

# Genesis

**AS ITS NAME IMPLIES**, Genesis is the book of beginnings. It starts with the creation of the world and every creature in it. It records the first marriage, the first sin, the first consequences of sin, and the first reference to God's plan to redeem humanity. After recounting the stories of the Flood and the Tower of Babel, Genesis also tells the story of the birth of the nation of Israel. The story begins as God calls Abraham, the forefather of the Israelites, to leave his home, Ur (located in modern-day Iraq), and move to Canaan—the land God would promise his descendants. Eventually, the Redeemer of the world would come from the descendants of Abraham. The story then shifts to events concerning Isaac, Abraham's son, and then to Jacob, Abraham's grandson. Genesis concludes with the remarkable experiences of Joseph, one of Jacob's twelve sons.

■ **Author:** Moses, according to Jewish tradition

■ **Date Written:** Uncertain, perhaps between 1450 and 1410 BC

■ **Purpose:** To show how the world and everything in it came about and to show God's desire to have a people set apart to worship him

■ **Themes:** Origin of the world, humanity, sin, and the nation of Israel; the sovereignty and trustworthiness of God; obedience and blessing

■ **Outline**

1:1–2:25 The creation of the world and humanity

3:1–3:24 The fall of Adam and Eve

4:1–9:29 The history of fallen humanity through the Flood

10:1–11:32 The spread of people around the world

12:1–25:18 The life of Abraham

25:19–26:35 The life of Isaac

27:1–37:1 The lives of Jacob and Esau

37:2–50:26 The life of Joseph

## *The Account of Creation*

**1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.\*<sup>2</sup>The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

<sup>3</sup>Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light "day" and the darkness "night."

And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

<sup>6</sup>Then God said, "Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth."<sup>7</sup>And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of

the earth from the waters of the heavens.

<sup>8</sup>God called the space "sky."

And evening passed and morning came, marking the second day.

<sup>9</sup>Then God said, "Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear." And that is what happened. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground "land" and the waters "seas." And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, "Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came." And that is what happened. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of

1:1 Or *In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, . . . Or When God began to create the heavens and the earth, . . .*

the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>13</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the third day.

<sup>14</sup>Then God said, “Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years. <sup>15</sup>Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth.” And that is what happened. <sup>16</sup>God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, <sup>18</sup>to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>19</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind.” <sup>21</sup>So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>Then God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”

<sup>23</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened. <sup>25</sup>God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let us make human beings\* in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth,\* and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created human beings\* in his own image.

In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup>Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

<sup>29</sup>Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. <sup>30</sup>And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened.

<sup>31</sup>Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

**2** So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. <sup>2</sup>On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested\* from all his work. <sup>3</sup>And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

<sup>4</sup>This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

### *The Man and Woman in Eden*

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup>neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. <sup>6</sup>Instead, springs\* came up from the ground and watered all the land. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.

<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made. <sup>9</sup>The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup>A river flowed from the land of Eden, watering the garden and then dividing into

<sup>1:26a</sup> Or *man*; Hebrew reads *adam*. <sup>1:26b</sup> As in Syriac version; Hebrew reads *all the earth*. <sup>1:27</sup> Or *the man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. <sup>2:2</sup> Or *ceased*; also in 2:3. <sup>2:6</sup> Or *mist*.

four branches. <sup>11</sup>The first branch, called the Pishon, flowed around the entire land of Havilah, where gold is found. <sup>12</sup>The gold of that land is exceptionally pure; aromatic resin and onyx stone are also found there. <sup>13</sup>The second branch, called the Gihon, flowed around the entire land of Cush. <sup>14</sup>The third branch, called the Tigris, flowed east of the land of Asshur. The fourth branch is called the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. <sup>16</sup>But the LORD God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—<sup>17</sup>except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.”

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” <sup>19</sup>So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man\* to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. <sup>20</sup>He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.

<sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man’s ribs\* and closed up the opening. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup>“At last!” the man exclaimed.

“This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!  
She will be called ‘woman,’  
because she was taken from ‘man.’”

<sup>24</sup>This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

<sup>25</sup>Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

### *The Man and Woman Sin*

**3** The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

<sup>2</sup>“Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. <sup>3</sup>“It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden

that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’”

<sup>4</sup>“You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. <sup>5</sup>“God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup>The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. <sup>7</sup>At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

<sup>8</sup>When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man\* and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

<sup>10</sup>He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.”

<sup>11</sup>“Who told you that you were naked?” the LORD God asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?”

<sup>12</sup>The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God asked the woman, “What have you done?”

“The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.”

<sup>14</sup>Then the LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild.

You will crawl on your belly,  
groveling in the dust as long as you live.

<sup>15</sup> And I will cause hostility between you and the woman,

and between your offspring and her offspring.

He will strike\* your head,  
and you will strike his heel.”

<sup>16</sup>Then he said to the woman,

“I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy,  
and in pain you will give birth.

And you will desire to control your husband,  
but he will rule over you.\*”

<sup>2:19</sup> Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter. <sup>2:21</sup> Or *took a part of the man’s side*. <sup>3:8</sup> Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter. <sup>3:15</sup> Or *bruise*; also in <sup>3:15b</sup>. <sup>3:16</sup> Or *And though you will have desire for your husband, / he will rule over you*.

<sup>17</sup>And to the man he said,

“Since you listened to your wife and ate  
from the tree  
whose fruit I commanded you not to eat,  
the ground is cursed because of you.  
All your life you will struggle to scratch  
a living from it.

