

AB AHLULELI

U-Israyeli Ulwa Lensalela yamaKhenani

1 Emva kokufa kukaJoshuwa, abako-Israyeli babuza uJehova bathi, “Pho ngubani ozahamba kuqala ukuba ayesilwela lamaKhenani na?”

²UJehova waphendula wathi, “NguJuda ozahamba; ilizwe sengilnikele ezandleni zabo.”

³Lapho-ke abantu bakoJuda bathi kumaSimeyoni abafowabo, “Hambani lathi elizweni esalabelwayo, ukuyakulwa lamaKhenani. Lathi sizakwenanisa ngokuhamba lani kwelenu.” Ngakho amaSimeyoni ahamba labo.

⁴Kwathi uJuda esehlasela, uJehova wanikela amaKhenani lamaPherizi ezandleni zabo wabulala abantu abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi eBhezekhi. ⁵Kukhonapho lapho abafica khona u-Adoni-Bhezekhi balwa laye, baqothula amaKhenani kanye lamaPherizi. ⁶U-Adoni-Bhezekhi wabaleka, kodwa baxotshana laye baze bambamba, bamquma izithupha zakhe lamazwane amakhulu.

⁷U-Adoni-Bhezekhi wasesithi, “Amakhosi angamatshumi ayisikhombisa ayequnywe izithupha zawo lamazwane amakhulu ayedobha imvuthuluka ngaphansi kwetafula yami. Khathesi uNkulunkulu usephindisele kimi ngalokho engakwenza kuwo.” Bamusa eJerusalema lapho afela khona.

⁸Abantu bakoJuda bahlasela leJerusalema bayithumba. Bahlasela idolobho ngezinkemba balithungela ngomlilo.

⁹Emva kwalokho abantu bakoJuda bahamba bayakulwa lamaKhenani ayehlala elizweni lezintaba, iNegebi kanye lamawatha ezintaba

angasentshonalanga. ¹⁰Baqhubeka bayahlasela amaKhenani ayehlala eHebhroni (kuqala eyayithiwa yiKhiriyathi Aribha) banqoba uSheshayi, lo-Ahimani kanye loThalimayi.

¹¹Besuka lapho baqhubeka bayahlasela abantu ababehlala eDebhiri (kuqala eyayithiwa yiKhiriyathi Seferi).

¹²UKhalebi wasesithi, “Indodakazi yami u-Akhisa ngizayendisela endodeni ezahlasela iKhiriyathi Seferi iyithumbe.

¹³U-Othiniyeli, indodana kaKhenazi, umnawakhe kaKhalebi, wayithumba; ngakho uKhalebi wendisela indodakazi yakhe u-Akhisa kuye.

¹⁴Kwathi ngelinye ilanga u-Akhisa efike ku-Othiniyeli wamtshutshisa ukuba acele insimu kuyise. Esehile kubabhemi wakhe uKhalebi wambuza wathi, “Kuyini ofuna ngikwenzele khona na?”

¹⁵Yena waphendula wathi, “Ake ungenzele umusa othize. Njengoba usungiphe umhlaba eNegebi, ngipha lemithombo yamanzi.” Lapho-ke uKhalebi wamnika imithombo engaphezulu lengaphansi.

¹⁶Abayinzalo kayisezala kaMosi, amaKheni, bahamba labantu bakoJuda besuka edolobheni laMalala besiyahlala phakathi kwabantu basenkangala yakoJuda eNegebi eduze le-Aradi.

¹⁷Emva kwalokho abantu bakoJuda bahamba lamaSimeyoni abafowabo bahlasela amaKhenani ayehlala eZefathi, kwathi idolobho balichitha okupheleleyo. Ngakho lathiwa yiHorima. ¹⁸Abantu bakoJuda bathumba njalo iGaza, le-Ashikheloni kanye le-Ekhroni – lelo lalelolobho kanye lelizwe lalo.

¹⁹UJehova wayelabantu bakoJuda. Bathumba ilizwe lezintaba, kodwa babenganelisi ukuxotsha abantu

basemagekeni ngoba babeleziqola zempi zensimbi. ²⁰Njengokuthembisa kukaMosi, iHebhroni yaphiwa uKhalebi, owaxotsha kuyo amadodana amathathu ka-Anakhi. ²¹Kodwa abakoBhenjamini behluleka ukususa amaJebusi ayehlala eJerusalema; lalamhlanje amaJebusi ahlala khona labakoBhenjamini.

²²Ngalesosikhathi abendlu kaJosefa bahlasela iBhetheli, njalo uJehova wayelabo. ²³Ekuthumeni kwabo abantu ukuba bayehlola iBhetheli (kuqala eyayithiwa yiLuzi), ²⁴izinhloli zabona umuntu ephuma edolobheni zasezisithi kuye, “Sitshengise ukuthi singangena njani edolobheni, thina-ke sizabona ukuthi uphatheka kuhle.” ²⁵Ngakho wazitshengisa, zasezihlasela idolobho ngenkamba kodwa umuntu lowo zamyekela kanye labendlu yakhe bonke.

²⁶Ngakho-ke waya elizweni lamaHithi, lapho akha khona idolobho alibiza ngokuthi yiLuzi, okuyilona bizo lalo lalamhlanje.

²⁷Kodwa uManase kabaxotshanga abantu baseBhethi Shani loba eThahanakhi kumbe eDori loba e-Ibhiliyami kumbe eMegido kanye lasemizaneni yabo eseduzane, ngoba amaKhenani ayezimisele ukuhlala kulelolizwe. ²⁸Kwathi abako-Israyeli sebelamandla bawabamba ngamandla amaKhenani ukuba abasebenzele kodwa kabazange bawaxotshe wonke.

²⁹Labako-Efrayimi kababaxotshanga amaKhenani ayehlala eGezeri, kodwa amaKhenani aqhubeka ehlala khona labo. ³⁰LabakoZebhuluni kabawaxotshanga amaKhenani ayehlala eKhithroni kanye laseNahaloli, asala ephakathi kwabo; kodwa bawabamba ngamandla ukuba abasebenzele.

³¹Labako-Asheri kababaxotshanga labo ababehlala e-Akho, kumbe eSidoni, kumbe e-Ahilabi loba e-Akhizibi kumbe eHelibha loba e-Afeki kumbe eRehobi,

³²njalo ngenxa yalokhu abantu baka-Asheri bahlala lamaKhenani aye akhe elizweni. ³³Labako-Nafthali kababaxotshanga labo ababehlala eBhethi Shemeshi kumbe eBhethi Anathi; kodwa abako-Nafthali labo bahlala lamaKhenani aye akhe elizweni, kwathi lawo ayehlala eBhethi Shemeshi kanye leBhethi Anathi abanjwa ngamandla ukuba abe yizisebenzi zabo. ³⁴Ama-Amori acindezela abakoDani ukuba bahlale elizweni lezintaba, engabavumeli ukuba behlele phansi emagekeni. ³⁵Njalo ama-Amori ayezimisele ukuhlala kokuphela eNtabeni iHeresi, le- Ayijaloni kanye leShahalibhimi, kodwa kwathi amandla abendlu kaJosefa esemakhulu, lawo abanjwa ngamandla ukuba abe yizisebenzi. ³⁶Umngcele wama-Amori wawusekela eKhalweni lweNkume usiya eSela kanye laphambili.

Ingilosi kaJehova eBhokhimi

2 Ingilosi kaJehova yahamba isuka eGiligali isiya eBhokhimi yasisithi, “Ngalikhupha eGibhithe ngaliholela elizweni engafunga ukulinika okhokho benu. Ngathi, ‘Angiyikusephula isivumelwano sami lani, ²njalo kaliyikwenza isivumelwano labantu baleli ilizwe, kodwa lizabhidliza ama-alithare abo.’ Kodwa lina kalingilalelanga. Likwenzeleni lokhu na? ³Ngakho khateshi-ke ngiyalitshela ukuthi angiyikubaxotsha phambi kwenu, bazakuba ngameva emihlubulweni yenu njalo onkulunkulu babo bazakuba ngumjibila kini,”

⁴Kwathi ingilosi kaJehova isizikhulumile zonke lezizinto kubo bonke abako-Israyeli, abantu bakhala kakhulu, ⁵indawo leyo bayibiza ngokuthi

yiBhokhimi. Banikela imihlatshelo kuJehova khonapho.

Ukungalaleli Lokwehlulwa

⁶ Emva kokuba uJoshuwa esebadedele abako-Israyeli, bahamba bayalithatha ilizwe, lowo lalowo endaweni eyilifa lakhe. ⁷ Abantu bamkhonza uJehova kuyo yonke impilo kaJoshuwa lakweyabadala abasala bephila ababeyibonile imisebenzi emikhulu uJehova ayeyenzele abako-Israyeli.

⁸ UJoshuwa indodana kaNuni, inceku kaJehova, wafa eleminyaka elikhulu letshumi. ⁹ Bamngcwaba emhlabeni oyilifa lakhe, eThimnathi Heresi elizweni lezintaba lako-Efrayimi, enyakatho kwentaba iGahashi.

¹⁰ Kwathi emva kokuba sonke isizukulwana leso sesiphelile, kwavela esinye isizukulwane esasingamazi uJehova kanye lalokho ayekwenzele u-Israyeli. ¹¹ Lapho-ke abako-Israyeli benza okubi emehlweni kaJehova bakhonza uBhali. ¹² Bamdela uJehova, uNkulunkulu waboyise, owayebakhuphe eGibhithe. Balandela njalo bakhonza onkulunkulu abehlukeneyo babantu ababehlala phakathi kwabo. Bamthukuthelisa uJehova ¹³ ngoba bamdela bakhonza uBhali labo-Ashithorethi. ¹⁴ Ekubathukutheleleni kwakhe uJehova abako-Israyeli wabanikela kubahlaseli ababaphangayo. Wabanikela ezitheni zabo ezazibahanqile, ababengasanelisi ukumelana lazo. ¹⁵ Zonke izikhathi lapho u-Israyeli waphuma ukuyakulwa, isandla sikaJehova samelana labo ukuba behlulwe, njengokufunga kwakhe kubo. Basebephakathi kohlupho olukhulu.

¹⁶ Kulapho-ke uJehova wabeka abahluleli ababahlengayo ezandleni zabahlaseli laba. ¹⁷ Belo bajinge bengabalaleli abahluleli babo kodwa baziphingisa kwabanye onkulunkulu

babakhonza. Abenzanga njengaboyise, bona baphanga baphuma endleleni oyise ababehambe kuyo, indlela yokulalela imilayo kaJehova. ¹⁸ Ngesikhathi sonke lapho uJehova ebabekele umahluleli, wayemsekela umahluleli abahlenge ezandleni zezitha zabo lapho umahluleli esaphila ; ngoba uJehova waba lesihawu kubo lapho bebubula ngaphansi kwalabo ababebacindezele bebahlukuluza.

¹⁹ Kodwa lapho umahluleli esefile, abantu babuyela ezindleleni zokuxhwala okudlula ezaboyise, belandela abanye onkulunkulu, babasebenzele njalo babakhonze, besala ukudela izenzo zabo ezimbi lezindlela zenkani.

²⁰ Ngakho uJehova wamthukuthelela kakhulu u-Israyeli wathi, “Njengoba isizwe lesi sesephule isivumelwano engasimisela okhokho baso njalo kasingilalelanga, ²¹ kangisayikuxotsha phambi kwaso loba siphi sezizwe ezatshiywa nguJoshuwa ekufeni kwakhe.

²² Ngizasebenzisa zona ukuhlola u-Israyeli ngibone langabe bazayigcina indlela kaJehova bahambe kuyo njengokwenziwa ngokhokho babo.”

²³ UJehova wayevumele ukuthi izizwe lezo zisale; kazixotshanga masinyane ngokuzinikela ezandleni zika-Joshuwa.

3 Nanzi izizwe ezatshiywa nguJehova

ukuze abahlole bonke abako-Israyeli ababengazibonanga izimpi eKhenani ² (wenza lokhu ukuba azifundise izizukulwana zama-Israyeli ukulwiwa kwempi lezo ezazingazange zikubone ukulwa ngaphambili): ³ ababusi abahlanu bamaFilisti, amaKhenani wonke, amaSidoni, lamaHivi ahlala ezintabeni zaseLebhanoni kusukela eNtabeni iBhali Hemoni kusiya eLebho Hamathi.

⁴ Babetshiyelwe ukuhlola abako-Israyeli ukuba kubonakale ukuthi bayayilalela na

imilayo kaJehova, ayeyinike okhokho babo ngoMosi.

⁵ Abako-Israyeli babehlala phakathi kwamaKhenani, lamaHithi, lama-Amori, lamaPherizi, lamaHivi kanye lamaJebusi. ⁶ Bathatha amadodakazi awo aba ngomkabo njalo bendisela amadodakazi abo emadodaneni awo, bakhonza labonkulunkulu bawo.

U-Othiniyeli

⁷ Abako-Israyeli benza okubi emehlweni kaJehova; bamkhohlwa uJehova uNkulunkulu wabo bakhonza oBhali labo-Ashera. ⁸ Ulaka lukaJehova lwavutha ku-Israyeli waze wabanikela ezandleni zikaKhushani-Rishathayimi inkosi yase-Arami Naharayimi, abantu bako-Israyeli ababengaphansi kombuso wayo iminyaka eficamibili. ⁹ Kodwa ekukhaleni kwabo kuJehova, wabalethela umhlengi, u-Othiniyeli indodana kaKhenazi, umnawakhe kaKhalebi, owabakhululayo. ¹⁰ Umoya kaJehova wehlela kuye, wasesiba ngumahluleli wako-Israyeli waya empini. UJehova wanikela uKhushani-Rashathayimi ezandleni zika-Othiniyeli, wamnqoba. ¹¹ Ngakho ilizwe laba lokuthula iminyaka engamatshumi amane, u-Othiniyeli indodana kaKhenazi waze wafa.

U-Ehudi

¹² Abako-Israyeli baphinda benza okubi emehlweni kaJehova, kwathi ngenxa yokuthi babenze lobububi uJehova wanika u-Egiloni inkosi yase-Mowabi amandla phezu kuka-Israyeli. ¹³ Esenze ama-Amoni lama-Amaleki amanyana laye, u-Egiloni wayahlasela u-Israyeli, basebethumba idolobho laMalala. ¹⁴ Abako-Israyeli baba ngaphansi kombuso ka-Egiloni inkosi

yaseMowabi iminyaka elitshumi laficamibili.

¹⁵ Abako-Israyeli bakhala futhi kuJehova, wasebapha umhlengi u-Ehudi, indoda eyayilixele indodana kaGera umBhenjamini. Abako-Israyeli bamthuma lomthelo ku-Egiloni inkosi yaseMowabi. ¹⁶ U-Ehudi wayenze inkemba esika inxa zombili eyayingaba yingalo lengxenye ubude bayo, ayibophela emlenzeni wakhe wesokudla ngaphansi kwezigqoko zakhe.

¹⁷ Wawethula umthelo ku-Egiloni inkosi yaseMowabi, owayengumuntu oqatha kakhulu. ¹⁸ Emva kokuba u-Ehudi esewethule umthelo, walaya abantu ababewuthwele ukuba bazihambe. ¹⁹ Ezithombeni eduze leGiligali yena uqobo wabuyela emuva, wathi, “O nkosi, ngilelizwi, lakho eliyimfihlo.”

Inkosi yathi, “Thula!” Zonke izikhonzi zayo zasuka kuyo.

²⁰ U-Ehudi wayilanda isihlezi yodwa ekamelweni langaphezulu elipholileyo endlini yayo yobukhosi wathi, “Ngilelizwi lakho elivela kuNkulunkulu.” Kwathi inkosi isukuma esihlalweni sayo, ²¹ u-Ehudi wafinyelela ngesandla sakhe senxele, wahwatsha inkemba emlenzeni wakhe kwesokudla wayithela esiswini senkosi. ²² Lesilanda satshona phakathi lenhlendla eyaze yathutsha emhlane wayo. U-Ehudi kayingcothulanga inkemba, idanga layimboza. ²³ U-Ehudi waya phandle ekhulusini lendlu wavala iminyango yekamelo langaphezulu wayikhiya.

