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Chronological Bible Plan

January



JANUARY

**“Every day I will bless you and praise
your name forever and ever” (Ps 145:2)**

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Before Creation (Eternity Past)

Various

The Existence of the Trinity—Father, Son and Spirit

- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. The Word was with God in the beginning (John 1:1–2).
- Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they can see my glory that you gave me because you loved me before the creation of the world (John 17:24).
- How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our consciences from dead works to worship the living God (Hebrews 9:14).

The Father’s Plan of Salvation was the Son’s Sacrificial Death

- This man, who was handed over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you executed by nailing him to a cross at the hands of Gentiles (Acts 2:23).
- But by precious blood like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, namely Christ. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was manifested in these last times for your sake (1 Peter 1:19–20).

The Father Chose the Saints in the Son

- For he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we may be holy and unblemished in his sight in love (Ephesians 1:4).
- He is the one who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not based on our works but on his own purpose and grace, granted to us in Christ Jesus before time began (2 Timothy 1:9).
- And all those who live on the earth will worship the beast, everyone whose name has not been written since the foundation of the world in the book of life belonging to the Lamb who was killed (Revelation 13:8).

Creation—Days 1–5 (4174 BC)

Genesis 1:1–23

Day 1

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. [[John 1:3](#); [Col 1:16](#); [Prov 8:22–31](#)]

2 Now the earth was without shape and empty, and darkness was over the surface of the watery deep, but the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water.

3 God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light!

4 God saw that the light was good, so God separated the light from the darkness.

5 God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.” There was evening, and there was morning, marking the first day.

Day 2

6 God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate water from water.

7 So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. It was so.

8 God called the expanse “sky.” There was evening, and there was morning, a second day.

Day 3

9 God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear.” It was so.

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

11 God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.” It was so.

12 The land produced vegetation—plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. God saw that it was good.

13 There was evening, and there was morning, a third day.

Day 4

14 God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be signs to indicate seasons and days and years,

15 and let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” It was so.

16 God made two great lights—the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night. He made the stars also.

17 God placed the lights in the expanse of the sky to shine on the earth,

18 to preside over the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good.

19 There was evening, and there was morning, a fourth day.

Day 5

20 God said, “Let the water swarm with swarms of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.”

21 God created the great sea creatures and every living and moving thing with which the water swarmed, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. God saw that it was good.

22 God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”

23 There was evening, and there was morning, a fifth day.

Creation—Day 6: Toledot of the Heavens and the Earth (4174 BC)

Genesis 1:24–31; 2:4–25

Morning of the Sixth Day

2:4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created—when the LORD God made the earth and heavens.

5 Now no shrub of the field had yet grown on the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.

6 Springs would well up from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

Creation of Land Animals

1:24 God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” It was so.

25 God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the cattle according to their kinds, and all the creatures that creep along the ground according to their kinds. God saw that it was good.

Creation of Mankind

26 Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness, so they may rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth.”

27 God created humankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them,
male and female he created them. [[Matt 19:4](#); [Mark 10:6](#)]

Creation of Mankind—Expanded Account

2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. [[1 Cor 15:45](#)]

8 The LORD God planted an orchard in the east, in Eden; and there he placed the man he had formed.

9 The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow from the soil, every tree that was pleasing to look at and good for food. (Now the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were in the middle of the orchard.)

10 Now a river flows from Eden to water the orchard, and from there it divides into four headstreams.

11 The name of the first is Pishon; it runs through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold.

12 (The gold of that land is pure; pearls and lapis lazuli are also there).

13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it runs through the entire land of Cush.

14 The name of the third river is Tigris; it runs along the east side of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The LORD God took the man and placed him in the orchard in Eden to care for it and to maintain it.

16 Then the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat fruit from every tree of the orchard,

17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will surely die.”

18 The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion for him who corresponds to him.”

19 The LORD God formed out of the ground every living animal of the field and every bird of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them, and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

20 So the man named all the animals, the birds of the air, and the living creatures of the field, but for Adam no companion who corresponded to him was found.

21 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, and while he was asleep, he took part of the man’s side and closed up the place with flesh.

22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the part he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 Then the man said,

“This one at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one will be called ‘woman,’

for she was taken out of man.”

24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and unites with his wife, and they become a new family. [[Matt 19:5](#); [Mark 10:7–8](#); [1 Cor 6:16](#); [Eph 5:31](#)]

25 The man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed.

“Be fruitful and multiply”

1:28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply! Fill the earth and subdue it! Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every creature that moves on the ground.”

29 Then God said, “I now give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the entire earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

30 And to all the animals of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” It was so.

31 God saw all that he had made—and it was very good! There was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

Creation—Day 7 (4174 BC)

Genesis 2:1–3

1 The heavens and the earth were completed with everything that was in them.

2 By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, and he ceased on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing. [[Exod 20:11](#); [Heb 4:4](#)]

3 God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he ceased all the work that he had been doing in creation.

The Fall of Satan (After Creation)

Isaiah 14:12–15; Ezekiel 28:12–17; Revelation 12:3–4a

As Typified in the Destruction of the King of Babylon—Isaiah 14

12 Look how you have fallen from the sky,
O shining one, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the ground,
O conqueror of the nations!

13 You said to yourself,
“I will climb up to the sky.

Above the stars of El
I will set up my throne.

I will rule on the mountain of assembly
on the remote slopes of Zaphon.

14 I will climb up to the tops of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High!”

15 But you were brought down to Sheol,
to the remote slopes of the pit.

As Typified in the Destruction of the King of Tyre—Ezekiel 28

12 “Son of man, sing a lament for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says:

““You were the sealer of perfection,
full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

13 You were in Eden, the garden of God.
Every precious stone was your covering,
the ruby, topaz, and emerald,
the chrysolite, onyx, and jasper,
the sapphire, turquoise, and beryl;
your settings and mounts were made of gold.
On the day you were created they were prepared.

14 I placed you there with an anointed guardian cherub;
you were on the holy mountain of God;
you walked about amidst fiery stones.

15 You were blameless in your behavior from the day you were created,

until sin was discovered in you.

16 In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned;
so I defiled you and banished you from the mountain of God—
the guardian cherub expelled you from the midst of the stones of fire.

17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty;
you corrupted your wisdom on account of your splendor.
I threw you down to the ground;
I placed you before kings, that they might see you.

As Seen in the Revelation of Jesus Christ—Revelation 12

3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: a huge red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven diadem crowns.

4a Now the dragon's tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven and hurled them to the earth.

The Fall of Mankind (After Satan's Fall)

Genesis 3

By One Man Sin Entered the World

1 Now the serpent was more shrewd than any of the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Is it really true that God said, 'You must not eat from any tree of the orchard?'"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit from the trees of the orchard;

3 but concerning the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the orchard God said, 'You must not eat from it, and you must not touch it, or else you will die.'"

4 The serpent said to the woman, "Surely you will not die,

5 for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will be like divine beings who know good and evil."

6 When the woman saw that the tree produced fruit that was good for food, was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. [cf. [1 Tim 2:13-14](#); [Rom 5:12](#)]

The Immediate Effects of Sin

7 Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. [cf. [1 Tim 2:9](#)]

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the orchard at the breezy time of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the orchard.

9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 The man replied, "I heard you moving about in the orchard, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."

11 And the LORD God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave me, she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it."

13 So the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman replied, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."

The Curse

14 The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all the wild beasts
and all the living creatures of the field!
On your belly you will crawl
and dust you will eat all the days of your life.

15 And I will put hostility between you and the woman
and between your offspring and her offspring;
her offspring will attack your head,
and you will attack her offspring's heel."

16 To the woman he said,

"I will greatly increase your labor pains;

with pain you will give birth to children.
You will want to control your husband,
but he will dominate you.”

17 But to Adam he said,

“Because you obeyed your wife
and ate from the tree about which I commanded you,
‘You must not eat from it,’
cursed is the ground thanks to you;
in painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
but you will eat the grain of the field.

19 By the sweat of your brow
you will eat food until you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken; for you are dust,
and to dust you will return.”

Adam and Eve are Driven from Eden

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

21 The LORD God made garments from skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

22 And the LORD God said, “Now that the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not be allowed to stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”

23 So the LORD God expelled him from the orchard in Eden to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken.

24 When he drove the man out, he placed on the eastern side of the orchard in Eden angelic sentries who used the flame of a whirling sword to guard the way to the tree of life.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) Genesis 1:24–31 describes God’s creative activity on the sixth day of creation. Genesis 2:4–25 is an expanded account of the same events. The texts can be arranged as follows: Gen 2:4–6; 1:24–27; 2:7–25 (1:27 corresponds to 2:7, 22); 1:28–31. In this way the expansion of chapter two is included in the overall narrative of the sixth day.
- 2) There are several texts (Isa 14:12–15; Ezek 28:12–17; Rev 12:3–4a) that are commonly thought to describe the fall of Satan.¹ The fall of Satan must be placed *after* the declaration of God at the end of the sixth day of creation that “everything that he had made...was very good” (Gen 1:31). Satan’s fall must also be placed *before* the temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden (Satan’s intentions are clear at this point). This leaves a position just before Genesis 3 as the best option.
- 3) This chronological arrangement of the Scriptures is built on several key assumptions: a) the division of the kingdom in 931n BC, b) the exodus of Israel from Egypt in 1446 BC, and c) the birth of Abraham in 2166 BC.²
- 4) In order to date events prior to the flood, I made the following assumptions: a) Abraham was 75 when he left Haran (Gen 12:4), b) Terah was 205 at his death (Gen 11:32), c) Terah was 130 when he fathered Abraham³ (205 – 75 = 130), and d) Noah was 502

¹ Merrill F. Unger, “The Old Testament Revelation concerning Eternity Past,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 114:454 (Apr 1957): 134–140. Galeotti, while cautious about applying the OT texts to Satan primarily, admits “the King of Tyre, like the King of Babylon, also serves as a type for Satan”—Gary A. Galeotti, “Satan’s Identity Reconsidered,” *Faith and Mission* 15:2 (Spring 1998): 73–89.