<sup>18</sup> It will grow thorns and thistles for you,  
though you will eat of its grains.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow  
will you have food to eat  
until you return to the ground  
from which you were made.  
For you were made from dust,  
and to dust you will return.”

*Paradise Lost: God’s Judgment*

<sup>20</sup>Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve,  
because she would be the mother of all who  
live.\* <sup>21</sup>And the LORD God made clothing from  
animal skins for Adam and his wife.

<sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God said, “Look, the  
human beings\* have become like us, knowing  
both good and evil. What if they reach out, take  
fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they  
will live forever!” <sup>23</sup>So the LORD God banished  
them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent  
Adam out to cultivate the ground from which  
he had been made. <sup>24</sup>After sending them out,  
the LORD God stationed mighty cherubim to  
the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed  
a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to  
guard the way to the tree of life.

*Cain and Abel*

**4** Now Adam\* had sexual relations with his  
wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When  
she gave birth to Cain, she said, “With the  
LORD’s help, I have produced\* a man!” <sup>2</sup>Later  
she gave birth to his brother and named him  
Abel.

When they grew up, Abel became a shep-  
herd, while Cain cultivated the ground. <sup>3</sup>When  
it was time for the harvest, Cain presented  
some of his crops as a gift to the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Abel  
also brought a gift—the best portions of the  
firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD  
accepted Abel and his gift, <sup>5</sup>but he did not accept  
Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry,  
and he looked dejected.

<sup>6</sup>“Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked

Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? <sup>7</sup>You will  
be accepted if you do what is right. But if you  
refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin  
is crouching at the door, eager to control you.  
But you must subdue it and be its master.”

<sup>8</sup>One day Cain suggested to his brother,  
“Let’s go out into the fields.”\* And while they  
were in the field, Cain attacked his brother,  
Abel, and killed him.

<sup>9</sup>Afterward the LORD asked Cain, “Where is  
your brother? Where is Abel?”

“I don’t know,” Cain responded. “Am I my  
brother’s guardian?”

<sup>10</sup>But the LORD said, “What have you done?  
Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me  
from the ground! <sup>11</sup>Now you are cursed and  
banished from the ground, which has swal-  
lowed your brother’s blood. <sup>12</sup>No longer will  
the ground yield good crops for you, no matter  
how hard you work! From now on you will be  
a homeless wanderer on the earth.”

<sup>13</sup>Cain replied to the LORD, “My punish-  
ment\* is too great for me to bear! <sup>14</sup>You have  
banished me from the land and from your pres-  
ence; you have made me a homeless wanderer.  
Anyone who finds me will kill me!”

<sup>15</sup>The LORD replied, “No, for I will give a  
sevenfold punishment to anyone who kills  
you.” Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to  
warn anyone who might try to kill him. <sup>16</sup>So  
Cain left the LORD’s presence and settled in  
the land of Nod,\* east of Eden.

*The Descendants of Cain*

<sup>17</sup>Cain had sexual relations with his wife, and  
she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch.  
Then Cain founded a city, which he named  
Enoch, after his son. <sup>18</sup>Enoch had a son named  
Irad. Irad became the father of\* Mehujael.  
Mehujael became the father of Methushael.  
Methushael became the father of Lamech.

<sup>19</sup>Lamech married two women. The first  
was named Adah, and the second was Zillah.

<sup>20</sup>Adah gave birth to Jabal, who was the first  
of those who raise livestock and live in tents.

<sup>21</sup>His brother’s name was Jubal, the first of  
all who play the harp and flute. <sup>22</sup>Lamech’s  
other wife, Zillah, gave birth to a son named  
Tubal-cain. He became an expert in forging  
tools of bronze and iron. Tubal-cain had a sis-  
ter named Naamah. <sup>23</sup>One day Lamech said to  
his wives,

3:20 Eve sounds like a Hebrew term that means “to give life.” 3:22 Or the man; Hebrew reads ha-adam. 4:1a Or the man; also in 4:25. 4:1b Or I have acquired. Cain sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “produce” or “acquire.” 4:8 As in Samaritan Pentateuch, Greek and Syriac versions, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text lacks “Let’s go out into the fields.” 4:13 Or My sin. 4:16 Nod means “wandering.” 4:18 Or the ancestor of, and so throughout the verse.

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
listen to me, you wives of Lamech.  
I have killed a man who attacked me,  
a young man who wounded me.

<sup>24</sup> If someone who kills Cain is punished  
seven times,  
then the one who kills me will be  
punished seventy-seven times!”

### *The Birth of Seth*

<sup>25</sup> Adam had sexual relations with his wife again, and she gave birth to another son. She named him Seth,\* for she said, “God has granted me another son in place of Abel, whom Cain killed.” <sup>26</sup> When Seth grew up, he had a son and named him Enosh. At that time people first began to worship the LORD by name.

### *The Descendants of Adam*

**5** This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings,\* he made them to be like himself. <sup>2</sup> He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them “human.”