²⁴ Esehambile kweza izinceku zathola iminyango yekamelo langaphezulu ikhiyiwe. Zathi, “Kutsho ukuthi iye ngaphandle ekamelweni elingaphakathi kwendlu.” ²⁵ Zalinda zaze zakhathazeka, kodwa ngoba ingasavulanga iminyango yekamelo lelo, zathatha ikhiye zayivula. Lapho-ke zabona inkosi yazo iwele phansi, isifile.

²⁶ Zisalindile, u-Ehudi wasuka wahamba. Wedlula eduzane lezithombe wabalekela eSeyira. ²⁷ Esefike lapho wakhalisa icilongo elizweni lezintaba lako-Efrayimi, abako-Israyeli basebesehla laye ezintabeni, yena ebakhokhele.

²⁸ Wabalaya wathi, “Ngilandelani, ngoba uJehova usenikele uMowabi, isitha senu, ezandleni zenu.” Ngakho behlela laye phansi bemandela, kwathi sebethumbe amazibuko eJodani ayewelela eMowabi, kabaze bavumela muntu ukuba achaphele ngaphetsheya. ²⁹ Ngalesosikhathi babulala amaMowabi ayengaba yizinkulungwane ezilitshumi, wonke ayeqinile elamandla; akukho muntu owaphunyukayo. ³⁰ Ngalolosuku iMowabi yanqotshwa yi-Israyeli, ilizwe laselisiba lokuthula iminyaka engamatshumi aficamibili.

UShamigari

³¹ Emva kuka-Ehudi kwaba loShamigari indodana ka-Anathi owabulala amaFilisti angamakhulu ayisithupha ngesijujo senkabi. Laye wamkhulula u-Israyeli.

UDibhora

4 Emva kokuba u-Ehudi esefile abako-Israyeli baphinda benza okubi emehlweni kaJehova. ² Ngakho uJehova wabanikela ezandleni zikaJabhini, inkosi yaseKhenani, owayebusa eHazoni. Umlawuli webutho lakhe wayenguSisera, owayehlala eHaroshethi Hagoyimi. ³ Ngokuba wayelezinqola zempi ezensimbi ezingamakhulu aficamunye njalo ecindezele abako-Israyeli kabuhlungu okweminyaka engamatshumi amabili, bacela usizo kuJehova.

⁴ Ngalesosikhathi u-Israyeli wayekhokhelwa nguDibhora umphrofethikazi, umkaLaphidothi. ⁵ Wayethonisela amacala ngaphansi kweLala likaDibhora phakathi kweRama leBhetheli elizweni lezintaba lako-Efrayimi, njalo abantu bako-Israyeli baya kuye ukuba kwenziwe izinqumo ngemibono yabo. ⁶ Wabiza uBharakhi indodana ka-Abhinowami waseKhedeshi koNafthali wathi kuye, “UJehova uNkulunkulu ka-Israyeli, uyakulaya uthi: ‘Suka, uhambe labantu bakoNafthali labakoZebhuluni abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi ubakhokhelele eNtabeni iThabhoru. ⁷ Ngizahugela uSisera, umlawuli webutho likaJabhini, lezinqola zakhe zempi kanye lamabutho emfuleni uKhishoni ngimnikele ezandleni zakho.’ ”

⁸ UBharakhi wathi kuye, “Uma uhamba lami, ngizahamba; kodwa uma ungamhambi lami, kangiyikuhamba.”

⁹ UDibhora wathi, “Kulungile, ngizahamba lawe. Kodwa ngenxa yendlela oqhuba ngayo lokhu udumo kaluyikuba ngolwakho, ngoba uJehova uzanikela uSisera kowesifazana.” Ngakho uDibhora wahamba loBharakhi eKhedeshi ¹⁰ lapho abizela khona uZebhuluni loNafthali. Abantu abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi bamlandela, kwathi uDibhora laye wahamba laye.

¹¹ Ngalesosikhathi uHebheri umKheni wayewatshiyile amanye amaKheni, izizukulwana zikaHobhabhi, uyisezala kaMosi, wamisa ithente lakhe phansi kwesihlahla esikhulu eZananimi eduze leKhedeshi.

¹² Kwathi uSisera sebemtshelile ukuthi uBharakhi indodana ka-Abhinowami wayeseye eNtabeni iThabhoru, ¹³ uSisera waqoqela ndawonye izinqola zakhe zempi ezensimbi ezingamakhulu

aficamunye lawo wonke amadoda ayelaye, kusukela eHaroshethi Hagoyimi kusiya emfuleni uKhishoni.

¹⁴UDibhora wasesithi kuBharakhi, “Hamba! Lolu yilo usuku uJehova anikele ngalo uSisera ezandleni zakho. Kanti uJehova kahambanga phambi kwakho na?” Ngakho uBharakhi wehlela eNtabeni iThabhoi elandelwa ngabantu abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi. ¹⁵UBharakhi wathi esesondela uJehova wamhlasela uSisera lezinqola zakhe zonke zempi kanye lebuthe ngenkamba, njalo uSisera watshiya izinqola zakhe zempi wabaleka ngezinyawo. ¹⁶Kodwa uBharakhi waxotshana lezinqola zempi lebuthe waze wafika eHaroshethi Hagoyimi. Wonke amabutho kaSisera abulawa ngenkamba, akukho muntu owasilayo.

¹⁷Kodwa uSisera wabaleka ngezinyawo waze wayafika ethenteni likaJayeli, umkaHebheri umKheni, ngoba kwakulobudlelwane obuhle phakathi kukaJabhini inkosi yaseHazoni lomndeni kaHebheri umKheni.

¹⁸UJayeli waphuma wahlangabeza uSisera wasesithi kuye, “Woza nkosi yami, ngena phakathi sibili. Ungesabi.” Ngakho uSisera wangena ethenteni likaJayeli, wasemembesa ngengubo.

¹⁹Wasesithi, “Ngomile. Ake unginathise.” Wavula umxhaka wesikhumba sochago, wamnathisa, wasemembesa.

²⁰USisera wasesithi, “Mana emnyango wethente. Kungaba lomuntu ofika akubuze athi, ‘Kulomuntu lapha na?’ wothi ‘Hatshi.’”

²¹Kodwa uJayeli, umkaHebheri, wathatha isikhonkwane sethente lesando wanyonyobela kuye ephakathi kobuthongo obukhulu, ediniwe. Wabethela isikhonkwane enhlafunweni

sangena saze sayafika emhlabathini, wafa.

²²UBharakhi wafika exotshana loSisera, uJayeli waphuma wayamhlangabeza. Wathi, “Woza, ngizakutshengisa umuntu omdingayo.” Ngakho wangena laye, khonapho nango uSisera elele isikhonkwane sethente singene satshona enhlafunweni yakhe esefile.

²³Ngalolosuku uNkulunkulu wamngoba uJabhini, inkosi yamaKhenani, phambi kwama-Israyeli. ²⁴Amandla ama-Israyeli okumelana loJabhini inkosi yamaKhenani akhula, aze amchitha.

Ingoma KaDibhora

5 Ngalolosuku uDibhora loBharakhi indodana ka-Abhinowami bahlabela ingoma le:

²“Lapho amakhosana ko-Israyeli esekhokhela,
lapho abantu bezinikela
ngokuzithandela –
dumisani uJehova!

³“Zwanini lokhu lina makhosi!
Lalelani
lina babusi!
Ngizahlabelela kuJehova,
ngizahlabelela;
ngizahubela uJehova ihubo,
uNkulunkulu ka-Israyeli.

⁴“Awu Jehova, ekuqhamukeni kwakho
eSeyiri,
lapho usuka elizweni lase-Edomi,
umhlaba wanyikinyeka, amazulu

- athululeka,
amayezi athululela amanzi phansi.
- ⁵ Izintaba zazamazama phambi
kukaJehova, yena owaseSinayi,
phambi kukaJehova, uNkulunkulu
ka-Israyeli.
- ⁶ “Ezinsukwini zikaShamgari indodana
ka-Anathi,
ezinsukwini zikaJayeli,
imigwaqo yayideliwe;
izihambi zithatha izindledlana
ezimazombe.
- ⁷ Impilo yemakhaya ko-Israyeli
yaphela,
yaphela kwaze kwavela mina
Dibhora,
kwavela umama ko-Israyeli.
- ⁸ Kwathi sebekhethe onkulunkulu
abatsha,
impi yafika emasangweni edolobho,
njalo akukho hawu kumbe
umkhonto
owabonakalayo phakathi
kwezinkulungwane
ezingamatshumi
amane ko-Israyeli.
- ⁹ Inhliziyo yami ikanye lamakhosana
ka-Israyeli,
kanye labazinikela ngokuzithandela
phakathi kwabantu.
Dumisani uJehova!
- ¹⁰ “Lina eligada obabhemi
abamhlophe,
lihlezi ezihlalweni zenu zengubo,
lani elihamba emgwaqweni
cabangani
- ¹¹ ilizwi labahlabeleli
ezindaweni zamanzi okunathisa.
Bahuba ngezenzo ezilungileyo
- zikaJehova,
izenzo ezilungileyo zamabutho akhe
ko-Israyeli.
- “Lapho-ke abantu bakaJehova
behlela
emasangweni edolobho.
- ¹² ‘Vuka, vuka, Dibhora!
Vuka, vuka, uhlabelle ingoma!
Vuka weBharakhi.
Zithumbe izithunjwa zakho,
we ndodana ka-Abhinowami.’
- ¹³ “Kwathi abantu ababesele bafika
kubahlonitshwa;
abantu bakaJehova
beza kimi labalamandla.
- ¹⁴ Abanye bavela ko-Efrayimi,
abamdabuko wabo use-Amaleki;
uBhenjamini wayelabantu
abakulandelayo.
Izinduna zamabutho zavela
eMakhiri,
koZebhuluni labo abaphatha
intonga
yomlawuli webutho.
- ¹⁵ Amakhosana ako-Isakhari
ayeloDibhora;
yebo, u-Isakhari wayeloBharakhi
emxhuma ngesiqubu esigodini.
Ezifundeni zakoRubheni kwaba
lokuhlolwa okukhulu
kwezinhliziyi.
- ¹⁶ Lahlalelani ezihonqweni zomlilo
ukuzwa amakhwelo enqanda
izimvu
na?
Ezifundeni zakoRubheni,
kwaba lokuhlolwa okukhulu
kwezinhliziyi.
- ¹⁷ UGileyadi wahlala ngaphetsheya

kweJodani.
LoDani wasalelani
ngasemikhunjini na?
U-Asheri wasala ngasekhunjini
wahlala emagobosini akhe
olwandle.

¹⁸ Abantu bakoZebhuluni bafaka
impilo yabo uqobo engozini;
wenzanjalo loNafthali emiqolweni
yeganga.

¹⁹ “Amakhosi afika, alwa;
amakhosi aseKhenani alwa
eThahanakhi ngasemachibini
aseMegido,
kodwa kawazathwala isiliva,
lampango.

²⁰ Izinkanyezi zalwa zisemazulwini,
zalwa loSisera zisezindleleni
zazo.

²¹ Umfula uKhishoni wabakhukhula,
umfula wendulo, umfula
uKhishoni.

Phambili, mphefumulo wami;
Qina!

²² Kwaduma amasondo amabhiza –
ematha, ematha ehamba amabhiza
akhe alamandla.

²³ ‘Iqalekiseni iMerozi,’ kwatsho
ingilosu kaJehova,
‘Baqalekiseni kabuhlungu abantu
bayo,
ngoba kabezanga ukuncedisa
uJehova, ukuzasiza uJehova
emelane labalamandla.’

²⁴ “Kabe ngobusiswe kakhulu
kwabesifazana uJayeli,
umkaHebheri umKheni,
obusiswe kakhulu kwabesifazana
abahlala emathenteni.

²⁵ Wacela amanzi, yena wamnika
uchago,
wamlethela amasi ngomganu
ofanele abahlonitshwa.

²⁶ Wathatha isikhonkwane sethente
ngesandla sakhe,
isandla sakhe sokudla sathatha
isando somkhandi.

Watshaya uSisera, wachoboza
ikhanda lakhe, waphahaza
wabhoboza inhlafuno yakhe.

²⁷ Wawohlokela ezinyaweni zakhe,
wawa; wabhazalala khonapho.
Wawohlokela ezinyaweni zakhe
wawa; lapho awohlokela khona,
wawela khonapho esefile.

²⁸ “UnakaSisera walunguza ngewindi;
ngemuva kwewindi wanqolonga
wathi, ‘Kungani inqola yakhe
yempi iphuze kangaka ukufika?’

Kungani ukugodlozela kwezinqola
zakhe zempi kuphuzile?’

²⁹ Ohlakaniphe kakhulu
kumakhosazana akhe
wamphendula; impela yena uhlezi
ezitshela esithi,

³⁰ ‘Kanti kabafumani mpango
bayabelane na;
intombazana loba amabili indoda
nganye, izigqoko ezimibalabala
eziyimpango kaSisera,
izigqoko ezimibalabala
ezicecisiweyo, izigqoko eziceciswe
kakhulu zentamo yami –
konke lokhu kuyimpango?’

³¹ “Ngakho sengathi zingabhubha
zonke
izitha zakho,
O Jehova!

Kodwa sengathi labo
abakuthandayo
bangaba njengelanga lapho
liphuma ngamandla alo.”

Kwasekusiba lokuthula elizweni
iminyaka engamatshumi amane.

UGidiyoni

6 Abako-Israyeli benza okubi futhi emehlweni kaJehova, wabanikela ezandleni zamaMidiyani iminyaka eyisikhombisa. ²Ngenxa yokuthi umbuso wamaMidiyani wawucindezela kakhulu, abako-Israyeli bazakhela amadumba ezingoxweni zezintaba, lasezimbawini kanye lasezinqabeni. ³Kwakusithi abako-Israyeli bangalima izilimo zabo, amaMidiyani lama-Amaleki kanye labanye abantu basempumalanga bahlasele ilizwe labo. ⁴Bahlala elizweni bachitha izilimo ummango wonke kusiya eGaza kabaze bamtshiyela lutho oluphilayo u-Israyeli, loba izimvu kumbe izinkomo loba obabhemi. ⁵Beza lezifuyo zabo lamathente abo benjengemitshitshi yezithethe ngobunengi. Kwakungenzeki ukubala abantu lamakamela abo; bahlasela ilizwe balichithiza. ⁶AmaMidiyani abaphundla kangaka abako-Israyeli baze bakhala kuJehova ukuba abasize.

⁷Kwathi abako-Israyeli sebekhalile kuJehova ngenxa yamaMidiyani, ⁸wabathumela umphrofethi, owathi, “Nanku okutshiwo nguJehova, uNkulunkulu ka-Israyeli: Ngalikhupha eGibhithe, ngalikhupha elizweni lobugqili. ⁹Ngalhluthuna emandleni eGibhithe lasezandleni zabacindezeli benu bonke. Ngabaxotsha phambi kwenu ngalipha ilizwe labo. ¹⁰Ngathi kini, ‘Mina nginguJehova uNkulunkulu wenu, lingabakhonzi onkulunkulu bama-

Amori, elihlala elizweni lawo.’ Kodwa kalingilalelanga.”

¹¹Ingilosi kaJehova yafika yahlala ngaphansi kwesihlahla som-okhi e-Ofira esasingesikaJowashi um-Abhiyezeri lapho indodana yakhe uGidiyoni eyayibhula khona amabele esikhamelweni sewayini ukuze iwafihlele amaMidiyani. ¹²Ingilosi kaJehova isibonakele kuGidiyoni yathi kuye, “UJehova ulawe, butho elilamandla.”

¹³UGidiyoni waphendula wathi, “Kodwa nkosi, nxa uJehova elathi, pho kungani konke lokhu kwenzakele kithi? Zingaphi izimanga zakhe zonke obaba abasitshela ngazo besithi, ‘Kanje uJehova kasikhuphanga eGibhithe na? Kodwa khathesi uJehova usesidelile wasibeka ezandleni zamaMidiyani.” ¹⁴UJehova waphendukela kuye wathi, “Hamba ngamandla olawo uhlenge u-Israyeli ezandleni zamaMidiyani. Kanti kangikuthumi na?”

