

The First Book of Moses Called Genesis

Creation

- ¹ In the beginning when God created the heavens
and the earth,
² the earth was still unformed and chaotic,
with darkness on the surface of the abyss,
and the spirit of God hovering over the wa-
ters.
³ God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was
light.
⁴ God saw that the light was good.
He separated the light from the darkness,
⁵ calling the light "day" and the darkness
"night".

There was an evening and a morning, making the
first day.

- ⁶ Then God said, 'Let there be a dome between the
waters,
and let it separate the waters from the wa-
ters.'
⁷ So God made the dome to separate the wa-
ters below
from the waters which were above it.
It was so.
⁸ God called the dome the "sky".

There was an evening and a morning, making the second day.

⁹ Then God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together, and let the dry ground appear.'

It was so.

¹⁰ God called the dry ground "land" and he called the gathered waters "seas".
God saw that it was good.

¹¹ God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: Plants on the earth which yield their own kind of seed, and trees that bear fruits in which are their own seed.'

It was so.

¹² The earth sprouted vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit.
God saw that it was good.

¹³ There was an evening and a morning, making the third day.

¹⁴ Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the night from the day. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, the days, and the years.

¹⁵ Let them be lights in the dome of the sky to light the earth.'

It was so.

¹⁶ So God made the two great lights:

The greater to rule the day and the lesser to rule the night.

God made the stars also.

- ¹⁷ He placed all these lights in the dome of the sky to shed light upon the earth,
¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate light from darkness.
God saw that it was good.

- ¹⁹ There was an evening and a morning, making the fourth day.

- ²⁰ Then God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly over the earth in the open dome of the sky.'

- ²¹ God created the great sea monsters, all kinds of living, moving creatures with which the waters teem, and all kinds of winged birds.
God saw that it was good.

- ²² He blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful, increase, fill the oceans, and let the birds increase on the land.'

- ²³ There was an evening and a morning, making the fifth day.

- ²⁴ Then God said, 'Let the earth produce all kinds of living creatures: cattle and reptiles and wild beasts.'
It was so.

25 So God made all the different kinds of wild beasts,
and the cattle, and everything that crawls
upon the ground.

God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, 'Let us make humans who are
images of us, who are like us.

Let them rule over the fish of the sea,
the birds of the sky, the cattle, the whole earth,
and all the reptiles that crawl upon the
ground.'

27 So God created humans in his image,
he created them in the image of God.
He created them male and female.

28 Then God blessed them, and said to them:

'Be fruitful, grow in number,
fill the earth and govern it;
rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the
sky,
and over every living thing that crawls on the
ground,'

29 God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant
throughout all the earth,
and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit.
They will be food for you,

30 and to every wild beast and to every bird of
the sky,
and to everything that crawls on the earth –
everything with the breath of life in it,
I give every green plant for food.'

It was so.

³¹ When God saw all that he had made,
he perceived that it was very good.

There was an evening and a morning, making the
sixth day.

2

¹ So the heavens and the earth were finished, and
everything in them.

² When on the seventh day God finished the
work which he had done,
he rested that day from all his work.

³ God blessed the seventh day and set it apart,
for in it he rested from all the creative work
which he had done.

The garden

⁴ This is the story of the heavens and earth when
they were created.

At the time when the LORD God made earth and
heaven,

⁵ there were not yet any plants on the earth, and
no vegetation had sprung up; for the LORD God
had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was
no one to till the soil.

⁶ A mist used to rise from the earth and water all
the surface of the ground.

⁷ Then the LORD God moulded a human being
out of dust taken from the ground and breathed
into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became
a living being.

⁸ The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, far in the East; and placed the human he had formed there.

⁹ From the soil the LORD God made grow all kinds of trees that are pleasant to look at and good for food, with the tree of life also in the middle of the garden and the tree that gives the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden and watered the garden, and from there branched into four.

¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon, which flows round the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.

¹² The gold of that land is pure, and aromatic resins and onyx stone are found there.

¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon, which flows round the whole land of Cush,

¹⁴ and the name of the third river is the Tigris, which heads toward the east of Asshur. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ Then the LORD God took the human and placed him in the garden of Eden to till it and to care for it.

¹⁶ The LORD God also gave the human this command: 'You may freely eat from every tree of the garden,

¹⁷ except from the tree that gives the knowledge of good and evil; from this you must not eat, for on the day that you eat from it you will surely die.'

¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the human to be alone; I will make a helper suited to him.'

¹⁹ So out of the ground the LORD God formed all the wild beasts and birds, and made them come

to the human to see what he would call them. Whatever he called each living creature, that was its name.

²⁰ So the human, Adam gave names to all cattle and all the wild birds and beasts. But there was no companion suitable for him.

²¹ Then the LORD God caused the human to fall into a deep sleep, and while he slept, he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.

²² With the rib which he had taken from the human, the LORD built up a woman and brought her to the human.

²³ Then the human said, 'This now is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She will be called Woman, for from man she was taken.'

²⁴ For this reason a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and the two become one flesh.

²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked, yet felt no shame.

3

¹ Now the snake was craftier than any other wild beast that the LORD God had made. It said to the woman, 'Has God really said, "You must not eat from any tree of the garden"?''

² The woman answered, 'We are allowed to eat the fruit of all the trees of the garden;

³ it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God has said, "You must not eat from it, nor should you touch it, for if you do, you will die." '

⁴ Then the snake said to the woman, 'You will not die!

⁵ God knows that on the day you eat some of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like gods, knowing what is good and what is evil.'

⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, attractive to look at and desirable for acquiring wisdom, she took some of its fruit and ate. Then she gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they that they were naked, so they sewed fig-leaves together to cover themselves.

⁸ But when they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the evening breeze, the man and his wife hid from him among the garden trees.

⁹ When the LORD God called to the man, 'Where are you?'

¹⁰ he replied, 'I heard you in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself.'

¹¹ The LORD God said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree from which I ordered you not to eat?'

¹² The man answered, 'The woman you placed beside me, she gave me fruit from the tree and I ate.'

¹³ The LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman replied, 'The snake deceived me, and I ate.'

¹⁴ Then the LORD God said to the snake:
'Because you have done this,
you will be more accursed than all cattle
and all the wild beasts.
You will crawl on your belly

and eat dust
all your life.

¹⁵ I will establish hostility between you and the woman,
between your offspring and hers,
who will wound your head,
and you will wound their heel.'

¹⁶ To the woman he said,
'I will greatly increase your anguished toil in pregnancy;
with pain will you bear children.
You will yearn for your husband,
but he will rule over you.'

¹⁷ To Adam he said,
'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,
and ate from the tree
about which I ordered you:
"You must never eat from it"
the ground will be cursed because of you;
as long as you live, you will earn a living only by
anguished toil.

¹⁸ The ground will always bring forth thorns and
thistles,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat bread,
until you return to the ground,
for from it you were taken;
for dust you are,
and to dust you will return!'

²⁰ The man, Adam, named his wife Eve, because
she was the mother of all living people.

²¹ The LORD God made clothes from animal skins for Adam and his wife and dressed them.

²² Then the LORD God said: 'The man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not reach out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.'

²³ So the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he had been taken.

²⁴ He drove out Adam and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim, and the blazing whirling sword, to bar the way to the tree of life.

4

Cain and Abel

¹ Adam lay with his wife Eve and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain, and she said, 'I have created a man with the help of the LORD!'

² She also gave birth to his brother Abel. Abel was a shepherd, while Cain was a farmer.

³ In the course of time Cain brought some of the ground's produce as an offering to the LORD.

⁴ Abel too brought some of the choicest animals of his flock and sacrificed their fat pieces. The LORD looked with approval on Abel and his offering

⁵ but he could not receive Cain and his offering with approval.

Cain burned with anger and his face fell.

⁶ So the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry and why do you scowl?

⁷ If you do what is right and good, can't you hold your head up high? But if you do wrong, sin crouches at the door and longs to have you, but you must master it.'

⁸ Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let us go into the field.'^{*} While they were there, Cain attacked his brother and killed him.

⁹ Then the LORD asked Cain, 'Where is your brother Abel?' He answered, 'I do not know! Am I my brother's keeper?'

¹⁰ 'What have you done?' the LORD replied, 'Listen! Your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground.'

¹¹ Even now you are cursed by the very ground that has opened to receive your brother's blood shed by your hand.

¹² From now on when you till the ground, it will no longer yield its best to you. You will be a vagabond and a wandering refugee upon the earth.'

¹³ Then Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment is too much for me to bear.'

¹⁴ Look! Today you banish me from the ground. I must hide in your presence. I will be a wandering refugee upon the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me!'

¹⁵ But the LORD said to him, 'If anyone kills you, the crime will be avenged sevenfold.' So the LORD placed a distinctive mark on Cain, to keep anyone who found him from killing him.

* **4:8** As in most ancient versions, however the Masoretic Text omits 'Let us go into the field'

¹⁶ Cain departed from the LORD's presence and lived east of Eden in the land of Wandering.

Genealogy

¹⁷ Cain lay with his wife. She became pregnant, giving birth to Enoch. Cain built a city, and named it after his son Enoch.

¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech.

Lamech's vengeance

¹⁹ Lamech took two wives; the name of one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal, who became the ancestor of the people who live in tents and have cattle.

²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the ancestor of the people who play the harp and flute.

²² As for Zillah, she gave birth to Tubal-cain, who forged all sort of tools from copper and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives:

‘Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;

wives of Lamech, listen to my speech;
because I have slain a man for wounding me,
and a young man for bruising me.

²⁴ If Cain is to be avenged sevenfold,
then Lamech will be seventy and sevenfold.’

Genealogy

²⁵ Adam lay with his wife again and she bore a son. She named him Seth: ‘because God gave me another son for Abel, who was killed by Cain.’

²⁶ Seth too had a son. He named him Enosh. That was when people began worshipping in the name of LORD.

5

¹ This is the list of the descendants of Adam. On the day that God created human beings, he made them in his own image.

² He created them male and female created, and blessed them, and called their name Adam.

³ Adam lived for a hundred and thirty years, and had a son in his own likeness, after his image; and named him Seth.

⁴ Adam lived for eight hundred years after he had Seth; and he had sons and daughters.

⁵ In total, Adam lived for nine hundred and thirty years; and then he died.

⁶ Seth lived for a hundred and five years, and fathered Enosh.

⁷ Seth lived a further eight hundred and seven years after he had Enosh, and had sons and daughters.

⁸ In total, Seth lived for nine hundred and twelve years; and then he died.

⁹ Enosh lived for ninety years, and fathered Kenan.

¹⁰ Enosh lived a further eight hundred and fifteen years after he had Kenan, and had sons and daughters.

¹¹ In total, Enosh lived for nine hundred and five years; and then he died.

¹² Kenan lived for seventy years, and fathered Mahalalel.

¹³ Kenan lived for eight hundred and forty years after he had Mahalalel, and had sons and daughters.

¹⁴ In total, Kenan lived for nine hundred and ten years; and then he died.

¹⁵ Mahalalel lived for sixty and five years, and fathered Jared.

¹⁶ Mahalalel lived for eight hundred and thirty years after he had Jared, and had sons and daughters.

¹⁷ In total, Mahalalel lived for eight hundred ninety and five years; and then he died.

¹⁸ Jared lived for a hundred sixty and two years, and fathered Enoch.

¹⁹ Jared lived for eight hundred years after he had Enoch, and had sons and daughters.

²⁰ In total, Jared lived for nine hundred sixty and two years; and then he died.

²¹ Enoch lived for sixty and five years, and fathered Methuselah.

²² Enoch walked with God for three hundred years after he had Methuselah, and had sons and daughters.

²³ In total, Enoch lived for three hundred sixty and five years.

²⁴ Enoch walked with God, and then he was gone; because God took him.

²⁵ Methuselah lived for a hundred eighty and seven years, and fathered Lamech.

²⁶ Methuselah lived for seven hundred eighty and two years after he had Lamech, and had sons and daughters.

²⁷ In total, Methuselah lived for nine hundred sixty and nine years; and then he died.

²⁸ Lamech lived for a hundred eighty and two years, and had a son.

²⁹ He named him Noah, saying: 'He will bring us relief from our work and the toil of our hands which comes from the ground the LORD cursed.'

³⁰ Lamech lived for five hundred ninety and five years after he had Noah, and had sons and daughters.

³¹ In total, Lamech lived for seven hundred seventy and seven years; and then he died.

³² When Noah was five hundred years old, he fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6

The divine beings and the beautiful daughters

¹ When people began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,

² some of the heavenly beings saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful; and they took them as wives, whoever they chose.

³ But the LORD said: 'My spirit will not abide in people forever, because they are flesh; therefore they will live for only a hundred and twenty years.'

⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days (and later too) when the heavenly beings lay with the human daughters who had their children. These were the mighty heroes of old, men of renown.

The flood

⁵ When the LORD saw that people's wickedness was increasing in the world, and that the trend of their thoughts was at all times toward evil,

⁶ he was greatly grieved and regretted that he had made people on the earth.

⁷ Therefore the LORD said, 'I will destroy all living beings from off the ground – people, animals, creeping things, and birds – because I regret that I have made them.'

⁸ But Noah had won the LORD's favour.

⁹ This is the story of Noah. Among the people of his time, Noah was righteous and wholehearted; Noah walked with God.

¹⁰ Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹ God saw that the earth was corrupt and full of violence.

¹² God looked at the earth and saw that it was corrupt; all living things on the earth had become corrupt in their ways.

¹³ So God said to Noah, 'I have determined to put an end to all living beings, for the earth is filled with their acts of injustice; I am going to destroy them from the earth.'

¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of cypress wood. Construct rooms in the ark, and coat it within and without with pitch.

¹⁵ This is how you must build it: the length of the ark must be five hundred feet, its breadth eighty feet, and its height fifty feet.

¹⁶ Make a roof for it and place the door on the side. Construct it with lower, second, and third storeys.

¹⁷ For I am about to bring floods of water upon the earth to destroy from under heaven every living thing in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth will die.

¹⁸ 'But I will make a covenant with you. Go into the ark with your sons, your wife and their wives,

¹⁹ and take with you into the ark two of every kind living thing, a male and a female,

²⁰ birds, animals and creeping things, so that they might be kept alive.

²¹ Take and store food for them and you.'

²² Noah did all this. He did everything that God told him to.

7

¹ Then the LORD said to Noah, 'Enter with all your household into the ark; for I see that in this age you are living before me an upright life.

² Take seven of all the beasts that are fit for food and sacrifice, the male and the female; but of the beasts that are not fit for food and sacrifice take only two, the male and the female;

³ and of the wild birds that are fit for food and sacrifice take seven, to keep the species alive on the earth.

⁴ After seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will destroy from the surface of the ground every living thing that I have made.'

⁵ Then Noah did all that the LORD commanded him.

⁶ He was six hundred years old, and when the waters of the flood came upon the earth

⁷ he, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, entered the ark because of the waters of the flood
⁸ together with the beasts that were fit for food and sacrifice and the beasts that were not fit, and the birds, and everything that creeps upon the ground.

⁹ Two by two, male and female, they entered the ark as God had commanded Noah.

¹⁰ After seven days, the flood waters came.

¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that very day, all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the windows of heaven were opened – and

¹² it rained for forty days and forty nights.

¹³ That was the day that Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, went into the ark, and

¹⁴ every type of animal, and cattle, and creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and bird

¹⁵ went with Noah into the ark, two by two of every kind of living thing.

¹⁶ They went in, male and female, as God had commanded Noah; and the LORD shut Noah in the ark.

¹⁷ The flood continued for forty days, and the waters increased and raised up the ark, and it was lifted high above the earth.

¹⁸ It floated on the surface as the waters rose higher over the land.

¹⁹ Higher the waters rose over the land – until the highest mountains were covered

²⁰ by more than twenty feet.

²¹ All creatures on the land, bird and cattle and animals, every creature that swarms on the ground, every person,

²² everything on dry land in whose nostrils was the faintest breath of life, died.

²³ The LORD destroyed everything that existed upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and creeping things, and the birds of the heavens, and Noah only was left and they who were with him in the ark.

²⁴ The waters did not start to go down for a hundred and fifty days.

8

¹ Then God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the animals that were with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to blow over the earth, and the flood subsided,

² the fountains of the deed were stopped and the windows of heaven closed, and the rain from heaven ceased,

³ and the waters withdrew more and more from the land for a hundred and fifty days.

⁴ On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

⁵ The waters continued to go down until, on the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains could be seen.

⁶ After forty days Noah opened the window of the ark,

⁷ and sent out a raven; and it kept going to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth.

⁸ He also sent out a dove to see if the waters had subsided from the surface of the ground;

⁹ but the dove found no rest for her foot, and so returned to him to the ark, for the waters covered the surface of the whole earth. So he reached out his hand and took her and brought her back into the ark.

¹⁰ Then he waited seven days longer and again sent out the dove from the ark.

¹¹ The dove came in to him at dusk and in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive-leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.

¹² He waited seven days more and sent out the dove; but it did not return to him again.

¹³ So it was that in the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the waters had dried up. Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and saw that the surface of the ground was dry.

¹⁴ It was the twenty-seventh day of the second month.

¹⁵ God said to Noah,

¹⁶ 'Leave the ark with your wife and sons and their wives.

¹⁷ Bring out every living creature, every bird, cattle, and creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they can spread over the earth, and be fruitful and multiply.'