<sup>3</sup> When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son who was just like him—in his very image. He named his son Seth. <sup>4</sup> After the birth of Seth, Adam lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup> Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

<sup>6</sup> When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of\* Enosh. <sup>7</sup> After the birth of\* Enosh, Seth lived another 807 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup> Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

<sup>9</sup> When Enosh was 90 years old, he became the father of Kenan. <sup>10</sup> After the birth of Kenan, Enosh lived another 815 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>11</sup> Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

<sup>12</sup> When Kenan was 70 years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. <sup>13</sup> After the birth of Mahalalel, Kenan lived another 840 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup> Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

<sup>15</sup> When Mahalalel was 65 years old, he became the father of Jared. <sup>16</sup> After the birth of Jared, Mahalalel lived another 830 years, and he had other sons and

daughters. <sup>17</sup> Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

<sup>18</sup> When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. <sup>19</sup> After the birth of Enoch, Jared lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup> Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

<sup>21</sup> When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. <sup>22</sup> After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for another 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters.

<sup>23</sup> Enoch lived 365 years, <sup>24</sup> walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.

<sup>25</sup> When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. <sup>26</sup> After the birth of Lamech, Methuselah lived another 782 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>27</sup> Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.

<sup>28</sup> When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son. <sup>29</sup> Lamech named his son Noah, for he said, “May he bring us relief\* from our work and the painful labor of farming this ground that the LORD has cursed.” <sup>30</sup> After the birth of Noah, Lamech lived another 595 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup> Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died.

<sup>32</sup> After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

### *A World Gone Wrong*

**6** Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them.

<sup>2</sup> The sons of God saw the beautiful women\* and took any they wanted as their wives. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not put up with\* humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years.”

<sup>4</sup> In those days, and for some time after, giant Nephilites lived on the earth, for whenever the sons of God had intercourse with women, they gave birth to children who became the heroes and famous warriors of ancient times.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. <sup>6</sup> So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the

<sup>4:25</sup> Seth probably means “granted”; the name may also mean “appointed.” <sup>5:1</sup> Or *man*; Hebrew reads *adam*; similarly in 5:2. <sup>5:6</sup> Or *the ancestor of*; also in 5:9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25. <sup>5:7</sup> Or *the birth of this ancestor of*; also in 5:10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26. <sup>5:29</sup> Noah sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “relief” or “comfort.” <sup>6:2</sup> Hebrew *daughters of men*; also in 6:4. <sup>6:3</sup> Greek version reads *will not remain in*.

earth. It broke his heart. <sup>7</sup>And the LORD said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.” <sup>8</sup>But Noah found favor with the LORD.

### *The Story of Noah*

<sup>9</sup>This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. <sup>10</sup>Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup>Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup>God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt. <sup>13</sup>So God said to Noah, “I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, I will wipe them all out along with the earth!

<sup>14</sup>“Build a large boat\* from cypress wood\* and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior. <sup>15</sup>Make the boat 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.\* <sup>16</sup>Leave an 18-inch opening\* below the roof all the way around the boat. Put the door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper.

<sup>17</sup>“Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die. <sup>18</sup>But I will confirm my covenant with you. So enter the boat—you and your wife and your sons and their wives. <sup>19</sup>Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them alive during the flood. <sup>20</sup>Pairs of every kind of bird, and every kind of animal, and every kind of small animal that scurries along the ground, will come to you to be kept alive. <sup>21</sup>And be sure to take on board enough food for your family and for all the animals.”

<sup>22</sup>So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

### *The Flood Covers the Earth*

**7**When everything was ready, the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth,

I can see that you alone are righteous. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs—male and female—of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice,\* and take one pair of each of the others. <sup>3</sup>Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that all life will survive on the earth after the flood. <sup>4</sup>Seven days from now I will make the rains pour down on the earth. And it will rain for forty days and forty nights, until I have wiped from the earth all the living things I have created.”

<sup>5</sup>So Noah did everything as the LORD commanded him.

<sup>6</sup>Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth. <sup>7</sup>He went on board the boat to escape the flood—he and his wife and his sons and their wives. <sup>8</sup>With them were all the various kinds of animals—those approved for eating and for sacrifice and those that were not—along with all the birds and the small animals that scurry along the ground. <sup>9</sup>They entered the boat in pairs, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. <sup>10</sup>After seven days, the waters of the flood came and covered the earth.

<sup>11</sup>When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the underground waters erupted from the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky. <sup>12</sup>The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights.

<sup>13</sup>That very day Noah had gone into the boat with his wife and his sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—and their wives. <sup>14</sup>With them in the boat were pairs of every kind of animal—domestic and wild, large and small—along with birds of every kind. <sup>15</sup>Two by two they came into the boat, representing every living thing that breathes. <sup>16</sup>A male and female of each kind entered, just as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD closed the door behind them.

<sup>17</sup>For forty days the floodwaters grew deeper, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. <sup>18</sup>As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. <sup>19</sup>Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, <sup>20</sup>rising more than twenty-two feet\* above the highest peaks. <sup>21</sup>All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people. <sup>22</sup>Everything that

6:14a Traditionally rendered *an ark*. 6:14b Or *gopher wood*. 6:15 Hebrew *300 cubits* [138 meters] *long, 50 cubits* [23 meters] *wide, and 30 cubits* [13.8 meters] *high*. 6:16 Hebrew *an opening of 1 cubit* [46 centimeters]. 7:2 Hebrew *of each clean animal*; similarly in 7:8. 7:20 Hebrew *15 cubits* [6.9 meters].

breathed and lived on dry land died. <sup>23</sup>God wiped out every living thing on the earth—people, livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and the birds of the sky. All were destroyed. The only people who survived were Noah and those with him in the boat. <sup>24</sup>And the floodwaters covered the earth for 150 days.