¹⁵UGidiyoni wabuza wathi, “Kodwa Jehova, u-Israyeli ngingamhlenga kanjani na? Usendo lwakwethu kalulamandla koManase, njalo mina ngingomncinyane emulini yakwethu.”

¹⁶UJehova waphendula wathi, “Ngizakuba lawe, njalo amaMidiyani uzawacakazela phansi wonke ndawonye.”

¹⁷UGidiyoni waphendula wathi, “Uma khathesi sengithole umusa emehlweni akho, nginika isibonakaliso sokuthi impela nguwe sibili okhuluma lami.

¹⁸Ngiyakucela ukuba ungahambi ngize ngiphenduke ngilethe umnikelo wami ngiwubeke phambi kwakho.” UJehova wathi, “Ngizahlala uze uphenduke.”

¹⁹UGidiyoni wangena phakathi wahlaba izinyane lembuzi, wasesenza isinkwa esingelamvubelo ngehefa yefulawa. Esebeke inyama esitsheni lomhluzi wayo embizeni, waphuma

lakho wayakunikela kuye ngaphansi kom-okhi.

²⁰ Ingilosi kaNkulunkulu yathi kuye, “Thatha inyama lesinkwa esingelamvubelo ukubeke phezu kwedwala leli, uthole umhluzi.”

UGidiyoni wenzanjalo. ²¹ Ngesihloko somqwayi eyayiwuphethe ingilosi kaJehova yathinta inyama lesinkwa esingelamvubelo. Umlilo walavuka edwaleni watshisa inyama lesinkwa. Ingilosi kaJehova yasinyamalala.

²² Kwathi uGidiyoni esenanzelele ukuthi kwakuyingilosi kaJehova, wamemeza wathi, “A, Jehova Wobukhosi! Ngibone ingilosi kaJehova ubuso ngobuso!”

²³ Kodwa uJehova wathi kuye, “Ukuthula! Ungesabi. Kawuyikufa.”

²⁴ Ngakho uGidiyoni wakhela uJehova i-alithare khonapho walibiza ngokuthi uJehova uyiKuthula. Kuze kube lamhla likhona e-Ofira lama-Abhiyezeri.

²⁵ Ngabonalobobusuku uJehova wathi kuye, “Thatha inkunzi yesibili emhlambini kayihlo, le eleminyaka eyisikhombisa ubudala. Diliza i-alithare likayihlo alakhela uBhali, ugamule lezinsika zika-Ashera eziphansi kwalo.

²⁶ Emva kwalokho yakhela uJehova uNkulunkulu wakho i-alithare lohlobo oluyilo engqongeni yalumqolo. Nikela inkunzi yesibili njengomnikelo wokutshiswa usebenzisa izinkuni zensika zika-Ashera ozigamuleyo.”

²⁷ Ngakho uGidiyoni wathatha izinceku zakhe ezilitshumi wenza njengokutshelwa kwakhe nguJehova. Kodwa ngenxa yokuthi wayesesaba abemuli yakwabo labantu basedolobheni, wakwenza ebusuku kulokuba kube semini.

²⁸ Ekuseni kwathi abantu bedolobho lelo bevuka babona i-alithare likaBhali lidiliziwe, lezinsika zika-Ashera emaceleni alo ziganyulwe lenkunzi yesibili inikelwe phezu kwe-alithare

elalisanda kwakhiwa!

²⁹ Babuzana besithi, “Ngubani owenze lokhu?” Kwathi sebebuzisise kakuhle babatshela ukuthi, “Kwenziwe nguGidiyoni indodana kaJowashi.”

³⁰ Abantu bakulelodobho bathonisa kuJowashi bathi, “Ikhuphe indodana yakho. Kumele ife, ngoba idilize i-alithare likaBhali yagamula lezinsika zika-Ashera emaceleni alo.”

³¹ Kodwa uJowashi waphendula ixuku lelo elalifuthelene limhanqile wathi, “Lizakhulumela uBhali na? Lizama ukumhlenga na? Loba ngubani omlwelayo uzabulawa ekuseni! Nxa uBhali engukulunkulu sibili, angazivikela uma umuntu ediliza i-alithare lakhe.” ³² Ngakho ngalelolanga uGidiyoni bambiza ngokuthi “Jerubhi-Bhali,” besithi, “UBhali kalwe laye,” ngoba wadiliza i-alithare likaBhali.

³³ Ngalesosikhathi wonke amaMidiyani, lama-Amaleki kanye labanye abantu basempumalanga bamanyana bachapha iJodani, bamisa eSigodini saseJezereli. ³⁴ Umoya kaJehova wafika kuGidiyoni, wasetshaya icilongo emema ama-Abhiyezeri ukuba amlandele.

³⁵ Wathuma izithunywa kulo lonke elakoManase, ebatshela ukuba bahlome, lako-Asheri, koZebhuluni kanye lakoNafthali, ukuze labo bayebahlangabeza.

³⁶ UGidiyoni wathi kuNkulunkulu, “Uma uzasindisa u-Israyeli ngesandla sami njengoba uthembisile – ³⁷ khangela ngizabeka uboya bewulu esizeni. Kungaba lamazolo eboyeni bewulu kuphela iphansi lonke lomile, ngizakwazi ukuthi uzamsindisa u-Israyeli ngesandla sami njengoba utshilo.” ³⁸ Lokho yikho okwenzakalayo. Ngakusisa uGidiyoni wavuka ekuseni wakhama uboya wahluza amazolo – umganu wagcwala amanzi.

³⁹UGidiyoni wasesithi kuNkulunkulu, “Ungangzondeli. Ngivumela ngenze esinye isicelo esisodwa. Ngivumela ukuhlola kanye futhi ngoboya. Khathesi yomisa uboya kuthi iphansi ligcwale amazolo.” ⁴⁰Ngalobobusuku uNkulunkulu wenzanjalo. Uboya kuphela yibo obabomile; iphansi lonke ligcwele amazolo.

UGidiyoni Wehlula amaMidiyani

7 Ekuseni kakhulu uJerubhi-Bhali (lowo nguGidiyoni) labantu bakhe bonke bamisa emthonjeni waseHerodi. Izihonqo zamaMidiyani zazingasenyakatho kwabo esigodini eduzane lentaba yaseMore. ²UJehova wathi kuGidiyoni, “Abantu olabo banengi kakhulu ukuba nginikele amaMidiyani ezandleni zabo. Ukuze u-Israyeli angazincomi kimi esithi amandla akhe amsindisile, ³memezela ebantwini khathesi nje uthi, ‘Loba ngubani othuthumelayo ngenxa yokwesaba angaphenduka asuke eNtabeni iGileyadi.’ ” Ngakho abantu abayizinkulungwane ezingamatshumi amabili lambili basuka, kwathi abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi basala.

⁴Kodwa uJehova wathi kuGidiyoni, “Abantu balokhu bebanengi kakhulu. Behlisele emanzini, ngizakwahlukanisela bona khonale. Ngingathi, ‘Lo uzakamba lawe,’ uzakamba; kodwa ngingathi, ‘Lo kazukuhamba lawe;’ akayikuhamba.”

⁵Ngakho uGidiyoni wabathatha abantu wabasa ngasemanzini. Khonapho uJehova wathi kuGidiyoni, “Yehlukanisa labo abaxhapha amanzi ngolimi lwabo njengenja kulabo abaguqa phansi ukuba banathe.” ⁶Abantu abangamakhulu amathathu bakhaphazela amanzi emilonyeni yabo ngezandla zabo. Abanye bonke baguqa phansi ngamadolo

abo ukuba banathe.

⁷UJehova wasesithi kuGidiyoni, “Ngabantu abangamakhulu amathathu abaxhaphileyo ngizakusindisa nginikele amaMidiyani ezandleni zakho. Abanye bonke abantu badedele bahambe, lowo lalowo endaweni yakhe.” ⁸Ngakho uGidiyoni wabuyisela inengi lama-Israyeli emathenteni abo wasala labangamakhulu amathathu, abayibo abathatha ukudla lamacilongo alabo abanye.

Izihonqo zamaMidiyani zazingaphansi kwakhe esigodini. ⁹Ngalobobusuku uJehova wathi kuGidiyoni, “Vuka, yehla uyehlasela izihonqo ngoba ngizazinikela ezandleni zakho. ¹⁰Nxa usesaba ukuhlasela, yehlela ezihonqweni lenceku yakho uPhura ¹¹ulalele abakutshoyo. Emva kwalokho uzakuba lesibindi sokuhlasela izihonqo.” Ngakho yena loPhura inceku yakhe behlela emaphethelweni ezihonqo. ¹²AmaMidiyani lama-Amaleki kanye labanye bonke abantu basempumalanga babemise esigodini, bebanengi njengethete. Amakamela abo ayengeke abalwe njengetshebetshebe ekhunjini lolwandle.

¹³UGidiyoni wafika omunye umuntu esatshela umngane wakhe iphupho lakhe. Wathi, “Ngiphuphe iphupho. Isinkwa samabele esiyimbulunga size sigiqikela ezihonqweni zamaMidiyani. Sitshaye ithente ngamandla amakhulu ithente lagenquka lawohlaka.”

¹⁴Umngane wakhe waphendula wathi, “Lokhu akungeke kube ngolunye ulutho ngaphandle kwenkemba kaGidiyoni indodana kaJowashi, um-Israyeli. UNkulunkulu usenikele amaMidiyani lezihonqo zonke ezandleni zakhe.”

¹⁵Kwathi uGidiyoni esezwe iphupho lelo lencazelo yalo, wakhonza uNkulunkulu. Wabuyela ezihonqweni zako-Israyeli wamemeza esithi,

“Vukani! UJehova usenikele izihonqo zamaMidiyani ezandleni zenu!”

¹⁶ Eshlukanise abantu abangamakhulu amathathu baba ngamaviyo amathathu, bonke wabanika amacilongo lembizanyana ezingelalutho, zilezibane phakathi.

¹⁷ Wathi kubo, “Ngikhangelani. Lingilandele. Lapho sengifike emaphethelweni ezihonqo, yenzani njengoba ngisenza. ¹⁸ Nxa mina labo bonke abalami sesitshaya amacilongo ethu, lina ezindaweni zonke zezihonqo khalisani awenu limemeze lithi, ‘NgekaJehova lekaGidiyoni.’ ”

¹⁹ UGidiyoni lamadoda alikhulu ayelaye bafika emaphethelweni ezihonqo ekuqaliseni komlindo waphakathi, besanda kuntshintsha abalindi. Bakhalisa amacilongo abo babulala lezimbizanyana ababeziphethe. ²⁰ Amaviyo amathathu akhalisa amacilongo abulala izimbizanyana. Bepethe izibane ngezandla zabo zenxele, ezandleni zokudla bephethe amacilongo ababezawakhalisa, bamemeza bathi, “Inkemba kaJehova lekaGidiyoni!” ²¹ Kwathi umuntu ngamunye emi endaweni yakhe behanqe izihonqo, amaMidiyani wonke agijima, ehlabi umkhosi ebaleka.

²² Kwathi amacilongo angamakhulu amathathu esekhala, uJehova wenza ukuthi abantu ababesezindaweni zonke ezihonqweni bahlaselane ngezinkemba zabo. Ibutho labalekela eBhethi Shitha ngokuya eZerera kusiyafika emngceleni we-Abheli Melola eduzane leThabathi. ²³ Abako-Israyeli labakoNaftali, labako-Asheri labo bonke abakoManase babizwa, baxotshana lamaMidiyani. ²⁴ UGidiyoni wathuma izithunywa kulo lonke ilizwe lamaqaqa elako-Efrayimi, esithi, “Yehlani lihlosele amaMidiyani lithumbe iziziba zaseJodani ngaphambi kwawo kusiyafika eBhethi Bhara.”

Ngakho bonke abantu bako-Efrayimi babizwa bazithumba iziziba zaseJodani kusiyafika eBhethi Bhara. ²⁵ Bathumba labakhokheli bamaMidiyani ababili, u-Orebhi loZebhi. U-Orebhi bambulalela edwaleni lika-Orebhi, uZebhi esikhamelweni sewayini sikaZebhi. Baxotshana lamaMidiyani, amakhanda abo-Orebhi loZebhi bawasa kuGidiyoni owayengaseJodani.

UZebha loZalimuna

8 Abako-Efrayimi babuza uGidiyoni bathi, “Kungani usiphathe kanje na? Kungani ungasibizanga lapho ususiyakulwa lamaMidiyani?” Bamsola kakhulu. ² Kodwa yena wabaphendula wathi, “Kuyini mina engikufezileyo okulingana lokwenu na? Amagirebisi ako-Efrayimi aseleyo ekuvuneni kawangcono kulamagirebisi esivuno esipheleleyo sako-Abhiyezeri na? ³ UNkulunkulu unikele u-Orebhi loZebhi, abakhokheli bamaMidiyani, ezandleni zenu. Kuyini lokho engikwenzileyo lapho ngiqathaniswa lani?” Ngalokhu ukuthukuthela kwabo kwadeda.

⁴ UGidiyoni labantu bakhe abangamakhulu amathathu, sebediniwe kodwa belokhu bexotshana lawo, bafika eJodani bayichapha. ⁵ Wasesithi ebantwini baseSukhothi, “Phanini amabutho ami izinkwa; akhathele, njalo ngisaxotshana loZebha kanye loZalimuna, amakhosi aseMidiyani.”

⁶ Kodwa izikhulu zaseSukhothi zathi, “Usulazo kuwe yini izandla zikaZebha loZalimuna na? Kungani amabutho akho kumele siwanike izinkwa na?”

⁷ UGidiyoni waphedula wathi, “Ngenxa yalokho, lapho uJehova esenikele uZebha loZalimuna esandleni sami, ngizaklaya imizimba yenu ngameva asenkangala.”

⁸ Esuka lapho waya ePheniyeli, wenza isicelo esifanayo kubo, kodwa baphendula njengabantu beSukhothi.

⁹ Ngakho wathi ebantwini basePheniyeli, “Ekuphendukeni kwami senginqobile, ngizawudiliza umphotshongo lo.”

¹⁰ Ngalesosikhathi uZebha loZalimuna babeseKhakhori lebutu labantu ababephosa babe yizinkulungwane ezilitshumi lanhlanu, bonke ababesele abamabutho abantu basempumalanga; izinkulungwane ezilikhulu lamatshumi amabili zababesilwa ngenkamba zazifile. ¹¹ UGidiyoni wahamba ngendlela yemihambima empumalanga kweNobha leJogibheha wathleka phezu kwebutho elalilibe. ¹² UZebha loZalimuna, amakhosi amabili aseMidiyani, babaleka, kodwa waxotshana labo wabathumba, walichitha lonke ibutho labo.

¹³ Emva kwalokho uGidiyoni indodana kaJowashi wabuyela evela empini ngoKhalo lwaseHeresi. ¹⁴ Wabamba ijaha laseSukhothi walibuzabuza, ijaha lelo lamlobela amabizo ezikhulu zaseSukhothi ezingamatshumi ayisikhombisa, abadala bomuzi.

¹⁵ UGidiyoni wafika wathi ebantwini baseSukhothi, “Nangu uZebha loZalimuna elalingichothoza ngabo lisithi, ‘Uzulazo kuwe yini izandla zikaZebha loZalimuna? Kungani amabutho akho akhathelayo kumele siwanike izinkwa na?’” ¹⁶ Wathatha abadala bomuzi wasefundisa amadoda aseSukhothi isifundo ngokubajezisa ngameva asenkangala. ¹⁷ Wadiliza lomphotshongo wasePheniyeli wabulala amadoda alowomuzi.

¹⁸ Wabuza uZebha loZalimuna wathi, “Ngabantu abanjani labo elababulalayo eThabhothi?”

Baphendula bathi, “Ngabantu abanjengawe, lowo lalowo efana lenkosana.”

¹⁹ UGidiyoni waphendula wathi, “Labobantu babengabafowethu, amadodana kamama. Ngeqiniso elinjengoba uJehova ekhona, aluba labayekela bephila, kade ngingayikulibulala.” ²⁰ Esephendukele kuJetheri, indodana yakhe endala, wathi, “Babulale!” Kodwa uJetheri kayihwatshanga inkemba yakhe, ngoba wayengumfanyana esesaba.