¹⁸ So Noah left the ark with his sons and his wife and his son's wives,

¹⁹ and every living creature, every creeping thing, every bird came out one kind after another.

²⁰ Noah built an altar to the LORD and took one of every beast and bird that was fit for sacrifice and

offered burnt-offerings on the altar.

²¹ When the LORD smelled the pleasing odour, he said to himself, 'I will never again curse the ground because of people because the inclination of their heart is evil from their youth, nor will I again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

²² While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, will not cease.'

9

¹ Then God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, 'Bear children and multiply and repopulate the earth.

² Every wild beast and bird and everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea will fear and dread you; into your hand they are given.

³ Every moving thing that lives will be food for you; as I gave the green herbs, I give them all to you.

⁴ Only you must not eat flesh while the life is in it, that is, the blood.

⁵ 'Moreover, your own lifeblood will I require for a person's life; from every beast will I require it, and from everyone who takes another's life.

⁶ Whoever sheds a person's blood, by people will their blood be shed; for God made people in his own image.

⁷ But you are to bear children and repopulate the whole earth and subdue it.'

⁸ God also said to Noah and to his sons with him,

⁹ 'Now I make this covenant with you and with your descendants

¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, with the birds, the cattle, and every wild animal that is with you of all that have gone out of the ark, even with every beast of the earth.

¹¹ This is my covenant: No living thing will ever again be cut off by the waters of the flood, and there will never again be a flood to destroy the earth.'

¹² God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make for all time between me and you and every living creature that is with you:

¹³ I have placed my bow in the cloud and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the inhabitants of the earth.

¹⁴ Whenever I bring a cloud over the earth and the bow is seen in the cloud,

¹⁵ I will remember the agreement which is between me and you and every living creature; and the waters will never again become a flood to destroy all living things.

¹⁶ Whenever the bow is seen in the cloud, I will see it and remember the everlasting agreement between God and every living creature on earth,'

¹⁷ God said to Noah, 'it is the sign of the covenant which I have made with everything that lives on earth.'

Genealogy

¹⁸ The sons of Noah, who left the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; and Ham was the father of Canaan.

¹⁹ The descendants of these three sons of Noah spread over the whole earth.

Noah and the first vineyard

²⁰ Now Noah, the farmer, was the first to plant a vineyard.

²¹ When he drank the wine he became drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent.

²² Then Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers about it.

²³ But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and went backward to cover the nakedness of their father, their faces being turned away so that they did not see their father's nakedness.

²⁴ When Noah sobered up and learned what his youngest son had done to him,

²⁵ he said,
Cursed be Canaan;
may he be a slave of slaves to his brothers.

²⁶ Also he said:
Blessed of the LORD be Shem;
and let Canaan be a slave to him.

²⁷ God enlarge Japheth
and let him live in the tents of Shem.
Let Canaan be a slave to him as well.

Genealogy

²⁸ Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

²⁹ All the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.

10

¹ Now these are the descendants of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and to them were sons born after the flood.

² The sons of Japheth: Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

³ The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

⁴ The sons of Javan: Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

⁵ From the descendants of these were the peoples of the coasts and islands divided in their lands, each with its own language, after their families, in their nations.

⁶ The sons of Ham: Cush, and Mizraim, and Put, and Canaan.

⁷ The sons of Cush: Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah: Sheba, and Dedan.

⁸ Cush fathered Nimrod; he began to be known as a mighty one in the earth.

⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; which is why people say: 'Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.'

¹⁰ The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

¹¹ Asshur left that land and built Nineveh, and Rehoboth-ir, and Calah,

¹² and Resen between Nineveh and Calah – which is the great city.

¹³ Mizraim fathered Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,

¹⁴ and Pathrusim, and Casluhim – from whom went forth the Philistines – and Caphtorim.

¹⁵ Canaan fathered Zidon his firstborn, and Heth;

¹⁶ and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite;

¹⁷ and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite;

¹⁸ and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite; and afterward were the families of the Canaanite spread abroad.

¹⁹ The border of the Canaanite was from Zidon, as you go toward Gerar, to Gaza; as you go toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, to Lasha.

²⁰ These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, in their nations.

²¹ To Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, to him also were children born.

²² The sons of Shem: Elam, and Asshur, and Arpachshad, and Lud, and Aram.

²³ The sons of Aram: Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

²⁴ Arpachshad fathered Shelah; and Shelah fathered Eber.

²⁵ To Eber were born two sons; the name of the one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.

²⁶ Joktan fathered Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah;

²⁷ and Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah;

²⁸ and Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba;

²⁹ and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan.

³⁰ Their settlements were from Mesha, as you go toward Sephar, to the mountain of the east.

³¹ These are the sons of Shem, after their fami-

lies, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

³² These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations; and of these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

11

Babel

¹ All the inhabitants of the earth had one language and vocabulary;

² and as they travelled westward, they found a broad valley in the land of Shinar, and made their home there.

³ Then they said one to another, 'Come, let us make bricks and thoroughly bake them.' So they had bricks for stone and asphalt for mortar.

⁴ They said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will touch the heavens. We will make a landmark, so that we are not scattered over all the earth.'

⁵ But when the LORD came down to see the city and tower that people had built,

⁶ he said, 'See, they are one people and all have one language. This is only the beginning of their activity, and now nothing that they propose to do will seem too difficult for them.'

⁷ Come, let us go down there and confuse their language, so that they do not understand each other's speech.'

⁸ So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth; and they ceased building the city.

⁹ That is why they named it Babel, for there the LORD confused the language of all the inhabitants of earth and scattered them over the whole world.

Genealogy

¹⁰ These are the descendants of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old, and fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood.

¹¹ Shem lived for five hundred years after he fathered Arpachshad, and fathered sons and daughters.

¹² Arpachshad lived for five and thirty years, and fathered Shelah.

¹³ Arpachshad lived for four hundred and three years after he fathered Shelah, and fathered sons and daughters.

¹⁴ Shelah lived for thirty years, and fathered Eber.

¹⁵ Shelah lived for four hundred and three years after he fathered Eber, and fathered sons and daughters.

¹⁶ Eber lived for four and thirty years, and fathered Peleg.

¹⁷ Eber lived for four hundred and thirty years after he fathered Peleg, and fathered sons and daughters.

¹⁸ Peleg lived for thirty years, and fathered Reu.

¹⁹ Peleg lived for two hundred and nine years after he fathered Reu, and fathered sons and daughters.

²⁰ Reu lived for two and thirty years, and fathered Serug.

²¹ Reu lived for two hundred and seven years after he fathered Serug, and fathered sons and daughters.

²² Serug lived for thirty years, and fathered Nahor.

²³ Serug lived for two hundred years after he fathered Nahor, and fathered sons and daughters.

²⁴ Nahor lived for nine and twenty years, and fathered Terah.

²⁵ Nahor lived for a hundred and nineteen years after he fathered Terah, and fathered sons and daughters.

²⁶ Terah lived for seventy years, and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

²⁷ Now these are the descendants of Terah. Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.

²⁸ Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldees.

²⁹ Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

³⁰ Sarai was barren; she had no child.

³¹ Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went from Ur of the Chaldees, to go to the land of Canaan; and they went to Haran, and dwelt there.

³² In total, Terah lived for two hundred and five years; and died in Haran.

12

Abram's Journey

¹ The LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your relatives and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

² I will make of you a great nation; and I will surely bless you and make your name famous, so that you will be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you, and all the families of the earth will ask for themselves a blessing like your own.'

⁴ So Abram set out, as the LORD had commanded him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

⁵ He took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son and all the slaves that they had acquired in Haran, and started for the land of Canaan.

⁶ Abram passed through the land to a place called Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites lived there.

⁷ The LORD appeared to Abram and said, 'To your descendants I will give this land.' There Abram built an altar to the LORD who had appeared to him.

⁸ From there he moved on to the hill at the east of Bethel and pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east, and there too he built an altar to the LORD and prayed to him.

⁹ Abram moved on, going from place to place toward the Nagreb.

¹⁰ There was a famine in the land, so Abram went down to Egypt to live there; because the famine was severe in the land.

¹¹ As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, 'You are a beautiful woman;

¹² so that when the Egyptians see you, they will say, “She is his wife”; and they will kill me, but let you live.

¹³ Say you are my sister, so that everything may go well for me because of you and my life will be spared.’

¹⁴ When Abram arrived in Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was very beautiful.

¹⁵ The officials of Pharaoh, when they saw her, praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into Pharaoh’s household.

¹⁶ He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, and oxen and donkeys, and male and female slaves, and female donkeys, and camels.

¹⁷ But the LORD sent great plagues to Pharaoh and his household because of Sarai, Abram’s wife.

¹⁸ Pharaoh called Abram and said, ‘What is this that you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?

¹⁹ Why did you say, “She is my sister,” so that I took her to be my wife? Here she is, take her and go.’

²⁰ Pharaoh gave his men orders to send him on his way with his wife and all his possessions.

13

¹ So Abram and his wife and all his possessions left Egypt and went to the Negreb and Lot went with him.

² Abram was now very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

³ He journeyed on from the Negreb in stages towards Bethel, to the place where he had earlier pitched his tent between Bethel and Ai

⁴ and had set up the alter to worship the LORD.

⁵ Lot, who went with Abram, also had so many flocks and herds and tents

⁶ that the land was not fertile enough to support them both. They had too many animals to live in the same place.

⁷ At that time, the Canaanites and Perizzites were living in the land. So when there was a quarrel between Lot's herdsmen and Abram's herdsmen,

⁸ Abram said to Lot, 'There should be no quarrels between me and you, or between my herdsmen and yours, because we are relatives.

⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Let's separate. If you go to the left, then I will go to the right; or if you go to the right, then I will go to the left.'

¹⁰ Then Lot looked about and saw that all the plain of the Jordan, as far as Zoar, was well watered everywhere, like a garden of the LORD. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan and went on to the east; and they separated from one another.

¹² Abram lived in the land of Canaan and Lot lived in the cities of the plain and moved his tent as far as Sodom.

¹³ (But the men of Sodom were very wicked and sinned against the LORD.)

¹⁴ The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had gone away from him, 'Lift up your eyes and look from

the place where you are northward, southward, eastward and westward,

¹⁵ for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever.

¹⁶ I will make your descendants as many as the dust of the earth, so that if someone could count the dust of the earth, then your descendants could also be counted.

¹⁷ Rise, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.'

¹⁸ Then Abram moved his tent and lived in the oak grove of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar to the LORD.

14

Victory over the Four Eastern Kings

¹ In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim,

² they went to war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).

³ All these joined forces together in the valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea).

⁴ For twelve years they had been subject to Chedorlaonier, but in the thirteenth year they had rebelled.

⁵ So in the fourteenth year Chedorlaonier, and the kings that were with him, came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-Kiriathaim,

⁶ and the Horites in their hill country of Seir, to El-Paran, which is on the edge of the wilderness.

⁷ Then they returned and came to En-Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and laid waste all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, who lived in Hazazon-Tamar.

⁸ So the king of Sodom went out together with the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar); and they set themselves in battle array against them in the valley of Siddim;

⁹ against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings against the five.

¹⁰ Now the valley of Siddim is full of bitumen pits; so when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell into them, but those who remained fled to the mountain.

¹¹ Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions and went their way.

¹² They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who was living in Sodom, and his goods and departed.

¹³ But one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner, and these were supporters of Abram.

¹⁴ When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued as far as Dan.

¹⁵ Then, dividing his band in order to attack the kings by night, he with his servants attacked them, and pursued them to Hobah, which is north of Damascus.

¹⁶ So he brought back all the goods, and also his kinsman Lot, with his goods, as well as the women and the people.

¹⁷ Then the king of Sodom went out to meet him, after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Vale).

¹⁸ Melchizedek king of Salem also brought out bread and wine; and he was priest of God Most High.

¹⁹ He blessed him saying:
Blessed be Abram before God Most High,
possessor of heaven and earth.

²⁰ Blessed be God Most High,
who has delivered your foes into your power.

Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

²¹ The king of Sodom said to Abram, 'Give me my people, and take the goods for yourself.'

²² But Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'I have lifted up my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth,

²³ that I would not take a thread nor a sandal-thong nor anything that is yours, so that you could not say, "I have made Abram rich."

²⁴ By no means! Only that which the servants have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre - let them take their portion.'

15

Abram's vision

¹ After these things God spoke to Abram in a vision saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield. Your reward will be exceedingly great.'

² But Abram said, 'Lord GOD, what can you give me? I am childless, and the person who will be possessor of my house is Eliezer of Damascus,

³ to me you have given no offspring, and, so a slave born in my house is my heir.'

⁴ The word of the LORD came to him, 'This man will not be your heir, but a child of your own will be your heir.'

⁵ Then God brought him outside and said, 'Look now toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them! So will your descendants be.'

⁶ Abram believed in the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness,

⁷ and said to him, 'I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give to you this land to inherit it.'

⁸ Abram said, 'Lord GOD, how will I know that I will inherit it?'

⁹ The LORD said to him, 'Bring me a heifer of three years old, and a female goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.'

¹⁰ Abram brought him all these, and divided them in the middle, and laid each half over against the other; but the birds he did not divide.

¹¹ The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

¹² When the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a horror of great darkness fell on him.

¹³ The LORD said to Abram, 'Know certainly that your descendants will be foreigners in a land that is not theirs, and will be slaves there; and they will be held there for four hundred years.

¹⁴ But I will judge that nation, whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many goods.

¹⁵ But you will go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age.

¹⁶ In the fourth generation they return here again; for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full.'

¹⁷ When the sun had set and it was dark, there appeared a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between the pieces of the animals.

¹⁸ At that time the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.'

¹⁹ (This includes the lands of the Kenite, the Kenizzite, the Kadmonite,

²⁰ the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Rephaim,

²¹ the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Girgashite, and Jebusite).

16

Hagar and Ishmael

¹ Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children, but she had an Egyptian slave-girl whose name was Hagar.

² Sarai said to Abram, 'the LORD has denied me children; Take my slave-girl; maybe I will obtain children by her.' Then Abram listened to her

³ so she took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave-girl, after Abram had lived for ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to Abram her husband to be his wife

⁴ and Abram lay with Hagar, and she conceived. When she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.

⁵ Sarai complained to Abram, 'May the wrong I suffer be on you! I myself gave my slave-girl to you; and now that she sees that she has conceived, I am despised by her; may the LORD judge between me and you.'

⁶ But Abram said to Sarai, 'Your maid-servant is in your power, do to her whatever seems right to you.' Then Sarai ill-treated her so that she fled from her presence.

⁷ The messenger of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring in the way to Shur.

⁸ He said, 'Hagar, Sarai's slave-girl, where have you come from? And where are you going?' She said, 'I am fleeing from the presence of mistress Sarai.'

⁹ Then the messenger of the LORD said to her, 'Return to your mistress and submit yourself to her authority.'

¹⁰ Moreover the messenger of the LORD said to her, 'I will make your descendants so many that they can not be numbered because they are so numerous.'

¹¹ The messenger of the LORD also said to her, 'You are pregnant, and will have a son; you must call him Ishmael God hears, because the LORD has heard of your ill-treatment.'

¹² He will be like a wild donkey,
his hand against every man,
and every man's hand against him;
and he will live at odds with all his relatives.

¹³ Then she called the name of the LORD, who had spoken to her, El-roi (You are a God who sees me); for she said, 'Have I seen God and am I still alive after I have looked upon him?'

¹⁴ Therefore the well is called Beer-lahai-roi, (it is between Kadesh and Bered)

¹⁵ Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old, when Hagar bore Ishmael.

17

Abram becomes Abraham

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD revealed himself to Abram and said to him, 'I am God Almighty, walk before me and be blameless

² and I will make my covenant between me and you and will make your descendants exceedingly numerous.'

³ Then Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying

⁴ 'I make this solemn promise to you: you will be the father of a multitude of nations.

⁵ Neither will your name any longer be Abram, but your name will be Abraham; for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.

⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and will make nations of you, and kings will spring from you.

⁷ I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations, an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your descendants after you.

⁸ I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land where you are now foreigners, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.'

Circumcision

⁹ God also said to Abraham, 'As for you, you must keep the requirements of my covenant, you, and your descendants after you throughout their generations.

¹⁰ This is my covenant, which you must keep, between me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you must be circumcised.

¹¹ Whenever you are circumcised, the flesh of your foreskin will be a sign of a covenant between me and you.

¹² Every male when he is eight days old, must be circumcised throughout your generations, whether he is born in the house, or bought with money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring.

¹³ The slave who is born in your house and the one who is bought with your money must be

circumcised. The sign of my covenant will be in your flesh – an everlasting agreement.

¹⁴ As for the uncircumcised male, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that one will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.'

Sarai becomes Sarah

¹⁵ Then God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, do not call her name Sarai, but Sarah.

¹⁶ I will bless her, and will give you a son from her: I will bless her, and she will become the mother of nations; kings of peoples will descend from her.'

¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself. 'Will a child be born to one who is an hundred years old? Will Sarah who is ninety years old bear children?'

¹⁸ Abraham said to God, 'If only Ishmael might live with your blessing!'

¹⁹ But God said, 'No. But Sarah your wife is about to bear your a son; call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

²⁰ However I have heard you regarding Ishmael: I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful and his descendants exceedingly many. Twelve princes he will father, and I will make him a great nation.

²¹ But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this appointed time next year.'

²² When he had finished talking with him, God left Abraham.

Abraham and Isaac's circumcision

²³ Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all who were born in his house, and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin that very same day, as God had said to him.