### *The Flood Recedes*

**8** But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and livestock with him in the boat. He sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the floodwaters began to recede. <sup>2</sup>The underground waters stopped flowing, and the torrential rains from the sky were stopped. <sup>3</sup>So the floodwaters gradually receded from the earth. After 150 days, <sup>4</sup>exactly five months from the time the flood began,\* the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup>Two and a half months later,\* as the waters continued to go down, other mountain peaks became visible.

<sup>6</sup>After another forty days, Noah opened the window he had made in the boat <sup>7</sup>and released a raven. The bird flew back and forth until the floodwaters on the earth had dried up. <sup>8</sup>He also released a dove to see if the water had receded and it could find dry ground. <sup>9</sup>But the dove could find no place to land because the water still covered the ground. So it returned to the boat, and Noah held out his hand and drew the dove back inside. <sup>10</sup>After waiting another seven days, Noah released the dove again. <sup>11</sup>This time the dove returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knew that the floodwaters were almost gone. <sup>12</sup>He waited another seven days and then released the dove again. This time it did not come back.

<sup>13</sup>Noah was now 601 years old. On the first day of the new year, ten and a half months after the flood began,\* the floodwaters had almost dried up from the earth. Noah lifted back the covering of the boat and saw that the surface of the ground was drying. <sup>14</sup>Two more months went by,\* and at last the earth was dry!

<sup>15</sup>Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup>“Leave the boat, all of you—you and your wife, and your sons and their wives. <sup>17</sup>Release all the animals—the birds, the livestock, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—so they can be fruitful and multiply throughout the earth.”

<sup>18</sup>So Noah, his wife, and his sons and their wives left the boat. <sup>19</sup>And all of the large and small animals and birds came out of the boat, pair by pair.

<sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and there he sacrificed as burnt offerings the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose.\* <sup>21</sup>And the LORD was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice and said to himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things. <sup>22</sup>As long as the earth remains, there will be planting and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.”

### *God Confirms His Covenant*

**9** Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth. <sup>2</sup>All the animals of the earth, all the birds of the sky, all the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the fish in the sea will look on you with fear and terror. I have placed them in your power. <sup>3</sup>I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables. <sup>4</sup>But you must never eat any meat that still has the lifeblood in it.

<sup>5</sup>“And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person’s life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. <sup>6</sup>If anyone takes a human life, that person’s life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings\* in his own image. <sup>7</sup>Now be fruitful and multiply, and repopulate the earth.”

<sup>8</sup>Then God told Noah and his sons, <sup>9</sup>“I hereby confirm my covenant with you and your descendants, <sup>10</sup>and with all the animals that were on the boat with you—the birds, the livestock, and all the wild animals—every living creature on earth. <sup>11</sup>Yes, I am confirming my covenant with you. Never again will floodwaters kill all living creatures; never again will a flood destroy the earth.”

<sup>12</sup>Then God said, “I am giving you a sign of my covenant with you and with all living creatures, for all generations to come. <sup>13</sup>I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I send clouds over the earth, the rainbow will appear in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>and I will remember my covenant with you

8:4 Hebrew *on the seventeenth day of the seventh month*; see 7:11. 8:13 Hebrew *On the first day of the first month*; see 7:11. see note on 8:13. 8:20 Hebrew *every clean animal and every clean bird*.

8:5 Hebrew *On the first day of the tenth month*; see 7:11 and note. 8:14 Hebrew *The twenty-seventh day of the second month arrived*. 9:6 Or *man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*.

and with all living creatures. Never again will the floodwaters destroy all life. <sup>16</sup>When I see the rainbow in the clouds, I will remember the eternal covenant between God and every living creature on earth.” <sup>17</sup>Then God said to Noah, “Yes, this rainbow is the sign of the covenant I am confirming with all the creatures on earth.”

**Noah's Sons**

<sup>18</sup>The sons of Noah who came out of the boat with their father were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham is the father of Canaan.) <sup>19</sup>From these three sons of Noah came all the people who now populate the earth.

<sup>20</sup>After the flood, Noah began to cultivate the ground, and he planted a vineyard. <sup>21</sup>One day he drank some wine he had made, and he became drunk and lay naked inside his tent. <sup>22</sup>Ham, the father of Canaan, saw that his father was naked and went outside and told his brothers. <sup>23</sup>Then Shem and Japheth took a robe, held it over their shoulders, and backed into the tent to cover their father. As they did this, they looked the other way so they would not see him naked.

<sup>24</sup>When Noah woke up from his stupor, he learned what Ham, his youngest son, had done.

<sup>25</sup>Then he cursed Canaan, the son of Ham:

“May Canaan be cursed!  
May he be the lowest of servants to his relatives.”

<sup>26</sup>Then Noah said,

“May the LORD, the God of Shem, be blessed,  
and may Canaan be his servant!

<sup>27</sup> May God expand the territory of Japheth!  
May Japheth share the prosperity of Shem,\*  
and may Canaan be his servant.”

<sup>28</sup>Noah lived another 350 years after the great flood. <sup>29</sup>He lived 950 years, and then he died.

**10** This is the account of the families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the three sons of Noah. Many children were born to them after the great flood.

**Descendants of Japheth**

<sup>2</sup>The descendants of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

<sup>3</sup>The descendants of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.

<sup>4</sup>The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.\* <sup>5</sup>Their descendants became the seafaring peoples that spread out to various lands, each identified by its own language, clan, and national identity.