²¹ UZebha loZalimuna bathi, “Woza, usibulale wena ngokwakho. ‘Njengoba indoda injalo, anjalo lamandla ayo.’” Ngakho uGidiyoni wasondela phambili wababulala, wasethatha imicciso ezintanyeni zamakamela abo.

Isithombe sikaGidiyoni

²² Abako-Israyeli bathi kuGidiyoni, “Sibuse – wena, lendodana yakho kanye lendodana yendodana yakho – ngoba usisindisile ezandleni zamaMidiyani.”

²³ Kodwa uGidiyoni wathi kubo, “Mina kangiyikulibusa, lendodana yami kayiyikulibusa. UJehova uzalibusa.”

²⁴ Wabuya wathi, “Ngilesicelo esisdwa, ukuthi omunye lomunye wenu angiphe icici esabelweni sempango yenu.” (Ukufaka amacici egolide kungumkhuba wama-Ishimayeli.)

²⁵ Baphendula bathi, “Sizathaba ukukunika wona.” Ngakho bendlala ingubo, kwathi umuntu ngamunye waphosela kuyo icici lempango yakhe. ²⁶ Isisindo samacici egolide ayewacelile saba ngamashekeli angamakhulu alitshumi lesikhombisa, kungabalwa izigqizo lemigaxo lezambatho ezilubende ezigqokwa ngamakhosi aseMidiyani loba amaketane ayesezintanjeni zamakamela awo.

²⁷ UGidiyoni wenza isithombe ngegolide lelo, wasibeka e-Ofira, umuzi wakibo. Bonke abako-Israyeli bazingcolisa ngokusikhonza khonapho, njalo saba ngumjibila kuGidiyoni labendlu yakhe.

Ukufa kukaGidiyoni

²⁸IMidiyani yanqotshwa kanjalo ngabako-Israyeli njalo kayizange ivuse ikhanda futhi. Ngezinsuku zokuphila kukaGidiyoni ilizwe laba lokuthula iminyaka engamatshumi amane.

²⁹UJerubhi-Bhali indodana kaJowashi wabuyela ekhaya ukuyahlala khona.

³⁰Wayelamadodana angamatshumi ayisikhombisa angawakhe ngoba wayelabafazi abanengi. ³¹Umfazi wakhe weceleni, owayehlala eShekemu, laye wamzalela indodana ayithi ngu-Abhimelekhi. ³²UGidiyoni indodana kaJowashi wafa eseluphele kakhulu wangcwatshwa ethuneni likayise uJowashi e-Ofira yama-Abhizeri.

³³Masinyane nje uGidiyoni esanda kufa ama-Israyeli azingcolisa njalo ngokukhonza oBhali. Bamisa uBhali Bherithi njengonkulunkulu wabo ³⁴kabaze bamkhumbula uJehova uNkulunkulu wabo owayebahlenge ezandleni zezitha zonke ezinhlangothini zonke. ³⁵Njalo kababanga lomusa kwabendlu ka-Jerubhi-Bhali (uGidiyoni) mayelana lezinto zonke ezinhle ayebenzele zona.

U-Abhimelekhi

9 U-Abhimelekhi indodana kaJerubhi-Bhali waya kubanewabo bakanina eShekemu lakubo bonke abosendo lukanina wathi kubo, ²“Buzani bonke abantu baseShekemu ukuthi, ‘Yikuphi okungcono kini: ukubuswa yiwo wonke amadodana kaJerubhi-Bhali angamatshumi ayisikhombisa, loba umuntu oyedwa?’ Likhumbule ukuthi mina ngingumzimba legazi lenu.”

³Kwathi abanewabo bakanina sebekutshilo konke lokhu ebantwini baseShekemu, bafuna ukumlandela u-Abhimelekhi, ngoba bathi,

“Ungumfowethu.” ⁴Bamnika amashekeli esiliva angamatshumi ayisikhombisa, athathwa ethempelini likaBhali-Bherithi, u-Abhimeleki aqatsha ngawo izigebenga ezingakhathaliyo, ezaba ngabalandeli bakhe. ⁵Waya emzini kayise e-Ofira kwathi abafowabo abangamatshumi ayisikhombisa, amadodana kaJerubhi-Bhali, wababulalela phezu kwedwala linye. Kodwa uJothamu, indodana encane kaJerubhi-Bhali waphepha ngokucatsha. ⁶Emva kwalokho bonke abantu baseShekemu labeBhethi Milo babuthana ngaphansi kwesihlahla esikhulu ensikeni eShekemu ukuba u-Abhimelekhi bamethese ubukhosi.

⁷Kwathi uJothamu esetshelwe lokhu wakhwela waya engqongweni yeNtaba iGerizimi wanqolonga esithi kubo, “Ngilaleleni, bantu baseShekemu, ukuze uNkulunkulu alilalele. ⁸Ngelinye ilanga izihlahla zasuka zayazibekela inkosi yazo. Zathi esihlahleni se-oliva, ‘Woba yinkosi yethu.’

⁹“Kodwa isihlahla se-oliva saphendula sathi, ‘Kambe ngingadela amafutha ami, okudunyiswa ngawo onkulunkulu labantu, ukuba ngibuse izihlahla na?’

¹⁰“Izihlahla zasezisithi esihlahleni somkhiwa, ‘Woza ube yinkosi yethu.’

¹¹“Kodwa isihlahla somkhiwa saphendula sathi, ‘Kambe ngingadela izithelo zami ezinhle kangaka njalo zimmnandi, ukuba ngibuse izihlahla na?’

¹²“Lapho-ke izihlahla zathi esihlahleni sevini, ‘Woza ube yinkosi yethu.’

¹³“Kodwa isihlahla sevini saphendula sathi, ‘Kambe ngingadela iwayini lami elithokozisa onkulunkulu labantu, ukuba ngibuse izihlahla na?’

¹⁴“Ekucineni zonke izihlahla zathi esihlahleni sameva, ‘Woza ube yinkosi yethu.’

¹⁵“Isihlahla sameva sathi ezihlahleni, ‘Nxa lifuna ngempela ukuthi lingigcobe

ukuba ngibe yinkosi yenu, wozanicatsha emthunzini wami, kodwa uma kungenjalo, akuphume umlilo esihlahleni sameva uqothule imisedari yaseLebhanoni!’

¹⁶“Uma lenze okubongekayo njalo ngobuqotho ekubekeni kwenu u-Abhimelekhi ukuba abe yinkosi, njalo uma lenze okulungileyo kuJerubhi-Bhali labendlu yakhe, njalo uma limphathe ngendlela emfaneleyo – ¹⁷ngoba ubaba walilwela, wabeka impilo yakhe engozini ukuba alihlenge ezandleni zamaMidiyani ¹⁸(kodwa lamhla selivukele abendlu kababa, kwathi amadodana akhe angamatshumi ayisikhombisa lawabulalela phezu kwedwala linye, kwathi u-Abhimelekhi, indodana yesigqilikazi sakhe, lamenza waba yinkosi yabantu baseShekemu ngoba engumfowenu) – ¹⁹ngakho uma lenze njalo ngobuqotho kuJerubhi-Bhali labendlu yakhe lamhla, thokozani ngo-Abhimelekhi, kube njalo laye ngani futhi! ²⁰Kodwa uma lingenzanga njalo, akuphume umlilo ku-Abhimelekhi uliqothule, bantu baseShekemu labaseBhethi Milo, njalo kuphume umlilo kini bantu baseShekemu labaseBhethi Milo, uqothule u-Abhimelekhi!”

²¹Emva kwalokhu uJothamu wabaleka, waya eBheri, wahlala khona ngoba wayesesaba umfowabo u-Abhimelekhi.

²²Kwathi u-Abhimelekhi esebuse elako-Israyeli iminyaka emithathu ²³uNkulunkulu wathumela umoya omubi phakathi kuka-Abhimelekhi labantu baseShekemu bamhlamukela u-Abhimelekhi. ²⁴UNkulunkulu wenza lokhu ukuze ububi obenziwa emadodaneni kaJerubhi-Bhali angamatshumi ayisikhombisa, ukuchithwa kwegazi lawo, buphindiselwe kumfowabo

u-Abhimelekhi lasebantwini baseShekemu, ababemsizile ekubulaleni kwakhe abafowabo. ²⁵Ekumelaneni kwabo laye abantu baseShekemu laba babeka abantu ezingqongeni zezintaba ukuba bachathamele bonke abadlula lapho babaphange, njalo lokhu kwabikwa ku-Abhimelekhi.

²⁶UGali indodana ka-Ebhedi wathuthela eShekemu labafowabo, njalo abantu bakhona bamethemba. ²⁷Kwathi sebeye emasimini babutha amagirebisi bawagxoba, baba ledili ethempelini likankulunkulu wabo. Kwathi besidla njalo benatha, bamthuka u-Abhimelekhi. ²⁸Lapho-ke uGali indodana ka-Ebhedi, wathi, “Ungubani u-Abhimelekhi, loShekemu ungubani, ukuba asibuse na? Akasindodana kaJerubhi-Bhali yini, njalo uZebhuli kasumsekeli wakhe na? Khonzani abantu baseHamori, yise kaShekemu! Kungani kumele sikhonze u-Abhimelekhi na? ²⁹Sengathi ngabe abantu laba balawulwa yimi! Kade ngizamsusa. Kade ngizakuthi ku-Abhimelekhi, ‘Libize lonke ibutho lakho.’”

³⁰Kwathi uZebhuli umbusi wedolobho esizwa okwatshiwo nguGali indodana ka-Ebhedi, wathukuthela kakhulu.

³¹Wathuma izithunywa ngasese ku-Abhimelekhi, esithi, “UGali indodana ka-Ebhedi kanye labafowabo sebeze eShekemu njalo badunga idolobho ukuba likuvukele. ³²Ngakho wena labantu bakho kumele lize phakathi kobusuku limcathamele egangeni. ³³Ekuseni ekuphumeni kwelanga, sondelani ukuba lilihlasele idolobho. Lapho uGali labantu bakhe bephuma ukuba balihlasele, yenzani loba kuyini isandla senu esanelisa ukukwenza.”

³⁴Ngakho-ke u-Abhimeleki lamabutho akhe wonke basuka ebusuku bacathama ezindaweni ezifihlakeleyo eduze

leShekemu bengamaviyo amane.

³⁵UGali indodana kaEbhedi wayephumile emi ekungeneni kwesango ledolobho kwathi u-Abhimelekhi lamabutho akhe baphuma lapho ababecatshe khona.

³⁶Kwathi uGali ebona wathi kuZebhuli, “Khangela nampayana abantu bayehla besuka ezingqongeni zezintaba!” UZebhuli waphendula wathi, “Ubona amathunzi ezintaba kube angathi ngabantu.”

³⁷Kodwa uGali wakhuluma futhi wathi, “Khangela, nampayana abantu bayehla besuka phakathi kwelizwe, njalo leviyo lamabutho liyeza livelela ngokuya esihlahleni sezangoma.”

³⁸UZebhuli wasesithi kuye, “Kungaphi ukukloloda kwakho manje, wena owathi, ‘Ungubani u-Abhimelakhi ukuba asibuse na?’ Laba kabasibo yini abantu owawubahleka? Phuma uyekulwa labo!”

³⁹Ngakho uGali waphuma labantu baseShekemu walwa lo-Abhimelekhi. ⁴⁰U-Abhimelekhi wamxotsha, kwathi abanengi bafa belimele ekubalekeni – ibanga lonke kusiya ekungeneni kwesango. ⁴¹U-Abhimelekhi wahlala e-Aruma, kwathi uZebhuli wamdudula uGali labafowabo eShekemu.

⁴²Ngelanga elalandelayo abantu baseShekemu basuka baya egangeni, njalo lokhu kwabikwa ku-Abhimelekhi.

⁴³Ngakho wathatha abantu bakhe, wabehlukanisa baba ngamaviyo amathathu wathi kabacathanyelwe egangeni. Kwathi ebona abantu bephuma edolobheni wavuka ukuba abahlasele. ⁴⁴U-Abhimelekhi lamaviyo ayelaye bagijimela phambili endaweni esekungeneni kwesango ledolobho. Amaviyo amabili agijimela kulabo ababesegangeni ababulala. ⁴⁵Ngalo lonke lolosuku u-Abhimelekhi waqinisa ukulihlasela kwakhe idolobho lelo waze

walithumba wabulala labantu balo. Idolobho walidiliza wasehaza itshwayi phezu kwalo.

⁴⁶Besizwa lokhu, abantu abasemphotshongweni weShekemu bayangena enqabeni yethempheleli lase-Eli-Bherithi. ⁴⁷Kwathi u-Abhimelekhi esizwa ukuthi basebebuthene lapho, ⁴⁸yena labantu bakhe bakhwela intaba iZalimoni. Wathatha ihloka wagamula amahlahla, wawetshatha emahlombe akhe. Walaya abantu ababelaye wathi, “Phangisani! Yenzani lokhu elibone ngikwenza!” ⁴⁹Ngakho abantu bagamula amahlahla bamlandela u-Abhimelekhi. Bawabuthelela enqabeni leyo bayithungela ngomlilo abantu bephakathi. Ngakho bonke abantu ababephakathi komphotshongo waseShekemu, amadoda labesifazana ababengaba yinkulungwane bafa.

⁵⁰Emva kwalokho u-Abhimelekhi waya eThebezi wayivimbezela wayithumba. ⁵¹Kodwa phakathi kwedolobho lelo kwakulomphotshongo oqinileyo lapho wonke amadoda labesifazana – abantu bakulelodalobho – ababebalekele khona. Bazikhiyela phakathi bakhwela phezu kophahla lomphotshongo. ⁵²U-Abhimelekhi waya emphotshongweni lowo wawuhlasela. Kodwa wathi esebanga emnyango womphotshongo ukuba awuthungele ngomlilo, ⁵³owesifazana othile wawisela imbokodo phezu kwekhanda lakhe yadabula ukhakhayi lwakhe.

⁵⁴Waphanga wabiza umthwali wezikhali zakhe wathi, “Hwatsha inkemba yakho ungibulale, ukuze bangathi, ‘Wabulawa ngowesifazana.’ ” Ngakho inceku yakhe yamgwaza, wafa. ⁵⁵Kwathi abako-Israyeli bebona ukuthi u-Abhimelekhi wayesefile, babuyela ekhaya.

⁵⁶UNKulunkulu wabuphindisela kanje ububi u-Abhimelekhi ayebenze kuyise

ngokubulala abafowabo
 abangamatshumi ayisikhombisa.
⁵⁷ UNkulunkulu wenza ukuthi labantu
 baseShekemu babuhlawulele ububi
 babo. Isiqalekiso sikaJothamu indodana
 kaJerubhi-Bhali sehlela phezu kwabo.

UThola

10 Ngemva kwezinsuku zika-

Abhimelekhi kwavela umuntu wako-
 Isakhari, uThola indodana kaPhuwa,
 indodana kaDodo ukuba ahlenge
 u-Israyeli. Wayehlala eShamiri,
 elizweni lezintaba elako-Efrayimi.
² Wakhokhela u-Israyeli iminyaka
 engamatshumi amabili lantathu;
 wasesifa, wangewatshwa eShamiri.

UJayiri

³ Walandelwa nguJayiri
 owaseGileyadi, owakhokhela u-Israyeli
 iminyaka engamatshumi amabili lambili.
⁴ Wayelamadodana angamatshumi
 amathathu, ayegada obabhemi
 abangamatshumi amathathu. Ayephethe
 amadolobho angamatshumi amathathu
 eGileyadi, lalamhlanje abizwa ngokuthi
 Havothi Jayiri. ⁵ Ekufeni kwakhe uJayiri
 wangewatshwa eKhamoni.