² These assumptions are standard for conservative scholarship and follow the work of Eugene H. Merrill (*Kingdom of Priests*), Andrew Steinmann, (*From Abraham to Paul*), and Rodger Young ([Papers on Chronology](#)). See also Eugene H. Merrill, “Fixed Dates in Patriarchal Chronology,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 137:547 (Jul 1980): 242–48.

³ Eric Lyons, “Could Terah Have Been 130 When Abraham was Born?” (2002) [Online] URL: <http://www.apologeticspress.org/AllegedDiscrepancies.aspx?article=665>.

when he fathered Shem⁴ (Gen 5:32). Using the data in Genesis 5 and 11, the following table is then constructed.⁵ For an overview of the issues related to using Genesis 5 and 11 as chronological genealogies, see David McGee, “Creation Date of Adam from the Perspective of Young-Earth Creationism,” *Answers Research Journal* 5 (2012): 217–230.⁶

| Father | Age at birth of child | Years lived after birth of child | Total years lived | Born | Died |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|------|------|
| Adam | 130 | 800 | 930 | 4174 | 3244 |
| Seth | 105 | 807 | 912 | 4044 | 3132 |
| Enosh | 90 | 815 | 905 | 3939 | 3034 |
| Kenan | 70 | 840 | 910 | 3849 | 2939 |
| Mahalalel | 65 | 830 | 895 | 3779 | 2884 |
| Jared | 162 | 800 | 962 | 3714 | 2752 |
| Enoch | 65 | 300 | 365 | 3552 | 3187 |
| Methuselah | 187 | 782 | 969 | 3487 | 2518 |
| Lamech | 182 | 595 | 777 | 3300 | 2523 |
| Noah | 502 | 450 | 950 | 3118 | 2168 |
| Shem | 100 | 500 | 600 | 2616 | 2016 |
| <i>The Flood</i> | | | | 2518 | |
| Arphaxad | 35 | 403 | 438 | 2516 | 2078 |
| Shelah | 30 | 403 | 433 | 2481 | 2048 |
| Eber | 34 | 430 | 464 | 2451 | 1987 |
| Peleg | 30 | 209 | 239 | 2417 | 2178 |
| Reu | 32 | 207 | 239 | 2387 | 2148 |
| Serug | 30 | 200 | 230 | 2355 | 2125 |
| Nahor | 29 | 119 | 148 | 2325 | 2177 |
| Terah | 130 | 135 | 205 | 2296 | 2091 |
| Abraham | 86 | 89 | 175 | 2166 | 1991 |

⁴ Eric Lyons, “How Old was Terah when Abraham was Born?” (2001) [Online] URL: <http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=6&article=758>.

⁵ The first named child in the genealogy is often assumed to be the firstborn son, but this is only speculation. Notable exceptions to this assumption include Seth (he was Adam’s third son, cf. Gen 5:3), Shem (Japheth was firstborn, cf. Gen 5:32), and Abraham (Terah was 130 when Abraham was born, cf. Gen 11:26; Acts 7:4).

⁶ See also Terry **Mortenson**, “Systematic Theology Texts and the Age of the Earth: A Response to the Views of Erickson, Grudem, and Lewis and Demarest,” *Answers Research Journal* 2 (2009): 175–200; Travis R. **Freeman**, “A New Look at the Genesis 5 and 11 Fluidity Problem,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2004): 259–286; Jonathan **Sarfati**, “Biblical chronogenealogies,” *Journal of Creation (TJ)* 17 (2003): 14–18; Pete J. **Williams**, “Some Remarks Preliminary to a Biblical Chronology,” *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, Vol. 12 No. 1 (1996): 98–105; Gerhard **Larsson**, “The Chronology of the Pentateuch: A Comparison of the MT and LXX,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 102/3 (1983): 401–409; Gerhard F. **Hasel**, “The Meaning of the Chronogenealogies of Genesis 5 and 11,” *Origins* 7 (1980): 53–70.

Cain and Abel (c. 4070 BC)

Genesis 4:1–24

The Birth of Cain and Abel

- 1 Now the man had marital relations with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. Then she said, “I have created a man just as the LORD did!”
 2 Then she gave birth to his brother Abel. Abel took care of the flocks, while Cain cultivated the ground.

Abel Pleases God

- 3 At the designated time Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground for an offering to the LORD.
 4 But Abel brought some of the firstborn of his flock—even the fattest of them. And the LORD was pleased with Abel and his offering,
 5 but with Cain and his offering he was not pleased. So Cain became very angry, and his expression was downcast. [cf. [Heb 11:4](#)]
 6 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why is your expression downcast?
 7 Is it not true that if you do what is right, you will be fine? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. It desires to dominate you, but you must subdue it.”

Cain Murders His Brother Abel

- 8 Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.” While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.
 9 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” And he replied, “I don’t know! Am I my brother’s guardian?”
 10 But the LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground!
 11 So now, you are banished from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.
 12 When you try to cultivate the ground it will no longer yield its best for you. You will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.”
 13 Then Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is too great to endure!
 14 Look! You are driving me off the land today, and I must hide from your presence. I will be a homeless wanderer on the earth; whoever finds me will kill me.”
 15 But the LORD said to him, “All right then, if anyone kills Cain, Cain will be avenged seven times as much.” Then the LORD put a special mark on Cain so that no one who found him would strike him down.
 16 So Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

The Line of Cain (c. 4070 BC – c. 3000 BC)

- 17 Cain had marital relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was building a city, and he named the city after his son Enoch.
 18 To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.
 19 Lamech took two wives for himself; the name of the first was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah.
 20 Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the first of those who live in tents and keep livestock.
 21 The name of his brother was Jubal; he was the first of all who play the harp and the flute.
 22 Now Zillah also gave birth to Tubal-Cain, who heated metal and shaped all kinds of tools made of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.
 23 Lamech said to his wives,

“Adah and Zillah! Listen to me!
 You wives of Lamech, hear my words!
 I have killed a man for wounding me,
 a young man for hurting me.

- 24 If Cain is to be avenged seven times as much,
 then Lamech seventy-seven times!”

Toledot of Adam (4044–2618 BC)

Genesis 5

Genesis 4:25–26

1 This is the record of the family line of Adam. When God created humankind, he made them in the likeness of God.
 2 He created them male and female; when they were created, he blessed them and named them “humankind.”
 3 When Adam had lived 130 years he fathered a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and he named him Seth.

25 And Adam had marital relations with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son. She named him Seth, saying, “God has given me another child in place of Abel because

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|--|---|
| <p>4 The length of time Adam lived after he became the father of Seth was 800 years; during this time he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>5 The entire lifetime of Adam was 930 years, and then he died.</p> <p>6 When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh.</p> | <p>Cain killed him.”</p> <p>26 And a son was also born to Seth, whom he named Enosh. At that time people began to worship the LORD.</p> |
| <p>7 Seth lived 807 years after he became the father of Enosh, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>8 The entire lifetime of Seth was 912 years, and then he died.</p> <p>9 When Enosh had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan.</p> <p>10 Enosh lived 815 years after he became the father of Kenan, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>11 The entire lifetime of Enosh was 905 years, and then he died.</p> <p>12 When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel.</p> <p>13 Kenan lived 840 years after he became the father of Mahalalel, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>14 The entire lifetime of Kenan was 910 years, and then he died.</p> <p>15 When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared.</p> <p>16 Mahalalel lived 830 years after he became the father of Jared, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>17 The entire lifetime of Mahalalel was 895 years, and then he died.</p> <p>18 When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch.</p> <p>19 Jared lived 800 years after he became the father of Enoch, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>20 The entire lifetime of Jared was 962 years, and then he died.</p> <p>21 When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah.</p> <p>22 After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God for 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>23 The entire lifetime of Enoch was 365 years.</p> <p>24 Enoch walked with God, and then he disappeared because God took him away. [cf. Heb 11:5; Jude 1:14]</p> <p>25 When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech.</p> <p>26 Methuselah lived 782 years after he became the father of Lamech, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>27 The entire lifetime of Methuselah was 969 years, and then he died.</p> <p>28 When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son.</p> <p>29 He named him Noah, saying, “This one will bring us comfort from our labor and from the painful toil of our hands because of the ground that the LORD has cursed.”</p> <p>30 Lamech lived 595 years after he became the father of Noah, and he had other sons and daughters.</p> <p>31 The entire lifetime of Lamech was 777 years, and then he died.</p> <p>32 After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.</p> | |

The Wickedness of the World That Perished (c. 4070–2518 BC)

Genesis 6:1–8

- 1 When humankind began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,
- 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of humankind were beautiful. Thus they took wives for themselves from any they chose.
- 3 So the LORD said, “My spirit will not remain in humankind indefinitely, since they are mortal. They will remain for 120 more years.”
- 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days (and also after this) when the sons of God were having sexual relations with the daughters of humankind, who gave birth to their children. They were the mighty heroes of old, the famous men.
- 5 But the LORD saw that the wickedness of humankind had become great on the earth. Every inclination of the thoughts of their minds was only evil all the time.
- 6 The LORD regretted that he had made humankind on the earth, and he was highly offended.
- 7 So the LORD said, “I will wipe humankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—everything from humankind to animals, including creatures that move on the ground and birds of the air, for I regret that I have made them.”
- 8 But Noah found favor in the sight of the LORD.

Toledot of Noah (c. 2570 BC)

Genesis 6:9–22

9 This is the account of Noah. Noah was a godly man; he was blameless among his contemporaries. He walked with God.
 10 Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
 11 The earth was ruined in the sight of God; the earth was filled with violence.
 12 God saw the earth, and indeed it was ruined, for all living creatures on the earth were sinful.
 13 So God said to Noah, “I have decided that all living creatures must die, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Now I am about to destroy them and the earth.
 14 Make for yourself an ark of cypress wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch inside and out.
 15 This is how you should make it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.
 16 Make a roof for the ark and finish it, leaving 18 inches from the top. Put a door in the side of the ark, and make lower, middle, and upper decks.
 17 I am about to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy from under the sky all the living creatures that have the breath of life in them. Everything that is on the earth will die,
 18 but I will confirm my covenant with you. You will enter the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.
 19 You must bring into the ark two of every kind of living creature from all flesh, male and female, to keep them alive with you.
 20 Of the birds after their kinds, and of the cattle after their kinds, and of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every kind will come to you so you can keep them alive.
 21 And you must take for yourself every kind of food that is eaten, and gather it together. It will be food for you and for them.
 22 And Noah did all that God commanded him—he did indeed. [cf. [Heb 11:7](#)]

The Flood (2518 BC)

Genesis 7

The Command to Enter the Ark (600/2/10)

1 The LORD said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, for I consider you godly among this generation.
 2 You must take with you seven of every kind of clean animal, the male and its mate, two of every kind of unclean animal, the male and its mate,
 3 and also seven of every kind of bird in the sky, male and female, to preserve their offspring on the face of the earth.
 4 For in seven days I will cause it to rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the ground every living thing that I have made.”
 5 And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him.
 6 Noah was 600 years old when the floodwaters engulfed the earth.