**Descendants of Ham**

<sup>6</sup>The descendants of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

<sup>7</sup>The descendants of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

<sup>8</sup>Cush was also the ancestor of Nimrod, who was the first heroic warrior on earth.

<sup>9</sup>Since he was the greatest hunter in the world,\* his name became proverbial. People would say, “This man is like Nimrod, the greatest hunter in the world.”

<sup>10</sup>He built his kingdom in the land of Babylonia,\* with the cities of Babylon, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh. <sup>11</sup>From there he expanded his territory to Assyria,\* building the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, <sup>12</sup>and Resen (the great city located between Nineveh and Calah).

<sup>13</sup>Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, <sup>14</sup>Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines came.\*

<sup>15</sup>Canaan’s oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of the Hittites,\* <sup>16</sup>Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, <sup>17</sup>Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, <sup>18</sup>Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites. The Canaanite clans eventually spread out, <sup>19</sup>and the territory of Canaan extended from Sidon in the north to Gerar and Gaza in the south, and east as far as Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, near Lasha.

<sup>20</sup>These were the descendants of Ham, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity.

9:27 Hebrew *May he live in the tents of Shem.* 10:4 As in some Hebrew manuscripts and Greek version (see also 1 Chr 1:7); most Hebrew manuscripts read *Dodanim.* 10:9 Hebrew *a great hunter before the LORD*; also in 10:9b. 10:10 Hebrew *Shinar.* 10:11 Or *From that land Assyria went out.* 10:14 Hebrew *Casluhites, from whom the Philistines came, and Caphtorites.* Compare Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7. 10:15 Hebrew *ancestor of Heth.*

### *Descendants of Shem*

- <sup>21</sup>Sons were also born to Shem, the older brother of Japheth.\* Shem was the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber.
- <sup>22</sup>The descendants of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.
- <sup>23</sup>The descendants of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.
- <sup>24</sup>Arphaxad was the father of Shelah,\* and Shelah was the father of Eber.
- <sup>25</sup>Eber had two sons. The first was named Peleg (which means “division”), for during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups. His brother’s name was Joktan.
- <sup>26</sup>Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, <sup>27</sup>Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup>Obal, Abimael, Sheba, <sup>29</sup>Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were descendants of Joktan. <sup>30</sup>The territory they occupied extended from Mesha all the way to Sephar in the eastern mountains.
- <sup>31</sup>These were the descendants of Shem, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity.

### *Conclusion*

<sup>32</sup>These are the clans that descended from Noah’s sons, arranged by nation according to their lines of descent. All the nations of the earth descended from these clans after the great flood.

### *The Tower of Babel*

**11** At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. <sup>2</sup>As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia\* and settled there.

<sup>3</sup>They began saying to each other, “Let’s make bricks and harden them with fire.” (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) <sup>4</sup>Then they said, “Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world.”

<sup>5</sup>But the LORD came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. <sup>6</sup>“Look!” he said. “The people are united, and

they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! <sup>7</sup>Come, let’s go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won’t be able to understand each other.”

<sup>8</sup>In that way, the LORD scattered them all over the world, and they stopped building the city. <sup>9</sup>That is why the city was called Babel,\* because that is where the LORD confused the people with different languages. In this way he scattered them all over the world.

### *The Line of Descent from Shem to Abram*

<sup>10</sup>This is the account of Shem’s family.

Two years after the great flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of\* Arphaxad. <sup>11</sup>After the birth of\* Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>12</sup>When Arphaxad was 35 years old, he became the father of Shelah. <sup>13</sup>After the birth of Shelah, Arphaxad lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.\*

<sup>14</sup>When Shelah was 30 years old, he became the father of Eber. <sup>15</sup>After the birth of Eber, Shelah lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>16</sup>When Eber was 34 years old, he became the father of Peleg. <sup>17</sup>After the birth of Peleg, Eber lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>18</sup>When Peleg was 30 years old, he became the father of Reu. <sup>19</sup>After the birth of Reu, Peleg lived another 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup>When Reu was 32 years old, he became the father of Serug. <sup>21</sup>After the birth of Serug, Reu lived another 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>22</sup>When Serug was 30 years old, he became the father of Nahor. <sup>23</sup>After the birth of Nahor, Serug lived another 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>24</sup>When Nahor was 29 years old, he became the father of Terah. <sup>25</sup>After the birth of Terah, Nahor lived another 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>26</sup>After Terah was 70 years old, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

10:21 Or *Shem, whose older brother was Japheth.* 10:24 Greek version reads *Arphaxad was the father of Cainan, Cainan was the father of Shelah.* Compare Luke 3:36. 11:2 Hebrew *Shinar.* 11:9 Or *Babylon.* Babel sounds like a Hebrew term that means “confusion.” 11:10 Or *the ancestor of;* also in 11:12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24. 11:11 Or *the birth of this ancestor of;* also in 11:13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25. 11:12-13 Greek version reads *“When Arphaxad was 135 years old, he became the father of Cainan. After the birth of Cainan, Arphaxad lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Cainan was 130 years old, he became the father of Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Cainan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died.* Compare Luke 3:35-36.

### *The Family of Terah*

<sup>27</sup>This is the account of Terah's family. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot. <sup>28</sup>But Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, the land of his birth, while his father, Terah, was still living. <sup>29</sup>Meanwhile, Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. (Milcah and her sister Iscah were daughters of Nahor's brother Haran.) <sup>30</sup>But Sarai was unable to become pregnant and had no children.