UJefitha

⁶ Abako-Israyeli benza okubi futhi
 emehlweni kaJehova. Bakhonza oBhali
 labo-Ashithorethi, labonkulunkulu base-
 Aramu, labonkulunkulu baseSidoni,
 labonkulunkulu baseMowabi,
 labonkulunkulu bama-Amoni, kanye
 labonkulunkulu bamaFilisti. Ngenxa
 yokuthi abako-Israyeli bamdela uJehova
 kabaze babe besamkhonza,
⁷ wabathukuthelela kakhulu. Wabanikela
 ezandleni zamaFilisti lama-Amoni,
⁸ okwathi ngalowomnyaka abachitha
 abanqoba. Acindizela abako-Israyeli

bonke iminyaka elitshumi lesificamibili
 ngasempumalanga kweJodani eGileyadi,
 ilizwe lama-Amori. ⁹ Ama-Amori futhi
 achapha iJodani ukuba alwe loJuda,
 loBhenjamini kanye lendlu ka-Efrayimi;
 u-Israyeli wayephakathi kohlupho
 olukhulu. ¹⁰ Lapho-ke abako-Israyeli
 bakhala kuJehova bathi, “Senze isono
 kuwe, sadela uNkulunkulu wethu
 sakhonza oBhali.”

¹¹ UJehova waphendula wathi, “Lapho
 amaGibhithe, lama-Amori, lama-Amoni,
 lamaFilisti, ¹² lamaSidoni, lama-Amaleki
 kanye lamaMowani ayelicindezela
 lakhulekela usizo kimi, kanje
 kangilihlenganga ezandleni zawo na?
¹³ Kodwa selingidelile lakhonza abanye
 onkulunkulu, ngakho ngisayikulisindisa.
¹⁴ Hambani liyekhala kubonkulunkulu
 elibathembileyo. Kabalisindise nxa
 seliphakathi kokuhlupheka!”

¹⁵ Kodwa abako-Israyeli bathi
 kuJehova, “Senze isono. Yenza kithi
 lokho okubona kulungile kuwe, kodwa
 ake usihlenge khathesi nje.” ¹⁶ Ngakho
 basusa onkulunkulu bezizweni phakathi
 kwabo bakhonza uJehova. Wayengeke
 alumele futhi usizi luka-Israyeli.

¹⁷ Kwathi ama-Amoni esebizelwe
 empini njalo emise eGileyadi, ama-
 Israyeli abuthana amisa eMizipha.
¹⁸ Abakhokheli babantu baseGileyadi
 bathi omunye komunye, “Lowo
 ozaqalisa ukuhlasela ama-Amoni
 uzakuba yinduna yabo bonke abahlala
 eGileyadi.”

11 UJefitha umGileyadi

wayelibutho elilamandla. Uyise
 wayenguGileyadi; unina wayeliwule.
² UmkaGileyadi wamzalela lamadodana,
 okwathi esekhulile asexotsha uJefitha.
 Athi kuye, “Wena akulalifa ozalithola
 emulini yakwethu ngoba uyindodana
 yomunye umfazi.” ³ Ngakho uJefitha

wabaleka kubafowabo wayahlala elizweni laseThobi, lapho abuthanelwa khona lixuku lezigebenga zamlandela.

⁴ Ngesinye isikhathi muva kwalokho, ama-Amoni esilwa impi lo-Israyeli, ⁵ abadala baseGileyadi bahamba bayathatha uJefitha elizweni laseThobi. ⁶ Bathi kuye, “Woza ube ngumlawuli wethu ukuze silwe lama-Amoni.”

⁷ UJefitha wathi kubo, “Kanje kalingizondanga yini langixotsha endlini kababa na? Kungani lisiza kimi khathesi, seliphakathi kohlupho?”

⁸ Abadala baseGileyadi bathi kuye, “Lanxa kunjalo, khathesi sesiphendukela kuwe; hamba lathi ekulweni lama-Amoni, njalo uzakuba yinduna yabo bonke abahlala eGileyadi.”

⁹ UJefitha waphendula wathi, “Uma lingabuyela lami emuva ekuyenikulwa lama-Amoni uJehova awanikele kimi – ngizakuba yinduna yenu sibili na?”

¹⁰ Abadala baseGileyadi baphendula bathi, “UJehova ungufakazi wethu; sizakwenza njengoba usitsho impela.”

¹¹ Ngakho uJefitha wahamba labadala baseGileyadi, abantu bamenza waba yinduna lomlawuli wabo. Wawaphinda wonke amazwi akhe phambi kukaJehova eMizipha.

¹² Emva kwalokho uJefitha wathuma izithunywa enkosini yama-Amoni lombuzo othi: “Kuyini osibangisa khona uze uhlasele ilizwe lethu na?”

¹³ Inkosi yama-Amoni yaphendula izithunywa zikaJefitha yathi, “Aba-Israyeli sebesukile eGibhithe bathatha ilizwe lami kusukela e-Arinoni kusiya eJabhokhi, ummango wonke kusiya eJodani. Khathesi libuyiseleni ngokuthula.”

¹⁴ UJefitha wazibuyisela izithunywa enkosini yama-Amoni, ¹⁵ esithi, “Nanku okutshiwo nguJefitha:

U-Israyeli kazange athathe ilizwe laseMowabi loba ilizwe lama-Amoni.

¹⁶ Kodwa ekusukeni kwakhe eGibhithe, u-Israyeli wadabula enkangala esiya eLwandle oluBomvu laphambili eKhadeshi. ¹⁷ U-Israyeli wathuma izithunywa enkosini yase-Edomi esithi, ‘Ake usinike imvumo yokudabula phakathi kwelizwe lakho,’ kodwa inkosi yase-Edomi kayilalelanga. Bathumela lasenkosini yaseMowabi, layo yala. Ngakho u-Israyeli wahlala eKhadeshi.

¹⁸ “Emva kwalokho bahamba bedabula phakathi kwenkangala, beceza ilizwe lase-Edomi lelaseMowabi, badlula beseceleni langasempumalanga kwelizwe laseMowabi, bamisa ngakwelinye icele le-Arinoni. Kabangenanga elizweni laseMowabi, ngoba i-Arinoni yayingumngcele walo.

¹⁹ “U-Israyeli wasethuma izithunywa kuSihoni inkosi yama-Amori, owayebusa eHeshibhoni, wathi kuye, ‘Akusivumele sidlule phakathi kwelizwe lakho sisiya endaweni yethu.’ ²⁰ Kodwa uSihoni kamthembanga u-Israyeli ukuba adlule phakathi kwelizwe lakhe. Wabutha abantu bakhe bonke wamisa eJahazi walwa lo-Israyeli.

²¹ “Kwathi uJehova, uNkulunkulu ka-Israyeli, wanikela uSihoni labantu bakhe bonke ezandleni zika-Israyeli wabehlula. U-Israyeli walithatha lonke ilizwe lama-Amori ayehlala kulelilizwe, ²² walithumba lonke kusukela e-Arinoni kusiya eJabhokhi lokusuka enkangala kusiya eJodani.

²³ “Njengoba uJehova, uNkulunkulu ka-Israyeli, ewaxotshile ama-Amori phambi kwabantu bakhe u-Israyeli, wena ulungelo bani lokulithatha na?

²⁴ Kawuyikuthatha lokho okuphiwa ngukulunkulu wakho uKhemoshi na? Ngokunjalo, yiloba yikuphi uJehova uNkulunkulu wethu asiphe khona,

sizakuthatha. ²⁵Wena ungcono yini kuloBhalaki indodana kaZiphori, inkosi yaseMowabi? Kanje wake waxabana lo-Israyeli loba walwa laye na?

²⁶U-Israyeli wahlala eHeshibhoni iminyaka engamakhulu amathathu, e-Aroweri, lasemizaneni eseduzane kanye lakuyo yonke imizi elinganisane le-Arinoni. Kungani ungazihlangulanga lezondawo ngalesosikhathi?

²⁷Kangikonelanga, kodwa wena wenza okubi kimi ngokungihlasela ngempi. Akuthi uJehova, uMahluleli, ahlulele umbango ngalolosuku phakathi kwama-Israyeli lama-Amoni.”

²⁸Kodwa inkosi yama-Amoni kayilinakanga ilizwi eyayilithunyelwe nguJefitha.

²⁹Lapho-ke uMoya kaJehova wehlela kuJefitha. Wadabula eGileyadi kanye lakoManase, wedlula eMizipha yaseGileyadi, kuthe esuka lapho waqhubekela kuma-Amoni. ³⁰Njalo uJefitha wafunga isifungo kuJehova wathi, “Unganikela ama-Amoni ezandleni zami, ³¹loba kuyini okuphuma emnyango wendlu yami ukuba kungihlangabeze lapho ngibuya nginqobile ngivela kuma-Amoni kuzakuba ngokukaJehova, njalo ngizakunikela njengomhlatshele wokutshiswa.”

³²UJefitha waya ngaphetsheya ukuyakulwa lama-Amoni, njalo uJehova wawanikela ezandleni zakhe. ³³Wabhuqa imizi engamatshumi amabili kusukela e-Aroweri kusiya eduze leMinithi, kusiya fika lase-Abheli Kheramimi.

U-Israyeli wayinqoba kanjalo i-Amoni.

³⁴UJefitha esebuyele emzini wakhe eMizipha, ngubani owaphuma wamhlangabeza ngaphandle kwendodakazi yakhe, igida kukhala amagedla! Yayinguye yedwa

umntanakhe. Ngaphandle kwakhe wayengelandodana loba indodakazi.

³⁵Kwathi eyibona wadabula izigqoko zakhe wakhala esithi, “O! Ndodakazi yami! Usungidabule wangenza ngaba lusizi, ngoba ngifunge isifungo kuJehova engingeke ngisephule.”

³⁶Yona yaphendula yathi, “Baba, wethule ilizwi lakho kuJehova. Kimi yenza njengoba uthembisile, njengoba uJehova esekuphindisele ezitheni zakho, ama-Amoni.” ³⁷Wasesithi, “Kodwa ngivumela isicelo lesi esisodwa. Nginika izinyanga ezimbili ukuba ngizulazule ezintabeni ngilile labangane bami, ngoba angiyikwenda.”

³⁸Yena wathi, “Ungahamba.” Wayivumela ukuba ihambe okwezinyanga ezimbili. Yona lamantombazana lawo baya ezintabeni balila ngoba yayingasozwe yende.

³⁹Emva kwezinyanga ezimbili yabuyela kuyise wasesenza kuyo njengoba wayefungile. Yayiyintombi egcweleyo.

Kulokhu yikho okuvela khona umkhuba wama-Israyeli ⁴⁰wokuthi minyaka yonke izintombi zako-Israyeli ziyaphuma okwezinsuku ezine ukuba zikhumbule indodakazi kaJefitha umGileyadi.

UJefitha lo-Efrayimi

12 Abantu bako-Efrayimi babiza amabutho abo, bachaphela eZafoni basebesithi kuJefitha, “Kungani wena wayakulwa lama-Amoni ungasibizanga ukuba sihambe lawe na? Sizakutshisela endlini yakho.”

²UJefitha waphendula wathi, “Mina labantu bami sasilengxabano enkulu lama-Amoni njalo, lanxa nje ngalibiza, kalingihlenganga ezandleni zawo.

³Kwathi sengibona ukuthi lalingeke

lisize, ngabeka impilo yami engozini ngachaphela ngaphetsheya ukuyakulwa lama-Amoni, uJehova wawanikela esandleni sami. Pho kungani lina lamhla selizekulwa lami?”

⁴UJefitha wabuthanisa abantu baseGileyadi balwa lo-Efrayimi. AbaseGileyadi babacakazela phansi ngoba abako-Efrayimi babethe, “Lina maGileyadi lingamab hazuka ako-Efrayimi lakoManase.” ⁵AbaseGileyadi bathumba amazibuko aseJodani awokuya ko-Efrayimi, njalo kwakusithi owako-Efrayimi osindileyo angathi, “Ngivumelani ngichaphele ngaphetsheya,” abantu baseGileyadi babembuza bathi, “Ungowako-Efrayimi na?” Angaphendula athi, “Hayi,” ⁶bathi, “Kulungile, wothi, ‘Shibholethi.’ ” Uma angathi, “Sibholethi,” ngokuba engeke alitsho kuhle, babemphuthuma bambulalele emazibukweni aseJodani. Abako-Efrayimi abayizinkulungwane ezingamshumi amane lambili babulawa ngalesosikhathi.

⁷UJefitha wakhokhela u-Israyeli iminyaka eyisithupha. UJefitha wafa, wangcwatshwa emzini waseGileyadi.

U-Ibhizani lo-Eloni lo-Abhidoni

⁸Ngemva kwakhe, u-Ibhizani waseBhethilehema wakhokhela u-Israyeli. ⁹Wayelamadodana angamatshumi amathathu lamadodakazi angamatshumi amathathu. Amadodakazi akhe wawendisela kwabangaphandle komhlobo wakibo kwathi amadodana akhe wawalethela izintombi ezingamshumi amathathu ezingasizo zomhlobo wakibo ukuba zibe ngomkawo. U-Ibhizani wakhokhela u-Israyeli iminyaka eyisikhombisa. ¹⁰U-Ibhizani wafa, wangcwatshwa eBhethilehema.

¹¹Ngemva kwakhe, u-Eloni umZebhuluni wakhokhela u-Israyeli iminyaka elitshumi. ¹²U-Eloni wafa, wangcwatshwa e-Ayijaloni elizweni lakoZebhuluni.

¹³Ngemva kwakhe, u-Abhidoni indodana kaHileli, owasePhirathoni, wakhokhela u-Israyeli.

¹⁴Wayelamadodana angamatshumi amane lamadodana amadodana angamatshumi amathathu, ayegada obabhemi abangamatshumi ayisikhombisa. Wakhokhela u-Israyeli iminyaka eficamibili. ¹⁵U-Abhidoni indodana kaHileli wafa, wangcwatshwa ePhirathoni ko-Efrayimi, elizweni lezintaba elama-Amaleki.

Ukuzalwa kukaSamsoni

13 Abako-Israyeli benza okubi njalo emehlweni kaJehova, ngakho uJehova wabanikela ezandleni zamaFilisti okweminyaka engamatshumi amane.

²Umuntu othile waseZora, owayethiwa nguManowa, owosendo lwakoDani, wayelomfazi owayeyinyumba engelamntwana. ³Ingilosi kaJehova yabonakala kuye yathi, “Uyinyumba kawulamntwana, kodwa uzathatha isisu ube lendodana. ⁴Ngakho nanzelela ukuthi kawunathi wayini loba okunye okunathwayo okulemvubelo kanye lokuthi ungadli ukudla okungcolileyo, ⁵ngoba uzathatha isisu uzale indodana. Akungabi lempuco esetshenziswa ekhanda layo, ngoba umfana uzakuba ngumNaziri, owahlukaniselwe uNkulunkulu kusukela ekuzalweni, njalo uzaqalisa ukukhululwa kuka-Israyeli ezandleni zamaFilisti.”

⁶Emva kwalokho owesifazana lowo waya kumkakhe wamtshela wathi, “Kufike umuntu kaNkulunkulu kimi. Ubefana lengilosi kaNkulunkulu,

esesabeka kakhulu. Angimbuzanga ukuthi ubevela ngaphi, njalo laye kangitshelanga ibizo lakhe. ⁷Kodwa uthe kimi, ‘Uzathatha isisu uzale indodana. Khathesi-ke unganathi iwayini loba okunye okunathwayo okulemvubelo, njalo ungadli lutho olungcolileyo, ngoba umfana uzakuba ngumNaziri kaNkulunkulu kusukela ekuzalweni kuze kube lusuku lokufa kwakhe.’”

⁸UManowa wasekhuleka kuJehova esithi, “Awu Nkosi, ngiyakucela, umuntu kaNkulunkulu omthumileyo kabuye futhi azesifundisa ukuthi umfana ozalwa wondliwa njani.”

⁹UNkulunkulu wamuzwa uManowa, ingilosi kaNkulunkulu yafika njalo kowesifazana lowo esegangeni; kodwa umkakhe uManowa wayengekho.

¹⁰Owesifazana lowo wagijima wayatshela umkakhe wathi, “Ukhona! Umuntu owabonakala kimi mhlalokhuyana!”

¹¹UManowa wasuka walandela umkakhe. Esefikile kulowomuntu, wathi, “Unguwe yini lowo owakhuluma lomkami?” Yena wathi, “Nginguye.”

¹²Ngakho uManowa wambuza wathi, “Lapho amazwi akho esegcwalisekile, umlayo wokuphila lomsebenzi womfana uthini?”

¹³Ingilosi kaJehova yaphendula yathi, “Umkakho kumele enze konke engimtshela khona. ¹⁴Kangadli lutho oluvela evinini, loba anathe iwayini loba okunye okunathwayo okulemvubelo loba adle ukudla okungcolileyo. Kumele enze konke engimlaye khona.”

