tremendous meals and I grew up more in a kitchen than anywhere else. My family did not follow the strict dietary laws of kosher Jews, so foreign foods, especially Egyptian and Italian fascinated me. A long our away, at the bazaars, I picked up a few recipes from China and India. I think the foreign meals will entice caravan masters to come to the Cafe and stay at the inn.

“What a marvelous idea.” said Kalanit.

“If it works,” replied Ruth, “You might be able to use this idea here in Jerusalem.”

“We should be getting some sleep,” mentioned Caleb when he noticed Jeremiah could barely keep his eyes open. “I am sure you are tired from your uphill climb from Jericho. After Shabbat we will show you around our facility then head down to Bethlehem and get you settled in.”

There was absolutely no disagreement from the weary Nazareth couple.

“We are looking forward to celebrating Shabbat in Jerusalem,” Jeremiah shared.

“Rest well. Sunday, we will show you around our facility then head down to Bethlehem and get you settled in.

## **DAY 7 Saturday Shabbat in Jerusalem**

## **DAY 8 Sunday Touring Jerusalem and then Leave for Bethlehem**

In the morning, Kalanit and Ruth prepared a breakfast of scrambled eggs, walnuts-tomato paste, feta cheese crusted with herbs, eggplant, tahini, jam, butter, and salad.<sup>76</sup> A side dish of Ratzelech.<sup>77</sup>

Ruth was excited to see that Kalanit was an excellent cook and looked forward to working with her.

Jerusalem was a very busy city, so Jeremiah and Ruth appreciated Caleb being their guide while Kalanit took care of Joel.

Standing outside the Inn, Jeremiah could see the towering turreted walls over the Damascus Gate.

Leaving the Inn, Caleb took them southeast of the Temple to the Gishon Spring.

“This spring is the most important of the two springs that supply water for Jerusalem,” Caleb shared. “As you can see, the spring is located just outside the wall of the city. It was necessary to make a tunnel into the city to bring in the large amount of water needed when the city was under siege. King

---

<sup>76</sup> i.22.98 Traditional Jewish Breakfast

<sup>77</sup> i.21.24 [Potato Pancakes \(Ratzelech\)](http://Potato Pancakes (Ratzelech), jewishvirtuallibrary.org), [jewishvirtuallibrary.org](http://jewishvirtuallibrary.org)



David could have entered the city through this tunnel when he captured Jerusalem.<sup>78</sup> Solomon was anointed David's successor here.<sup>79</sup> Years later, to make the water more accessible, an aqueduct (conduit<sup>80</sup>) built. When Sennacherib attacked Judah, a new water system was needed for safer transporting of the Gihon water into the city, so Hezekiah had a special tunnel built."<sup>81</sup>

Their next stop was west of the spring to see Herod's Theater. "About 20 years ago," Caleb explained, "Herod built a theater here, introducing more of the Greco-Roman culture, wealthy Jews come here, but our more traditional Jews scorn the place."<sup>82</sup> Further west of us you can see the three heavily fortified towers Herod also built, protecting his palace and the western side of Jerusalem. The tallest one is called The Phasael Tower, named after Herod's brother and is 145 feet tall; the middle one shorter, it is 132 feet tall, and he named it after a friend; but the most beautiful one is the Mariamme Tower, named after his Hasmonean wife, that he murdered. The Mariamme tower is only 74 feet tall."<sup>83</sup>

Caleb led the way when Jeremiah & Ruth left Jerusalem for the 3-hour walk to Bethlehem.

After Chacham died, Caleb moved to the Jerusalem Inn and stayed with his sister; leaving the Bethlehem facility to be managed by his assistant. His grandfather's house had been vacant ever since.