Noah, His Family and the Animals Enter the Ark (600/2/10–16)

7 Noah entered the ark
 along with his sons,
 his wife, and his sons’ wives
 because of the floodwaters.
 8 Pairs of clean animals, of unclean animals,

 of birds, and of everything that creeps along the ground,

 9 male and female, came into the ark to Noah,
 just as God had commanded him.
 10 And after seven days the floodwaters engulfed the earth.

13 On that very day Noah entered the ark,
 accompanied by his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth,
 along with his wife and his sons’ three wives.

14 They entered, along with every living creature after its kind,
 every animal after its kind,
 every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind,
 and every bird after its kind, everything with wings.
 15 Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life
 came into the ark to Noah.
 16 Those that entered were male and female,
 just as God commanded him.
 Then the LORD shut him in.

The Worldwide Flood (600/2/17 – 600/3/26, days 1–40)

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month—on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst open and the floodgates of the heavens were opened.
 12 And the rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.
 17 The flood engulfed the earth for forty days. As the waters increased, they lifted the ark and raised it above the earth.
 18 The waters completely overwhelmed the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the waters.

The Waters Prevail (600/2/17 – 600/7/16, days 1–150)

19 The waters completely inundated the earth so that even all the high mountains under the entire sky were covered.

20 The waters rose more than twenty feet above the mountains.

21 And all living things that moved on the earth died, including the birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all humankind.

22 Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died.

23 So the LORD destroyed every living thing that was on the surface of the ground, including people, animals, creatures that creep along the ground, and birds of the sky. They were wiped off the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark survived. [cf. [1 Pet 3:19–20](#); [2 Pet 2:5](#)]

24 The waters prevailed over the earth for 150 days.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) I date the story of Cain and Abel to c. 4070 BC. This is pure speculation on my part since we are not told how old Adam was when Cain was born. If Cain was born in 4070, then he would have been around 26 in 4044 when Seth was born (with Abel being perhaps 25 or 24). The murder took place sometime before Seth's birth, but we cannot be certain when. Note that I do not give the line of Cain its own chronological block—this is in keeping with the text's deliberate omission of any chronological details related to Cain's genealogy.
- 2) Seth's birth is mentioned twice, first in the conclusion to the story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4:25–26) and again in the Toledot of Adam (Gen 5:3–4). From a literary perspective, the birth of Seth provides a positive conclusion to Cain's murder of Abel and his ungodly descendants (Gen 4:17–24). A proper chronological placement is made by simply harmonizing the two texts together, thus showing that Seth was born when Adam was 130.
- 3) The Flood.
 - A) Dates given in the "The Flood (2518 BC)" are with respect to Noah's age and are given in year/month/day notation (e.g., 600/2/10 means the tenth day of the second month of Noah's 600th year).¹ Months are assumed to be 30 days each² and the Flood year is assumed to exclude an intercalary month.³
 - B) Two kinds of time reckoning are used in the Flood narrative.⁴ The first, based on calendar dates with respect to Noah's age, informs us that the Flood lasted exactly twelve months and eleven days, assuming the first and last days as full days (see Gen 7:11; 8:4–5, 13–14). The second, based on spans of time, complements the first reckoning and conveys the number of days related to specific periods during the Flood event (see Gen 7:12, 24; 8:6, 10, 12). A comparison of these reckonings shows that they are consistent:
 - (1) Five months (150 days) elapsed between the onset of the rains and the grounding of the ark (Gen 7:11; 8:4). Seventy-four days passed from the seventeenth of the seventh month (8:4) to the first day of the tenth month, when the mountain tops first became visible (8:5). Another forty days elapsed before the release of the raven (8:6–7), and 21 more days passed during the three forays of the dove (8:10–12). This makes a total of 285 days, bringing us to the

¹ The dates in my sectional headings follow Dr. William D. Barrick's "Noah's Flood and Its Geological Implications" in *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*. See especially "Translation with Chronological Notations" for more detail. See also Bodie Hodge, "Biblical Overview of the Flood Timeline," *Answers in Genesis*, August 23, 2010. Cited: October 8, 2013. Online: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/2010/08/23/overview-flood-timeline>.

² This assumption is in harmony with the fact that Genesis 7:11 and 8:4 state that five months elapsed between the onset of the rains and the grounding of the ark, while 7:24 and 8:3 specify that same period to be 150 days.

³ The calendar assumed here corresponds to the ancient Egyptian civil calendar which was divided into twelve months of thirty days each yielding 360 days exactly. The shortage of five days was accounted for by inserting five extra days before the beginning of the new year (see "The Reckoning of Time in the Ancient World" in Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Rev. Ed. (Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), p. 21, §40).

⁴ See "Excursus 2" in Nahum M. Sarna, *JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), p. 377.

second day of the twelfth month. Some 29 days later, the waters on earth had begun to dry up (8:13), and it took another 57 days for the ground to be completely dried out by the twenty-seventh day of the second month (8:14). The addition of 29 and 57 to the 285 gives a grand total of 371 days (assuming the first and last days as full days). Taking 30 days to a month, this figure yields twelve months and eleven days, identical with the conclusion based solely upon the date system.

Textual Notes

- 1) Mundhenk comments on Genesis 7:13: “There is still one further problem with dating in the flood story. It comes right at the beginning of the flood. In 7:4 Noah is told to get all the animals into the ark. The rain will begin seven days later. Then in 7:6–9 Noah and his family and all of the animals enter the ark. 7:10 tells us (according to NRSV) that ‘after seven days the waters of the flood came.’ This could be understood to mean that they all managed to get into the ark on the same day that God spoke to Noah, and that they then waited in the ark for seven days before the rain started. However 7:13–16 seems to say that they all entered the ark on the same day that the flood started. NRSV is not the only translation that gives this impression. NJB, REB and GNB all translate in a way that might suggest that there is a contradiction here. Here too, there is probably no contradiction intended by the text, and it is better to translate in a way that avoids a contradiction. For example, in 7:10 a translator can say ‘on the seventh day’ (NJV) rather than ‘seven days later.’ If a translator does that, then 7:10 is merely a reference back to what God had said in 7:4. It does not say anything about which day Noah actually entered the ark. NAB says, ‘as soon as the seven days were over.’ MLB and NIV also refer to ‘the seven days.’ All of these translations avoid the contradiction suggested by the first group of translations mentioned.”⁵ I have dealt with this issue by putting Genesis 7:7–10 in parallel with 7:13–16 and harmonizing the text. Thus Noah, his family and the animals entered the ark sometime between God’s command (600/2/10) and the beginning of the Flood (600/2/17).

⁵ Norman A. Mundhenk, “The Dates of the Flood,” *The Bible Translator* 45/2 (Apr 1994): 207–213.

The New World (2518/2517 BC)

Genesis 8:1–19

The Ark Comes to Rest on Ararat (600/7/17, day 151)

- 1 But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and domestic animals that were with him in the ark. God caused a wind to blow over the earth and the waters receded.
 2 The fountains of the deep and the floodgates of heaven were closed, and the rain stopped falling from the sky.
 3 The waters kept receding steadily from the earth, so that they had gone down by the end of the 150 days.
 4 On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark came to rest on one of the mountains of Ararat.

The Waters Continue to Recede (600/7/17 – 600/9/30, days 151–224)

- 5a The waters kept on receding until the tenth month.

The Tops of the Mountains Become Visible (600/10/1, day 225)

- 5b On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains became visible.

Noah Sends a Raven (600/11/11, day 265)

- 6 At the end of forty days, Noah opened the window he had made in the ark
 7 and sent out a raven; it kept flying back and forth until the waters had dried up on the earth.

Noah Sends a Dove (600/11/19, day 273)

- 8 Then Noah sent out a dove to see if the waters had receded from the surface of the ground.
 9 The dove could not find a resting place for its feet because water still covered the surface of the entire earth, and so it returned to Noah in the ark. He stretched out his hand, took the dove, and brought it back into the ark.

Noah Sends the Dove Again (600/11/26, day 280)

- 10 He waited seven more days and then sent out the dove again from the ark.
 11 When the dove returned to him in the evening, there was a freshly plucked olive leaf in its beak! Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth.

Noah Sends the Dove a Third Time (600/12/3, day 287)

- 12 He waited another seven days and sent the dove out again, but it did not return to him this time.

The Surface of the Ground is Dry / Noah Removes the Ark's Cover (601/1/1, day 315)

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

The Earth is Dry / Noah Leaves the Ark (601/2/27, day 371)

- 14 And by the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was dry.
 15 Then God spoke to Noah and said,
 16 "Come out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you.
 17 Bring out with you all the living creatures that are with you. Bring out every living thing, including the birds, animals, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. Let them increase and be fruitful and multiply on the earth!"
 18 Noah went out along with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives.
 19 Every living creature, every creeping thing, every bird, and everything that moves on the earth went out of the ark in their groups.

The Noahic Covenant (2517 BC)

Genesis 8:20–9:17

8:20 Noah built an altar to the LORD. He then took some of every kind of clean animal and clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

21 And the LORD smelled the soothing aroma and said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, even though the inclination of their minds is evil from childhood on. I will never again destroy everything that lives, as I have just done.

22 "While the earth continues to exist,
 planting time and harvest,
 cold and heat,
 summer and winter,
 and day and night will not cease."