<sup>31</sup>One day Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai (his son Abram's wife), and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's child) and moved away from Ur of the Chaldeans. He was headed for the land of Canaan, but they stopped at Haran and settled there. <sup>32</sup>Terah lived for 205 years\* and died while still in Haran.

### *The Call of Abram*

**12** The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

<sup>4</sup>So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. <sup>5</sup>He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people he had taken into his household at Haran—and headed for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in Canaan, <sup>6</sup>Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites.

<sup>7</sup>Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants.\*" And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the LORD, who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup>After that, Abram traveled south and set up camp in the hill country, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built another altar and dedicated it to the LORD, and he worshiped the LORD. <sup>9</sup>Then Abram continued traveling south by stages toward the Negev.

### *Abram and Sarai in Egypt*

<sup>10</sup>At that time a severe famine struck the land of Canaan, forcing Abram to go down to Egypt,

11:32 Some ancient versions read 145 years; compare 11:26 and 12:4. 12:7 Hebrew seed.

where he lived as a foreigner. <sup>11</sup>As he was approaching the border of Egypt, Abram said to his wife, Sarai, "Look, you are a very beautiful woman. <sup>12</sup>When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife. Let's kill him; then we can have her!'" <sup>13</sup>So please tell them you are my sister. Then they will spare my life and treat me well because of their interest in you."

<sup>14</sup>And sure enough, when Abram arrived in Egypt, everyone noticed Sarai's beauty. <sup>15</sup>When the palace officials saw her, they sang her praises to Pharaoh, their king, and Sarai was taken into his palace. <sup>16</sup>Then Pharaoh gave Abram many gifts because of her—sheep, goats, cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

<sup>17</sup>But the LORD sent terrible plagues upon Pharaoh and his household because of Sarai, Abram's wife. <sup>18</sup>So Pharaoh summoned Abram and accused him sharply. "What have you done to me?" he demanded. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife?" <sup>19</sup>Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' and allow me to take her as my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and get out of here!" <sup>20</sup>Pharaoh ordered some of his men to escort them, and he sent Abram out of the country, along with his wife and all his possessions.

### *Abram and Lot Separate*

**13** So Abram left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev, along with his wife and Lot and all that they owned. <sup>2</sup>(Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.) <sup>3</sup>From the Negev, they continued traveling by stages toward Bethel, and they pitched their tents between Bethel and Ai, where they had camped before. <sup>4</sup>This was the same place where Abram had built the altar, and there he worshiped the LORD again.

<sup>5</sup>Lot, who was traveling with Abram, had also become very wealthy with flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and many tents. <sup>6</sup>But the land could not support both Abram and Lot with all their flocks and herds living so close together. <sup>7</sup>So disputes broke out between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. (At that time Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land.)

<sup>8</sup>Finally Abram said to Lot, "Let's not allow this conflict to come between us or our herdsmen. After all, we are close relatives! <sup>9</sup>The whole countryside is open to you. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want the land to

the left, then I'll take the land on the right. If you prefer the land on the right, then I'll go to the left."

<sup>10</sup>Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the LORD or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) <sup>11</sup>Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. <sup>12</sup>So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. <sup>13</sup>But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>After Lot had gone, the LORD said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. <sup>15</sup>I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants\* as a permanent possession. <sup>16</sup>And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! <sup>17</sup>Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you."

<sup>18</sup>So Abram moved his camp to Hebron and settled near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. There he built another altar to the LORD.

#### *Abram Rescues Lot*

**14** About this time war broke out in the region. King Amraphel of Babylonia,\* King Arioch of Ellasar, King Kedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim <sup>2</sup>fought against King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboim, and the king of Bela (also called Zoar).

<sup>3</sup>This second group of kings joined forces in Siddim Valley (that is, the valley of the Dead Sea\*). <sup>4</sup>For twelve years they had been subject to King Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled against him.

<sup>5</sup>One year later Kedorlaomer and his allies arrived and defeated the Rephaites at Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzites at Ham, the Emites at Shaveh-kiriathaim,<sup>6</sup> and the Horites at Mount Seir, as far as El-paran at the edge of the wilderness. <sup>7</sup>Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (now called Kadesh) and conquered all the territory of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites living in Hazazon-tamar.

<sup>8</sup>Then the rebel kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Bela (also called Zoar)

prepared for battle in the valley of the Dead Sea.\* <sup>9</sup>They fought against King Kedorlaomer of Elam, King Tidal of Goiim, King Amraphel of Babylonia, and King Arioch of Ellasar—four kings against five. <sup>10</sup>As it happened, the valley of the Dead Sea was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains. <sup>11</sup>The victorious invaders then plundered Sodom and Gomorrah and headed for home, taking with them all the spoils of war and the food supplies. <sup>12</sup>They also captured Lot—Abram's nephew who lived in Sodom—and carried off everything he owned.

<sup>13</sup>But one of Lot's men escaped and reported everything to Abram the Hebrew, who was living near the oak grove belonging to Mamre the Amorite. Mamre and his relatives, Eshcol and Aner, were Abram's allies.

<sup>14</sup>When Abram heard that his nephew Lot had been captured, he mobilized the 318 trained men who had been born into his household. Then he pursued Kedorlaomer's army until he caught up with them at Dan. <sup>15</sup>There he divided his men and attacked during the night. Kedorlaomer's army fled, but Abram chased them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. <sup>16</sup>Abram recovered all the goods that had been taken, and he brought back his nephew Lot with his possessions and all the women and other captives.