When Chacham established the inn at Jerusalem, he developed many valuable contacts with the Caravan Masters and worked well with several Roman Centurions which allowed him to gain information on the political scene of Rome. Caleb continued to cultivate his father's contacts as he struggled to

---

78 i.22.1 [2 Samuel 5:6-9](#)

79 i.22.1 [1 Kings 1:33-45](#)

80 i.22.1 [Commentary by A. R. FAUSSET](#) "conduit--an aqueduct from the pool or reservoir for the supply of the city. At the foot of Zion was Fount Siloah ( Isa 8:6 Neh 3:15 Jhn 9:7 ), called also Gihon, on the west of Jerusalem ( 2Ch 32:30 ). Two pools were supplied from it, the Upper, or Old ( Isa 22:11 ), or King's ( Neh 2:14 ), and the Lower ( Isa 22:9 )

81 i.22.1 [Isaiah 7:3](#)

82 i.22.13 [Herod's Theater](#)

83 i.22.13 [Herod's Three Towers](#)

maintain both locations.

When he heard the Centurions talk about Caesar Augustus' plans to demand an empire-wide census for taxation purposes, he knew he had to hire a manager for the Bethlehem Inn & Café. After consulting with his father's brother in Nazareth, Nir, he decided to hire Jeremiah and Ruth to oversee the stable and the café.

Anticipating a much-needed increase in business. Caleb had to enlarge his inn and stables in Jerusalem; the Bethlehem Inn would be next.

## **DAY 9 Monday**

### **first day at the Bethlehem inn**

Before entering the gate of Bethlehem, they stopped at the well and enjoyed drinking the refreshing, cool water, and gentle breezes as they sat in the shade. After visiting with some of the locals, they began their search for the house which was just a short walk from the well.

When they arrived at their new dwelling, the excited young couple went in, and Ruth began to make the house a home.

After an early supper, Caleb came over to finalize the employment agreement. Now he knew his Uncle Nir had not exaggerated at all about Jeremiah's knowledge of the animals.

"I will be managing the stable in Jerusalem since my father passed away last winter. You and Ruth will be overseeing the one here in Bethlehem. Jeremiah, you would like to walk with me when I return to the stable this evening; then tomorrow you get started."

"That would be a good idea," Jeremiah responded, "along the way you could share some history of Bethlehem."

"Of course." Caleb was very proud of his hometown. "You passed Rachel's tomb on the way into town."<sup>84</sup>

"Many years later, Naomi returned to Bethlehem, bringing Ruth

---

84 i.22.1 [Genesis 35:19](#) "So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, *ἵσ*, Bethlehem).."[Genesis 48:7](#) "...and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same *ἵσ* Bethlehem"

the Moabite with her. I'm sure you are familiar with the story of Boaz, a man of superior integrity and strength and very knowledgeable of the Laws of God."

"Oh yes," replied Jeremiah," the great kinsman-redeemer story.<sup>85</sup>

'Boaz might have said, my money is as good as my kinsman's; if I have a mind to it, why may not I buy it privately, since I had the first proffer of it, and say nothing to my kinsman?'

No, Boaz, though fond enough of the purchase, would not do so mean a thing as to take a bargain over another man's head that was nearer a-kin to it; and we are taught by his example to be not only just and honest, but fair and honorable, in all our dealings, and to do nothing which we are unwilling should see the light, but be above-board."<sup>86</sup>

"That's right, Boaz followed the chain of command to an extreme, gathering ten honorable witnesses to meet with him when he explained Naomi and Ruth's situation to the closest kinsman. This relative was not able to purchase the land and be the kinsman-redeemer, so he turned it over to Boaz, the next in line. Boaz was also the great grandfather of King David, who was born and raised in Bethlehem."

"Imagine being King David's grandpa; certainly, proves integrity pays off!" Jeremiah exclaimed. "There is a lot of history in Bethlehem; I did not know all of Boaz's background."

Jeremiah said, "I did know this is called the City of David. I was born here, also. However, when I was thirteen, my family moved to Nazareth."