9:1 Then God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.
 2 Every living creature of the earth and every bird of the sky will be terrified of you. Everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea are under your authority.
 3 You may eat any moving thing that lives. As I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.
 4 But you must not eat meat with its life (that is, its blood) in it.
 5 For your lifeblood I will surely exact punishment, from every living creature I will exact punishment. From each person I will exact punishment for the life of the individual since the man was his relative.

6 “Whoever sheds human blood,
 by other humans
 must his blood be shed;
 for in God’s image
 God has made humankind.”

7 But as for you, be fruitful and multiply; increase abundantly on the earth and multiply on it.”
 8 God said to Noah and his sons,
 9 “Look! I now confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you
 10 and with every living creature that is with you, including the birds, the domestic animals, and every living creature of the earth with you, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature of the earth.
 11 I confirm my covenant with you: Never again will all living things be wiped out by the waters of a flood; never again will a flood destroy the earth.”
 12 And God said, “This is the guarantee of the covenant I am making with you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all subsequent generations:
 13 I will place my rainbow in the clouds, and it will become a guarantee of the covenant between me and the earth.
 14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds,
 15 then I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures of all kinds. Never again will the waters become a flood and destroy all living things.
 16 When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will notice it and remember the perpetual covenant between God and all living creatures of all kinds that are on the earth.”
 17 So God said to Noah, “This is the guarantee of the covenant that I am confirming between me and all living things that are on the earth.”

Noah’s Drunkenness and Canaan’s Curse (c. 2500 BC)

Genesis 9:18–27

18 The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Now Ham was the father of Canaan.)
 19 These were the sons of Noah, and from them the whole earth was populated.
 20 Noah, a man of the soil, began to plant a vineyard.
 21 When he drank some of the wine, he got drunk and uncovered himself inside his tent.
 22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father’s nakedness and told his two brothers who were outside.
 23 Shem and Japheth took the garment and placed it on their shoulders. Then they walked in backwards and covered up their father’s nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so they did not see their father’s nakedness.
 24 When Noah awoke from his drunken stupor he learned what his youngest son had done to him.
 25 So he said,
 “Cursed be Canaan!
 The lowest of slaves
 he will be to his brothers.”

26 He also said,
 “Worthy of praise is the LORD, the God of Shem!
 May Canaan be the slave of Shem!
 27 May God enlarge Japheth’s territory and numbers!
 May he live in the tents of Shem
 and may Canaan be his slave!”

Toledot of Shem, Ham and Japheth (c. 2500 BC)

Genesis 10

Introduction

1 This is the account of Noah's sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

Japheth's Descendants

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

3 The sons of Gomer were Askenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.

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

5 From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to its language, according to their families, by their nations.

Ham's Descendants

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

7 The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

8 Cush was the father of Nimrod; he began to be a valiant warrior on the earth.

9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. (That is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.")

10 The primary regions of his kingdom were Babel, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar.

11 From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah,

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

13 Mizraim was the father of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,

14 Pathrusites, Casluhites (from whom the Philistines came), and Caphtorites.

15 Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, Heth,

16 the Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites,

17 Hivites, Arkites, Sinites,

18 Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites. Eventually the families of the Canaanites were scattered

19 and the borders of Canaan extended from Sidon all the way to Gerar as far as Gaza, and all the way to Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.

20 These are the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, and by their nations.

Shem's Descendants

21 And sons were also born to Shem (the older brother of Japheth), the father of all the sons of Eber.

22 The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

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

24 Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah was the father of Eber.

25 Two sons were born to Eber: One was named Peleg because in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan.

26 Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,

27 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,

28 Obal, Abimael, Sheba,

29 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan.

30 Their dwelling place was from Mesha all the way to Sephar in the eastern hills.

31 These are the sons of Shem according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, and according to their nations.

Conclusion

32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations, and from these the nations spread over the earth after the flood.

Toledot of Shem – Part 1 (2516–2178 BC)

Genesis 11:10–19

10 This is the account of Shem. Shem was 100 old when he became the father of Arphaxad, two years after the flood.

11 And after becoming the father of Arphaxad, Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

12 When Arphaxad had lived 35 years, he became the father of Shelah.

13 And after he became the father of Shelah, Arphaxad lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

14 When Shelah had lived 30 years, he became the father of Eber.

15 And after he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

- 16 When Eber had lived 34 years, he became the father of Peleg.
 17 And after he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters.
 18 When Peleg had lived 30 years, he became the father of Reu.
 19 And after he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

The City of Babel (c. 2300 BC)

Genesis 11:1–9

- 1 The whole earth had a common language and a common vocabulary.
 2 When the people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.
 3 Then they said to one another, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” (They had brick instead of stone and tar instead of mortar.)
 4 Then they said, “Come, let’s build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens so that we may make a name for ourselves. Otherwise we will be scattered across the face of the entire earth.”
 5 But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the people had started building.
 6 And the LORD said, “If as one people all sharing a common language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be beyond them.
 7 Come, let’s go down and confuse their language so they won’t be able to understand each other.”
 8 So the LORD scattered them from there across the face of the entire earth, and they stopped building the city.
 9 That is why its name was called Babel—because there the LORD confused the language of the entire world, and from there the LORD scattered them across the face of the entire earth.

Toledot of Shem – Part 2 (2355–2226 BC)

Genesis 11:20–26

- 20 When Reu had lived 32 years, he became the father of Serug.
 21 And after he became the father of Serug, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters.
 22 When Serug had lived 30 years, he became the father of Nahor.
 23 And after he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters.
 24 When Nahor had lived 29 years, he became the father of Terah.
 25 And after he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters.
 26 When Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

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- 2) Genesis 10:25 (repeated by 1 Chronicles 1:19) states that in the days of Peleg “the earth was divided.” The traditional opinion has been to interpret this phrase as a reference to the city of Babel story. For this reason, I have placed Genesis 11:1–9 after Genesis 11:19. However, it should be noted that although the traditional view is likely, it cannot be dogmatically held since there is no clear allusion to 11:1–9 because “scattered” (*pus*) and “divided” (*niplega*) are different words.⁴

⁴ Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, New American Commentary (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), pp. 463–64.

A Man Named Job (c. 2200 BC)

Job 1–2

A Man Named Job

1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. And that man was pure and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

2 Seven sons and three daughters were born to him.

3 His possessions included 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys; in addition he had a very great household. Thus he was the greatest of all the people in the east.

4 Now his sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one in turn, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

5 When the days of their feasting were finished, Job would send for them and sanctify them; he would get up early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job thought, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's customary practice.

"Have you considered my servant Job?"

6 Now the day came when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD—and Satan also arrived among them.

7 The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" And Satan answered the LORD, "From roving about on the earth, and from walking back and forth across it."

8 So the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil."

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, "Is it for nothing that Job fears God?"

10 Have you not made a hedge around him and his household and all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his livestock have increased in the land.

11 But extend your hand and strike everything he has, and he will no doubt curse you to your face!"

12 So the LORD said to Satan, "All right then, everything he has is in your power. Only do not extend your hand against the man himself!" So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

The First Test

13 Now the day came when Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house,

14 and a messenger came to Job, saying, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing beside them,

15 and the Sabeans swooped down and carried them all away, and they killed the servants with the sword! And I—only I alone—escaped to tell you!"

16 While this one was still speaking, another messenger arrived and said, "The fire of God has fallen from heaven and has burned up the sheep and the servants—it has consumed them! And I—only I alone—escaped to tell you!"

17 While this one was still speaking another messenger arrived and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and carried them all away, and they killed the servants with the sword! And I—only I alone—escaped to tell you!"

18 While this one was still speaking another messenger arrived and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house,

19 and suddenly a great wind swept across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they died! And I—only I alone—escaped to tell you!"

20 Then Job got up and tore his robe. He shaved his head, and then he threw himself down with his face to the ground.

21 He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will return there. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. May the name of the LORD be blessed!"

22 In all this Job did not sin, nor did he charge God with moral impropriety.

"He still holds fast his integrity"

2:1 Again the day came when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also arrived among them to present himself before the LORD.

2 And the LORD said to Satan, "Where do you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roving about on the earth, and from walking back and forth across it."

3 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil. And he still holds firmly to his integrity, so that you stirred me up to destroy him without reason."

4 But Satan answered the LORD, "Skin for skin! Indeed, a man will give up all that he has to save his life!

5 But extend your hand and strike his bone and his flesh, and he will no doubt curse you to your face!"

6 So the LORD said to Satan, "All right, he is in your power; only preserve his life."

The Second Test

7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and he afflicted Job with a malignant ulcer from the sole of his feet to the top of his head.

8 Job took a shard of broken pottery to scrape himself with while he was sitting among the ashes.

9 Then his wife said to him, “Are you still holding firmly to your integrity? Curse God, and die!”

10 But he replied, “You’re talking like one of the godless women would do! Should we receive what is good from God, and not also receive what is evil?” In all this Job did not sin by what he said.

Job’s Friends Come to Comfort Him

11 When Job’s three friends heard about all this calamity that had happened to him, each of them came from his own country—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to come to show sympathy for him and to console him.

12 But when they gazed intently from a distance but did not recognize him, they began to weep loudly. Each of them tore his robes, and they threw dust into the air over their heads.

13 Then they sat down with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights, yet no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his pain was very great.

Job’s First Speech (c. 2200 BC)**Job 3****Job Curses the Day He Was Born**

1 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day he was born.

2 Job spoke up and said:

3 “Let the day on which I was born perish,
and the night that said,
‘A man has been conceived!’

4 That day—let it be darkness;
let not God on high regard it,
nor let light shine on it!

5 Let darkness and the deepest
shadow claim it;
let a cloud settle on it;
let whatever blackens the day terrify it!

6 That night—let darkness seize it;
let it not be included among the days of the year;
let it not enter among the number of the months!

7 Indeed, let that night be barren;
let no shout of joy penetrate it!

8 Let those who curse the day curse it—
those who are prepared to rouse Leviathan.

9 Let its morning stars be darkened;
let it wait for daylight but find none,
nor let it see the first rays of dawn,

10 because it did not shut the doors of my mother’s womb on me,
nor did it hide trouble from my eyes!

Job Wishes He Had Died at Birth

11 “Why did I not die at birth,
and why did I not expire
as I came out of the womb?