²⁴ Now Abraham was ninety-nine years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

²⁵ Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

²⁶ On this very same day was Abraham circumcised, with Ishmael his son.

²⁷ All the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from foreigners, were circumcised with him.

18

The guests at the oaks of Mamre

¹ The LORD also appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he was sitting at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day;

² and, as he looked up, three men stood there before him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed to the ground

³ and said, 'Sirs, if you are willing to do me a favour, do not, I beg of you, pass by your servant.

⁴ Since you have come to your servant, let a little water be brought, so that you may wash your feet, and lie down under the tree.

⁵ And let me bring some food, so that you may refresh yourselves; afterward you may go on your way.' They replied, 'Do as you have said.'

⁶ So Abraham hastened to Sarah's tent and said, 'Make ready quickly four measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes.'

⁷ Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a calf that was tender and good, and gave it to the servant, and he prepared it quickly.

⁸ Then Abraham took curd and milk, with the calf that he had prepared, and served them; and he waited on them under the tree, while they ate.

⁹ Then they said to him, 'Where is your wife?' He said, 'There, within the tent.'

¹⁰ One of them said, 'I will surely return to you about nine months from now, and then, Sarah your wife will have a son.' But Sarah was listening behind the door of the tent.

¹¹ Now Sarah and Abraham were advanced in years;

¹² so she laughed to herself, saying, 'After I and my husband are so old will I have pleasure?'

¹³ But the LORD said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh, saying, "Will I, indeed, even when I am old give birth to a child?"'

¹⁴ Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the appointed time about nine months from now, I will return to you and Sarah will have a son.'

¹⁵ Sarah was frightened and denied that she had laughed, but he said 'Yes, you laughed.'

¹⁶ Then the men started from there and looked off in the direction of Sodom; and Abraham went along with them to start them on their way.

¹⁷ the LORD said, ‘Should I conceal from Abraham that which I am about to do,

¹⁸ since Abraham will become a great and mighty nation and all the nations of the earth will want a blessing like his for themselves?

¹⁹ For I have chosen him in order that he may teach his sons and his household after him, and that they may keep the way of the LORD, by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring on Abraham that which he has promised concerning him.’

Sodom and Gomorrah

²⁰ The LORD said, ‘The complaint has come that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah have committed great and terrible sins.

²¹ I will go down and see whether they have done exactly as the complaint comes to me; and if they have not, I will know.’

²² As the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, Abraham remained standing before the LORD*

²³ Abraham drew near to the LORD and said, ‘Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?

²⁴ Suppose there are within the city fifty people who are righteous. Will you sweep it away and not forgive the place for sake of the fifty righteous who are in it?

²⁵ Far be it from you to do this: to slay the righteous with the wicked! And that the righteous should be treated as the wicked, far be it from you!

* **18:22** As per the Masoretic Text. Another ancient Jewish tradition reads ‘The Lord remained standing before Abraham’.

Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?’

²⁶ The LORD said, ‘If I find in the city of Sodom fifty who are righteous, I will spare the whole place for their sake.’

²⁷ Abraham answered, ‘I have dared to speak to the LORD, even though I am but dust and ashes.’

²⁸ Suppose there be five lacking of the fifty righteous. Will you sweep away all the city for lack of five?’ The LORD said, ‘I will not sweep it away, if I find forty-five there.’

²⁹ Then Abraham spoke to him again, and said, ‘Suppose forty are found there?’ He replied, ‘For the sake of forty I will not do it.’

³⁰ Then Abraham said, ‘Oh, let not the LORD be angry, but let me speak. Suppose thirty are found there?’ He answered, ‘I will not do it, if I find thirty there.’

³¹ Then Abraham said, ‘You see that I have dared to speak to the LORD. Suppose twenty are found there?’ He replied, ‘For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.’

³² Then Abraham said, ‘Oh, let not the LORD be angry, but let me speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there?’ And he said, ‘For the sake of the ten I will not destroy it.’

³³ Then the LORD went his way, and Abraham returned home.

19

¹ Two messengers came to Sodom in the evening, as Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom.

When Lot saw them, he rose up to meet them, and he bowed with his face to the earth

² and said, 'Sirs, turn aside, I beg of you, into your servant's house and spend the night and wash your feet; then you can rise up early and go on your way.' They said, 'No, we will spend the night in the street.'

³ But he urged them so strongly that they went with him and entered his house. He made a feast for them and baked bread made without yeast, and they ate.

⁴ But before they had lain down, the people of Sodom, both young and old, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house.

⁵ They called out to Lot, 'Where are the men who came in to you tonight? Bring them out to us so we can rape them.'

⁶ Then Lot went out to them at the entrance of his house, but he shut the door after him.

⁷ He said, 'I beg of you, my friends, do not do what is wrong.

⁸ See, I have two unmarried daughters; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you desire; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shadow of my roof.'

⁹ But they replied, 'Stand back!' And they added, 'This one came in as a foreigner to live here, but now he would set himself up as a judge! We will treat you worse than them.' They pressed hard against Lot and advanced to break the door.

¹⁰ But the men reached out and drew Lot to them into the house and shut the door.

¹¹ Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, both small and great, with blindness, so that they grew tired of searching for the door.

¹² Then the men said to Lot, 'Have you anyone else here? Bring your sons-in-law, your sons, and daughters, and whoever you have in the city out of this place,

¹³ for we are about to destroy it, because great complaint concerning the people has come to the LORD and he has sent us to destroy it.'

¹⁴ So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, 'Up, go out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city.' But his sons-in-law thought he was only joking.

¹⁵ When the dawn appeared, the messengers urged Lot, saying, 'Get up, take your wife and your two daughters so that you may not be swept away in the punishment of the city.'

¹⁶ When he hesitated, the men grabbed him by the hand and led him and his wife and his two daughters outside the city, for the LORD was merciful to him.

¹⁷ When they had brought them outside, they said, 'Run for your life; do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the heights, that you may not be swept away!'

¹⁸ But Lot said to them, 'Oh, sirs, not so!

¹⁹ See, your servant has found favour with you, and you have shown great mercy to me in saving my life. But I cannot flee to the heights. Some evil will overtake me and I will die.

²⁰ See now, this village is near enough to run to, and it is small. Oh, let me escape there, and my life will be saved.'

²¹ He answered, 'I have also granted you this favour, in that I will not destroy the village of which you have spoken.

²² Make haste, escape to it, for I can do nothing until you arrive there.' Therefore the village was called Zoar.

²³ The sun had risen when Lot came to Zoar.

²⁴ Then the LORD caused brimstone and fire from heaven to rain upon Sodom and Gomorrah,

²⁵ and he destroyed those cities and all the plain, with all the people who lived in it and all that grew on the ground.

²⁶ But Lot's wife, who was following him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

²⁷ Early in the morning Abraham rose and went to the place where he had stood before the LORD;

²⁸ and as he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and all the plain, he saw the smoke of the land going up as the smoke of a smelting-furnace.

²⁹ God had remembered Abraham when he destroyed the cities of the plain and rescued Lot from the destruction.

Lot and his daughters

³⁰ Then Lot went up from Zoar with his two daughters and lived in a cave on the heights, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar.

³¹ The older daughter said to the younger, 'Our father is old, and there is no one on the earth to come in to us after the manner of all the world.'

³² Come let us make our father drink wine and we will lie with him, so that we can preserve our family through our father.'

³³ So they made their father drink wine that night; and the older daughter went in and lay with her father. He, however, did not know when she lay down, nor when she arose.

³⁴ Then in the morning the older daughter said to the younger, 'Last night I lay with my father. Let us make him drink wine again tonight; and you go in and lie with him, so that we can preserve our family through our father.'

³⁵ So they made their father drink wine that night as well. The younger arose and lay with him. He, however, did not know when she lay down nor when she arose.

³⁶ In this way both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father.

³⁷ Then Lot went up from Zoar with his two daughters and lived in a cave on the heights, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. His oldest daughter bore a son, and named him Moab. He is the father of the present Moabites.

³⁸ The younger also bore a son and named him Ben-ammi. That one is the father of the present Ammonites.

20

Abraham in Gerar

¹ Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negreb, settling between Kadesh and Shur, and staying for a while in Gerar,

² where he said that his wife Sarah was his sister. So King Abimelech of Gerar had Sarah brought to him.

³ But God came to Abimelech in a dream in the night and said to him, 'You will die, because of the woman you have taken, for she is married.

⁴ But Abimelech had not come near her; so he said, Lord, will you slay an innocent people?

⁵ Did Abraham not himself say to me, "She is my sister?" And even she herself said, "He is my brother." I acted innocently and in good faith.'

⁶ Then God said to him in the dream, 'I know that you acted innocently and in good faith, and I also prevented you from sinning against me, since I did not allow you to touch her.

⁷ Now you must restore the man's wife – for he is a prophet and he can intercede for you, and you will live. But if you do not restore her at once, you will die, together with all your people.'

⁸ Abimelech rose early in the morning, and summoned all his court, and when he had told all these things in their hearing, they were greatly afraid.

⁹ Then Abimelech called Abraham and asked him, 'What have you done to us? What harm have I done to you to make you bring this great sin on me and my kingdom? You have done to me something that ought not to be done.'

¹⁰ Abimelech said to Abraham, 'What was your purpose in doing this thing?'

¹¹ Abraham answered, 'Because I thought, "Surely reverence for God is not in this place and they will slay me for my wife's sake."

¹² Moreover, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father, though not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

¹³ So when God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, "This is how you can show your loyalty to me: at every place to which we come, say that you are my brother." '

¹⁴ Abimelech then took sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and restored Sarah his wife to him.

¹⁵ Also Abimelech said, 'My land lies before you; live wherever you please.'

¹⁶ To Sarah he said, 'I have given your "brother" a thousand pieces of silver as compensation in the sight of everyone here, and you are vindicated in the eyes of all.'

¹⁷ Then Abraham prayed to God and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his slave-girls, so that they could have children (

¹⁸ for the LORD had made every woman in Abimelech's household barren, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife).

21

Isaac

¹ The LORD remembered what he had told Sarah, and he did as he had promised.

² So Sarah had Abraham's son in his old age at the fixed time of which God had told him.

³ Abraham named him Isaac

⁴ and when he was eight days old he circumcised him as God had told him to.

⁵ Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born.

⁶ Sarah said, 'God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.'

⁷ She added, 'Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have born him a son in his old age.'

⁸ When the child grew up, Abraham made a great feast on the day that he was weaned.

⁹ But Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac.

¹⁰ She said to Abraham, 'Drive out this slave-girl and her son, for the son of this slave-girl will never be heir with my son Isaac'

¹¹ This request was very displeasing to Abraham because the boy was his son.

¹² But the LORD said to Abraham, 'Do not be displeased because of the boy and because of your slave-girl. Listen to all that Sarah says to you, for only through the line of Isaac will your name be perpetuated.

¹³ But I will also make the son of the slave-girl into a nation, because he is your son.'

¹⁴ Then Abraham got up early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave it to Hagar, and he put the boy upon her shoulder and sent her away. So she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

¹⁵ When the water in the skin was gone, she left the child under one of the desert shrubs

¹⁶ and went a short distance away and sat down and said, 'Let me not see the death of the child.' So she sat there and wept.

¹⁷ Then the LORD heard the cry of the boy, and the messenger of the LORD called to Hagar from heaven and said, 'What troubles you, Hagar? Don't be afraid, for the LORD has heard the boy's cry.

¹⁸ Rise, lift him up, and hold him fast by the hand, for I will make him a great nation.'

¹⁹ The LORD opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. Then she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ The LORD was with the boy, and he grew up,

²¹ and lived in the wilderness of Paran, and became a bowman. His mother secured a wife for him from Egypt.

The pact with Abimelech

²² It happened at that time that Abimelech and Phicol the captain of his army spoke to Abraham, saying, 'God is with you in all you do.

²³ Now therefore take an oath to me here by God that you will not be false to me, nor to my son nor to my descendants; but that you will treat me and the land you have stayed in according to the kindness which I have shown you.'

²⁴ Abraham said, 'I swear it.'

²⁵ Now as often as Abraham complained to Abimelech because of the well of water which Abimelech's servants had seized,

²⁶ Abimelech said, 'I do not know who has done this thing, neither have you told me nor have I heard of it until today.'

²⁷ So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and made an agreement with each other.

²⁸ But when Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves,

²⁹ Abimelech said to Abraham, 'What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?'

³⁰ Abraham answered, 'Accept these seven ewe lambs from my hand so that you may be my witness that I dug this well.'

³¹ The place was called Beer-sheba, because it was there they swore their oath.

³² So they made a covenant at Beer-sheba, and Abimelech arose with Phicol the captain of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines.

³³ Abraham, however, planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God.

³⁴ Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days.

22

The test of Abraham

¹ Later the LORD tested Abraham, saying to him, 'Abraham'; and he answered, 'Here I am.'

² The LORD said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains which I will show you.'

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, and his son Isaac. When he had split the wood for the burnt-offering, he set out for the place of which God had told him.

⁴ On the third day, when Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance,

⁵ he said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey, while I and the boy go over there. When we have worshipped, we will come back to you.'

⁶ Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt-offering and laid it on Isaac, his son. He took the fire and the knife, and they both went on together.

⁷ Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, 'My father!' and Abraham answered, 'Yes, my son.' Isaac said, 'Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?'

⁸ Abraham answered, 'My son, God will himself provide a lamb for a burnt-offering.' So the two went on together.

⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood on it and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand, and took the knife to kill his son.

¹¹ But the messenger of the LORD called to him from heaven, saying, 'Abraham, Abraham!' and he answered, 'Here am I.'

¹² He said, 'Do not put your hand upon the boy, nor do anything to him, for now I know that you love God, for you have not refused to give your son, your only son, to me.'

¹³ Then Abraham looked up, and he saw behind him* a ram caught in the thicket by his horns.

¹⁴ So Abraham took the ram and offered him up as a burnt-offering instead of his son.

* **22:13** Some ancient manuscripts omit 'behind him'

¹⁵ He named the place ‘The LORD will provide’ – and even today people say, ‘The LORD will provide on his mountain.’

¹⁶ The messenger of the LORD again called to Abraham and said, ‘The LORD declares, “Because you have done this thing and have not kept back your son, your only son,

¹⁷ I will surely bless you. I will make your children as many as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore, so that they will conquer their enemies.

¹⁸ All the nations of the earth will ask for themselves a blessing like theirs, because you have obeyed my command.” ’

¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his servants, and they arose and went together to Beer-sheba.

Genealogy

Abraham was living in Beer-sheba.

²⁰ After these things, Abraham was told, ‘Milcah has also borne children to your brother Nahor,

²¹ Uz his first born, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram,

²² Chesed, Hazo and Pildash, Jidlaph and Bethuel.’

²³ (And Bethuel fathered Rebekah). These eight Mileah bore to Nahor, Abraham’s brother.

²⁴ And his concubine whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maaeah.

23

Sarah’s death and the cave of Machpelah

¹ Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old.

² When she died in Kiriath-arba (that is Hebron), in the land of Canaan, Abraham went to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

³ When Abraham rose up from the presence of his dead, he said to the Hittites,

⁴ 'I am a stranger and a foreigner living among you; give me possession of a burying-place with you, so that I may bury my dead out of my sight.'

⁵ The Hittites answered Abraham,

⁶ 'Hear us, my lord; you are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the best of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, so that you may bury your dead.'

⁷ Abraham rose up and bowed before the people of the land, the Hittites,

⁸ and said to them, 'If it is your intention that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and speak for me to Ephron the son of Zohar,

⁹ to give me the cave of Machpelah, which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give to me for the full price in your presence, so that I can own it as a burying-place.'

¹⁰ Now Ephron was sitting with the other Hittites, and, in the presence of all the Hittites, all who went in and out at the gate of his city he answered Abraham,

¹¹ 'No, my lord, hear me. I give the field to you and the cave that is in it I give to you; in the presence of the children of my people I give it to you; bury your dead.'

¹² Then Abraham bowed before the people of the land,

¹³ and spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, 'Please, hear me – I will give the price of the field; accept it from me so that I may bury my dead there.'

¹⁴ Ephron answered Abraham by saying to him,

¹⁵ 'My lord, listen to me; a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and you? Bury your dead.'

¹⁶ Then Abraham accepted Ephron's terms and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels of silver, on the standard weights used by merchants.

¹⁷ So the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah which was to the east of Mamre, the field, and the cave which was in it, with all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the border of it round about,

¹⁸ were transferred to Abraham's possession in the presence of the Hittites, before all that went in at the gate of his city.

¹⁹ After this Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah to the east of Mamre (that is Hebron), in the land of Canaan.

²⁰ In this way the field and the cave that is in it were transferred by the Hittites to Abraham that he might possess a burying-place.

24

Rebekah

¹ When Abraham was very old and the LORD had blessed him in every way,

² Abraham said to the eldest of his household servants, who had charge of all his affairs, 'Put your hand under my thigh,

³ while I make you promise by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not let my son marry one of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live,

⁴ but that you will go to my own country and to my relatives and there get a wife for my son Isaac.'

⁵ The servant said to him, 'Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?'

⁶ Abraham said to him, 'See to it that you do not take my son back there.

⁷ The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from my native land and who solemnly promised me, "To your children I will give this land," will send his messenger before you and there you will get a wife for my son.

⁸ But if the woman is not willing to come with you, then you will be free from this promise to me; only never take my son back there.'