¹⁵UManowa wathi engilosini kaJehova, “Sifuna ukuba uhlale size sikuhlabele izinyane lembuzi.”

¹⁶Ingilosi kaJehova yaphendula yathi, “Loba lingangibamba ngamandla ukuba ngihlale, angiyikudla kudla kwenu. Kodwa uma lilungisa umnikelo

wokutshiswa, unikeleni kuJehova.” (UManowa kananzelelanga ukuthi kwakuyingilosi kaJehova.)

¹⁷UManowa waseyibuza ingilosi kaJehova esithi, “Ibizo lakho ngubani, ukuze sikubonge lapho ilizwi lakho seligcwalisekile?”

¹⁸Yaphendula yathi, “Kungani ungibuza ibizo lami? Kaliqedisiseki.”

¹⁹Lapho-ke uManowa wathatha izinyane lembuzi, ndawonye lomnikelo wamabele wakunikela kuJehova phezu kwedwala. Njalo uJehova wenza into emangalisayo uManowa lomkakhe bekhangele:

²⁰Kwathi ilangabi libhebha lisuka e-alithareni lisiya ezulwini, ingilosi kaJehova yenyukela phezulu iphakathi kwelangabi. Bebona lokhu uManowa lomkakhe bathi mbo phansi ngobuso.

²¹Kwathi ingilosi kaJehova ingasazibonakalisanga futhi kuManowa lomkakhe, uManowa wananzelela ukuthi kwakuyingilosi kaJehova.

²²Wasesithi kumkakhe, “Silahliwe sizakufa. Sibone uNkulunkulu!”

²³Kodwa umkakhe waphendula wathi, “Aluba uJehova ubeqonde ukusibulala, ubengasoze amukele umnikelo wokutshiswa lomnikelo wamabele ezandleni zethu, loba asitshengise zonke lezizinto kumbe lalokhu asesitshela khona.”

²⁴Owesifazana wazala umfana wamuthi nguSamsoni. Wakhula loJehova wambusisa, ²⁵loMoya kaJehova waqala ukuqubuka phakathi kwakhe eseseMahane Dani, phakathi kweZora le-Eshithawoli.

Ukuthatha kukaSamsoni

14 USamsoni waya eThimina

wabona intombi yesiFilisti. ²Esebuyele, wathi kuyise lonina, “Ngibone intombi

yesiFilisti eThimina; ake liyengithathela yona ukuba ibe ngumkami.”

³Uyise lonina baphendula bathi, “Kanti akulantombi eyamukelekayo yini phakathi kwezihlobo zakho loba phakathi kwabantu bonke bakithi? Usungaze uye kumaFilisti angasokanga ukuba uthathe umfazi na?” Kodwa uSamsoni wathi kuyise, “Ngithathela yena. Nguye ongifaneleyo.” (⁴Uyise lonina babengazi ukuthi lokhu kwakuvela kuJehova, owayefuna ithuba lokumelana lamaFilisti; ngoba ngalesosikhathi ayebusa elako-Israyeli.)
⁵USamsoni waya eThimina eloyise lonina. Bathe sebebanga ezivinini zeThimina kwathutsha ibhuklwana lesilwane libhonga lisiya kuye. ⁶Umoya kaNkulunkulu wafika kuye ngamandla wasidabula ngezandla zakhe njengayenkwenza edabula izinyane lembuzi. Kodwa uyise lonina kabatshelanga ayekwenzile. ⁷Emva kwalokho wahamba wayakhuluma lowesifazana lowo, wezwa emthanda.

⁸Emva kwesikhathi esithize, esebuyele ukuba ayemthatha, waphambuka ukuba abone isidumbu sesilwane. Phakathi kwaso kwakulomtshitshi wezinyosi ziloluju, ⁹waluthapha waluphatha ngezandla zakhe wahamba eludla. Kodwa kabatshelanga ukuthi uluju wayeluthethe esidunjini sesilwane.

¹⁰Uyise wahamba ukuyabona owesifazana lowo. USamsoni wenza idili khona, njengokwakungumkhuba wezinsizwa ezithathayo. ¹¹Ekufikeni kwakhe waphiwa abakhaphi abangamatshumi amathathu.

¹²USamsoni wasesithi kubo, “Lalelani ngilitshela ilibho. Lingangitshela ukuthi litshoni phakathi kwezinsuku eziyisikhombisa zedili, ngizalinika izambatho zelineni ezingamatshumi amathathu lezigqoko ezingamatshumi amathathu. ¹³Uma lisehluleka

ukungitshela ukuthi litshoni, kumele linginike izambatho zelineni ezingamatshumi amathathu lezigqoko ezingamatshumi amathathu.”

Bona bathi, “Sitshele ilibho lakho. Litsho silizwe.”

¹⁴Waphendula wathi,

“Kokudlayo, kwaphuma okudliwayo; Kokulamandla kwaphuma okumnandi.”

Behluleka ukuyitsho impendulo okwezinsuku ezintathu.

¹⁵Ngosuku lwesine bathi kumkaSamsoni, “Ncenga umkakho asichazele ilibho, hlezi sikutshise wena labendlu yakwenu life. Kanti usinxusele ukuzasiphanga lapha na?”

¹⁶Lapho-ke umkaSamsoni waziphosela phezu kwakhe, ebubula esithi, “Uyangizonda. Kawungithandi okweqiniso. Unike abantu bakithi ilibho; kodwa mina kawungitshelanga ukuthi litshoni”

Yena waphendula wathi, “Angilichazanga lakubaba lomama, pho ngingalichazelani kuwe na?”

¹⁷Owesifazana lowo wakhala zonke lezozinsuku eziyisikhombisa zedili. Ngakho ngosuku lwesikhombisa wantshela, ngoba waqhubeka emcinezela. Laye-ke walichaza ilibho ebantwini bakibo.

¹⁸Kwathi ilanga lingakatshoni ngosuku lwesikhombisa abantu bakulowomuzi bathi kuye,

“Kuyini okumnandi kuloluju na? Kuyini okulamandla kulesilwane na?”

USamsoni wathi kubo,

“Aluba kalilimanga ngethokazi lami kade lingeke liliqambe ilibho lami.”

¹⁹UMoya kaJehova wasusehlela phezu kwakhe ngamandla. Waya

e-Ashikheloni, wabulala abantu bakhona abangamatshumi amathathu, wabakhulula impahla yabo kwathi izigqoko zabo wazinika labo ababechaze ilibho lakhe. Waya endlini kayise evutha ulaka. ²⁰UmkaSamsoni wasesendiselwa kumngane lowo owayengumkhaphi wakhe omkhulu.

Ukuphindisela kukaSamsoni kumaFilisti

15 Muva, ngesikhathi sokuvuna

ingqoloyi, uSamsoni wathatha izinyane lembuzi wethekelela umkakhe. Wathi, “Ngiya endlini yomkami.” Kodwa uyisezala wamalela ukuba angene.

²Wathi, “Ngangileqiniso ukuthi wawusumzonda kakhulu ngasengimendisela kumngane wakho. Umnawakhe kamuhle na? Thatha yena.”

³USamsoni wathi kubo, “Khathesi ngilelungelo lokuphindisela okubi kumaFilisti. Ngizawalimaza impela.”

⁴Ngakho wasuka wabamba amakhanka angamakhulu amathathu wawabophanisa imisila ngamabili. Wasebophela uluthi lomlilo emisileni yonke ngamibili, ⁵walumathisa izinti zomlilo wawayekela amakhanka angena emabeleni amiyo amaFilisti. Watshisa izinqumbi lamabele amiyo, lezivini kanye lezivande zama-Oliva.

⁶Kwathi amaFilisti ebuza esithi, “Ngubani owenze lokhu na?” atshelwa ukuthi, “NguSamsoni, umkhwenyana womThimina ngoba umkakhe wendisela kumngane wakhe.”

Ngakho amaFilisti ahamba ayamtshisa umfazi kanye loyise, bafa.

⁷USamsoni wathi kubo, “Njengoba selenze lokhu, angiyikukhawula engikwenzayo ngize ngiphindisele kini.”

⁸Wabahlasela kakubi wabulala abanengi babo. Emva kwalokho wahamba wayahlala ebhalwini edwaleni lase-Ethami.

⁹AmaFilisti ahamba ayamisa koJuda, asabalala eduze leLehi. ¹⁰Abantu bakoJuda babuza bathi, “Lizesihlaselelani na?”

Bona baphendula bathi, “Silande ukuzabopha uSamsoni, senze kuye lokhu akwenzayo kithi.”

¹¹Abantu bakoJuda abayizinkulungwane ezintathu baya ebhalwini edwaleni lase-Ethami bathi kuSamsoni, “Kawazi yini ukuthi amaFilisti ayasibusa? Wenzeni kithi na?”

Waphendula wathi, “Ngimane ngenza kuwo lokho akwenzayo kimi.”

¹²Bathi kuye, “Thina silande ukuzakubopha sikunikele kumaFilisti.” USamsoni wathi, “Fungani kimi ukuthi kaliyikungibulala lina ngokwenu.”

¹³Baphendula bathi, “Siyavuma. Thina sizakubopha nje kuphela besesikunikela kuwo. Kasiyikukubulala.” Ngakho bambopha ngemichilo emibili emitsha basebesuka laye edwaleni. ¹⁴Esebanga eLehi, amaFilisti amhlangabeza eklabalala. UMoya kaNkulunkulu wehlela phezu kwakhe ngamandla. Imichilo ezingalweni zakhe yaba njengesikusha esitshileyo, izibopho zawa ezandleni zakhe. ¹⁵Esethole ithambo elitsha elomhlathi kababhemi, walithatha wabulala ngalo abantu abayinkulungwane.

¹⁶USamsoni wasesithi,

“Ngethambo lomhlathi kababhemi,
ngibenze baba ngobabhemi.
ngethambo lomhlathi kababhemi.
ngibulele amadoda
ayinkulungwane.”

¹⁷Eseqedile ukukhuluma walilahla
ithambo lomhlathi; indawo leyo
yasithiwa yiRamathi Lehi.

¹⁸Ngenxa yokuthi wayesome kakhulu,
wakhala kuJehova wathi, “Uyiphile
inceku yakho lokhukunqoba okukhulu.
Pho sekumele ngibulawe yikoma yini
njalo ngiwele ezandleni zabangasokanga
na?” ¹⁹UJehova wasevula indawo
engumwolo eLehi, kwaphuma amanzi
kuwo. USamsoni esenathile, amandla
akhe abuya wasevuseleleka. Ngakho
umthombo lowo wathiwa yi-Eni
Hakhore, njalo ulokhu ukhona eLehi.

²⁰USamsoni wakhokhela u-Israyeli
iminyaka engamatshumi amabili
ngesikhathi samaFilisti.

USamsoni loDelila

16 Ngelinye ilanga uSamsoni waya
eGaza, lapho abona khona iwule.
Walala lalo ngalobobusuku. ²Abantu
baseGaza batshelwa ukuthi, “USamsoni
ulapha!” Ngakho indawo leyo
bayihonqolozela bamcathamela ubusuku
bonke esangweni ledolobho.
Kabenzanga lutho ebusuku, besithi,
“Sizambulala emadabukakusa.”

³Kodwa uSamsoni walala lapho
kwaze kwaba phakathi kwamabili
kuphela. Lapho-ke wavuka wabamba
izivalo zesango ledolobho, ndawonye
lezinsika ezimbili, wakusiphula, umgoqo
lakho konke. Wakwethatha emahlombe
akhe, wakuthwalela phezu kwentaba
ekhangele iHebhroni.

⁴Ngemva kwesikhathi, wathandana
lowesifazana esiGodini saseSoreki obizo
lakhe lalinguDelila. ⁵Ababusi
bamaFilisti baya kuye bathi, “Zama
ukumhuga ukuthi akutshengise imfihlo
yamandla akhe amakhulu kanye lokuthi
singamehlula njani ukuze simbophe
simnqobe. Omunye lomunye wethu
uzakupha amashekeli esiliva
angamakhulu alitshumi lanye.”

⁶Ngakho uDelila wathi kuSamsoni,
“Ngitshela imfihlo yamandla akho
amakhulu kanye lokuthi ungabotshwa
unqotshwe njani.”

⁷USamsoni waphendula wathi, “Nxa
umuntu angangibopha ngemicilo
eyisikhombisa engonyiswanga,
ngizakuba buthakathaka njengomuntu
wonke.”

⁸Ababusi bamaFilisti basebemlethela
imichilo eyisikhombisa emitsha
eyayingonyiswanga, wambopha ngayo.
⁹Kwakulabantu ababecatshile endlini,
wasembiza wathi kuye, “Samsoni,
amaFilisti asephezu kwakho!” Kodwa
yena waqhunsula imichilo kalula
njengesiqa sentambo lapho sisondele
eduzane lelangabi. Ngakho imfihlo
yamandla akhe yayingazakalanga.

¹⁰UDelila wasesithi kuSamsoni,
“Ungenze ngaba yisithutha; uqambe
amanga kimi. Khathesi-ke ngitshela
ukuthi ungabotshwa njani.”

¹¹Yena wathi, “Umuntu angangibopha
aqinise ngamagoda amatsha angakaze
asetshenziswe, ngizakuba buthakathaka
njengomuntu wonke.”

¹²Ngakho uDelila wathatha amagoda
amatsha wambopha ngawo.
Kwasekusithi abantu becatshile endlini,
wambiza wathi kuye, “Samsoni,
amaFilisti asephezu kwakho!” Kodwa
yena waqhunsula amagoda ezingalweni
zakhe kungathi ayeluhali nje.

¹³UDelila wasesithi kuSamsoni, “Kuze kube khathesi kade ungenza isithutha njalo uqamba amanga kimi. Ngitshela ukuthi ungabotshwa njani.” Yena waphendula wathi, “Ungeluka izixha zenwele zami eziyisikhombisa zibe yisibhebhedu esalukisweni uluqinise ngesiqobotsho, ngizakuba buthakathaka njengomuntu wonke.” Ngakho kwathi eselele, uDelila wathatha izixha eziyisikhombisa ekhanda lakhe, wazelukel elenjini ¹⁴ ngesiqobotsho.

Wambiza njalo wathi kuye, “Samsoni, amaFilisti asephezu kwakho!” Wavuka ebuthongweni wadonsa isiqobotsho lesalukiso, kanye lesibhebhedu.

¹⁵UDelila wasesithi, kuye, “Ungatsho njani uthi, ‘Ngiyakuthanda,’ wena ungangithembi na? Lokhu ngokwesithathu ungenza isithutha njalo kawungitshelanga imfihlo yamandla akho amakhulu.” ¹⁶Ngokubelesela okunje wamcindezela izinsuku zonke waze wadinwa kakhulu.

¹⁷Ngakho wamtshela konke wathi, “Akulampuco eseyake yasetshenziswa ekhanda lami ngoba ngingumNaziri owahlukaniselwa uNkulunkulu kusukela ekuzalweni. Uma ikhanda lami lingaphucwa, amandla ami angasuka kimi, njalo ngingaba buthakathaka njengomuntu wonke.”

¹⁸Kwathi uDelila ebona ukuthi wayesemtshela konke, wathumela ilizwi kubabusi bamaFilisti elithi, “Wozani futhi; usengitshela konke.” Ngakho ababusi bamaFilisti babuyela bephethe isiliva ngezandla zabo. ¹⁹Kwathi esemlalisile ethangazini lakhe, wabiza umuntu ukuba aphuce izixha eziyisikhombisa zezinwele zakhe, ngakho waqalisa ukumnqoba. Amandla akhe aphela kuye.

²⁰Wasememeza esithi, “Samsoni, amaFilisti asephezu kwakho!”

Wavuka ebuthongweni bakhe wacabanga wathi, “Ngizaphuma njengakuqala ngizikhulule.” Kodwa wayengazi ukuthi uJehova wayesemtshiyile.

²¹AmaFilisti ambamba, amkopola amehlo akhe asehamba laye eGaza. Esembophe ngamaketane ethusi, amupha umsebenzi wokuchola entolongweni.

²²Kodwa izinwele ekhanda lakhe zaqalisa ukukhula futhi emva kokuphucwa.