12 Why did the knees welcome me,
and why were there two breasts
that I might nurse at them?

13 For now I would be lying down
and would be quiet,
I would be asleep
and then at peace

- 14 with kings and counselors of the earth
who built for themselves places now desolate,
15 or with princes who possessed gold,
who filled their palaces with silver.
16 Or why was I not buried
like a stillborn infant,
like infants who have never seen the light?
17 There the wicked cease from turmoil,
and there the weary are at rest.
18 There the prisoners relax together;
they do not hear the voice of the oppressor.
19 Small and great are there,
and the slave is free from his master.

Job Bemoans His Fate—God Grants Him Life When He Longs for Death

- 20 “Why does God give light to one who is in misery,
and life to those whose soul is bitter,
21 to those who wait for death that does not come,
and search for it
more than for hidden treasures,
22 who rejoice even to jubilation,
and are exultant when they find the grave?
23 Why is light given to a man
whose way is hidden,
and whom God has hedged in?
24 For my sighing comes in place of my food,
and my groanings flow forth like water.
25 For the very thing I dreaded has happened to me,
and what I feared has come upon me.
26 I have no ease, I have no quietness;
I cannot rest; turmoil has come upon me.”

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The following internal evidence argues for the patriarch period as the historical setting of Job:
 - A) Job lived to be much older than 140 (Jewish tradition holds that his age at death was 70 + 140 = 210; cf. Job 42:16).¹ This age matches the ages of those who lived immediately after the flood (Gen 11:13–23). Also, the patriarchs lived to similar ages: Abraham lived to be 175, Isaac 180, Jacob 147, and Joseph 110.
 - B) Job’s wealth consisted primarily of his possessions, his animals and his servants (Job 1:3; 42:12; cf. Gen 12:16). This is consistent with what we know of wealth during the time of the patriarchs (cf. Gen 13:1–2; 24:35).
 - C) Job indicated no knowledge of organized religion—Mosaic, Levitical or otherwise; like the patriarchs he was a priest to his own household (Job 1:5).²
- 2) A placement of the story of Job before Abraham seems best—such a position gives Job a good chronological placement and avoids interrupting the patriarch narratives of Genesis 12–50.

¹ Job 42:16 LXX says that “Job lived after his affliction a hundred and seventy years: and all the years he lived were two hundred and forty” (a variant says that all Job’s years were 248).

² Robert L. Alden, *Job*, New American Commentary Vol. 11, 26.

Eliphaz's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 4–5

Eliphaz's Surprise at Job's Bitter Words

4:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

- 2 "If someone should attempt a word with you,
will you be impatient?
But who can refrain from speaking?
- 3 Look, you have instructed many;
you have strengthened feeble hands.
- 4 Your words have supported those
who stumbled,
and you have strengthened the knees
that gave way.
- 5 But now the same thing comes to you,
and you are discouraged;
it strikes you,
and you are terrified.
- 6 Is not your piety your confidence,
and your blameless ways your hope?

Eliphaz Voices His Worldview

- 7 Call to mind now:
Who, being innocent, ever perished?
And where were upright people ever destroyed?
- 8 Even as I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and those who sow trouble reap the same.
- 9 By the breath of God they perish,
and by the blast of his anger they are consumed.
- 10 There is the roaring of the lion
and the growling of the young lion,
but the teeth of the young lions are broken.
- 11 The mighty lion perishes for lack of prey,
and the cubs of the lioness are scattered.

Eliphaz's Vision

- 12 "Now a word was secretly brought to me,
and my ear caught a whisper of it.
- 13 In the troubling thoughts of the dreams in the night
when a deep sleep falls on men,
14 a trembling gripped me—and a terror!—
and made all my bones shake.
- 15 Then a breath of air passes by my face;
it makes the hair of my flesh stand up.
- 16 It stands still,
but I cannot recognize its appearance;
an image is before my eyes,
and I hear a murmuring voice:
- 17 "Is a mortal man righteous before God?
Or a man pure before his Creator?
- 18 If God puts no trust in his servants
and attributes folly to his angels,
19 how much more to those who live in houses of clay,
whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed like a moth?
- 20 They are destroyed between morning and evening;
they perish forever without anyone regarding it.
- 21 Is not their excess wealth taken away from them?

They die, yet without attaining wisdom.

“Man is born to trouble”

- 5:1 “Call now! Is there anyone who will answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?
2 For wrath kills the foolish person,
and anger slays the silly one.
3 I myself have seen the fool taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his place of residence.
4 His children are far from safety,
and they are crushed at the place where judgment is rendered,
nor is there anyone to deliver them.
5 The hungry eat up his harvest,
and take it even from behind the thorns,
and the thirsty swallow up their fortune.
6 For evil does not come up from the dust,
nor does trouble spring up from the ground,
7 but people are born to trouble,
as surely as the sparks fly upward.

Eliphaz’s Advice—Appeal to the God of Justice

- 8 “But as for me, I would seek God,
and to God I would set forth my case.
9 He does great and unsearchable things,
marvelous things without number;
10 he gives rain on the earth,
and sends water on the fields;
11 he sets the lowly on high,
that those who mourn are raised to safety.
12 He frustrates the plans of the crafty
so that their hands cannot accomplish
what they had planned!
13 He catches the wise in their own craftiness, [cf. [1 Cor 3:19](#)]
and the counsel of the cunning is brought to a quick end.
14 They meet with darkness in the daytime,
and grope about in the noontime as if it were night.
15 So he saves from the sword that comes from their mouth,
even the poor from the hand of the powerful.
16 Thus the poor have hope,
and iniquity shuts its mouth.

Eliphaz’s Advice—The God Who Disciplines Also Restores

- 17 “Therefore, blessed is the man whom God corrects,
so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. [cf. [Prov 3:11–12](#); [Heb 12:5–6](#)]
18 For he wounds, but he also bandages;
he strikes, but his hands also heal.
19 He will deliver you from six calamities;
yes, in seven no evil will touch you.
20 In time of famine he will redeem you from death,
and in time of war from the power of the sword.
21 You will be protected from malicious gossip,
and will not be afraid of the destruction when it comes.
22 You will laugh at destruction and famine
and need not be afraid of the beasts of the earth.
23 For you will have a pact with the stones of the field,
and the wild animals will be at peace with you.
24 And you will know that your home will be secure,
and when you inspect your domains,

- you will not be missing anything.
- 25 You will also know that your children will be numerous,
and your descendants like the grass of the earth.
- 26 You will come to your grave in a full age,
As stacks of grain are harvested in their season.
- 27 Look, we have investigated this, so it is true.
Hear it, and apply it for your own good.”

Job's Response to Eliphaz (c. 2200 BC)

Job 6–7

Job Defends His Bitter Words

6:1 Then Job responded:

- 2 “Oh, if only my grief could be weighed,
and my misfortune laid on the scales too!
- 3 But because it is heavier than the sand of the sea,
that is why my words have been wild.
- 4 For the arrows of the Almighty are within me;
my spirit drinks their poison;
God's sudden terrors are arrayed against me.
- 5 “Does the wild donkey bray when it is near grass?
Or does the ox low near its fodder?
- 6 Can food that is tasteless be eaten without salt?
Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?
- 7 I have refused to touch such things;
they are like loathsome food to me.

Job's Desire for Death

- 8 “Oh that my request would be realized,
and that God would grant me what I long for!
- 9 And that God would be willing to crush me,
that he would let loose his hand
and kill me.
- 10 Then I would yet have my comfort,
then I would rejoice,
in spite of pitiless pain,
for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.
- 11 What is my strength, that I should wait?
and what is my end,
that I should prolong my life?
- 12 Is my strength like that of stones?
or is my flesh made of bronze?
- 13 Is not my power to help myself nothing,
and has not every resource been driven from me?

Job's Disappointment With His Former Friends and Acquaintances

- 14 “To the one in despair, kindness should come from his friend
even if he forsakes the fear of the Almighty.
- 15 My brothers have been as treacherous as a seasonal stream,
and as the riverbeds of the intermittent streams
that flow away.
- 16 They are dark because of ice;
snow is piled up over them.
- 17 When they are scorched, they dry up,
when it is hot, they vanish from their place.
- 18 Caravans turn aside from their routes;
they go into the wasteland and perish.

19 The caravans of Tema looked intently for these streams;
the traveling merchants of Sheba hoped for them.

20 They were distressed,
because each one had been so confident;
they arrived there, but were disappointed.

Job's Disappointment With Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar

21 For now you have become like these streams that are no help;
you see a terror, and are afraid.

22 "Have I ever said, 'Give me something,
and from your fortune make gifts in my favor'?

23 Or 'Deliver me from the enemy's power,
and from the hand of tyrants ransom me'?

Job Pleads for Genuine Help

24 "Teach me and I, for my part, will be silent;
explain to me how I have been mistaken.

25 How painful are honest words!
But what does your reproof prove?

26 Do you intend to criticize mere words,
and treat the words of a despairing man as wind?

27 Yes, you would gamble for the fatherless,
and auction off your friend.

Job Insists that He is Innocent

28 "Now then, be good enough to look at me;
and I will not lie to your face!

29 Relent, let there be no falsehood;
reconsider, for my righteousness is intact!

30 Is there any falsehood on my lips?
Can my mouth not discern evil things?

Job Describes His Suffering

7:1 "Does not humanity have hard service on earth?
Are not their days also
like the days of a hired man?

2 Like a servant longing for the evening shadow,
and like a hired man looking for his wages,

3 thus I have been made to inherit
months of futility,
and nights of sorrow
have been appointed to me.

4 If I lie down, I say, 'When will I arise?',
and the night stretches on
and I toss and turn restlessly
until the day dawns.

5 My body is clothed with worms and dirty scabs;
my skin is broken and festering.

6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle
and they come to an end without hope.

Job Speaks to God—Remember How Brief My Life Is!

7 Remember that my life is but a breath,
that my eyes will never again see happiness.

8 The eye of him who sees me now will see me no more;
your eyes will look for me, but I will be gone.

9 As a cloud is dispersed and then disappears,
so the one who goes down to the grave

does not come up again.

- 10 He returns no more to his house,
nor does his place of residence know him any more.