#### *Melchizedek Blesses Abram*

<sup>17</sup>After Abram returned from his victory over Kedorlaomer and all his allies, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

<sup>18</sup>And Melchizedek, the king of Salem and a priest of God Most High,\* brought Abram some bread and wine. <sup>19</sup>Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing:

"Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
Creator of heaven and earth.

<sup>20</sup> And blessed be God Most High,  
who has defeated your enemies for you."

Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered.

<sup>21</sup>The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give back my people who were captured. But you may keep for yourself all the goods you have recovered."

<sup>22</sup>Abram replied to the king of Sodom, "I

13:15 Hebrew *seed*; also in 13:16. 14:1 Hebrew *Shinar*; also in 14:9, 14:3; also in 14:10. 14:18 Hebrew *El-Elyon*; also in 14:19, 20, 22.

14:3 Hebrew *Salt Sea*. 14:8 Hebrew *Siddim Valley* (see

solemnly swear to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, <sup>23</sup>that I will not take so much as a single thread or sandal thong from what belongs to you. Otherwise you might say, 'I am the one who made Abram rich.' <sup>24</sup>I will accept only what my young warriors have already eaten, and I request that you give a fair share of the goods to my allies—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre."

#### *The LORD's Covenant Promise to Abram*

**15** Some time later, the LORD spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, "Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great."

<sup>2</sup>But Abram replied, "O Sovereign LORD, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. <sup>3</sup>You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir."

<sup>4</sup>Then the LORD said to him, "No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir." <sup>5</sup>Then the LORD took Abram outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!"

<sup>6</sup>And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith.

<sup>7</sup>Then the LORD told him, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as your possession."

<sup>8</sup>But Abram replied, "O Sovereign LORD, how can I be sure that I will actually possess it?"

<sup>9</sup>The LORD told him, "Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." <sup>10</sup>So Abram presented all these to him and killed them. Then he cut each animal down the middle and laid the halves side by side; he did not, however, cut the birds in half. <sup>11</sup>Some vultures swooped down to eat the carcasses, but Abram chased them away.

<sup>12</sup>As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a terrifying darkness came down over him. <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said to Abram, "You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, where they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years. <sup>14</sup>But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will come away with great

wealth. <sup>15</sup>(As for you, you will die in peace and be buried at a ripe old age.) <sup>16</sup>After four generations your descendants will return here to this land, for the sins of the Amorites do not yet warrant their destruction."

<sup>17</sup>After the sun went down and darkness fell, Abram saw a smoking firepot and a flaming torch pass between the halves of the carcasses. <sup>18</sup>So the LORD made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt\* to the great Euphrates River—<sup>19</sup>the land now occupied by the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup>Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, <sup>21</sup>Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites."

#### *The Birth of Ishmael*

**16** Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar. <sup>2</sup>So Sarai said to Abram, "The LORD has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal. <sup>3</sup>So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)

<sup>4</sup>So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt. <sup>5</sup>Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The LORD will show who's wrong—you or me!"

<sup>6</sup>Abram replied, "Look, she is your servant, so deal with her as you see fit." Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away.

<sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD found Hagar beside a spring of water in the wilderness, along the road to Shur. <sup>8</sup>The angel said to her, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away from my mistress, Sarai," she replied.

<sup>9</sup>The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority."

<sup>10</sup>Then he added, "I will give you more descendants than you can count."

<sup>11</sup>And the angel also said, "You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You are to name him Ishmael (which means 'God hears'), for the LORD has heard your cry of distress.

15:18 Hebrew *the river of Egypt*, referring either to an eastern branch of the Nile River or to the Brook of Egypt in the Sinai (see Num 34:5).

<sup>12</sup>This son of yours will be a wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey! He will raise his fist against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives.”

<sup>13</sup>Thereafter, Hagar used another name to refer to the LORD, who had spoken to her. She said, “You are the God who sees me.”\* She also said, “Have I truly seen the One who sees me?” <sup>14</sup>So that well was named Beer-lahai-roi (which means “well of the Living One who sees me”). It can still be found between Kadesh and Bered.

<sup>15</sup>So Hagar gave Abram a son, and Abram named him Ishmael. <sup>16</sup>Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born.

#### *Abram Is Named Abraham*

**17** When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am El-Shaddai—‘God Almighty.’ Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life. <sup>2</sup>I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants.”

<sup>3</sup>At this, Abram fell face down on the ground. Then God said to him, <sup>4</sup>“This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations! <sup>5</sup>What’s more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham,\* for you will be the father of many nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them!

<sup>7</sup>“I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants\* after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you. <sup>8</sup>And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants. It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God.”

#### *The Mark of the Covenant*

<sup>9</sup>Then God said to Abraham, “Your responsibility is to obey the terms of the covenant. You and all your descendants have this continual responsibility. <sup>10</sup>This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised. <sup>11</sup>You must cut off the flesh of your foreskin as a sign of the covenant between me and you. <sup>12</sup>From generation to generation, every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This applies not only to members

of your family but also to the servants born in your household and the foreign-born servants whom you have purchased. <sup>13</sup>All must be circumcised. Your bodies will bear the mark of my everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup>Any male who fails to be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family for breaking the covenant.”

#### *Sarai Is Named Sarah*

<sup>15</sup>Then God said to Abraham, “Regarding Sarai, your wife—her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah.\* <sup>16</sup>And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants.”