Ukufa kukaSamsoni

²³Ababusi bamaFilisti babuthana ukuba banikele umhlatshelo omkhulu kuDagoni unkulunkulu wabo njalo bathokoze besithi, “Unkulunkulu wethu unikele uSamsoni, isitha sethu, ezandleni zethu.”

²⁴Kwathi abantu bembona, badumisa unkulunkulu wabo besithi,

“Unkulunkulu wethu unikele isitha sethu ezandleni zethu, sona esachitha ilizwe lethu sabulala abanengi bethu.”

²⁵Bephakathi kokuthokoza, baklabalala bathi, “Lethani uSamsoni azesilibazisa.” Ngakho uSamsoni bayambiza entolongweni, wazabادلalela.

Kwathi sebemmise phakathi kwezinsika, ²⁶uSamsoni wathi encekwini eyayimbambe isandla, “Ngibeka lapho engizathinta khona izinsika ezisekele ithempeli, ukuze ngeyame kuzo.”

²⁷Ithempeli laligcwele abesilisa labesifazana; bonke ababusi bamaFilisti babekhonapho, njalo phezu kophahla kwakulabesilisa labesifazana ababephose babe yizinkulungwane ezintathu bebukele uSamsoni egida. ²⁸USamsoni wasekhuleka kuJehova esithi, “O Nkosi Yobukhosi, ake ungikhumbule.

O Nkulunkulu, ake ungiqinise kanye nje futhi, kuthi ngokugalela okukodwa ngiphindisele kumaFilisti amehlo ami amabili.”²⁹ USamsoni wasebamba izinsika ezimbili eziphakathi, ithempeli elalixile kuzo. Waziqinisa ngokweyama kuzo, isandla sakhe sokudla sikwenye lesenxele sikwenye,³⁰ uSamsoni wathi, “Kangife lamaFilisti!” Wafuqa ngamandla akhe wonke, ithempeli lawela phezu kwababusi labantu bonke ababephakathi kwalo. Ngalokho wabulala abantu abanengi ekufeni kwakhe kulalapho esaphila.

³¹ Emva kwalokho abafowabo labo bonke abendlu kayise bamlanda. Babuya laye bamngcwaba phakathi kweZora le-Eshithawoli ethuneni likaManowa uyise. Wayekhokhele u-Israyeli iminyaka engamatshumi amabili.

Izithombe zikaMikha

17 Umuntu waselizweni lezintaba elako-Efrayimi owayethiwa nguMikha² wathi kunina, “Amashekeli esiliva angamakhulu alitshumi lanye athathwa kuwe njalo engakuzwa uwaqalekisa – ngilaso isiliva leso sikimi; yimi engasithathayo.”

Unina wathi, “UJehova kakubusise, ndodana yami!”

³ Esewabuyisele kunina amashekeli esiliva angamakhulu alitshumi lanye, unina wathi, “Isiliva sami ngisahlukanisela uJehova ngokungxama ukuba indodana yami yenze isifanekiso esibaziweyo lesithombe esibunjiweyo. Ngizasibuyisela kuwe.”

⁴ Ngakho wasibuyisela isiliva kunina, unina wasethatha amashekeli angamakhulu amabili esiliva wawanika umkhandi wesiliva, owawabumba aba

yisifanekiso lesithombe. Kwabekwa endlini kaMikha.

⁵ UMikha lo wayelendawo yokukhonzela, njalo wenza isambatho semahlombe kanye lezithombe, wasebeka enye yamadodana akhe ukuba ngumphristi wakhe. ⁶ Ngalezonsuku u-Israyeli wayengelankosi; umuntu wonke ezenzela ayekubona kulungile kuye.

⁷ Ijaha laseBhethilehema koJuda elalingumLevi, elalihlala phakathi kwabosendo lukaJuda,⁸ lasuka kulowomuzi lidinga enye indawo yokuhlala. Ekuhambeni kwalo lafika endlini kaMikha elizweni lezintaba elako-Efrayimi.

⁹ UMikha walibuza wathi, “Uvela ngaphi na?” Lona lathi, “NgingumLevi ovela eBhethilehema koJuda, ngidinga indawo yokuhlala.”

¹⁰ UMikha wasesithi kulo, “Hlala lami ube ngubaba lomphristi wami, njalo ngizakupha amashekeli esiliva alitshumi ngomnyaka, izigqoko zakho kanye lokudla kwakho.” ¹¹ Ngakho umLevi wavuma ukuhlala laye, njalo ijaha lelo kuye lalinjengenywe yamadodana akhe. ¹² UMikha wabeka umLevi ukuba ngumphristi wakhe, njalo ijaha lelo lahlala endlini yakhe. ¹³ UMikha wasesithi, “Khathesi sengisazi ukuthi uJehova uzakwenza okulungileyo kimi, njengoba umLevi lo esebe ngumphristi wami.”

AbakoDani Bakhela eLayishi

18 Ngalezozinsuku u-Israyeli wayengelankosi. Njalo ngalezozinsuku abosendo lukaDani babedinga indawo engeyabo, lapho ababengahlala khona, ngoba babengakabi sendaweni eyilifa labo phakathi kwezizwana zako-Israyeli. ² Ngakho abakoDani bathuma amabutho amahlanu avela eZora lase-Eshithawoli

ukuyahlola ilizwe lokulibona. Amadoda la abemele zonke izinsendo zakibo. Zathi kubo, “Hambani liyehlola ilizwe.” Amadoda lawo angena elizweni lezintaba elako-Efrayimi ayafika endlini kaMikha, lapho alala khona. ³ Kwathi eseseduze lendlu kaMikha alazi ilizwi lejaha elingumLevi; ngakho aphendukela khona alibuza athi, “Ngubani owakuletha lapha? Wenzani kule indawo? Ufunani lapha?”

⁴ Lawatshela elalikwenziwe nguMikha, laselitsithi, “Ungiqatshile njalo ngingumphristi wakhe.”

⁵ Asesithi kulo, “Ake usibuzele kuNkulunkulu ukuthi uhambo lwethu luzaphumelela na.”

⁶ Umphristi wawaphendula wathi, “Hambani ngokuthula. Uhambo lwenu luvunyelwe nguJehova.”

⁷ Ngakho amadoda amahlanu lawo asuka aya eLayishi, lapho abona ukuthi abantu bakhona babezihlalele bevikelekile njengamaSidoni, kungekho kunqineka bezinzile. Njalo babehlezi khatshana lamaSidoni njalo bengelabuhlobo lomunye umuntu.

⁸ Esebuyele eZora lase-Eshithawoli, abafowabo bawabuza bathi, “Libone kunjani?”

⁹ Apendula athi, “Phangisani, kasibahlaseleni! Sibonile ukuthi ilizwe lelo lihle kakhulu. Kaliyikwenza lutho na? Lingazilazili ukuya khonale lilithathe. ¹⁰ Ekufikeni khonale lizathola abantu abanganqineki lutho lelizwe elibanzi uNkulunkulu aselifake ezandleni zenu, ilizwe elingelalutho olungekho kulo.”

¹¹ Lapho-ke amadoda osendo lwakoDani angamakhulu ayisithupha ahlomela ukulwa, asesuka eZora kanye le-Eshithawoli. ¹² Ekuhambeni kwawo amisa izihonqo eduze leKhiriyaathi Jeyarimi koJuda. Yikho nje indawo

esentshonalanga kweKhiriyaathi Jeyarimi ithiwa Mahane Dani kuze kube lamhla. ¹³ Esuka lapho aya elizweni lezintaba elako-Efrayimi afika endlini kaMikha.

¹⁴ Amadoda amahlanu ayehlola ilizwe asesithi kubafowabo, “Liyakwazi yini ukuthi enye yalezizindlu ilesambatho semahlombe, labanye onkulunkulu basendlini, lesifanekiso esibaziweyo kanye lesithombe esabunjwayo? Khathesi selikwazi elimele likwenze.”

¹⁵ Ngakho-ke aphambukela khona aya endlini yejaha elingumLevi koMikha alibingelela. ¹⁶ AbakoDani abangamakhulu ayisithupha, ababehlomele ukulwa, bema ekungeneni kwesango. ¹⁷ Abahlanu ababeyehlola ilizwe bangena phakathi bathatha isifanekiso esibaziweyo, lesambatho semahlombe, labanye onkulunkulu basendlini kanye lesithombe esibunjiweyo, umphristi labantu abangamakhulu ayisithupha abahlomileyo bemi ekungeneni kwesango.

¹⁸ Kwathi amadoda la esengene endlini kaMikha athatha isifanekiso esibaziweyo, lesambatho semahlombe, labanye onkulunkulu basendlini kanye lesithombe esibunjiweyo, umphristi wathi kubo, “Lenzani na?”

¹⁹ Amphendula athi, “Thula! Ungatsho lutho. Woza uhambe lathi, ube ngubaba lomphristi wethu. Akungcono yini ukuthi usebenzele isizwana losendo ko-Israyeli njengomphristi kulabendlu yomuntu oyedwa?” ²⁰ Umphristi wathokoza. Wathatha isambatho semahlombe, labanye onkulunkulu basendlini kanye lesifanekiso esibaziweyo wahamba labantu.

²¹ Sebefake abantwababo abancane, lezifuyo zabo kanye lezimpahla zabo phambi kwabo, baphenduka bahamba.

²² Sebehambe isibanga esithize besuka endlini kaMikha, abantu ababehlala

eduzane lendlu kaMikha babizelwa ndawonye baxhuma abakoDani.

²³ Kwathi bebamemeza, abakoDani baphendula bathi kuMikha, “Kungani ubize abantu bakho ukuba balwe?”

²⁴ Yena waphendula wathi, “Lithethe onkulunkulu engabenzayo lomphristi wami, lahamba. Kuyini okunye engilakho? Lingangibuza kanjani lisithi, ‘Uhlutshwa yini na?’ ”

²⁵ AbakoDani baphendula bathi, “Ungaphikisani lathi, hlezi abanye abantu abalolaka bakuhlasele, kuthi wena labendlu yakho lilahlekelwe yikuphila kwenu.” ²⁶ Ngakho abakoDani bazihambela, kwathi uMikha, ebona ukuthi babelamandla kakhulu kulaye, waphenduka wabuyela ekhaya.

²⁷ Bathatha okwakwenziwe nguMikha, lomphristi wakhe, baya eLayishi, ebantwini bokuthula ababenganqineki lutho. Babahlasela ngenkamba batshisa ledolobho labo. ²⁸ Kakho owayengabahlenga ngoba babehlezi khatshana kakhulu leSidoni bengelabuhlobo lamuntu. Idolobho lalisegodini eduze leBhethi Rehobi.

AbakoDani balakha kutsha idolobho lelo bahlala kulo. ²⁹ Balibiza ngokuthi yiDani ngokhokho wabo uDani, owayezalwa ngu-Israyeli – lanxa idolobho lalikade lithiwa yiLayishi.

³⁰ AbakoDani bazimisela izithombe khona, njalo uJonathani indodana kaGeshomu, indodana kaMosi, lamadodana akhe babengabaphristi besizwana sikaDani kwaze kwaba yisikhathi sokuthunjwa kwelizwe.

³¹ Baqhubeka basebenzisa izithombe ezazenziwe nguMikha, ngaso sonke isikhathi indlu kaNkulunkulu iseShilo.

UmLevi Lomfazi Wakhe Weceleni

19 Ngalezozinsuku u-Israyeli

wayengelankosi. UmLevi othile owayehlala esiqintini esikhatshana elizweni lamaqaqa elako-Efrayimi wathatha umfazi weceleni eBhethilehema koJuda. ² Kodwa umfazi wayengathembekanga kuye. Wamtshiya wabuyela endlini kayise eBhethilehema, koJuda. Esehla khona okwenyanga ezine, ³ indoda yamlandela ukuyamncenga ukuba abuye. Indoda yayilenceku yayo labobabhemi ababili. Umfazi wamngenisela endlini kayise, njalo kwathi uyise embona wamamukela ngokuthokoza. ⁴ Uyisezala, uyise wentombi, wamncenga ukuba ahlale; ngakho wahlala laye izinsuku ezintathu, esidla enatha, njalo elala khona.

⁵ Ngelanga lesine bavuka ekuseni walungiselela ukusuka, kodwa uyise wentombi wathi kumkhwenyana wakhe, “Ake uziqabule ngongakudla; ubusuhamba.” ⁶ Ngakho bubili babo bahlala phansi badla banatha. Muva uyise wentombi wathi, “Ake ulale ubusuku balamhla uzithokozise.”

⁷ Kwathi umuntu lowo evuka ukuba ahambe, uyisezala wamncenga, ngakho walala khona ngalobobusuku. ⁸ Ekuseni kosuku lwesihlanu, wathi evuka ukuba ahambe, uyise wentombi wathi, “Ziqabule. Hlala kuze kube ngemva kwemini.” Ngakho bobabili badla ndawonye.

⁹ Kwathi lapho umuntu lowo, lomfazi wakhe weceleni kanye lenceku yakhe, belungiselela ukusuka, uyisezala, uyise wentombi wathi, “Khangela, sekuzakuhlwa. Lala lapha; ilanga selizatshona. Hlala uzithokozise. Kusasa ekuseni kakhulu uzavuka uthathe indlela yakho yokuya ekhaya.” ¹⁰ Kodwa umuntu lowo engasafuni ukulala obunye ubusuku lapho, wasuka waqonda eJebusi (leyo yiJerusalema), labobabhemi bakhe

ababili ababebotshelwe izihlalo kanye lomfazi wakhe weceleni.

¹¹ Kwathi sebebanga eJebusi lelanga selitshona, inceku yathi enkosini yayo, “Uyabona, kasime kulelidolobho lamaJebusi silale.”

¹² Inkosi yayo yathi, “Hayi. Kasiyikungena edolobheni lezizweni, abantu balo abangasiwo ma-Israyeli. Sizaqhubeka siye eGibheya.”

¹³ Wengeza wathi, “Uyabona, kasizameni ukuyafika eGibheya loba eRama silale kwenye yalezizindawo.” ¹⁴ Ngakho baqhubeka, ilanga latshona sebebanga eGibheya koBhenjamini. ¹⁵ Bema lapho ukuba balale khona. Bahamba bayahlala egcekeni ledolobho, kodwa kakho owabangenisa endlini yakhe ukuba balale khona.

¹⁶ Ngalokhokuhlwa ixhegu laselizweni lamaqaqa lako-Efrayimi, elalihlala eGibheya (abantu bakuleyondawo babengabakoBhenjamini), lafika livela emsebenzini walo emasimini.

¹⁷ Selikhangele labona isihambi egcekeni ledolobho, ixhegu labuza lathi, “Liya ngaphi? Livela ngaphi?”

¹⁸ Yena waphendula wathi, “Siphakathi kohambo lwethu sivela eBhethilehema koJuda sisiya esiqintini esikhatshana elizweni lamaqaqa lako-Efrayimi lapho engihlala khona. Kade ngiseBhethilehema koJuda kodwa khathesi sengisiya endlini kaJehova. Akulamuntu ongingenise endlini yakhe. ¹⁹ Silotshani lokudla kwabobabhemi bethu lesinkwa kanye lewayini lethu thina zinceku zakho – mina, lencekukazi yakho kanye lejaha esilalo. Kasisweli lutho.”

²⁰ Ixhegu lathi, “Liyamukeleka endlini yami. Ngizalinika konke elikuswelayo. Kodwa lingalali egcekeni.” ²¹ Ngakho lamngenisa endlini yalo lanika labobabhemi bakhe ukudla. Sebegeze izinyawo zabo, badla banatha.

²² Besazitika, abanye babantu abaxhwalileyo bakulelodolobho bahanqa indlu leyo. Batshaya isivalo, bamemeza ixhegu elalingumnikazi wendlu besithi, “Mkhuphele phandle umuntu ongene endlini ukuze simenze umfazi.”

²³ Umnikazi wendlu waya phandle wathi kubo, “Hayi, bangane bami, lingenzi okubi kangaka. Njengoba umuntu eyisethekeli sami, lingenzi into le elihlazo. ²⁴ Khangelani, nansi indodakazi yami eyintombi egcweleyo, kanye lomfazi wendoda le weceleni. Ngizabaletha phandle kini, lingabasebenzisa lenze kubo konke elikufisayo. Kodwa lingenzi ihlazo elinjalo kule indoda.”