⁹ So the servant put his hand under Abraham's thigh and made the promise.

¹⁰ Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and set out with precious gifts from his master. So he went to the town of Aram-naharaim, where Nahor lived.

¹¹ He made the camels kneel down outside the town by the well in the evening, at the time when women go out to draw water.

¹² Then he said, 'LORD, God of my master Abraham, give me, I pray, success today, and show kindness to my master Abraham.

¹³ Here I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the town are coming out to draw water.

¹⁴ May that young woman to whom I say, "Please let down your water-jar that I may drink"; and who answers, "Drink and I will also water your camels," may she be the one you have chosen for thy servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master.'

¹⁵ Then even before he was through speaking, Rebekah, who was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her water-jar upon her shoulder.

¹⁶ She was very beautiful and unmarried, a virgin. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up.

¹⁷ Then the servant ran to meet her and said, 'Please let me drink a little water from your jar.'

¹⁸ She answered, 'Drink, sir,' and quickly let down her water-jar from her shoulder upon her hand and gave him a drink.

¹⁹ When she had finished giving him a drink she said, 'I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.'

²⁰ So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

²¹ Meanwhile the man was silently gazing at her in order to find out whether the LORD had made his journey successful or not.

²² As soon as the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring, half a shekel in weight, and put it in her nose, and put on her arms two golden bracelets weighing ten shekels,

²³ and said, 'Whose daughter are you? Tell me, I beg of you. Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?'

²⁴ She answered, 'I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah and Nahor.

²⁵ We have plenty of straw and feed, and there is a place for you to spend the night.'

²⁶ Then the man bowed his head and worshipped the LORD,

²⁷ saying, 'Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has continued to show his mercy and his faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the way to the house of my master's relatives.'

²⁸ Then the young woman ran and told these things to her mother's family.

²⁹ Now Rebekah had a brother named Laban; and Laban ran out to the man at the spring.

³⁰ When he saw the bracelets on his sister's hands and the ring, and when he heard Rebekah say, 'This is what the man said to me,' he went to the man, who was still standing by the camels at the spring,

³¹ and said, 'Come in, you who are blessed by the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have cleared the house and have room for the camels.'

³² So he brought the man into the house and took the packs off the camels and furnished straw and

feed for them, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him.

³³ But when food was set before him to eat, he said, 'I will not eat until I have made known my errand.' They answered, 'Speak.'

³⁴ He said, 'I am Abraham's servant;

³⁵ and the LORD has blessed my master greatly, so that he has become very rich. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, servants, and camels and donkeys.

³⁶ Now Sarah, my master's wife, had a son when she was old, and my master has given him all that he has.

³⁷ My master also made me promise, saying, "Do not let my son marry one of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live,

³⁸ but go to my father's home and to my relatives and there find a wife for my son."

³⁹ 'When I said to my master, "What if the woman will not follow me?"

⁴⁰ he said to me, "The LORD, whom I love and serve, will send his messenger with you and make you successful, and you will find for my son a wife from among my relatives and my father's family.

⁴¹ Then you will be free from your promise to me. But if you go to my family and they do not give her to you, you will also be free from your promise to me."

⁴² So I came today to the spring and said, "LORD, God of my master Abraham, please make the errand on which I am going successful.

⁴³ See, I am standing by the spring of water. Let the young woman who comes to draw, to whom I

say, "Please give me a little water from your jar to drink",

⁴⁴ and who says to me, "Drink, and I will also draw for your camels", let that one be the woman whom the LORD has chosen for my master's son."

⁴⁵ 'Even before I was through speaking, Rebekah came out with her water-jar on her shoulder and went down to the spring and drew water. When I said to her, "Please let me drink,"

⁴⁶ she quickly let down her water-jar from her shoulder and answered, "Drink, and I will also water your camels." So I drank, and she also watered the camels.

⁴⁷ Then I asked her, "Whose daughter are you?" She said, "The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor and Milcah." So I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms.

⁴⁸ I bowed my head and worshipped and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham who had led me on the right way to find the daughter of my master's brother for his son.

⁴⁹ Tell me whether or not you will deal kindly and truly with my master, so that I will know what to do!

⁵⁰ Then Laban and his family answered, 'The matter is in the hands of the LORD. We cannot say either "yes" or "no."

⁵¹ See, Rebekah is before you; take her and go and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has said.'

⁵² When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed to the ground before the LORD.

⁵³ Then he brought out gold and silver ornaments and clothing and gave them to Rebekah.

He also gave costly gifts to her brother and to her mother.

⁵⁴ He and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night there.

When they rose in the morning, the servant said, 'Send me away to my master.'

⁵⁵ But Rebekah's brother and mother answered, 'Let the young woman stay with us a month or at least ten days; after that she may go.'

⁵⁶ But he said to them, 'Do not delay me, for the LORD has given me success. Send me away that I may go to my master.'

⁵⁷ Then they said, 'We will call the young woman and ask her.'

⁵⁸ So they called Rebekah and said to her, 'Will you go with this man?' She answered, 'I will go.'

⁵⁹ So they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse with Abraham's servant and his men.

⁶⁰ They also blessed Rebekah, saying to her, 'Our sister! May your children and their children become thousands and thousands, may your sons conquer the cities of their enemies!'

⁶¹ Then Rebekah set out with her maids and, riding upon the camels, they followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and went away.

⁶² Now Isaac had come from Beer-lahai-roi, and was settled in the Negeb.

⁶³ In the evening, when Isaac had gone out for a walk in the field, he looked up and saw camels coming.

⁶⁴ Rebekah too looked up, and when she saw Isaac, she quickly alighted from the camel

⁶⁵ and said to the servant, 'Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?' When the servant said, 'It is my master,' she took her veil and covered her face.

⁶⁶ Then the servant told Isaac all that he had done.

⁶⁷ Isaac brought Rebekah to the tent of Sarah his mother, and she became his wife; and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

25

Genealogy, Abraham's death

¹ Abraham had taken another wife, whose name was Keturah.

² She gave him sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

³ Jokshan fathered Sheba, and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim;

⁴ and the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah.

⁵ Abraham had left all that he had to Isaac.

⁶ But to the sons of his concubines, Abraham had given gifts while he was still alive, and had sent them away from Isaac his son, eastward, to the east country.

⁷ Abraham had lived for one hundred and seventy-five years,

⁸ when he breathed his last, dying in a good old age, old and satisfied with living, and was gathered to his forefathers.

⁹ Then Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is east of Mamre,

¹⁰ the field which Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife.

¹¹ After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son, who settled at Beer-lahai-roi.

¹² This is a list of descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid-servant gave to Abraham.

¹³ These then are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named according to their order of birth: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,

¹⁴ Mishma, Dumah, Massa,

¹⁵ Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

¹⁶ These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their villages, and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their peoples.

¹⁷ Ishmael lived for one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

¹⁸ They settled from Havilah to Shur that is east of Egypt, as far as Assyria; he settled down alongside all his people.

¹⁹ These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham fathered Isaac.

²⁰ Isaac was forty years old, when he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean.

Esau and Jacob

²¹ Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she had no children; and the LORD heard his prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins.

²² The children struggled against each other in her womb, and she said, 'Why is this happening to me? What does it mean?' She went to ask the LORD,

²³ who said to her,
'Two nations are in your womb,
two peoples divided from birth,
One will be stronger than the other,
the elder will serve the younger.'

²⁴ When the time came for her to give birth, she became the mother of twin boys.

²⁵ The first was born red, his whole body covered with hair like a fur coat, so they named him Esau.

²⁶ Afterwards his brother came holding Esau's heel with his hand; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

²⁷ As they grew up, Esau became a skilful hunter, a man who lived out in the fields; but Jacob was a quiet man who stayed about the tents.

²⁸ Isaac loved Esau, for he had a taste for venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

²⁹ Once when Jacob was preparing a stew, Esau came in from the fields, and he was very hungry;

³⁰ so he said to Jacob, 'Let me swallow some of that red stew, for I am very hungry.' (This is why he was called Edom.)

³¹ But Jacob said, 'Sell me first of all your right as the eldest.'

³² Esau replied, 'See, I am nearly dead now! So of what use is this birthright to me?'

³³ Jacob said, 'First solemnly promise to give it to me.' So Esau solemnly promised and sold his birthright to Jacob.

³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau bread and stewed lentils, and when he had finished eating and drinking, he got up and went away. In this way Esau gave away his birthright.

26

Famine again

¹ Now when a famine came in the land, (not the first famine that was in the days of Abraham), Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines at Gerar.

² The LORD appeared to him and said, 'Go not down into Egypt; settle in the land of which I will tell you,

³ stay in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you; for to you, and to your descendants, I will give all these lands, and will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father:

⁴ I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven, and give to your descendants all these lands; and all the nations of the earth will invoke for themselves a blessing like that of your descendants,

⁵ because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.'

⁶ So Isaac settled in Gerar.

⁷ When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, 'She is my sister'. He was afraid to say 'my wife'. He thought that the men of the place would kill him for Rebekah, because she was beautiful to look at.

⁸ But after he had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of the window, and saw Isaac just as he was caressing Rebekah his wife.

⁹ Then Abimelech called to Isaac, and said, 'Surely she is your wife; why did you say "She is my sister?"' Isaac answered him, 'I said it, so that I might not die because of her.'

¹⁰ Abimelech said, 'What is this you have done to us? One of the people might have lain with your wife and so you would have brought guilt upon us.'

¹¹ Abimelech warned all the people, saying, 'The person who touches this man or his wife will be put to death.'

¹² Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year an increase of a hundredfold, for the LORD blessed him.

¹³ The man became rich, and grew richer and richer until he became very wealthy; for he had many flocks, and many herds, and a great household; so that the Philistines envied him.

¹⁴ Now all the wells which Isaac's father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped, and filled with earth.

¹⁵ But Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father – for the Philistines had stopped them after the

death of Abraham and he gave them the same names as his father had given them.

¹⁶ Abimelech said to Isaac, 'Go from us; for you are much mightier than we are.'

¹⁷ So Isaac departed, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and settled there.

¹⁸ Isaac reopened the wells which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham and stopped by the Philistines after his death. He called them by the names his father had given them.

¹⁹ When Isaac's slaves dug in the valley, they found there a well of spring water.

²⁰ The herdsmen of Gerar quarrelled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, 'The water is ours.' So he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him.

²¹ And when they dug another well, they quarrelled over that also. So he called the name of it Sitnah.

²² He moved on from these and dug another well; and over that one there was no dispute. So he called it Rehoboth, and said, 'For now the LORD has made room for us and we will be fruitful in the land.'

²³ Isaac went up from there to Beer-sheba.

²⁴ The LORD appeared to him the same night and said, 'I am the God of Abraham your father, do not be afraid, because I am with you, and will bless you and make your descendants numerous for the sake of my servant Abraham.'

²⁵ Isaac built an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there. There also Isaac's slaves dug a well.

²⁶ Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol the captain of his army.

²⁷ Isaac said to them, 'Why have you come to me, since you hated me and have driven me away from you?'

²⁸ They said, 'We saw plainly that the LORD was with you, so we said, "Let there now be a sworn treaty between us – let us make a covenant with you –

²⁹ so that you will do us no harm, as we have not touched you, and as we have done to you nothing but good, and have sent you away in peace." You are now blessed of the LORD.'

³⁰ And he made them a feast and they ate and drank.

³¹ Then in the morning they arose early and took oaths with each other; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

³² That same day, Isaac's slaves came and told him about a well which they had dug, and said to him, 'We have found water.'

³³ He called it Shebna, therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba to this day.

Esau and Jacob

³⁴ When Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite,

³⁵ and they were a source of grief to Isaac and to Rebekah.

27

¹ When Isaac was so old and so nearly blind that

he could not see, he called Esau his oldest son and said to him, 'My son.' Esau answered, 'Here I am.'

² Isaac said, 'See, I am old and do not know how soon I may die.

³ Take your quiver and your bow and go out into the fields and hunt venison for me

⁴ and prepare for me savoury food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat and that I may bless you before I die.'

⁵ Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went into the fields to hunt venison,

⁶ Rebekah said to her son Jacob, 'I just now heard your father say to your brother Esau,

⁷ "Bring me venison and prepare for me savoury food that I may eat it and bless you before I die."

⁸ Now, my son, do as I tell you:

⁹ Go to the flock and bring me from there two good young goats, and I will make of them savoury food for your father, such as he loves.

¹⁰ Then take it to him, so that he may eat, so that he may bless you before he dies.'

¹¹ But Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, 'You know that my brother Esau is a hairy man, while I am smooth.

¹² Perhaps my father will touch me; then I will appear to him to be a deceiver, and I will bring blame upon me and not a blessing.'

¹³ But his mother said to him, 'Let the curse be on me, my son; only obey me and go, bring the goats to me.'

¹⁴ So he went and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savoury food such as his

father loved.

¹⁵ Rebekah also took the fine clothes of her older son Esau, which she had with her in the tent, and put them on her younger son Jacob.

¹⁶ Then she put the skins of the goats upon his hands and upon the smooth part of his neck,

¹⁷ and she placed the savoury food and the bread which she had prepared in his hand,

¹⁸ and he went to his father and said, 'My father.' Isaac answered, 'Here I am; who are you, my son?'

¹⁹ Jacob said, 'I am Esau your oldest son. I have done as you commanded me. Sit up and eat some of my venison, so that you may bless me.'

²⁰ Isaac said to his son, 'How very quickly you have found it, my son.' He answered, 'Yes, because the LORD your God gave me success.'

²¹ Then Isaac said to Jacob, 'Come here, my son, that I may touch you to find out whether you are really my son Esau or not.'

²² So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, 'The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.'

²³ He did not recognise him, for his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's. So he blessed him.

²⁴ 'Are you really my son Esau?' he asked, and Jacob answered, 'I am.'

²⁵ Then Isaac said, 'Bring the food to me, that I may eat some of my son's venison and bless you.' So he brought it to him, and he ate. Jacob also brought him wine, and he drank.

²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, 'Come near now and kiss me, my son.'

27 As he came near and kissed him, he smelled the smell of his garment, and blessed him:

See, the smell of my son
is as that of fields blessed by the LORD.

28 May God give you dew from heaven,
a share in the earth's fertile places,
and plenty of corn and wine.

29 May peoples be subject to you,
and nations bow down to you.

Be master over your brothers.

Let your mother's sons bow down before you,
Cursed be all who curse you.
and blessed be all who bless you.

30 As soon as Isaac had given Jacob his blessing, and Jacob was about to leave his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 He also had made savoury food and was bringing it to his father. So he said to him, 'Father, rise and eat of your son's venison, that you may bless me.'

32 But Isaac his father said to him, 'Who are you?' He answered, 'I am your son, your oldest, Esau.'

33 Then Isaac trembled and said, 'Who then is he that has hunted venison and brought it to me, so that I ate plentifully before you came, and blessed him? His blessing cannot be undone!'

34 When Esau heard the words of his father, he uttered a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, 'Father, bless me also!'

35 But Isaac said, 'Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.'

³⁶ Esau said, 'He was correctly named Jacob. He has supplanted me these two times: he took my birthright, and now he has taken my blessing!' Then he said, 'Have you kept a blessing for me?'

³⁷ Isaac answered Esau, 'I have made him your master and I have given to him all his relatives as slaves and grain and wine as his food. What then can I do for you, my son?'

³⁸ Esau said to his father, 'Is that the only blessing you have, my father? Father, bless me too!' and Esau began to weep aloud.

³⁹ Then Isaac his father answered him:
'You will live far from earth's fertile places,
and away from the dew of heaven.

⁴⁰ By your sword you will live,
and your brother you will serve.

But whenever you will break loose,
you will break off his yoke from your neck.'

⁴¹ Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing that his father had given him. Esau said to himself, 'My father will soon die; then I will kill Jacob, my brother.'

⁴² When the words of her older son Esau were told to Rebekah, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him, 'Your brother, Esau, is going to kill you.

⁴³ Now, my son, listen to me: run away to my brother Laban at Haran

⁴⁴ and stay with him for a time until your brother is no longer angry

⁴⁵ – until he is no longer angry and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send and

bring you back. Why should I lose both of you in one day?’

Wives for Jacob and Esau

⁴⁶ Rebekah said to Isaac, ‘I am disgusted with life because of the Hittite women; if Jacob marries a Hittite woman, such as these, the women of the land, I might as well die.’

28

¹ Then Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and instructed him, ‘You must not marry any of the daughters of Canaan.

² Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father; and marry one of the daughters of Laban, your mother’s brother.

³ May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful and numerous, so that you may become a great people,

⁴ and may he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your descendants with you so that you may inherit the land you have settled in, which God gave to Abraham.’

⁵ So Isaac sent away Jacob, and he went to Paddan-aram to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob and Esau’s mother.

⁶ Now when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and send him away to Paddan-aram, to find a wife there, and that, as he blessed him, he instructed him: ‘You must not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan’,

⁷ and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother, and had gone to Paddan-aram,

⁸ and when Esau also saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please Isaac his father,

⁹ then Esau went to Ishmael, and in addition to the wives that he had, married Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth.

Jacob and the ladder

¹⁰ Then Jacob set out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.

¹¹ When he arrived at a certain holy place, he passed the night there, because the sun had set. He took one of the stones from its place and put it under his head and lay down to sleep.

¹² Then he dreamed and saw a ladder set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and the messengers of God were going up and down on it.

¹³ The LORD also stood beside him and said, 'I am the LORD, God of Abraham and God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your children.