<sup>17</sup>Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself in disbelief. “How could I become a father at the age of 100?” he thought. “And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?” <sup>18</sup>So Abraham said to God, “May Ishmael live under your special blessing!”

<sup>19</sup>But God replied, “No—Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac,\* and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant. <sup>20</sup>As for Ishmael, I will bless him also, just as you have asked. I will make him extremely fruitful and multiply his descendants. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. <sup>21</sup>But my covenant will be confirmed with Isaac, who will be born to you and Sarah about this time next year.” <sup>22</sup>When God had finished speaking, he left Abraham.

<sup>23</sup>On that very day Abraham took his son, Ishmael, and every male in his household, including those born there and those he had bought. Then he circumcised them, cutting off their foreskins, just as God had told him.

<sup>24</sup>Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, <sup>25</sup>and Ishmael, his son, was thirteen. <sup>26</sup>Both Abraham and his son, Ishmael, were circumcised on that same day, <sup>27</sup>along with all the other men and boys of the household, whether they were born there or bought as servants. All were circumcised with him.

#### *A Son Is Promised to Sarah*

**18** The LORD appeared again to Abraham near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. One day Abraham was sitting at the entrance

16:13 Hebrew *El-roi*. 17:5 *Abram* means “exalted father”; *Abraham* sounds like a Hebrew term that means “father of many.” 17:7 Hebrew *seed*; also in 17:7b, 8, 9, 10, 19. 17:15 *Sarai* and *Sarah* both mean “princess”; the change in spelling may reflect the difference in dialect between Ur and Canaan. 17:19 *Isaac* means “he laughs.”

to his tent during the hottest part of the day. <sup>2</sup>He looked up and noticed three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he ran to meet them and welcomed them, bowing low to the ground.

<sup>3</sup>“My lord,” he said, “if it pleases you, stop here for a while. <sup>4</sup>Rest in the shade of this tree while water is brought to wash your feet. <sup>5</sup>And since you’ve honored your servant with this visit, let me prepare some food to refresh you before you continue on your journey.”

“All right,” they said. “Do as you have said.”

<sup>6</sup>So Abraham ran back to the tent and said to Sarah, “Hurry! Get three large measures\* of your best flour, knead it into dough, and bake some bread.” <sup>7</sup>Then Abraham ran out to the herd and chose a tender calf and gave it to his servant, who quickly prepared it. <sup>8</sup>When the food was ready, Abraham took some yogurt and milk and the roasted meat, and he served it to the men. As they ate, Abraham waited on them in the shade of the trees.

<sup>9</sup>“Where is Sarah, your wife?” the visitors asked.

“She’s inside the tent,” Abraham replied.

<sup>10</sup>Then one of them said, “I will return to you about this time next year, and your wife, Sarah, will have a son!”

Sarah was listening to this conversation from the tent. <sup>11</sup>Abraham and Sarah were both very old by this time, and Sarah was long past the age of having children. <sup>12</sup>So she laughed silently to herself and said, “How could a worn-out woman like me enjoy such pleasure, especially when my master—my husband—is also so old?”

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say, ‘Can an old woman like me have a baby?’ <sup>14</sup>Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

<sup>15</sup>Sarah was afraid, so she denied it, saying, “I didn’t laugh.”

But the LORD said, “No, you did laugh.”

### *Abraham Intercedes for Sodom*

<sup>16</sup>Then the men got up from their meal and looked out toward Sodom. As they left, Abraham went with them to send them on their way.

<sup>17</sup>“Should I hide my plan from Abraham?” the LORD asked. <sup>18</sup>“For Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. <sup>19</sup>I have singled him out so that he will

18:6 Hebrew 3 seahs, about half a bushel or 22 liters.

direct his sons and their families to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just. Then I will do for Abraham all that I have promised.”

<sup>20</sup>So the LORD told Abraham, “I have heard a great outcry from Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sin is so flagrant. <sup>21</sup>I am going down to see if their actions are as wicked as I have heard. If not, I want to know.”

<sup>22</sup>The other men turned and headed toward Sodom, but the LORD remained with Abraham. <sup>23</sup>Abraham approached him and said, “Will you sweep away both the righteous and the wicked? <sup>24</sup>Suppose you find fifty righteous people living there in the city—will you still sweep it away and not spare it for their sakes? <sup>25</sup>Surely you wouldn’t do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, you would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn’t do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?”

<sup>26</sup>And the LORD replied, “If I find fifty righteous people in Sodom, I will spare the entire city for their sake.”

<sup>27</sup>Then Abraham spoke again. “Since I have begun, let me speak further to my Lord, even though I am but dust and ashes. <sup>28</sup>Suppose there are only forty-five righteous people rather than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?”

And the LORD said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five righteous people there.”

<sup>29</sup>Then Abraham pressed his request further. “Suppose there are only forty?”

And the LORD replied, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the forty.”

<sup>30</sup>“Please don’t be angry, my Lord,” Abraham pleaded. “Let me speak—suppose only thirty righteous people are found?”

And the LORD replied, “I will not destroy it if I find thirty.”

<sup>31</sup>Then Abraham said, “Since I have dared to speak to the Lord, let me continue—suppose there are only twenty?”

And the LORD replied, “Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty.”

<sup>32</sup>Finally, Abraham said, “Lord, please don’t be angry with me if I speak one more time. Suppose only ten are found there?”

And the LORD replied, “Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten.”

<sup>33</sup>When the LORD had finished his conversation with Abraham, he went on his way, and Abraham returned to his tent.