Job Speaks to God—Why Do You Torture Me? Leave Me Alone!

- 11 “Therefore, I will not refrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.
12 Am I the sea, or the creature of the deep,
that you must put me under guard?
13 If I say, “My bed will comfort me,
my couch will ease my complaint,”
14 then you scare me with dreams
and terrify me with visions,
15 so that I would prefer strangling,
and death more than life.
16 I loathe it; I do not want to live forever;
leave me alone, for my days are a vapor!

Job Speaks to God—Why Do You Put Men Under Such Intense Scrutiny?

- 17 “What is mankind that you make so much of them,
and that you pay attention to them?
18 And that you visit them every morning,
and try them every moment?
19 Will you never look away from me,
will you not let me alone
long enough to swallow my spittle?
20 If I have sinned—what have I done to you,
O watcher of men?
Why have you set me as your target?
Have I become a burden to you?
21 And why do you not pardon my transgression,
and take away my iniquity?
For now I will lie down in the dust,
and you will seek me diligently,
but I will be gone.”

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Bildad's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 8

Bildad Agrees With Eliphaz's Worldview

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite spoke up and said:

- 2 "How long will you speak these things,
seeing that the words of your mouth
are like a great wind?
3 Does God pervert justice?
Or does the Almighty pervert what is right?
4 If your children sinned against him,
he gave them over to the penalty of their sin.

Bildad Encourages Job to Repent

- 5 But if you will look to God,
and make your supplication to the Almighty,
6 if you become pure and upright,
even now he will rouse himself for you,
and will restore your righteous abode.
7 Your beginning will seem so small,
since your future will flourish.

Bildad's Sermon—God's Judgment is Upon the Unrighteous

- 8 "For inquire now of the former generation,
and pay attention to the findings
of their ancestors;
9 For we were born yesterday and do not have knowledge,
since our days on earth are but a shadow.
10 Will they not instruct you and speak to you,
and bring forth words
from their understanding?
11 Can the papyrus plant grow tall where there is no marsh?
Can reeds flourish without water?
12 While they are still beginning to flower
and not ripe for cutting,
they can wither away
faster than any grass!
13 Such is the destiny of all who forget God;
the hope of the godless perishes,
14 whose trust is in something futile,
whose security is a spider's web.
15 He leans against his house but it does not hold up,
he takes hold of it but it does not stand.
16 He is a well-watered plant in the sun,
its shoots spread over its garden.
17 It wraps its roots around a heap of stones
and it looks for a place among stones.
18 If he is uprooted from his place,
then that place will disown him, saying,
'I have never seen you!'
19 Indeed, this is the joy of his way,
and out of the earth others spring up.

Bildad's Sermon—God's Blessing is Upon the Righteous

- 20 "Surely, God does not reject a blameless man,
nor does he grasp the hand
of the evildoers.
21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,

and your lips with gladness.

- 22 Those who hate you will be clothed with shame,
and the tent of the wicked will be no more.”

Job's Response to Bildad (c. 2200 BC)

Job 9–10

Job Imagines Himself Being Vindicated in Court—But Who Can Defend Themselves Against God?

9:1 Then Job answered:

- 2 “Truly, I know that this is so.
But how can a human be just before God?
- 3 If someone wishes to contend with him,
he cannot answer him one time in a thousand.
- 4 He is wise in heart and mighty in strength—
who has resisted him and remained safe?
- 5 He who removes mountains suddenly,
who overturns them in his anger;
- 6 he who shakes the earth out of its place
so that its pillars tremble;
- 7 he who commands the sun and it does not shine
and seals up the stars;
- 8 he alone spreads out the heavens,
and treads on the waves of the sea;
- 9 he makes the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades,
and the constellations of the southern sky;
- 10 he does great and unsearchable things,
and wonderful things without number.
- 11 If he passes by me, I cannot see him,
if he goes by, I cannot perceive him.
- 12 If he snatches away, who can turn him back?
Who dares to say to him, ‘What are you doing?’
- 13 God does not restrain his anger;
under him the helpers of Rahab lie crushed.
- 14 “How much less, then, can I answer him
and choose my words to argue with him!
- 15 Although I am innocent,
I could not answer him;
I could only plead with my judge for mercy.
- 16 If I summoned him, and he answered me,
I would not believe
that he would be listening to my voice—
- 17 he who crushes me with a tempest,
and multiplies my wounds for no reason.
- 18 He does not allow me to recover my breath,
for he fills me with bitterness.
- 19 If it is a matter of strength,
most certainly he is the strong one!
And if it is a matter of justice,
he will say, ‘Who will summon me?’
- 20 Although I am innocent,
my mouth would condemn me;
although I am blameless,
it would declare me perverse.

Job Declares Himself Innocent and Argues That the Blameless Suffer With the Guilty

- 21 I am blameless. I do not know myself.
I despise my life.

- 22 “It is all one! That is why I say,
‘He destroys the blameless and the guilty.’
23 If a scourge brings sudden death,
he mocks at the despair of the innocent.
24 If a land has been given
into the hand of a wicked man,
he covers the faces of its judges;
if it is not he, then who is it?

Job Reflects On His Miserable Plight—No Matter What He Does, He Cannot Win

- 25 “My days are swifter than a runner,
they speed by without seeing happiness.
26 They glide by like reed boats,
like an eagle that swoops down on its prey.
27 If I say, ‘I will forget my complaint,
I will change my expression and be cheerful,’
28 I dread all my sufferings,
for I know that you do not hold me blameless.
29 If I am guilty,
why then weary myself in vain?
30 If I wash myself with snow water,
and make my hands clean with lye,
31 then you plunge me into a slimy pit
and my own clothes abhor me.

If Only There Were Someone To Arbitrate Between Us!

- 32 For he is not a human being like I am,
that I might answer him,
that we might come together in judgment.
33 Nor is there an arbiter between us,
who might lay his hand on us both,
34 who would take his rod away from me
so that his terror would not make me afraid.
35 Then would I speak and not fear him,
but it is not so with me.

Job Cries Out to God—Why Are You Doing this? What is My Fault?

- 10:1 “I am weary of my life;
I will complain without restraint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
2 I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn me;
tell me why you are contending with me.’
3 Is it good for you to oppress,
to despise the work of your hands,
while you smile
on the schemes of the wicked?
4 “Do you have eyes of flesh,
or do you see as a human being sees?
5 Are your days like the days of a mortal,
or your years like the years of a mortal,
6 that you must search out my iniquity,
and inquire about my sin,
7 although you know that I am not guilty,
and that there is no one who can deliver
out of your hand?

Job Cries Out to God—Have You Created Me Only to Destroy Me?

- 8 “Your hands have shaped me and made me,

- but now you destroy me completely.
- 9 Remember that you have made me as with the clay;
will you return me to dust?
- 10 Did you not pour me out like milk,
and curdle me like cheese?
- 11 You clothed me with skin and flesh
and knit me together with bones and sinews.
- 12 You gave me life and favor,
and your intervention watched over my spirit.
- 13 “But these things you have concealed in your heart;
I know that this is with you:
- 14 If I sinned, then you would watch me
and you would not acquit me of my iniquity.
- 15 If I am guilty, woe to me,
and if I am innocent, I cannot lift my head;
I am full of shame,
and satiated with my affliction.
- 16 If I lift myself up,
you hunt me as a fierce lion,
and again you display your power against me.
- 17 You bring new witnesses against me,
and increase your anger against me;
relief troops come against me.

Job Cries Out to God—Will You Give Me No Relief Before the End?

- 18 “Why then did you bring me out from the womb?
I should have died
and no eye would have seen me!
- 19 I should have been as though I had never existed;
I should have been carried
right from the womb to the grave!
- 20 Are not my days few?
Cease, then, and leave me alone,
that I may find a little comfort,
before I depart, never to return,
to the land of darkness
and the deepest shadow,
to the land of utter darkness,
like the deepest darkness,
and the deepest shadow and disorder,
where even the light is like darkness.”

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Zophar's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 11

Zophar Rebukes Job Sharply—God Has Punished You Less Than Your Guilt Deserves

1 Then Zophar the Naamathite spoke up and said:

- 2 “Should not this abundance of words be answered,
or should this talkative man
be vindicated?
3 Will your idle talk reduce people to silence,
and will no one rebuke you when you mock?
4 For you have said, ‘My teaching is flawless,
and I am pure in your sight.’
5 But if only God would speak,
if only he would open his lips against you,
6 and reveal to you the secrets of wisdom—
for true wisdom has two sides—
so that you would know
that God has forgiven some of your sins.

God's Ways Are Beyond Understanding, and He Can See Your Iniquity

- 7 “Can you discover the essence of God?
Can you find out the perfection of the Almighty?
8 It is higher than the heavens—what can you do?
It is deeper than Sheol—what can you know?
9 Its measure is longer than the earth,
and broader than the sea.
10 If he comes by and confines you
and convenes a court,
then who can prevent him?
11 For he knows deceitful men;
when he sees evil, will he not consider it?
12 But an empty man will become wise,
when a wild donkey's colt is born a human being.

If You Will Repent, God Will Again Bless You

- 13 “As for you, if you prove faithful,
and if you stretch out your hands toward him,
14 if iniquity is in your hand—put it far away,
and do not let evil reside in your tents.
15 For then you will lift up your face
without blemish;
you will be securely established
and will not fear.
16 For you will forget your trouble;
you will remember it
like water that has flowed away.
17 And life will be brighter than the noonday;
though there be darkness,
it will be like the morning.
18 And you will be secure, because there is hope;
you will be protected
and will take your rest in safety.
19 You will lie down with no one to make you afraid,
and many will seek your favor.
20 But the eyes of the wicked fail,
and escape eludes them;
their one hope is to breathe their last.”

Job's Response to Zophar (c. 2200 BC)

Job 12–14

Job Responds With Sarcasm

12:1 Then Job answered:

- 2 “Without a doubt you are the people,
and wisdom will die with you.
- 3 I also have understanding as well as you;
I am not inferior to you.
Who does not know such things as these?