¹⁴ Your descendants will be as countless as the dust of the earth and you will spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south, and all the families of the earth will wish for a blessing like yours and that of your descendants.

¹⁵ See, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you again to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.'

¹⁶ When Jacob woke up, he said, 'Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.'

¹⁷ And he was filled with awe and said, 'This place is the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'

¹⁸ So Jacob rose early in the morning and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil upon the top of it.

¹⁹ He named that place Bethel. (The earlier name of the town was Luz.)

²⁰ Jacob also made this promise, 'If God will be with me and protect me on this journey which I am making and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on,

²¹ and if I return safe and sound to my father's house, then the LORD will be my God,

²² and this stone which I have set up as a pillar will be a house of God. And of all that you give me I will surely give a tenth to you.'

29

Leah and Rachel

¹ Jacob continued on his journey and arrived at the land of the people of the East.

² He looked and saw a well in the field, and there were three flocks of sheep lying down by it; for from that well they watered the flocks; but there was a large stone over the well.

³ When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds used to roll away the stone and water the sheep and then put the stone back in its place over the well.

⁴ Jacob said to the men, 'My friends, from where do you come?' They said, 'We are from Haran.'

⁵ Then he said to them, 'Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?' They said, 'We know him.'

⁶ He said to them, 'Is all well with him?' They said, 'All is well; indeed, this is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep.'

⁷ He said, 'See, the sun is still high! It is not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep and feed them.'

⁸ But they said, 'We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they roll away the stone from the well; then we will water the sheep.'

⁹ While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she was a shepherdess.

¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and Laban's sheep, he went up and rolled the stone from the well and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud.

¹² When Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah's son, she ran and told her father.

¹³ As soon as Laban heard about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, put his arms round him, kissed him many times, and brought him to his home. When Jacob told Laban all that had happened,

¹⁴ Laban said to him, 'Surely you are my bone and my flesh.' So he remained with him a whole month.

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, 'Should you serve me for nothing simply because you are related to me? Tell me what will be your wages?'

¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

¹⁷ Leah's eyes were dull, but Rachel was beautiful.

¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel, and so he said, 'I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter.'

¹⁹ Laban said, 'It is better for me to give her to you than to give her to any other man. Stay with me.'

²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days, because he loved her so.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, 'Give me my wife, for my time is up, and let me marry her.'

²² So Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast.

²³ In the evening he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob received her as his wife.

²⁴ At the same time Laban gave his slave-girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah.

²⁵ When in the morning Jacob found it was Leah, he said to Laban, 'What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?'

²⁶ Laban said, 'It is not the custom among us to give the younger in marriage before the older.'

²⁷ Remain with this one during the marriage week, then we will give you the other also for the service which you will give me during seven more years.'

²⁸ Jacob did so: he remained with Leah during the marriage week. Then Laban gave him Rachel his daughter to be his wife,

²⁹ and his slave-girl Bilhah to serve Rachel.

³⁰ Jacob slept with Rachel as well, and loved Rachel more than Leah. So he had to serve Laban seven years more.

³¹ When the LORD saw that Leah was spurned, he gave her the gift of motherhood; Rachel, however, was barren.

³² So Leah gave birth to a son whom she named Reuben, for she said, 'The LORD has seen my affliction; now my husband will love me.'

³³ She gave birth to another son; and said, 'Because the LORD has heard that I am spurned, he has given me this one also'; and she called his name Simeon.

³⁴ She gave birth to another son and said, 'Now this time my husband will become attached to me because I have borne him three sons'; therefore his name was called Levi.

³⁵ She gave birth to another son and said, 'This time I will praise the LORD'; therefore she called his name Judah then she stopped having children.

30

¹ When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she was jealous of her sister and said to Jacob, 'Give me children or else I will die.'

² But Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, 'Am I in God's place? Who has withheld offspring from you?'

³ She said, 'Here is my slave-girl Bilhah, go to her, so that she may bear sons who can be laid on my knees and I also may obtain children through her.'

⁴ So she gave him Bilhah her slave-girl for a wife, and Jacob slept with her.

⁵ When Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son,

⁶ Rachel said, 'God has judged me and has also heard my voice and has given me a son.' So she called his name Dan.

⁷ Bilhah, Rachel's slave-girl conceived again, and bore Jacob a second son.

⁸ Rachel said, 'I have fought a hard fight with my sister, and have prevailed'; so she called his name Naphtali.

⁹ When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took Zilpah her slave-girl, and gave her to Jacob as a wife.

¹⁰ Zilpah, Leah's slave-girl bore Jacob a son.

¹¹ Leah said, 'Fortunate!' and she called his name Gad.

¹² Zilpah bore Jacob a second son,

¹³ and Leah said, 'Happy am I! Now women will call me happy', and she called his name Asher.

¹⁴ One time, during the wheat harvest, Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. Rachel asked Leah, 'Please give me some of your son's mandrakes.'

¹⁵ But Leah said to her, 'Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband, that you would also take away my son's mandrakes?' Rachel said, 'In exchange for your son's mandrakes, Jacob can sleep with you tonight.'

¹⁶ So when Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him, and said, 'You sleep with me tonight, for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes.' So he slept with her that night.

¹⁷ God heard Leah's prayer, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.

¹⁸ Leah said, 'God has given me my reward, because I gave my slave-girl to my husband'; so she called his name Issachar.

¹⁹ Leah conceived again, and bore a sixth son to Jacob.

²⁰ She said, 'God has endowed me with a good dowry; now my husband will honour me, because I have borne him six sons'; and she called him Zebulun.

²¹ And afterwards she had a daughter and named her Dinah.

²² Then God remembered Rachel and heard her prayer and gave her a child.

²³ She conceived and gave birth to a son and said, 'God has taken away my disgrace.'

²⁴ She called his name Joseph, saying, 'the LORD will add to me another son.'

²⁵ When Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, 'Send me away, so that I may go to my own place, and to my country.'

²⁶ Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, so that I may go; for you know the service which I have rendered you.'

²⁷ But Laban said to him, 'If now I have found favour in your eyes - I have divined that the LORD has blessed me for your sake.'

²⁸ State exactly to me your wages and I will pay them.'

²⁹ Jacob answered him, 'You know how I have served you and what your cattle have become under my care;

³⁰ for it was little which you had before I came, but now it has greatly increased, since the LORD has blessed you wherever I went. But now, when am I to provide for my own house as well?'

³¹ Laban said, 'What should I give you?'

Jacob said, 'You do not need to give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed your flock; I will again keep it.

³² If I can go through all your flock today, and remove from it every black one among the lambs and the spotted and speckled among the goats; these will be my wages.

³³ So my honesty will testify for me later, when you come to inspect my wages. Any goat that is not speckled and spotted, and any lamb which is not black, can be considered stolen.'

³⁴ Laban said, 'Good, let it be as you say.'

³⁵ But later that day he removed the male goats that were streaked and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted or had white markings, and all the black lambs, and gave them to his sons to take care of.

³⁶ Then he put the distance of a three days' journey between himself and Jacob; and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

³⁷ Jacob, however, took fresh rods of white poplar, and of the almond and of the plane tree,

and peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white which was in the rods.

³⁸ He set the rods which he had peeled before the flocks in the watering-troughs where the flocks came to drink (and they conceived when they came to drink)

³⁹ so that the flocks conceived before the rods. Therefore the flocks brought forth striped, speckled and spotted offspring.

⁴⁰ Jacob separated the lambs, and he set the faces of the flocks toward the striped and the black animals in the flock of Laban and he put his own droves apart and did not put them near Laban's flock.

⁴¹ Whenever the stronger animals of the flock conceived, Jacob laid the rods in the troughs before the eyes of the flock, so that they might conceive among the rods.

⁴² But when the animals were weak, he did not put them in. In this way the weaker became Laban's, and the stronger Jacob.

⁴³ So the man increased in wealth exceedingly, and had large flocks, and male and female slaves, and camels and donkeys.

31

¹ Now Jacob heard Laban's sons say, 'Jacob has taken all that was our father's, and from that which was our father's he has acquired all these riches.'

² Now Jacob observed that Laban was not so favourably inclined to him as formerly.

³ The LORD said to Jacob, 'Return to the land of your ancestors, and to your relatives, and I will be with you.'

⁴ Then Jacob sent for Rachel and Leah to come to the field where his flocks were,

⁵ and said to them, 'I see that your father is not so favourably inclined toward me as formerly; but the God of my father has been with me.'

⁶ You know that I have served your father with all my strength.

⁷ Your father, however, has deceived me and changed my wages ten times; but God has not allowed him to do me harm.

⁸ If your father said, "The speckled will be your wages," then all the flock bore speckled offspring, but if he said: "The striped will be your wages," then all the flock have striped offspring.

⁹ God has taken away the possessions of your father and given them to me.

¹⁰ At the time when the flock breed, I looked up, and saw in a dream, that the male goats which were mating were striped, speckled, and piebald.

¹¹ The messenger of God said to me in a dream, "Jacob!" and I said, "Here I am."

¹² And he said, "Look! All the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and piebald: for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you."

¹³ I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar of stone, where you made a vow to me. Now arise, leave this land, and return to the land where you were born."

¹⁴ Then Rachel and Leah answered him, 'There is no longer any inheritance for us in our father's

house.

¹⁵ Are we not considered as foreigners by him? For he has sold us and goes on to consume the money paid for us.

¹⁶ Since all the riches which God has taken away from our father is ours and our children's, do whatever God has told you to do.'

¹⁷ Then Jacob rose up and put his sons and his wives on camels,

¹⁸ and drove away all his cattle and all the cattle which he had acquired in Paddan-aram, in order to go to Isaac his father, to the land of Canaan.

¹⁹ And while Laban was gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole the household gods that were her father's.

²⁰ So Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean – he did not tell him that he was going to flee.

²¹ So he fled with all he had; crossing the river Euphrates heading towards the hill-country of Gilead.

²² When it was reported to Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled,

²³ he took his tribesmen with him, and pursued him for seven days, and overtook him in the hill country of Gilead.

²⁴ But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night, and said to him, 'Take care that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad.'

²⁵ When Laban caught up with Jacob, Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country; and Laban with his relatives encamped in same hill country of Gilead.

²⁶ Laban said to Jacob, ‘What have you done? You have deceived me and carried away my daughters like captives of war!’

²⁷ Why did you flee secretly, stealing away from me without telling me? I would have sent you away with mirth and with songs, with tambourine and with harp –

²⁸ but you did not allow me to kiss my sons and daughters. You have acted foolishly.

²⁹ It was in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night saying, “Take care that you do not speak to Jacob, neither good nor bad.”

³⁰ But now, since you are surely going because you long so earnestly for your father’s house, why have you stolen my gods?’

³¹ Jacob answered Laban, ‘I was afraid, because I thought you would take your daughters from me by force.

³² The one with whom you find your gods will be put to death; in the presence of our kinsmen investigate for yourself what is with me and take it.’ Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen Laban’s gods.

³³ So Laban went into Jacob’s tent and into Leah’s, and into the tent of the two slave-girls, but he did not find his gods. Then he went out of Leah’s tent, and entered Rachel’s.

³⁴ Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel’s saddle and was sitting on them, so that when Laban had searched all about the tent, he did not find them.

³⁵ She said to her father, ‘Do not be angry that I cannot rise before you, my lord, for it is that time of the month that women have.’ And though he searched thoroughly, he did not find the household gods.

³⁶ Then Jacob became angry and challenged Laban. ‘What is my crime?’ he said, ‘What is my offense, that you have pursued hotly after me?’

³⁷ Although you have gone through all through my things, what have you found of all your household possessions? Declare it here before my kinsmen and yours, so that they may decide which of us two is in the right.

³⁸ In all these twenty years that have I been with you, your ewes and female goats have not miscarried their young, neither did I eat the rams of your flocks.

³⁹ I did not bring to you the animals which were killed by wild beasts; I bore the loss of it myself; from my hand you required compensation, whether stolen by day or stolen by night.

⁴⁰ This was how I was: in the day the heat consumed me, and by night the frost, and sleep deserted me.

⁴¹ These twenty years I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times.

⁴² Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely by now you would have sent me away empty. But God has seen my affliction and the labour of my hands, and he rebuked you last

night.'

⁴³ Then Laban answered Jacob, 'The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my grandchildren, and the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine, but what can I do today for these my daughters, or for their children whom they have borne?

⁴⁴ Come, let us make a covenant, I and you, and let there be a witness between me and you.'

⁴⁵ So Jacob took a stone, and set it up as a pillar,

⁴⁶ and said to the members of his family, 'Gather stones.' When they had taken stones and made a heap, they ate there by the heap.

⁴⁷ Laban called it Jegar-sahaduthap, but Jacob called it Galeed.

⁴⁸ 'This heap', Laban said, 'is witness between me and you today.' This is why it was called Galeed,

⁴⁹ and Mizpah, for Laban said, 'May the LORD watch between me and you when we are absent one from another,

⁵⁰ so that you may not maltreat my daughters nor take other wives besides my daughters. No one is with us; but beware: God is witness between me and you.'

⁵¹ Moreover, Laban said to Jacob, 'See this heap, and the pillar which I have set up between me and you.

⁵² This heap is a witness and the pillar is a witness that I should not pass beyond this heap to you and that you must not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, with hostile intent.

⁵³ The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor' (the God of their ancestors) 'judge between us.' And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac.

⁵⁴ Then Jacob offered a sacrifice there on the mountain and called his kinsmen to eat bread, and they ate bread and spent the night on the mountain.

⁵⁵ Then early in the morning Laban arose, and, when he had kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them, he departed and returned to his home.

32

¹ Jacob went on his way and the messengers of God met him.

² When he saw them, Jacob said, 'This is God's camp,' so he named the place 'Mahanaim.'

Jacob prepares to meet Esau

³ Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau, to the land of Seir, which is the territory of the Edomites.

⁴ He gave them this command, 'Say to my lord Esau: "Your servant Jacob declares, I have lived with Laban and have stayed until now.

⁵ I have oxen and donkeys, flocks and male and female slaves, and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may win your favour." '

⁶ The messengers returned to Jacob with the report, 'We came to your brother Esau, even as he was coming to meet you with four hundred men.'

⁷ Then Jacob was greatly alarmed and worried. So he divided the people that were with him and

the flocks and the herds and the camels into two parts

⁸ and said, 'If Esau comes to the one and attacks and destroys it, then the other which is left can escape.'

⁹ Jacob also prayed, 'God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, LORD who said to me, "Return to your country, and to your relatives, and I will do well by you,"

¹⁰ I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and all the faithfulness which you have shown to me, your servant. I passed over the Jordan river with only my staff, and now I have these two groups,

¹¹ deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear that he will come and attack me and kill the mothers and the children.

¹² Remember your promise to make me prosper and my descendants as many as the sand of the seashore, uncountable.'

¹³ After spending the night there, Jacob took from his livestock as a present for his brother Esau,

¹⁴ two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,

¹⁵ thirty milch camels and their young, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten young donkeys.

¹⁶ These he put, each drove by itself, in the care of his servants and said to them, 'Go on before me and leave a space between the droves.'

¹⁷ He gave those in front this command: 'When my brother Esau meets you and asks you, "To

whom do you belong? And where are you going? And whose are these before you?"

¹⁸ then you must say, "To your servant Jacob; it is a present sent by him to my lord Esau; and Jacob himself is just behind us." '

¹⁹ Jacob also commanded the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, to make the same answer,

²⁰ and to say, 'Jacob himself is just behind us.' For he said to himself, 'I will please him with the present that goes before me, and then, when I meet him, perhaps he will welcome me.'

²¹ So he sent the present over before him; but he himself spent that night in the camp.

²² Later that night he rose up and took his two wives, his two slave-girls, and his eleven children, and sent them over the river Jabbok.

Jacob wrestles

²³ After he had sent them across with all his belongings,

²⁴ Jacob was left alone, and someone wrestled with him until daybreak.

²⁵ When he saw that he did not win against Jacob, he struck the socket of his hip, and the socket of Jacob's hip was dislocated, as he wrestled with him.

²⁶ Then he said, 'Let me go, for the dawn is breaking.' But Jacob replied, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.'

²⁷ So he said to him, 'What is your name?' He answered, 'Jacob.'

²⁸ Then he said, 'Your name will be no longer Jacob, but Israel, for you have struggled with God and with mortals and have won.'

²⁹ Jacob asked him, 'Tell me, I pray, your name.' He said, 'Why do you ask my name?' So he blessed him there.

³⁰ Jacob called the place Penuel, for he said, 'I have seen God face to face, and my life has been saved.'

³¹ The sun rose as soon as he had passed beyond Penuel, and he limped because of his hip.

³² This is why to this day the Israelites do not eat the thigh muscle, which is at the socket of the hip, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the thigh muscle.

33

Reconciliation

¹ When Jacob looked up, he saw Esau coming with four hundred men. So he divided the children between Leah and Rachel and the two slave-girls.

² He put the slave-girls and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and her son Joseph in the rear.

³ Then Jacob himself went in front of them, and he bowed down to the ground seven times, as he drew near to his brother.

⁴ Esau ran to meet him, threw his arms about his neck, and kissed him, and they wept.

⁵ When Esau looked up and saw the women and the children, he said, 'Who are these with you?' Jacob answered, 'The children whom God has so kindly given me.'

⁶ Then the slave-girls with their children came up and bowed down to the ground.

⁷ Leah and her children also came and bowed down, and afterward Joseph and Rachel came up and bowed down before Esau.