²⁵ Kodwa abantu labo kabamlalelanga. Ngakho indoda leyo yathatha umfazi wayo weceleni yamusa phandle kubo, bamdlovula njalo bamphatha kubi ubusuku bonke, kwathi emadabukakusa bamyekela wahamba. ²⁶ Ekuseni owesifazana lowo waya endlini lapho umkakhe ayehlezi khona, wawela emnyango walala khonapho kwaze kwakhanya.

²⁷ Esevukile umkakhe ekuseni wavula umnyango wendlu waphuma ukuba aqhubeke ngohambo lwakhe, wabona nango umfazi wakhe weceleni ewele emnyango wendlu, izandla zakhe zisekungeneni komnyango. ²⁸ Wathi kuye, “Vuka; kasihambe.” Kodwa kwakungelampendulo. Ngakho umuntu lowo wambeka phezu kukababhemi wakhe wasuka waya ekhaya.

²⁹ Esefikile ekhaya wathatha ingqamu waquma umfazi wakhe weceleni iziqayiqqa ezilitshumi lambili wazithumela kuzo zonke izigaba zako-Israyeli. ³⁰ Umuntu wonke owakubonayo lokho wathi, “Into enje kayikaze ibonakale loba yenziwe, selokhu u-Israyeli waphuma eGibhithe.

Cabangani ngakho! Kuhloleni!
Sitssheleni okungenziwa!”

Abako-Israyeli Balwa labakoBhenjamini

20 Ngalesosikhathi bonke abako-

Israyeli baphuma njengomuntu munye kusukela eDani kusiya eBherisheba kanye laselizweni leGileyadi babuthana phambi kukaJehova eMizipha.

² Abakhokheli babantu bonke bezizwana zako-Israyeli bathatha izindawo zabo ebandleni labantu bakaNkulunkulu, amabutho ayizinkulungwane ezingamakhulu amane ehloze ngezinkemba. ³ (AbakoBhenjamini bezwa ukuthi abako-Israyeli babeye eMizipha.) Abako-Israyeli basebesithi, “Sitssheleni ukuthi into le embi yenzakale njani.”

⁴ Ngakho umLevi, indoda yowesifazana lowo owayebulewe, wathi, “Mina lomkami weceleni safika eGibheya koBhenjamini ukuba silale khona. ⁵ Ebusuku abantu beGibheya bangivukela bahanqa indlu, behlose ukungibulala. Badlovula umkami weceleni, wafa. ⁶ Ngathatha umkami weceleni, ngamquma waba yiziqayiqanga ngathumela isiqanga esisodwa esigabeni ngasinye selifa lako-Israyeli, ngoba lesisenzo sokuxhwala lamanyala basenzela ko-Israyeli. ⁷ Khathesi lonke lina abako-Israyeli, khulumani litsho isinqumo senu.”

⁸ Abantu bonke basukuma njengomuntu munye, besithi, “Kakho owethu ozakuya ekhaya. Hayi, kakho owethu ozabuyela endlini yakhe.

⁹ Kodwa khathesi esizakwenza eGibheya yilokhu: Sizakuyayihlasela njengokubonisa kwenkatho. ¹⁰ Sizathatha

abantu abalitshumi phakathi kwabalikhulu kuzo zonke izizwana zako-Israyeli, labalikhulu kwabayinkulungwane, labayinkulungwane kwabayizinkulungwane ezilutshumi ukuba badingele ibutho ukudla. Ekufikeni kwalo ibutho eGibheya koBhenjamini, lizabanika okubafaneleyo ngobudlova bonke lobu obenziwe ko-Israyeli.” ¹¹ Ngakho bonke abantu bako-Israyeli bahlangana bamanyana njengomuntu munye bamelana ledolobho.

¹² Izizwana zako-Israyeli zathumela abantu kuso sonke isizwana sakoBhenjamini, zisithi, “Yibudlova bani lobu obenziwayo phakathi kwenu na? ¹³ Khathesi-ke banikeleni labobantu baseGibheya abagangileyo ukuze sibabulale siqede ububi ko-Israyeli.”

Kodwa abakoBhenjamini kabawalalelanga ama-Israyeli akibo. ¹⁴ Baqoqana eGibheya bevela emizini yakibo ukuba balwe lama-Israyeli. ¹⁵ Ngasikhathi sinye abakoBhenjamini babutha izinkulungwane ezingamatshumi amabili lesithupha zabahlome ngezinkemba emizini yakibo, phezu kwabantu abangamakhulu ayisikhombisa abakhethwa kulabo abahlala eGibheya. ¹⁶ Phakathi kwamabutho la kwakulabantu abakhethiweyo abangamakhulu ayisikhombisa ababengamanxele, bonke bengajikela ilitshe ngesavutha enweleni bangakhuthi.

¹⁷ Abako-Israyeli, ngaphandle kwabakoBhenjamini, babutha abantu abalwa ngezinkemba abayizinkulungwane ezingamakhulu amane, bonke bengabantu bempi.

¹⁸ Abako-Israyeli baya eBhetheli babuza uNkulunkulu. Bathi, “Ngubani wethu ozahamba kuqala ukuyakulwa

labako-Bhenjamini?” UJehova wathi,
“NguJuda ozahamba kuqala.”

¹⁹Ngakusasa ekuseni, abako-Israyeli bavuka bamisa izihonqo eduzane leGibheya. ²⁰Abantu bako-Israyeli baphuma ukuyakulwa labakoBhenjamini bema ezindaweni ezilungele ukubahlasela eGibheya. ²¹Abako-Bhenjamini baphuma eGibheya babulala abako-Israyeli abayizinkulungwane ezingamatshumi amabili lambili endaweni yokulwela mhlalokho.

²²Kodwa abantu bako-Israyeli banikana isibindi babuyela njalo ezindaweni zabo lapho ababekhona ngelanga lakuqala.

²³Abako-Israyeli bahamba bayakhala phambi kukaJehova kwaze kwaba kusihlwa, njalo babuza uJehova bathi,
“Singahamba njalo yini siyekulwa labakoBhenjamini, abafowethu na?”

UJehova waphendula yathi, “Hambani liyebahlasela.”

²⁴Abako-Israyeli basondela koBhenjamini ngosuku lwesibili.

²⁵Ngalesisikhathi, kwathi abakoBhenjamini sebephumile eGibheya ukuba bamelane labo, babulala abanye njalo abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi lathoba mibili, bonke behlome ngezinkemba.

²⁶Lapho-ke abako-Israyeli, abantu bonke, baya eBhetheli, bahlala khona bekhala phambi kukaJehova. Ngalelolangazibazila kwaze kwaba kusihlwa banikela leminikelo yokutshiswa kanye leminikelo yobudlelwane kuJehova. ²⁷Abako-Israyeli basebebuza uJehova. (Ngalezonsuku ibhokisi lesivumelwano sikaNkulunkulu lalikhonapho, ²⁸liloFinehasi indodana ka-Eleyazari, indodana ka-Aroni, ekhonza phambi kwalo.) Babuza bathi, “Singahamba njalo yini siyekulwa loBhenjamini umfowethu loba hatshi na?”

UJehova waphendula wathi,
“Hambani, ngoba kusasa ngizabanikela ezandleni zenu.”

²⁹Ngakho abako-Israyeli bacathama bezungeze iGibheya. ³⁰Bahamba bayahlasela abakoBhenjamini ngosuku lwesithathu basebelungela ukuhlasela iGibheya njengebabekwenze kuqala. ³¹AbakoBhenjamini baphuma babahlangabeza baholelwa kude ledolobho. Baqalisa ukubabulala abako-Israyeli njengakuqala, kwathi ababephosa babe ngamatshumi amathathu bafela egcekeni emigwaqweni – oya eBhetheli lomunye oya eGibheya.

³²Kwathi abakoBhenjamini besithi, “Siyabehlula njengakuqala,” abako-Israyeli bona besithi, “Kasihlehleleni emuva sibaholele kude ledolobho emigwaqweni.”

³³Bonke abantu bako-Israyeli basuka ezindaweni zabo baya eBhali Thamari, kwathi abako-Israyeli ababecatheme bahlasela bephuma endaweni yabo ngasentshonalanga kweGibheya.

³⁴Izinkulungwane ezilitshumi zabantu bako-Israyeli abakhethiweyo bahlasela iGileyadi mathupha. Ukulwa kwakunzima kakhulu ngakho kwenza abakoBhenjamini bangananzeleli ukuthi ingozi yayisisondele. ³⁵UJehova wamngoba uBhenjamini phambi kuka-Israyeli, njalo ngalelolangazibazila abako-Israyeli babulala abakoBhenjamini abayizi-25, 100, bonke behlome ngezinkemba. ³⁶Lapho-ke abakoBhenjamini babona ukuthi babenqotshiwe.

Khathesi abako-Israyeli basebevulele abakoBhenjamini isikhala, ngoba babethembe ababecatheme eduze leGibheya. ³⁷Abantu ababecatheme bagijimela eGibheya ngokuphangisa, basabalala kwathi idolobho lonke balihlasela ngenkemba. ³⁸Abantu bako-

Israyeli babehlele labacathamayo ukuthi benze iyezi elikhulu lentuthu phakathi kwedolobho,³⁹ lapho-ke abantu bako-Israyeli babezaphendukela ekulweni empini.

AbakoBhenjamini basebeqalisile ukubulala abako-Israyeli (babephosa babe ngamatshumi amathathu), njalo bathi, “Siyabehlula njengempini yakuqala.”⁴⁰ Kodwa kwathi insika yentuthu isiqalise ukuphakama edolobheni, abakoBhenjamini baphenduka babona intuthu yedolobho lonke iqonga isiya phezulu emkhathini.

⁴¹ Lapho-ke abako-Israyeli babaphendukela, abantu bakoBhenjamini batshaywa luvalo, ngoba babona ukuthi ingozi yayisibehlele.⁴² Ngakho babaleka phambi kwabako-Israyeli abaphuma emizini bababulalela khonapho.

⁴³ Babahanqa abakoBhenjamini, baxotshana labo bababhuqela eduze leGibheya kalula ngasempumalanga.

⁴⁴ Kwafa abakoBhenjamini abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi lesificamibili, bonke bengamaqhawe.

⁴⁵ Sebephenduke babaleka beqonda enkangala edwaleni laseRimoni, abako-Israyeli babulala abantu abayizinkulungwane ezinhlanu kulandela imigwaqo. Baqhubeka bexotshana labakoBhenjamini baze bayafika eGidamu babulala abanye njalo abayizinkulungwane ezimbili.

⁴⁶ Ngalelolanga kwafa abakoBhenjamini abalwa ngenkamba abayizinkulungwane ezingamatshumi amabili lanhlanu, bonke bengamaqhawe.

⁴⁷ Kodwa abantu abangamakhulu ayisithupha baphenduka babalekela enkangala edwaleni laseRimoni, lapho abahlala khona izinyanga ezine.

⁴⁸ Abantu bako-Israyeli babuyela koBhenjamini bahlasela imizi yonke ngenkamba, kubalwa lezifuyo lakho

konke okunye abakutholayo. Yonke imizi abafika kuyo bayithungela ngomlilo.

Abafazi babantu bakoBhenjamini

21 Abantu bako-Israyeli babefunge isifungo eMizipha bathi, “Akukho lamunye wethu ozakwendisela indodakazi yakhe emuntwini wakoBhenjamini.”

² Abantu baya eBhetheli, lapho abahlala khona phambi kukaNkulunkulu kwaze kwaba kusihlwa, bephakamise amazwi abo bekhala kabuhlungu besithi,³ “O Jehova, uNkulunkulu ka-Israyeli, kungani lokhu kwenzakale ku-Israyeli na? Kungani esinye isizwana singekho ko-Israyeli lamhla na?”

⁴ Ngakusasa ekuseni abantu bakha i-alithare banikela iminikelo yokutshiswa leminikelo yobudlelwane.

⁵ Basebebuza abako-Israyeli besithi, “Yisiphi kuzo zonke izizwana zako-Israyeli esingabuthananga phambi kukaJehova na?” Ngoba babefunge isifungo esiqinileyo bathi lowo owayengayikuba khona ekubuthaneni phambi kukaJehova eMizipha kwakuzamele abulawe.

⁶ Abako-Israyeli bezwa ubuhlungu ngabafowabo abakoBhenjamini. Bathi, “Lamhla esinye isizwana kasisekho ko-Israyeli.”⁷ Labo abaseleyo singabanika njani abafazi, njengoba thina sifunge isifungo ngoJehova ukuba singabendiseli loba yiphi yamadodakazi ethu?”

⁸ Babuye babuza bathi, “Yisiphi sezizwana zako-Israyeli esingabuthananga phambi kukaJehova

eMizipha na?” Bafumana ukuthi akulamuntu waseJabheshi Gileyadi owayefikile ezihonqweni elande umbuthano lowo. ⁹Ngoba kwathi bebala abantu, bathola ukuthi kwakungelamuntu waseJabheshi Gileyadi owayekhona.

¹⁰Ngakho ibandla lathuma abantu bempi abayizinkulungwane ezilitshumi lambili belaywa ukuthi baye eJabheshi Gileyadi babahlasele ngenkemba labo abahlala khona, kubalwa abesifazana labantwana. ¹¹Bathi, “Nanku elizakwenza: Bulalani wonke owesilisa lowesifazana wonke ongasiyo ntombi egcweleyo.” ¹²Phakathi kwabantu ababehlala eJabheshi Gileyadi bathola izintombi ezingamakhulu amane ezazingakaze zembathe lowesilisa, bazisa ezihonqweni eShilo kweleKhenani.

¹³Ibandla lonke lathumela ilizwi lokuthula kwabakoBhenjamini edwaleni laseRimoni. ¹⁴Ngakho abakoBhenjamini babuyela ngalesosikhathi basebepiwa abesifazana baseJabheshi Gileyadi ababeyekelwe. Kodwa kabawanelanga amadoda wonke.

¹⁵Abantu bezwa ubuhlungu ngabakoBhenjamini, ngoba uJehova wayeseyenze isikhexe phakathi kwezizwana zako-Israyeli. ¹⁶Abadala bebandla bathi, “Njengoba abasifazana bakoBhenjamini beqothulwe amadoda aseleyo siwazuzela njani abafazi na?” ¹⁷AbakoBhenjamini abasindayo kumele babe lezindlalifa, ukuze isizwana sako-Israyeli singapheli. ¹⁸Asingeke sibendisele amadodakazi ethu ngoba thina ama-Israyeli safunga isifungo lesi sathi: ‘Kaqaqalekiswe lowo owendisela umBhenjamini umfazi.’ ¹⁹Kodwa khangalani, kulomkhosi weminyaka yonke kaJehova eShilo, enyakatho kweBhetheli, ngasempumalanga

komgwaqo osuka eBhetheli usiya eShekemu, ngeningizimu kweLebhona.”

²⁰Ngakho balaya abakoBhenjamini bathi, “Hambani liyecatsha ezivinini ²¹lilinde. Lapho izintombi zaseShilo ziphuma ukuba zingene ekugideni, sukani ezivinini ligijima kuthi lowo lalowo wenu azibambe umfazi ezintombini zaseShilo libe selisiya elizweni lakoBhenjamini. ²²Oyise labanewabo bangakhonona kithi, thina sizakuthi kubo, ‘Ake lisenzele umusa ngokusisiza, ngoba kasibatholelanga abafazi ngesikhathi semp, njalo lina kalilacala, ngoba amadodakazi enu kaliwendiselanga kubo.’ ”

²³Ngakho lokho yikho okwenziwa ngabakoBhenjamini. Kwathi izintombi zigida, indoda yabamba intombi yahamba layo ukuba ibe ngumkayo. Babuyela-ke elifeni labo bayakha kutsha imizi, bahlala kuyo.

²⁴Ngalesisikhathi abako-Israyeli basuka kuleyondawo babuyela ekhaya ezizwaneni zabo lakuzinsendo zabo, ngulowo lalowo elifeni lakhe.

²⁵Ngalezozinsuku abako-Israyeli babengelankosi; umuntu wonke ezenzela ayekubona kulungile kuye.