Caleb continued, "My grandfather, Ro'I, leased the land where David was tending the sacrificial lambs and his father's flock when he left fighting predators like lions and bears, to fight the giant Philistine, Goliath, to protect the Israelites and bring honor to God's name. He knew the same God that protected him, and his flock would also prevail against such a formidable foe. Years later, Samuel, the prophet, came to Bethlehem and anointed David King over Israel."<sup>87</sup>

"In a few days you will meet Asaph and Abyah. They are twin

---

<sup>85</sup> i.22.1 [Ruth 4](#)

<sup>86</sup> i.22.1 [Matthew Henrys commentary on Ruth Chapter 4](#)

<sup>87</sup> i.22.1 [1 Samuel 16:11-13](#)

brothers who are the shepherds that tend to our flocks of the sacrificial lambs in the same fields that David watched his father's sheep. They have two young men helping them."

"I will look forward to that; we saw the fields north of the village but did not realize these were the scarified lambs.

"The house you are staying in belonged to my great-grandfather, Moriel. You mentioned that coming to the village, you stopped at the well near the gate to water your animals and rest a while. It was at that very well, that a sacred event developed.

"When King David was quite old and fighting the Philistines again. Weary from battle, he was resting in the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines were pitched in the valley of Rephaim with a garrison in Bethlehem."<sup>88</sup>

"Three of David's thirty mighty men went down and joined with David at the cave. The exhausted David remembered his boyhood days when he watched over the flocks of his father, Jesse. He also recalled that it was just outside of Bethlehem that he volunteered to defend the Israelites against Goliath and where the prophet Samuel anointed him King over Israel. His three mighty men overheard him say to himself:

"Oh that one would give me a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!"<sup>89</sup>

The three mighty men, Adino, Eleazar and Shammah, penetrated the host of the Philistines troop, drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and brought it to David:

"Nevertheless, he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD."

And he said, be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it."<sup>90</sup>

"Ah, here we are at the stables," Caleb pointed out, "As you can see there is considerable work to be done on remodeling both the stables and the cafe."

---

88 i.22.1 [2 Samuel 23:14](#)

89 i.22.1 [2 Samuel 23:15](#)

90 i.22.1 [2 Samuel 23:16-17](#)

“It will be good to see it all in daylight,” Jeremiah said confidently as the sun began its rapid descent into the coming darkness.

We will see you in the morning. Thank you for putting so much faith in Ruth and myself.”

“Uncle Nir gave you the highest reference, and now that I have visited with you both, I know I have made a wise choice. Good night.”

On the short walk home, Jeremiah had a lot to think about. He now had made peace with himself over the move to his childhood town. The cafe would be food for the family; however, he must find a young girl to help with the care of Joel. The old corrals were in serious need of repairs; he would have to bring in some professional help to repair them.

One thing about Jeremiah, he was ready for a challenge and able to meet whatever came his way with the confidence of a victorious outcome. Because he knew God is his strength<sup>91</sup> and will receive all the glory and honor<sup>92</sup> for each, and every victory.

Arriving home just as the sun had settled well into the darkness, he greeted Ruth in the doorway of their new home.

He was away for less than an hour, she was relieved to see his return.

“Tomorrow,” he said, “we will go to work!” you will love the little cafe, the kitchen faces the East so you will be able to see the morning sunrises.”

Ruth, trusting her husband's report, smiled in anticipation.

Little Joel was fast asleep, and Jeremiah and Ruth settled down for a good night's rest.

The sun came up early that cool spring morning. Ruth was the first one up, fixing a hearty breakfast for her two valiant men. Joel ate like a starving rabbit.

“We must find a young girl to help with him while you are at the cafe.” Jeremiah said.

“I was visiting with Farrah at the well last evening. She has a 10-year-old daughter, Shoshana. I will speak with her this

---

<sup>91</sup> i.22.1 [Psalm 59:9](#).

<sup>92</sup> i.22.1 [Revelation 4:11](#)

evening, but for today, I must take Joel with us.”  
“Of course,” he replied.  
End of Chapter 1