⁸ Esau asked, 'What do you mean by all this company which I met?' Jacob answered, 'To win your friendship, my lord.'

⁹ Esau said, 'I have enough, my brother; keep what you have.'

¹⁰ But Jacob replied, 'No, if now I have won your favour, receive this present from me, because seeing your face when you welcomed me was like seeing the face of God.'

¹¹ Take, I beg of you, the gift that I bring to you, for God has been generous to me and I have enough.' So he urged Esau until he took it.

¹² Then Esau said, 'Let us set out on our way, and let me travel with you.'

¹³ But Jacob replied, 'My lord knows that the children are delicate, and I have flocks and herds with their young; if they are overdriven one day, all the flocks will die.'

¹⁴ Let my lord, I beg of you, go on ahead of me, and I will proceed leisurely by stages according to the pace of the cattle which I am driving and of the children, until I come to my lord at Seir.'

¹⁵ Then Esau said, 'Let me at least leave with you some of the people who are with me.' But Jacob replied, 'What need is there? Let me only enjoy the favour of my lord.'

¹⁶ So Esau turned back that day on his way to Seir.

¹⁷ But Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built there a house for himself, and made huts for his cattle; therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

Dinah and Shechem

¹⁸ Now Jacob came in peace to the city of Shechem in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-Aram, and encamped before the city.

¹⁹ He bought the piece of ground where he pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for four hundred shekels;

²⁰ and he erected there an altar and called it El, God of Israel.

34

¹ Dinah the daughter of Leah and Jacob, went out to visit the women of the region.

² When Sheeham the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the region, saw her, he took her and lay with her and violated her,

³ but his heart was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob – he loved her and spoke endearingly to her.

⁴ Therefore Shechem said to his father Hamor, ‘Get me this girl for my wife.’

⁵ When Jacob heard that Shecham had defiled Dinah his daughter, his sons were with his cattle in the field, so Jacob said nothing until they came home.

⁶ Meanwhile Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him and with his sons.

⁷ The sons of Jacob came in from the field, and when they heard the news, the men were indignant and became very angry, because Shechem had committed a shameful crime in raping Jacob's daughter: such a thing ought never to be done.

⁸ Hamor said to them, 'My son Shechem has set his heart on your daughter. I beg you: give her to him as a wife

⁹ and intermarry with us. Give your daughters to us and take our daughters for yourselves.

¹⁰ Then you can settle with us, and the land will be open before you. Remain, go about, and settle down in it.'

¹¹ And Shechem said to Dinah's father and to her brothers, 'Let me find favour in your sight, and I will give you what you ask of me.

¹² Demand of me an exceedingly large gift for yourselves and a dowry for the bride, and I will give all you ask of me; only give me the girl for my wife.'

¹³ Then the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, declaring, (because he had defiled their sister Dinah),

¹⁴ 'We cannot do this. We cannot give our sister to someone who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us.

¹⁵ Only on this condition will we make an alliance with you: if you will be as we are, in that every male of you be circumcised.

¹⁶ Then will we give our daughters to you and take your daughters to us and will live with you and we will become one people.

¹⁷ But if you will not listen to us and allow yourselves to be circumcised, then we will take Dinah and be gone.'

¹⁸ Their proposal pleased Hamor and his son Shechem.

¹⁹ The young man (who was honoured above all the house of his father) did not hesitate to do the thing demanded, because he was smitten with Jacob's daughter.

²⁰ Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city, and conversed with the men of their city, saying,

²¹ 'These men are peaceably disposed toward us, let them remain in the land and go about in it; the land is broad enough for them on every side and in every direction; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

²² Only on this condition will these men consent to settle with us to become one people, namely, that every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised.

²³ Shouldn't their cattle and their goods and all their beasts be ours? Let us make an alliance with them so that they will live with us.'

²⁴ Then all who went in and out of the gate of his city agreed with Hamor and Shechem. And every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

²⁵ On the third day when they were still in pain, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took swords and came upon the city unawares,

²⁶ and put Hamor and his son Shechem to the

sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went away.

²⁷ The other sons of Jacob came on the slain, and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister.

²⁸ They took their flocks and their herds and their donkeys and all that which was in the city and all that which was in the field.

²⁹ All their wealth, and all their children and their wives, they took captive, and made all that was in the houses their prey.

³⁰ Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, 'You have brought me into trouble, in that you have made me odious to the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites. Since I have only a few people, if they gather themselves together against me they will attack me – and I and my house will be destroyed.'

³¹ But they replied, 'Should he have treated our sister like a prostitute?'

35

Jacob goes to Bethel

¹ Then God said to Jacob, 'Arise, go up to Bethel, and live there. Make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.'

² So Jacob said to his household, and to everyone who was with him, 'Put away the foreign gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your garments.'

³ Let us arise and go up to Bethel. I will make there an altar to God, who answered me in the day

of my distress, and was with me on the journey which I was making.'

⁴ So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their possession, and the rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.

⁵ They set out on their journey, and a terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

⁶ Then Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan (that is, Bethel). He and all the people that were with him came to Bethel.

⁷ He built there an altar, and named the place El-Bethel, because there God revealed himself to him, when he fled from the presence of his brother.

⁸ Then Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and was buried below Bethel under the oak. Therefore its name was called Allon-bacuth.

⁹ God appeared again to Jacob when he came from Paddanaram, and blessed him.

¹⁰ God said to him, 'Now your name is Jacob: but your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel.' So he called his name Israel.

¹¹ God said to him, 'I am God Almighty; be fruitful and become numerous; a nation and a multitude of nations will come from you, and kings will descend from you;

¹² and the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you, and to your descendants after you.'

¹³ God went up from him at that place where he spoke with him.

¹⁴ Jacob set up at the place where God had spoken with him, a pillar of stone, and poured a drink-offering and oil on it.

¹⁵ Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.

¹⁶ Then they set out from Bethel, and when they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into a hard and painful labour.

¹⁷ At the hardest, the midwife said to her, 'Do not be afraid; for now you will have another son.'

¹⁸ And, as her life was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni, but his father called him Benjamin.

¹⁹ So Rachel died, and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem),

²⁰ and Jacob set up a pillar on her grave: that is the Pillar of Rachel's Grave, which stands until this day.

²¹ Then Israel journeyed, and pitched his tent beyond Migdal-Eder.

²² While Israel was living in that land, Reuben went and lay with his father's concubine Bilhah and Israel heard of it.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:

²³ The sons of Leah: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun;

²⁴ the sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin;

²⁵ and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's slave-girl: Dan and Naphtali;

²⁶ and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's slave-girl: Gad and Asher (these are the sons of Jacob, that were born to him in Paddan-aram).

²⁷ Then Jacob came to Isaac his father, to Mamre, near Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had stayed.

²⁸ The length of Isaac's life was a one hundred and eighty years.

²⁹ Isaac beathed his last, and was gathered to his father's kin, old and satisfied with life; and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him.

36

Genealogy

¹ Now these are the descendants of Esau (that is, Edom).

² Esau took his wives from the Canaanites: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite,

³ and Basemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebaioth.

⁴ Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau; and Basemath bore Reuel;

⁵ and Oholibamah bore Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau that were born to him in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the members of his household and his cattle and all his beasts and all his possessions which he had gathered in the land of Canaan and went into a land away from his brother Jacob.

⁷ For their possessions were too many for them to live together; and the land where they sojourned could not support them because of their cattle.

⁸ So Esau dwelt in Mount Seir (Esau is Edom).

⁹ These are the descendants of Esau the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir:

¹⁰ these are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Esau's wife Adah, Reuel the son of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz.

¹² Timna was the concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz; and she bore Amalek to him. These are the sons of Esau's wife Adah.

¹³ These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

¹⁴ These were the sons of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Esau's wife Zibion she bore Jeush to Esau, and Jalam, and Korah.

¹⁵ These are the chiefs descended from Esau. The sons of Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau: chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz,

¹⁶ chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek. These are the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in the land of Edom. These are the sons of Adah.

¹⁷ These are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah. These are the chiefs descended from Reuel in the land of Edom. These are the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

¹⁸ These are the sons of Oholibamah, Esau's wife: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah. These are the chiefs that came of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife.

¹⁹ These are the sons of Esau (that is, Edom), and these are their chiefs.

²⁰ These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the

original inhabitants of the land: Lotan and Shobal and Zibeon and Anah,

²¹ and Dishon and Ezer and Dishan. These are the chiefs that came of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom.

²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman. Lotan's sister was Timna.

²³ These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan and Manahath and Ebal, Shepho and Onam.

²⁴ These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; this is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as he fed the donkeys of his father Zibeon.

²⁵ These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah.

²⁶ These are the children of Dishon: Hemdan and Eshban and Ithran and Cheran.

²⁷ These are the children of Ezer: Bilhan and Zaavan and Akan.

²⁸ These are the children of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

²⁹ These are the chiefs descended from the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah,

³⁰ chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan. These are the chiefs that came of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.

³¹ These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the Israelites.

³² Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom; and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

³³ Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

³⁴ Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead.

³⁵ Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead. The name of his city was Avith.

³⁶ Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

³⁷ Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth by the River reigned in his stead.

³⁸ Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

³⁹ Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-zahab.

⁴⁰ These are the names of the chiefs descended from Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names: chief Timna, chief Alvah, chief Jetheth,

⁴¹ chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon,

⁴² chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar,

⁴³ chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These are the chiefs of Edom, according to their settlements in the land they possessed. This was Esau, the father of the Edomites.

37

Joseph sold into slavery

¹ Jacob made his home in the land of Canaan, where his father had lived as a resident foreigner.

² Joseph at the age of seventeen was a shepherd with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's slave wives. He brought a bad report about them to their father.

³ Now Jacob loved his son Joseph, who was born in his old age; and he made him a long robe with sleeves.

⁴ When his brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than all his other sons, they hated him and could not speak to him in a friendly manner.

⁵ Joseph also had a dream and told it to his brothers, and they hated him still more.

⁶ This is what he said to them, 'Hear, if you will, this dream which I have had;

⁷ for as we were binding sheaves in the field, my sheaf rose up and remained standing, while your sheaves came round and bowed down to my sheaf.'

⁸ His brothers said to him, 'Do you think you will be king over us? And rule us?' So they hated him still more because of his dreams and his words.

⁹ Then he had another dream and told it to his brothers, saying, 'I have had another dream, and it seemed to me that the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me.'

¹⁰ But when he told it to his father and his brothers, his father reproved him and said, 'What is this dream that you have dreamed? Am I and your mother and your brothers supposed to bow down to the earth before you?'

¹¹ Therefore his brothers envied him; but his father kept the matter in mind.

¹² When his brothers went to pasture his father's flocks in Shechem,

¹³ Israel said to Joseph, 'Are not your brothers pasturing the flocks in Shechem? Come now, I will send you to them.' Joseph replied, 'I am ready.'

¹⁴ So his father said to him, 'Go, see whether all goes well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me back word.' So he sent him out from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

¹⁵ There a man found him, as he was wandering in the field, and the man asked him, 'What are you seeking?'

¹⁶ He said, 'I am looking for my brothers; tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.'

¹⁷ The man said, 'They have gone away, for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan."' So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan.

¹⁸ When they saw him in the distance, before he came to them, they conspired against him to kill him.

¹⁹ They said one to another, 'See, here comes that master-dreamer.

²⁰ Come on, let us kill him, and throw him into one of the pits, and then we will say, "A fierce beast has devoured him"; and we will see what will become of his dreams!'

²¹ Reuben, however, when he heard it, saved him from their hands by saying, 'Let us not take his life.'

²² Reuben also said to them, 'Do not shed blood; throw him into this pit, that is in the wilderness; but do not harm him,' He planned to save him from their hands in order to restore him to his father.

²³ Nevertheless, when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his long robe, the robe with sleeves;

²⁴ and they took him and threw him into the pit. But the pit was empty, there being no water in it.

²⁵ Then they sat down to eat bread, and when they looked up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, and their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh on their way to carry it down to Egypt.

²⁶ Judah said to his brothers, 'What do we gain if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?

²⁷ Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let us do him no violence, for he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.' So his brothers listened to him;

²⁸ and when the Midianite merchants passed by, pulled Joseph up from the pit and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who brought him to Egypt.

²⁹ When Reuben returned to the pit and found Joseph gone, he tore his clothes in sorrow.

³⁰ He went back to his brothers and said, 'The boy is gone! What am I going to do?'

³¹ Then his brothers took Joseph's robe, killed a he-goat, dipped the long-sleeved robe in the blood,

³² tore it and sent it to their father, saying, 'We found this; see whether it is your son's robe or not.'

³³ He recognised it and said, 'It is my son's robe! A wild beast has devoured him! Joseph without doubt is torn in pieces.'

³⁴ Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth about his waist, and mourned for his son many days.

³⁵ All his sons and his daughters tried to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted, saying, 'I will

go down to the grave mourning for my son.’ So Joseph’s father wept for him.

³⁶ Meanwhile, the Midianites* had sold Joseph in Egypt to one of Pharaoh’s court officials, Potiphar, the captain of the guard.

38

Judah and Tamar

¹ About that time Judah left his kinsmen, and settled near a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.

² Judah saw there a daughter of a Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her. He lay with her,

³ and she conceived, and bore a son, and he named him Er.

⁴ Then she conceived again, and bore a son and named him Onan.

⁵ She bore still another son, and named him Shelah: and it was at Chezib that she bore him.

⁶ Now Judah found a wife for Er his eldest son, and her name was Tamar.

⁷ But Er, Judah’s eldest son, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD took his life.

⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, ‘Go and lie with your brother’s wife, and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her, and raise up offspring for your brother.’

⁹ But Onan knew that the child would not be his; so whenever he lay with his brother’s wife, he

* **37:36** Most ancient manuscripts read ‘Midianites’ but the Masoretic Text reads ‘Medanites.’

spilled his semen on the ground, in order not to raise up offspring for his brother.

¹⁰ What he did was evil in the sight of the LORD: therefore he took his life also.

¹¹ Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, 'Remain a widow in your father's house, until Shelah my son is grown up'; for he said to himself, 'I will not let him marry her, he must not die like his brothers.' So Tamar went and lived in her father's house.

¹² After many days had passed, Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died. When Judah had finished mourning, he went up to see about his sheep-shearers at Timnah, with his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

¹³ Someone told Tamar, saying, 'Behold, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.'

¹⁴ She took off the garments of her widowhood, and covered herself with her veil. She sat, veiled, in the gate of Enaim, which is by the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah had grown up without her being given to him as wife.

¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he thought her to be a prostitute; because she had veiled her face.

¹⁶ So he turned aside to her by the roadside, and said, 'Permit me, I pray you, to lie with you.' For he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, 'What will you give me to lie with me?'

¹⁷ He said, 'I will send you a young goat from the flock.' She said, 'Will you give me a pledge, until you send it?'

¹⁸ He said, 'What pledge should I give you?' And she said, 'Your seal-ring and your chain and your staff that is in your hand.' So he gave them to her, and lay with her, and she became pregnant.

¹⁹ And she got up, and went away, and took off her veil, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

²⁰ Now when Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive the pledge from the woman's hand, he could not find her.

²¹ He asked the men of her place, saying, 'Where is the sacred prostitute, who was at Enaim by the wayside?' They replied, 'There has been no sacred prostitute here.'

²² So he returned to Judah, and said, 'I have not found her; and the men of the place said, "There has been no sacred prostitute here." '

²³ Judah said, 'Let her keep the pledge, otherwise we will be put to shame. I have sent this goat, and you have not found her.'

²⁴ Now after about three months, Judah was told, 'Tamar your daughter-in-law has been acting like a prostitute and is pregnant.' Judah said, 'Bring her forth and let her be burnt.'

²⁵ But when she was brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, 'By the man to whom these things belong, I am with child.' She also said, 'Look at them and see if you know whose these are, the seal-ring and the chain and the staff.'

²⁶ When Judah recognised them, he said, 'She is more in the right than I, because I did not give

her to Shelah my son.’ But he did not lie with her again.

²⁷ When her time came to give birth, it was found that twins were in her womb.

²⁸ While she was in labour, one put out a hand and the midwife took and bound on his hand a bright red thread, saying, ‘This one came out first.’

²⁹ But he drew back his hand, and his brother came out, and she said, ‘What a breach you have made for yourself!’ Therefore he was named Perez.

³⁰ Afterward his brother came out, who had the bright red thread on his hand; therefore he was named Zerah.

39

Joseph in Egypt

¹ Joseph was taken down to Egypt, and Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officers, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

² Now the LORD was with Joseph, so that he prospered; and he remained in the house of his master the Egyptian.

³ When his master saw that the LORD was with him and made everything that he undertook prosper,

⁴ Joseph won his confidence and became his personal attendant. He also made him overseer of his household and placed all that he had in his care.

⁵ From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian’s household for Joseph’s

sake, and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house and in the field.

⁶ Leaving all that he had in Joseph's charge, he knew nothing about his affairs except about the food which he ate. Also Joseph was handsome and attractive.

⁷ After these honours had come to Joseph, his master's wife directed her glances toward him and tried to tempt him.

⁸ But he refused, saying to her, 'See, my master knows nothing about what I do in the house, and he has put all that he has in my charge.

⁹ No one has greater authority in this house than I, and he has kept back nothing from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wrong and sin against God?'

¹⁰ Day after day she tempted Joseph, but he did not listen to her nor accept her advances.