Job Points Out the Irony—He is Derided by his Friends, While the Tents of Robbers are Peaceful

- 4 I am a laughingstock to my friends,
I, who called on God and whom he answered—
a righteous and blameless man
is a laughingstock!
- 5 For calamity, there is derision
(according to the ideas of the fortunate)
—a fate for those whose feet slip!
- 6 But the tents of robbers are peaceful,
and those who provoke God are confident—
who carry their god in their hands.

Even the Animals Know Your “Wisdom”

- 7 “But now, ask the animals and they will teach you,
or the birds of the sky and they will tell you.
- 8 Or speak to the earth and it will teach you,
or let the fish of the sea declare to you.
- 9 Which of all these does not know
that the hand of the LORD has done this,
10 in whose hand is the life of every creature
and the breath of all the human race.
- 11 Does not the ear test words,
as the tongue tastes food?
- 12 Is not wisdom found among the aged?
Does not long life bring understanding?

God is Sovereign—But He Does Not Always Act in Ways You Might Expect

- 13 “With God are wisdom and power;
counsel and understanding are his.
- 14 If he tears down, it cannot be rebuilt;
if he imprisons a person, there is no escape.
- 15 If he holds back the waters, then they dry up;
if he releases them, they destroy the land.
- 16 With him are strength and prudence;
both the one who goes astray
and the one who misleads are his.
- 17 He leads counselors away stripped
and makes judges into fools.
- 18 He loosens the bonds of kings
and binds a loincloth around their waist.
- 19 He leads priests away stripped
and overthrows the potentates.
- 20 He deprives the trusted advisers of speech
and takes away the discernment of elders.
- 21 He pours contempt on noblemen
and disarms the powerful.
- 22 He reveals the deep things of darkness,

and brings deep shadows into the light.

- 23 He makes nations great, and destroys them;
he extends the boundaries of nations
and disperses them.
- 24 He deprives the leaders of the earth
of their understanding;
he makes them wander
in a trackless desert waste.
- 25 They grope about in darkness without light;
he makes them stagger like drunkards.

Job Tells His Friends to Be Silent and Let Him Address His Case Directly to God

- 13:1 “Indeed, my eyes have seen all this,
my ears have heard and understood it.
- 2 What you know, I know also;
I am not inferior to you!
- 3 But I wish to speak to the Almighty,
and I desire to argue my case with God.
- 4 But you, however, are inventors of lies;
all of you are worthless physicians!
- 5 If only you would keep completely silent!
For you, that would be wisdom.
- 6 “Listen now to my argument,
and be attentive to my lips’ contentions.
- 7 Will you speak wickedly on God’s behalf?
Will you speak deceitfully for him?
- 8 Will you show him partiality?
Will you argue the case for God?
- 9 Would it turn out well if he would examine you?
Or as one deceives a man would you deceive him?
- 10 He would certainly rebuke you
if you secretly showed partiality!
- 11 Would not his splendor terrify you
and the fear he inspires fall on you?
- 12 Your maxims are proverbs of ashes;
your defenses are defenses of clay.

Job Is Certain of His Vindication

- 13 “Refrain from talking with me so that I may speak;
then let come to me what may.
- 14 Why do I put myself in peril,
and take my life in my hands?
- 15 Even if he slays me, I will hope in him;
I will surely defend my ways to his face!
- 16 Moreover, this will become my deliverance,
for no godless person would come before him.
- 17 Listen carefully to my words;
let your ears be attentive to my explanation.
- 18 See now, I have prepared my case;
I know that I am right.
- 19 Who will contend with me?
If anyone can, I will be silent and die.

Job Addresses God—Two Pre-Trial Conditions

- 20 Only in two things spare me, O God,
and then I will not hide from your face:
- 21 Remove your hand far from me
and stop making me afraid with your terror.

22 Then call, and I will answer,
or I will speak, and you respond to me.

Job Addresses God—Explain My Fault, Why Are You Doing This to Me?

23 How many are my iniquities and sins?
Show me my transgression and my sin.
24 Why do you hide your face
and regard me as your enemy?
25 Do you wish to torment a windblown leaf
and chase after dry chaff?
26 For you write down bitter things against me
and cause me to inherit the sins of my youth.
27 And you put my feet in the stocks
and you watch all my movements;
you put marks on the soles of my feet.
28 So I waste away like something rotten,
like a garment eaten by moths.

Job Addresses God—The Brevity of Life

14:1 “Man, born of woman,
lives but a few days, and they are full of trouble.
2 He grows up like a flower and then withers away;
he flees like a shadow, and does not remain.
3 Do you fix your eye on such a one?
And do you bring me before you for judgment?
4 Who can make a clean thing come from an unclean?
No one!
5 Since man’s days are determined,
the number of his months is under your control;
you have set his limit and he cannot pass it.
6 Look away from him and let him desist,
until he fulfills his time like a hired man.

Job Addresses God—The Terrible Finality of Death

7 “But there is hope for a tree:
If it is cut down, it will sprout again,
and its new shoots will not fail.
8 Although its roots may grow old in the ground
and its stump begins to die in the soil,
9 at the scent of water it will flourish
and put forth shoots like a new plant.
10 But man dies and is powerless;
he expires—and where is he?
11 As water disappears from the sea,
or a river drains away and dries up,
12 so man lies down and does not rise;
until the heavens are no more,
they will not awake
nor arise from their sleep.

Job Addresses God—A Hope after Death

13 “O that you would hide me in Sheol,
and conceal me till your anger has passed!
O that you would set me a time
and then remember me!
14 If a man dies, will he live again?
All the days of my hard service I will wait
until my release comes.

- 15 You will call and I—I will answer you;
you will long for the creature you have made.
- 16 “Surely now you count my steps;
then you would not mark my sin.
- 17 My offenses would be sealed up in a bag;
you would cover over my sin.

Job Addresses God—Hope Fades and Despair Returns

- 18 But as a mountain falls away and crumbles,
and as a rock will be removed from its place,
- 19 as water wears away stones,
and torrents wash away the soil,
so you destroy man’s hope.
- 20 You overpower him once for all,
and he departs;
you change his appearance
and send him away.
- 21 If his sons are honored,
he does not know it;
if they are brought low,
he does not see it.
- 22 Only his flesh has pain for himself,
and he mourns for himself.”

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Eliphaz's Second Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 15

Eliphaz Attacks—Your Own Words Prove Your Guilt

1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

- 2 “Does a wise man answer with blustery knowledge,
or fill his belly with the east wind?
3 Does he argue with useless talk,
with words that have no value in them?
4 But you even break off piety,
and hinder meditation before God.
5 Your sin inspires your mouth;
you choose the language of the crafty.
6 Your own mouth condemns you, not I;
your own lips testify against you.

Eliphaz Attacks—Who Do You Think You Are?

- 7 “Were you the first man ever born?
Were you brought forth before the hills?
8 Do you listen in on God's secret council?
Do you limit wisdom to yourself?
9 What do you know that we don't know?
What do you understand that we don't understand?
10 The gray-haired and the aged are on our side,
men far older than your father.
11 Are God's consolations too trivial for you;
or a word spoken in gentleness to you?
12 Why has your heart carried you away,
and why do your eyes flash,
13 when you turn your rage against God
and allow such words to escape from your mouth?

Eliphaz Lectures—The Sinfulness of Man

- 14 What is man that he should be pure,
or one born of woman, that he should be righteous?
15 If God places no trust in his holy ones,
if even the heavens are not pure in his eyes,
16 how much less man, who is abominable and corrupt,
who drinks in evil like water!

Eliphaz Lectures—The Fate of the Wicked

- 17 “I will explain to you;
listen to me,
and what I have seen, I will declare,
18 what wise men declare,
hiding nothing,
from the tradition of their ancestors,
19 to whom alone the land was given
when no foreigner passed among them.
20 All his days the wicked man suffers torment,
throughout the number of the years
that are stored up for the tyrant.
21 Terrifying sounds fill his ears;
in a time of peace marauders attack him.
22 He does not expect to escape from darkness;
he is marked for the sword;
23 he wanders about—food for vultures;
he knows that the day of darkness is at hand.

- 24 Distress and anguish terrify him;
they prevail against him
like a king ready to launch an attack,
- 25 for he stretches out his hand against God,
and vaunts himself against the Almighty,
- 26 defiantly charging against him
with a thick, strong shield!
- 27 Because he covered his face with fat,
and made his hips bulge with fat,
- 28 he lived in ruined towns
and in houses where no one lives,
where they are ready to crumble into heaps.
- 29 He will not grow rich,
and his wealth will not endure,
nor will his possessions spread over the land.
- 30 He will not escape the darkness;
a flame will wither his shoots
and he will depart
by the breath of God's mouth.
- 31 Let him not trust in what is worthless,
deceiving himself;
for worthlessness will be his reward.
- 32 Before his time he will be paid in full,
and his branches will not flourish.
- 33 Like a vine he will let his sour grapes fall,
and like an olive tree
he will shed his blossoms.
- 34 For the company of the godless is barren,
and fire consumes the tents of those who accept bribes.
- 35 They conceive trouble and bring forth evil;
their belly prepares deception."

Job's Response to Eliphaz (c. 2200 BC)

Job 16–17

Job Wishes He Could Be His Own Friend

16:1 Then Job replied:

- 2 "I have heard many things like these before.
What miserable comforters are you all!
- 3 Will there be an end to your windy words?
Or what provokes you that you answer?
- 4 I also could speak like you,
if you were in my place;
I could pile up words against you
and I could shake my head at you.
- 5 But I would strengthen you with my words;
comfort from my lips would bring you relief.

Job Graphically Describes How God Has Treated Him

- 6 "But if I speak, my pain is not relieved,
and if I refrain from speaking
—how much of it goes away?
- 7 Surely now he has worn me out,
you have devastated my entire household.
- 8 You have seized me,
and it has become a witness;
my leanness has risen up against me

and testifies against me.

- 9 His anger has torn me and persecuted me;
he has gnashed at me with his teeth;
my adversary locks his eyes on me.
- 10 People have opened their mouths against me,
they have struck my cheek in scorn;
they unite together against me.
- 11 God abandons me to evil men,
and throws me into the hands of wicked men.
- 12 I was in peace, and he has shattered me.
He has seized me by the neck and crushed me.
He has made me his target;
- 13 his archers surround me.
Without pity he pierces my kidneys
and pours out my gall on the ground.
- 14 He breaks through against me, time and time again;
he rushes against me like a warrior.