¹¹ One day, however, when he went into the house to do his work and when none of the men of the household were at home,

¹² she caught hold of his garment and tried to seduce him; but he left his garment in her hand and fled out of the house.

¹³ When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled,

¹⁴ she called to her household servants and said to them, 'See, the master has brought a Hebrew into insult us. He came to me to rape me, and I screamed loudly;

¹⁵ and when he heard me scream, he left his garment with me and ran out of the house.'

¹⁶ She kept his garment by her until his master came home;

¹⁷ then she told him the same story, saying, 'The Hebrew slave whom you have brought to us came to me to insult me;

¹⁸ and when I screamed he left his garment with me and fled.'

¹⁹ When Joseph's master heard the statements which his wife made to him, his anger was aroused;

²⁰ and he took Joseph and put him into the prison, in the place where the king's prisoners were confined. So he was left there in prison.

²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and showed kindness to him and enabled him to win the favour of the keeper of the prison,

²² so that he placed all the prisoners in Joseph's charge and made him responsible for whatever they did there.

²³ The keeper did not have to concern himself about anything Joseph was responsible for, because the LORD was with him and gave him success in everything he did.

40

The Two Dreams

¹ Some time after these things the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker offended their master the king of Egypt,

² so that Pharaoh was angry with these two officers and imprisoned them in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined.

³ The captain of the guard assigned Joseph to them, and he waited on them;

⁴ and they remained in confinement for some time.

⁵ Meanwhile the king of Egypt's cupbearer and baker, who were confined in the prison, both had dreams the same night, each with a particular meaning.

⁶ When Joseph came in to them in the morning, he saw plainly that they were sad.

⁷ So he asked Pharaoh's officers, 'Why do you look so sad today?'

⁸ They answered. 'We have had a dream and there is no one who can interpret it.' Then Joseph said to them, 'Do not the interpretations of dreams belong to God? Tell them to me.'

⁹ Then the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph and said to him, 'In my dream I saw a vine before me,

¹⁰ and on the vine were three branches, and as if budding it put out blossoms and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes.

¹¹ Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into his cup and gave the cup to Pharaoh.'

¹² Then Joseph said to him, 'This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days;

¹³ within three days Pharaoh will release you from prison and restore you to your office, and you will give Pharaoh's cup into his hand as you used to do when you were his cupbearer.

¹⁴ But when all goes well with you, remember me, show kindness to me and speak in my behalf

to Pharaoh and bring me out of this house;

¹⁵ for I was unjustly stolen from the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing that they should put me in the dungeon.'

¹⁶ When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favourable, he said to Joseph, 'I also saw something in my dream: there were three baskets of white bread on my head,

¹⁷ and in the uppermost basket there were all kinds of baked food for Pharaoh, and the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head.'

¹⁸ Joseph answered, 'This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days;

¹⁹ within three days Pharaoh will take off your head and hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat your flesh.'

²⁰ Now on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast for all his officials. Then he released the chief cupbearer and the chief baker.

²¹ He restored the chief butler to his office, so that he again gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand,

²² but the chief baker he hanged, as Joseph had interpreted to them.

²³ Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

41

Pharaoh's Dream

¹ Two years later Pharaoh had a dream: as he stood by the Nile,

² he saw coming up from the Nile seven cows, good-looking and fat, and they had been feeding in the river grass.

³ Then seven other cows came up after them out of the Nile, bad-looking and lean, and they stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile.

⁴ The bad-looking cows ate up the seven good-looking, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

⁵ Afterward he slept and had a second dream and saw seven ears, plump and good, growing up on one stalk.

⁶ Also seven ears, thin and blasted by the east wind, sprang up after them.

⁷ The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump, full ears. Then Pharaoh woke up, and realised that it was a dream.

⁸ In the morning Pharaoh's mind was disturbed; so he sent and called all the magicians and wise men of Egypt and told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them to him.

⁹ Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, 'I now must remind you of my offenses:

¹⁰ Pharaoh was very angry with his servants and imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard.

¹¹ We both had dreams the same night, each with a special meaning.

¹² There was also with us a young Hebrew, a slave of the captain of the guard; and we told him and he interpreted our dreams to us, to each of us according to his dream.

¹³ Our dreams came true exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my office, but the other man was hanged.'

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved his face and changed his clothes and came to Pharaoh.

¹⁵ Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. Now I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.'

¹⁶ Joseph answered Pharaoh, 'Not I; God only can give Pharaoh a satisfactory answer.'

¹⁷ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'In my dream as I stood on the bank of the Nile,

¹⁸ I saw seven cows, fat and good-looking, which had been feeding in the river grass.

¹⁹ There came up after them seven more cows, thin, and bad-looking and lean, worse than I ever saw in all the land of Egypt;

²⁰ and the lean and bad-looking cows ate up the first seven fat cows;

²¹ and when they had eaten them up, one could not tell that they had eaten them, for they were still as bad-looking as at the beginning. Then I woke up.

²² Again I dreamed and saw seven ears, plump and good, grow up on one stalk;

²³ then seven ears, withered, thin, blasted with the east wind, sprang up after them;

²⁴ and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. I have told the dream to the magicians, but there is no one who can interpret it to me.'

²⁵ Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, ‘Pharaoh’s two dreams signify the same thing; God has made known to Pharaoh what he is about to do.

²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years. It is one dream.

²⁷ The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are also seven years, and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind represent seven years of famine.

²⁸ That is why I said to Pharaoh, “God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do.”

²⁹ Seven years of great plenty throughout the land of Egypt are coming,

³⁰ and they will be followed by seven years of famine, so that all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume all that the land produces;

³¹ and plenty will not be known in the land because of that famine which follows, for it will be very severe.

³² ‘The dream came twice to Pharaoh to indicate that its fulfilment is assured and that God will soon make it come true.

³³ Now therefore let Pharaoh select a man who is discreet and wise and place him in control of the land of Egypt.

³⁴ Pharaoh should take action and appoint overseers over the land and collect one-fifth of all the produce of Egypt in the seven plentiful years.

³⁵ Let them gather all the food of these good years that come and store the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them hold it for food in the cities.

³⁶ The food will furnish a supply for the land during the seven years of famine which will be in the land of Egypt, so that the people of the land will not perish because of the famine.'

³⁷ The plan pleased Pharaoh and all his officials;

³⁸ and Pharaoh said to his officials, 'Can we find one like this, a man in whom is the spirit of God?'

³⁹ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Since God has shown you all this, there is no one so discreet and wise as you.'

⁴⁰ You will be at the head of my dominion, and all my people will be ruled as you command, only on the throne I will be superior to you.'

⁴¹ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'See, I have appointed you over all the land of Egypt.'

⁴² Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his finger and put it upon Joseph's finger and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a golden collar about his neck.

⁴³ He also made him ride in the second-best chariot which he had; and they cried before him, 'Attention!' So he placed him over all the land of Egypt.

⁴⁴ Pharaoh also said to Joseph, 'I am Pharaoh, but without your consent no one may lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.'

⁴⁵ Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath-paneah and gave him as a wife Asenath the daughter of Potiphra, priest of On. Joseph's authority was over all Egypt,

⁴⁶ and so at the age of thirty Joseph was commissioned by Pharaoh, king of Egypt and went out as the head of the land of Egypt.

⁴⁷ In the seven plenteous years there were bountiful harvests,

⁴⁸ and Joseph gathered up all the food of the seven plenteous years, which were in the land of Egypt, and stored the food in the cities, putting in each city the products of the fields about it.

⁴⁹ Joseph stored up grain as the sand of the sea, in great quantities, until he ceased to keep account, because it could not be measured.

⁵⁰ Two sons were born to Joseph and Asenath before the year of famine came.

⁵¹ Joseph named the eldest Manasseh, for he said, 'God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's household.'

⁵² He named the second son Ephraim, for he said, 'God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.'

⁵³ When the seven years of plenty which had been in the land of Egypt were over,

⁵⁴ the seven years of famine began, as Joseph had said; and there was famine in all lands, but throughout the land of Egypt there was food,

⁵⁵ for when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread, and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, 'Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.'

⁵⁶ So when the famine was universal throughout the earth, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold food to the Egyptians: but the famine was severe in the land of Egypt.

⁵⁷ The peoples of all lands came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, for the famine was severe throughout the world.

42

Joseph's brothers come to Egypt

¹ Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, and he said to his sons, 'Why do you stand looking at each other?

² I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt; go down there and buy for us, so that we may live and not die.'

³ So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt.

⁴ But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's own brother, with his brothers; for he feared that some harm might come to him.

⁵ So the sons of Jacob went among others to buy grain, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Joseph was the governor over the land; it was he who sold to all the people of the land. Therefore Joseph's brothers came and bowed before him with their faces to the earth.

⁷ When Joseph saw his brothers he knew them, but he acted as a stranger toward them and spoke harshly to them and said, 'Where do you come from?' They said, 'From the land of Canaan to buy food.'

⁸ So Joseph recognised his brothers, but they did not know him.

⁹ Joseph also remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them and said to them, 'You spies! You have come to find out the weaknesses of the land.'

¹⁰ But they said to him, 'No my lord; your servants have come to buy food.'

¹¹ We are all sons of one man; we are honest men; your servants are not spies.'

¹² But he said to them, 'No, you have come to see the weaknesses of the land.'

¹³ They replied, 'We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; the youngest is today with our father, and one is no more.'

¹⁴ Joseph said to them, 'It is just as I said to you, you are spies.'

¹⁵ By this you will be tested: as sure as Pharaoh lives you will not go away unless your youngest brother comes here.

¹⁶ Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain in prison, that it may be proved whether you are telling the truth or not. Or else, as sure as Pharaoh lives, you are indeed spies.'

¹⁷ So he put them all into prison for three days.

¹⁸ Then Joseph said to them on the third day, 'Do this, and live, for I respect God:

¹⁹ if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain in prison, but you go, carry grain to supply the needs of your households

²⁰ and bring your youngest brother to me. So will your words be verified, and you will not die.'

²¹ They did as Joseph commanded, but they said to one another, 'We are indeed guilty because of the way we treated our brother, for when we saw his distress and when he pleaded with us, we would not listen; therefore this trouble has come upon us.'

²² Reuben added, ‘Did I not say to you, “Do not sin against the boy,” but you would not listen? Therefore now his very blood is required.’

²³ They did not know, however, that Joseph understood them, for he had spoken to them through an interpreter.

²⁴ But he turned away from them and wept; then he turned back and spoke to them, and, taking Simeon from among them, bound him before their eyes.

²⁵ Then Joseph gave orders to fill their vessels with grain and to restore each man’s money to his sack and to give them provision for the journey; and it was done to them.

²⁶ So they loaded their donkeys with their grain, and departed.

²⁷ When they stopped for the night, one of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey, and he saw the silver at the top of the sack.

²⁸ He said to his brothers, ‘My silver has been returned; here it is in my pack.’ They were dismayed and fearful, and said to one another, ‘What has God done to us?’

²⁹ When they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened, saying,

³⁰ ‘The man who is master in that land spoke harshly to us and imprisoned us as spies.

³¹ We said to him, “We are honest men; we are not spies;

³² we are twelve brothers, sons of the same father; one is no longer living, and the youngest is today with our father in the land of Canaan.”

³³ But the man who is master in that land said to us, "This is how I will discover if you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me and take the grain to supply the needs of your households and depart.

³⁴ Bring your youngest brother to me; then I will know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men; and I will restore your brother to you and you will be free to go about in the land." "

³⁵ As they were emptying their sacks, they found that each man's purse of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw their purses filled with money, they were afraid.

³⁶ Jacob their father said to them, 'You have robbed me of my children: Joseph is no longer living and Simeon is no longer here, and you would take Benjamin also. All this misfortune has overtaken me!'

³⁷ But Reuben said to his father, 'You may put my two sons to death, if I do not return him to you. Put him in my charge and I will bring him back to you.'

³⁸ But Jacob said, 'My son must not go down with you, for his brother is dead and he only is left. If harm should come to him on the way by which you go, then you will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.'

43

¹ The famine was severe in the land;

² and when Joseph's brothers had eaten all the grain which they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, 'Go again, and buy us some more grain.'

³ But Judah replied, ‘The man warned us: “You will not be able to see me unless your brother is with you.”

⁴ If you will let our brother go with us, we will go down and buy you food,

⁵ but if you will not let him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, “You will not be able to see me unless your brother is with you.” ’

⁶ Jacob said, ‘Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man you had another brother?’

⁷ They replied, ‘The man asked particularly about us and our relatives, saying, “Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?” So we answered his questions as he asked them. How were we to know that he would say, “Bring your brother down”?’

⁸ Then Judah said to Israel his father, ‘Send the boy with me, and we will go at once, so that both we and you and our little ones may live and not die.

⁹ I will be surety for him, you can hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever;

¹⁰ for if we had not lingered, surely we would now have returned the second time.’

¹¹ Therefore their father said to them, ‘If it must be so, then do this: take some of the products of the land in your jars and carry down a present to the man, a little balm, a little honey, spices, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds.

¹² Take twice as much money with you, carrying back the money that was returned in your sacks;

perhaps there was a mistake.

¹³ Take also your brother and go again to the man,

¹⁴ and may God Almighty grant that the man may be merciful to you and release Benjamin and your other brother. But if I am robbed of my sons, I am bereaved indeed!’

¹⁵ So the men took the present and twice as much money and Benjamin, and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, ‘Bring the men into the house, kill animals, and prepare the meal, for these men will eat with me at noon.’

¹⁷ He did as Joseph directed, and brought the men into Joseph’s house.

¹⁸ But the brothers were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph’s house, and they said, ‘We are being brought in on account of the money that was returned in our grain sacks at our first visit, so that he can overpower and arrest us and take us as slaves, together with our donkeys.’

¹⁹ So when they came near to Joseph’s steward, they spoke to him at the door of the house

²⁰ and said, ‘Oh, my lord, we came down the first time only to buy food;

²¹ and when we reached home, we opened our sacks and discovered every man’s money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in its full weight; and we have brought it back with us.

²² We have also brought down with us other money with which to buy food; we do not know who put our money into our sacks.’

²³ He replied, 'Be calm, don't be afraid; your God and the God of your father has given you the treasure in your sacks; I received your full payment.'

Then he brought Simeon out to them.

²⁴ The steward also conducted the men to Joseph's house and gave them water with which to wash their feet, and he gave their donkeys fodder.

²⁵ Then they made ready the present in anticipation of Joseph's coming at noon, for they had heard that they were to eat there.

²⁶ When Joseph came into the house, they gave him the present which they had brought and bowed down low before him.

²⁷ He asked them regarding their welfare and said, 'Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still living?'

²⁸ They replied, 'Your servant, our father, is well; he is still alive.' Then they bowed their heads and made obeisance.

²⁹ When Joseph looked up and saw Benjamin his brother, his own mother's son, he said. 'Is this your youngest brother of whom you spoke to me?' and he added, 'God be gracious to you, my son.'

³⁰ Then because he was overcome with emotion for his brother he sought a place to weep; and he went into his room and wept there.

³¹ Then he bathed his face and came out and controlling himself he said, 'Bring on the food.'

³² So they brought food for him by himself and for them by themselves and for the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for to do so

is abhorrent to the Egyptians.

³³ Joseph's brothers were seated before him, the eldest according to his right as the oldest and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked at each other in astonishment.

³⁴ Then Joseph had portions served to them from the food before him; but Benjamin's portions were five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.

44

¹ Then he gave this command to the steward of his household: 'Fill the men's grain sacks with food, as much as they can carry,

² and put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest and the money too that he paid for his grain.' He did as Joseph commanded.

³ As soon as the morning light appeared, the men were sent away, together with their donkeys.

⁴ When they had gone out of the city, but were not yet far away, Joseph commanded his steward, 'Follow after the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, "Why have you returned evil for good?"

⁵ Why have you stolen my silver cup, that from which my master drinks and by which he divines the future? You have done wrong in so doing!" '

⁶ So the steward overtook them and said these words to them.

⁷ They said to him, 'Why does my lord speak such words as this? Far be it from your servants that they should do such a thing!

⁸ Remember that we brought back to you from the hind of Canaan the money which we found in our sacks. Why then should we steal silver or gold from your master's house?

⁹ If one of us is found with the goblet then let him die, and we will be my lord's slaves.'

¹⁰ He said, 'Let it now be as you have said: he with whom it is found will be my slave; but the rest may go free.'

¹¹ Then each one hastily took down his sack to the ground and opened it;

¹² and the steward searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

¹³ Then they tore their clothes in sorrow, and every man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

¹⁴ When Judah and his brothers came back to Joseph's house, he was still there; and they threw themselves before him on the ground.

¹⁵ Joseph said to them, 'What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me can divine secrets?'

¹⁶ Judah replied, 'What can we say, my lord? What can we plead or how can we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants. See, both we and he also in whose possession the cup was found are my lord's slaves.'

¹⁷ But Joseph said, 'Far be it from me that I should do such a thing! The man in whose possession the cup was found must be my slave; but you yourselves go up in peace to your father.'

¹⁸ Then Judah came close to him and said, ‘My lord, let your servant, I beg of you, speak a word in my lord’s ears, and let not your anger be kindled against your servant; for you are as great as Pharaoh.

¹⁹ My lord, you asked us, “Have you a father or a brother?”

²⁰ And we said to you, “We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one. Since his brother is dead, he is the only son of his mother who is left; and his father loves him.”

²¹ You said to us, “Bring him down to me, so that I can see him.”

²² But we said to you, my lord, “The boy cannot leave his father. If he should leave his father, his father would die.”

²³ Then you said to us, “Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not be able to see me again.”

²⁴ When we went up to your servant, my father, we told him your words, my lord;

²⁵ and our father said, “Go again, buy us a little food.”

²⁶ But we said, “We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go; for we cannot see the man unless our youngest brother is with us.”

²⁷ And your servant, my father, said to us, “You know that my wife bore me two sons;

²⁸ and one went missing, and I said that surely he was torn in pieces; and I have not seen him since.

²⁹ If you take this one also from me, and harm befall him, you will bring down my grey hairs

with sorrow to the grave.”

³⁰ Now if I return to your servant, my father, and the boy with whose life his heart is bound up is not with us,

³¹ then when he sees that there is no boy, he will die, and we, your servants will bring down the grey hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

³² Indeed, my lord, I personally became surety for the boy to my father, when I said, “If I do not bring him to you, then I will bear the blame in my father’s eyes forever.”

³³ Now therefore let me, I beg of you, remain instead of the boy as your slave, my lord, but let the boy go up with his brothers.

³⁴ For how can I go up to my father, if the boy is not with me, and see the pain and sorrow that would come upon my father.’

45

¹ Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who were standing by him; so he cried out, ‘Let everyone leave me.’ So nobody stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

² But he wept so loudly that the Egyptians and Pharaoh’s court heard.

³ Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?’ But his brothers could not answer him for they were frightened in his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Come near to me, I beg of you.’ So they came near. And he

said, 'I am Joseph your brother whom you sold into Egypt.

⁵ Do not be troubled nor angry with yourselves that you sold me here, because God sent me before you to preserve life.

⁶ For the famine has already been two years in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest.

⁷ God sent me before you to keep you alive through a great deliverance and give you descendants on the earth.

⁸ So now it is clear that it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me like a father to Pharaoh and master of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

⁹ 'Go up quickly to my father and say to him, "Your son Joseph says: God has made me master of all Egypt, come down to me without delay.

¹⁰ You will live in the land of Goshen, and you will be near me with your children and children's children, with your flocks and your herds and all that you have,

¹¹ and there I will provide for you. Otherwise you, together with your household and all that you have, will starve; for there will be five more years of famine."

¹² Now you and my brother Benjamin see that it is really me, Joseph, who is speaking to you.

¹³ Tell my father all about my honour in Egypt and what you have seen, and you must quickly bring him down here.'

¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 He also kissed all his brothers and wept with them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

16 The report that Joseph's brothers had arrived spread in Pharaoh's palace, and it pleased Pharaoh and his servants greatly.

17 Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Say to your brothers, "Do this: load your beasts, go to the land of Canaan,

18 and take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the best that the land affords.

19 Now you are commanded to do this: take wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives and bring your father and come.

20 Also pay no attention to your household goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours." '

21 The sons of Jacob did as commanded.

So Joseph gave them wagons according to Pharaoh's orders and provisions for the journey.

22 To each of them he gave a change of clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothing.

23 To his father he sent the following gifts: ten donkeys loaded with the best products of Egypt and ten donkeys loaded with grain and bread and provisions for his father on the journey.

24 So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, 'See that you do not quarrel on the journey!'

²⁵ So they went up out of Egypt and came into the land of Canaan to Jacob their father.

²⁶ They told him, 'Joseph is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt!' Then Jacob's heart stood still, for he could not believe them.

²⁷ But when they told him all that Joseph had said to them and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived,

²⁸ and he, Israel, said, 'It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.'

46

The promise to Israel

¹ Then Israel set out on his journey with all that he had. He went to Beersheba and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

² God spoke to Israel in a vision by night and said, 'Jacob, Jacob.' He answered. 'Here I am.'

³ Then God said, 'I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down into Egypt, for there I will make of you a great nation.

⁴ I myself will go down with you into Egypt; and I will surely bring you up again; and Joseph will be the one who closes your dying eyes.'

⁵ When Jacob left Beersheba, his sons carried him and their little ones and their wives in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

⁶ They took their herds and the possessions they had acquired in Canaan and went to Egypt, Jacob and all his family;

⁷ his sons and grandsons, his daughters and his granddaughters, he brought all his family to Egypt.

Genealogy

⁸ Now these are the names of the Israelites, Jacob and his family, who came to Egypt. Reuben, Jacob's firstborn,

⁹ and the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

¹⁰ The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman.

¹¹ The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

¹² The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). Perez's sons were Hezron and Hamul.

¹³ The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Iob, and Shimron.

¹⁴ The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.

¹⁵ These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, together with his daughter Dinah. He had thirty-three descendants by Leah in total.

¹⁶ The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.

¹⁷ The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and Serah, their sister. The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel.

¹⁸ These are the children of Zilpah, the slave-girl whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah. She bore sixteen children to Jacob.

¹⁹ The children of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin.

²⁰ Joseph in the land of Egypt fathered Manasseh and Ephraim, whose mother was Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On.

²¹ The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard.

²² These fourteen were Rachel and Jacobs' descendants.

²³ The sons of Dan: Hashum.

²⁴ The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.

²⁵ These seven are the sons of Bilhah, the slave-girl whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel. She bore seven children to Jacob.

²⁶ All the people belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own offspring, not including the wives of his sons, were sixty-six in total.

²⁷ Two sons were born to Joseph in Egypt; all the people of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.

Israel in Egypt

²⁸ Jacob sent Judah before him to Joseph, so that he might show him the way to Goshen.

²⁹ When they came into the land of Goshen, Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to Goshen to meet Jacob his father; and when he presented himself to him Jacob fell on his neck and wept there a long time.

³⁰ Then Jacob said to Joseph, 'Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive.'

³¹ But Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, 'I will go up and tell Pharaoh and will say to him, "My brothers and my father's household who were in the land of Canaan have come to me.'

³² Now the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of cattle; and they have brought their flocks and cattle and all that they have."

³³ When Pharaoh calls you and asks, "What is your occupation?"

³⁴ you must say, "We, your servants have been keepers of cattle all our lives, both we and our fathers," so that you might be allowed to live in the province of Goshen, for shepherds are looked down upon by the Egyptians.'

47

¹ Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, 'My father and my brothers with their sheep and cattle and all that they possess have come from the land of Canaan; and now they are in the province of Goshen.'

² He took five of his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh.

³ Pharaoh said to them, 'What is your occupation?' And they said to Pharaoh, 'We are shepherds, both we and our fathers.'

⁴ They also said to Pharaoh, 'We have come to live in the land, because there is no pasture for our flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. We beg of you, to let us stay in the province of Goshen.'

⁵ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Since your father and your brothers have come to you,

⁶ the land of Egypt is at your disposal. Settle them in the best part of it. Let them stay in the province of Goshen; and if you know any capable men among them, put them in charge of my cattle.'

⁷ Joseph also brought in Jacob his father and presented him to Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

⁸ Then Pharaoh said to Jacob, 'How many years have you lived?'

⁹ Jacob answered, 'I have lived a hundred and thirty years; few and hard have been the years of my life, and they have not been as many as those that my ancestors lived on earth.'

¹⁰ After Jacob had blessed Pharaoh, he went out from Pharaoh's presence.

¹¹ So Joseph gave his father and his brothers a place to live in and a home in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, near Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

¹² Joseph also provided food for his father and his brothers and all his father's household according to the number of their little children.

¹³ There was no bread in all the land; since the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.

¹⁴ Joseph gathered in all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

¹⁵ When the money was all spent in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph, and said, 'Give us bread: for

why should we die before your eyes because our money fails?’

¹⁶ Then Joseph said, ‘Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money has failed.’

¹⁷ So they brought their cattle to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the horses, the flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, and the donkeys. That year he sustained them with bread in exchange for all their cattle.

¹⁸ And when that year was ended, they came to him the second year, and said to him, ‘We will not hide from you, my lord, now that our money is all spent; and the herds of cattle are yours; there is nothing left for your lordship but our bodies and our lands.

¹⁹ Why should we perish before your eyes, both we and our land? Take possession of us and our land in return for bread, and we and our land will become personal possessions of Pharaoh; and give us seed, so that we will live, and not die, so that the land does not become desolate.’

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; because every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh’s.

²¹ As for the people, he moved into the cities throughout the whole territory of Egypt*

²² Only the land of the priests he did not buy, because the priests had a definite allowance from Pharaoh, and ate their portion which Pharaoh gave them. Hence they did not sell their land.

* **47:21** As per the Masoretic Text. The Septaguint and Samaritan Pentateuch says “he reduced them to slavery”

²³ Then Joseph said to the people, 'I have bought you and you land today for Pharaoh. Here is seed for you, and you must sow the land.

²⁴ At the harvest, you must give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four parts will be your own, for seed for the field, and for your food, and for those of your households, and for food for your little ones.'

²⁵ They replied, 'You have saved our lives; let us find favour in your sight, lord, and we will be Pharaoh's slaves.'

²⁶ So Joseph made it a law, still in force today, that Pharaoh should have a fifth; only the land of the priests did not come into the possession of Pharaoh.

²⁷ The Israelites lived in Egypt, in the land of Goshen, and they acquired possessions in it and had many children and became exceedingly numerous.

²⁸ Jacob lived for seventeen years in Egypt and died at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven.

Deaths of Jacob and Joseph

²⁹ When the time drew near for Jacob to die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, 'If now you will do me a favour, put your hand under my thigh and swear that you will act kindly and faithfully with me. Do not bury me, I beg of you, in Egypt;

³⁰ but when I lie down to sleep with my ancestors, carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying-place.' Joseph replied, 'I will do as you have requested.'

³¹ Jacob said, 'Give me your oath'; so Joseph gave him his oath; and Israel bowed toward the head of the bed.

48

¹ Now after these things, Joseph was told, 'Your father is sick.' So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

² When Jacob was told, 'Your son Joseph has come to you.' Jacob rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

³ Then Jacob said to Joseph, 'God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me,

⁴ and said to me, "I will make you fruitful, and numerous, and I will make of you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession."

⁵ Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you into Egypt will be mine just as Reuben and Simeon are mine.

⁶ But your offspring, which you father after them, will be yours. Their inheritance will come from their older brothers.

⁷ As for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died to my sorrow in the land of Canaan on the way, some distance from Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).'

⁸ When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, 'Who are these?'

⁹ And Joseph said to his father, 'They are my sons, whom God has given me here.' Israel said, 'Bring them, I pray you, to me, and I will bless them.'

¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. So Joseph brought them

near to him; and he kissed them, and embraced them.

¹¹ Israel said to Joseph, 'I had not thought to see your face; and now God has let me see your offspring as well.'

¹² Joseph took them from his father's lap, and bowed with his face to the earth.

¹³ So Joseph took them both – Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand – and brought them near to him.

¹⁴ Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it upon the head of Ephraim who was the younger and his left hand upon the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands intentionally, for Manasseh was the eldest.

¹⁵ He then blessed Joseph, saying, 'The God whom my forefathers Abraham and Isaac revered and served, the God who has been my shepherd all my life long unto this day,

¹⁶ the messenger who has delivered me from all evil, bless the boys; and let them be known as descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and let them grow into a multitude on the earth.'

¹⁷ But when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, and he seized his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's.

¹⁸ Joseph said to his father, 'Not so, my father; this one is the eldest; put your right hand upon his head.'

¹⁹ But his father refused and said, 'I know, my son, I know, he also will become a people, and

he will be great, but his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a populous nation.'

²⁰ So he blessed them that day and said, 'The Israelites will invoke a blessing like your own, saying, "God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh." ' So he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹ Jacob said to Joseph, 'See, I am about to die; but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers.

²² As well I give you a mountain-slope which I took out of the power of the Amorites with my sword and bow.'

49

¹ Jacob summoned his sons and said, 'Come near, so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.'

² Assemble, sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father.

³ Reuben you are my firstborn,
my strength and the first-fruit of my manhood.
First in dignity and strength.

⁴ Boiling over like water, you will not be first,
For you climbed into my concubine's the bed,
you defiled your father's couch.

⁵ Simeon and Levi are akin,
weapons of violence are their swords.
I will not enter into their council,

⁶ My heart will not join in their assembly,
for men in their anger they slew.

and oxen in their wantonness they hamstrung.

⁷ Accursed is their anger that it is so fierce,
and their wrath because it is so cruel;
I will divide them in Jacob
and scatter them in Israel.

⁸ Judah, your brothers praise you!
Your hand is on the neck of your enemies.
Before you your father's sons bow down.

⁹ Judah is a whelp of a lion.
From the kill, my son, you have returned;
He has crouched, he has lain down as a lion,
as an old lion, who will disturb him?

¹⁰ The sceptre will not pass from Judah,
nor the royal staff from between his feet,
and to him is due the obedience of the people.

¹¹ Binding his donkey to the vine,
and his colt to the choice vine,
he has washed his garments in wine,
and his clothing in the blood of grapes.

¹² His eyes are red with wine,
and his teeth are white with milk.

¹³ Zebulun, he lives by the seashore;
he is by a shore that is lined with ships,
and his border extends to Sidon.

¹⁴ Issachar, he is a strong-limbed donkey,
crouching down between the sheepfolds,

¹⁵ and when he saw the resting place was good,
that the land also was pleasant,
he bowed his shoulder to bear,
and became a slave under a taskmaster.

¹⁶ Dan, he judges his own people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁷ Dan is a serpent by the way,
a horned-adder beside the path
that bites the horse's heel
so that his rider is thrown off.

¹⁸ I have waited for your deliverance LORD!

¹⁹ Gad, robber-bands press upon him,
but he also will press upon their heel.

²⁰ Asher, his food is rich,
and he provides royal dainties.

²¹ Naphtali, he is a flourishing terebinth,
that sends forth beautiful branches.

²² Joseph, he is a fruitful branch,
a fruitful branch by a spring,
his tendrils run over the wall.

²³ They bitterly attack, they shoot at him.
The archers hatefully assail him,

²⁴ But his bow remains ever bent,
his forearms tireless,
through the power of the Mighty One of Jacob,
In the name of the Shepherd of Israel,

²⁵ the God of your fathers, who will help you,
and God Almighty, who blesses you,
with blessings of heaven above,
and of the great deep that lies beneath.
With blessings of the breast and womb,

²⁶ with blessings of your father,
with blessings of the everlasting mountains,
with the gifts of the ancient hills!

They will be on the head of Joseph,
on the head of the consecrated among his brothers.

²⁷ Benjamin is a ravening wolf.
In the morning he devours prey.
and at evening divides the spoil.

²⁸ These are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this
is what their father said to them and blessed them;
each according to his blessing he blessed them.

²⁹ He instructed them, 'I am to be gathered to my
people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that
is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,

³⁰ in the cave that is in the field of Mach-
pelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of
Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field
from Ephron the Hittite for the purpose of holding
it as a burying-place.

³¹ There they buried Abraham and Sarah his
wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his
wife; and there I buried Leah.

³² The field and the cave that is in it which was
purchased from the children of Heth.'

³³ When Jacob had finished giving these instruc-
tions to his sons, he gathered up his feet into the
bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his
ancestors.

50

¹ Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept over
him and kissed him.

² Then Joseph commanded his servants the
physicians to embalm his father. So the physi-
cians embalmed Jacob;

³ and forty days were devoted to it, for this is the full period for embalming.

⁴ The Egyptians also mourned for him seventy days.

⁵ When the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the members of Pharaoh's court, saying, 'If now you wish to do me a favour, speak to Pharaoh and say, Joseph's father made him take an oath, saying, "See, I am dying; bury me in my grave which I prepared for myself in the land of Canaan." Ask Pharaoh, "Let me go up, I beg of you, and bury my father; after that I will return." '

⁶ Pharaoh said, 'Go up and bury your father, as he made you take an oath.'

⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went all the officials of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, all the elders of the land of Egypt,

⁸ all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their little ones, their sheep, and their cattle they left in the land of Goshen.

⁹ There went up with him both chariots and horsemen, so that it was a very great company.

¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, they held there a great and impressive lamentation; and Joseph appointed a period of mourning for his father which lasted seven days.

¹¹ When the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, 'This is an impressive mourning among the Egyptians.' That is why that place across the Jordan is called, Ebel-Mizraim.

¹² Then Jacob's sons did for him what he had commanded them:

¹³ they carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to hold as a place of burial.

¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph and his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father returned to Egypt.

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers realised that their father was dead, they said, 'It may be that Joseph will now hate us and fully punish us for all the evil which we did to him!'

¹⁶ They sent this message to him: 'Your father commanded before he died,

¹⁷ "Tell Joseph: Forgive, I beg of you, the wrongdoing and sin of your brothers, for they treated you basely." So now we beg of you forgive the wrongdoing of the servants of your father's God.'

While they were speaking to him, Joseph began to weep,

¹⁸ his brothers also went and fell down before him and said, 'See, we are your slaves.'

¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for am I in the place of God?

²⁰ You plotted mischief against me, but God intended it for good, in order to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of the lives of many people.

²¹ Now therefore do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.' He said this kindly, comforting them.

²² Joseph remained in Egypt with his father's family. He lived a hundred and ten years,

²³ and he saw Ephraim's great-grandchildren; the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were borne upon Joseph's knees.

²⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am about to die, but God will surely remember you and bring you up from this land to the land which he promised by an oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.'

²⁵ Joseph required an oath of the Israelites, saying, 'When God remembers you, as he surely will, then you must carry up my bones from here.'

²⁶ So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

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