Job's Response to God's Destruction is Humility

- 15 I have sewed sackcloth on my skin,
and buried my horn in the dust;
- 16 my face is reddened because of weeping,
and on my eyelids there is a deep darkness,
although there is no violence in my hands
and my prayer is pure.

Job Longs for an Intercessor Between Him and God

- 18 "O earth, do not cover my blood,
nor let there be a secret place for my cry.
- 19 Even now my witness is in heaven;
my advocate is on high.
- 20 My intercessor is my friend
as my eyes pour out tears to God;
- 21 and he contends with God on behalf of man
as a man pleads for his friend.

Job's Thoughts Return to Death...

- 22 For the years that lie ahead are few,
and then I will go on the way of no return.
- 17:1 My spirit is broken,
my days have faded out,
the grave awaits me.

...And He Looks Once More at His Friends

- 2 Surely mockery is with me;
my eyes must dwell on their hostility.
- 3 Make then my pledge with you.
Who else will put up security for me?
- 4 Because you have closed their minds to understanding,
therefore you will not exalt them.
- 5 If a man denounces his friends for personal gain,
the eyes of his children will fail.
- 6 He has made me a byword to people,
I am the one in whose face they spit.
- 7 My eyes have grown dim with grief;
my whole frame is but a shadow.
- 8 Upright men are appalled at this;
the innocent man is troubled with the godless.

9 But the righteous man holds to his way,
and the one with clean hands grows stronger.

Job Sarcastically Asks His Friends to Share Their Wisdom

10 “But turn, all of you, and come now!
I will not find a wise man among you.

11 My days have passed, my plans are shattered,
even the desires of my heart.

12 These men change night into day;
they say, ‘The light is near
in the face of darkness.’

13 If I hope for the grave to be my home,
if I spread out my bed in darkness,

14 If I cry to corruption, ‘You are my father,’
and to the worm, ‘My Mother,’ or ‘My sister,’

15 where then is my hope?
And my hope, who sees it?

16 Will it go down to the barred gates of death?
Will we descend together into the dust?”

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Bildad's Second Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 18

Bildad Criticizes Job Harshly

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

- 2 “How long until you make an end of words?
You must consider, and then we can talk.
- 3 Why should we be regarded as beasts,
and considered stupid in your sight?
- 4 You who tear yourself to pieces in your anger,
will the earth be abandoned for your sake?
Or will a rock be moved from its place?

Bildad's Claim—The Wicked are Dogged by Calamity

- 5 “Yes, the lamp of the wicked is extinguished;
his flame of fire does not shine.
- 6 The light in his tent grows dark;
his lamp above him is extinguished.
- 7 His vigorous steps are restricted,
and his own counsel throws him down.
- 8 For he has been thrown into a net by his feet
and he wanders into a mesh.
- 9 A trap seizes him by the heel;
a snare grips him.
- 10 A rope is hidden for him on the ground
and a trap for him lies on the path.
- 11 Terrors frighten him on all sides
and dog his every step.
- 12 Calamity is hungry for him,
and misfortune is ready at his side.
- 13 It eats away parts of his skin;
the most terrible death devours his limbs.
- 14 He is dragged from the security of his tent,
and marched off to the king of terrors.
- 15 Fire resides in his tent;
over his residence burning sulfur is scattered.
- 16 Below his roots dry up,
and his branches wither above.
- 17 His memory perishes from the earth,
he has no name in the land.
- 18 He is driven from light into darkness
and is banished from the world.
- 19 He has neither children nor descendants among his people,
no survivor in those places he once stayed.
- 20 People of the west are appalled at his fate;
people of the east are seized with horror, saying,
- 21 ‘Surely such is the residence of an evil man;
and this is the place of one who has not known God.’”

Job's Response to Bildad (c. 2200 BC)

Job 19

Job Bitterly Accuses His Friends of Tormenting Him

1 Then Job answered:

- 2 “How long will you torment me
and crush me with your words?
- 3 These ten times you have been reproaching me;

- you are not ashamed to attack me!
4 But even if it were true that I have erred,
my error remains solely my concern!
5 If indeed you would exalt yourselves above me
and plead my disgrace against me,
6 know then that God has wronged me
and encircled me with his net.

Job Complains that Nobody Helps Him

- 7 “If I cry out, ‘Violence!’
I receive no answer;
I cry for help,
but there is no justice.
8 He has blocked my way so I cannot pass,
and has set darkness over my paths.
9 He has stripped me of my honor
and has taken the crown off my head.
10 He tears me down on every side until I perish;
he uproots my hope like one uproots a tree.
11 Thus his anger burns against me,
and he considers me among his enemies.
12 His troops advance together;
they throw up a siege ramp against me,
and they camp around my tent.

Job Feels Isolated and Alone

- 13 “He has put my relatives far from me;
my acquaintances only turn away from me.
14 My kinsmen have failed me;
my friends have forgotten me.
15 My guests and my servant girls consider me a stranger;
I am a foreigner in their eyes.
16 I summon my servant, but he does not respond,
even though I implore him with my own mouth.
17 My breath is repulsive to my wife;
I am loathsome to my brothers.
18 Even youngsters have scorned me;
when I get up, they scoff at me.
19 All my closest friends detest me;
and those whom I love have turned against me.
20 My bones stick to my skin and my flesh;
I have escaped alive with only the skin of my teeth.

Job Cries Out for Mercy

- 21 Have pity on me, my friends, have pity on me,
for the hand of God has struck me.
22 Why do you pursue me like God does?
Will you never be satiated with my flesh?

Job’s Certainty of Vindication—I Shall See God!

- 23 “O that my words were written down,
O that they were written on a scroll,
24 that with an iron chisel and with lead
they were engraved in a rock forever!
25 As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
and that as the last
he will stand upon the earth.
26 And after my skin has been destroyed,

27 yet in my flesh I will see God,
whom I will see for myself,
and whom my own eyes will behold,
and not another.
My heart grows faint within me.

Job Warns His Friends

28 If you say, 'How we will pursue him,
since the root of the trouble is found in him!'
29 Fear the sword yourselves,
for wrath brings the punishment by the sword,
so that you may know
that there is judgment."

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Zophar's Second and Last Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 20

Zophar is Offended by Job's Rebuke

1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:

- 2 "This is why my troubled thoughts bring me back—
because of my feelings within me.
3 When I hear a reproof that dishonors me,
then my understanding prompts me to answer.

Zophar Expands on Bildad's Perspective—The Joy of the Wicked is Short and They are Quickly Punished by God

- 4 "Surely you know that it has been from old,
ever since humankind was placed on the earth,
5 that the elation of the wicked is brief,
the joy of the godless lasts but a moment.
6 Even though his stature reaches to the heavens
and his head touches the clouds,
7 he will perish forever, like his own excrement;
those who used to see him will say, 'Where is he?'
8 Like a dream he flies away, never again to be found,
and like a vision of the night he is put to flight.
9 People who had seen him will not see him again,
and the place where he was will recognize him no longer.
10 His sons must recompense the poor;
his own hands must return his wealth.
11 His bones were full of his youthful vigor,
but that vigor will lie down with him in the dust.
12 "If evil is sweet in his mouth
and he hides it under his tongue,
13 if he retains it for himself
and does not let it go,
and holds it fast in his mouth,
14 his food is turned sour in his stomach;
it becomes the venom of serpents within him.
15 The wealth that he consumed he vomits up,
God will make him throw it out of his stomach.
16 He sucks the poison of serpents;
the fangs of a viper kill him.
17 He will not look on the streams,
the rivers, which are the torrents
of honey and butter.
18 He gives back the ill-gotten gain
without assimilating it;
he will not enjoy the wealth from his commerce.
19 For he has oppressed the poor and abandoned them;
he has seized a house which he did not build.
20 For he knows no satisfaction in his appetite;
he does not let anything he desires escape.
21 "Nothing is left for him to devour;
that is why his prosperity does not last.
22 In the fullness of his sufficiency,
distress overtakes him.
The full force of misery will come upon him.
23 "While he is filling his belly,
God sends his burning anger against him,
and rains down his blows upon him.
24 If he flees from an iron weapon,
then an arrow from a bronze bow pierces him.

- 25 When he pulls it out and it comes out of his back,
the gleaming point out of his liver,
terrors come over him.
- 26 Total darkness waits to receive his treasures;
a fire which has not been kindled
will consume him
and devour what is left in his tent.
- 27 The heavens reveal his iniquity;
the earth rises up against him.
- 28 A flood will carry off his house,
rushing waters on the day of God's wrath.
- 29 Such is the lot God allots the wicked,
and the heritage of his appointment from God."

Job's Response to Zophar (c. 2200 BC)

Job 21

Job Tells His Friends to Listen

1 Then Job answered:

- 2 "Listen carefully to my words;
let this be the consolation you offer me.
- 3 Bear with me and I will speak,
and after I have spoken you may mock.
- 4 Is my complaint against a man?
If so, why should I not be impatient?
- 5 Look at me and be appalled;
put your hands over your mouths.
- 6 For, when I think about this,
I am terrified and my body feels a shudder.

Job Points Out Exceptions to Their Worldview—The Wicked Are Prosperous

- 7 "Why do the wicked go on living,
grow old, even increase in power?
- 8 Their children are firmly established
in their presence,
their offspring before their eyes.
- 9 Their houses are safe and without fear;
and no rod of punishment from God is upon them.
- 10 Their bulls breed without fail;
their cows calve and do not miscarry.
- 11 They allow their children to run like a flock;
their little ones dance about.
- 12 They sing to the accompaniment of tambourine and harp,
and make merry to the sound of the flute.
- 13 They live out their years in prosperity
and go down to the grave in peace.
- 14 So they say to God, 'Turn away from us!
We do not want to know your ways.
- 15 Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him?
What would we gain
if we were to pray to him?'
- 16 But their prosperity is not their own doing.
The counsel of the wicked is far from me!

Job Points Out Exceptions to Their Worldview—The Wicked Are Long-lived

- 17 "How often is the lamp of the wicked extinguished?
How often does their misfortune come upon them?

- How often does God apportion pain to them in his anger?
18 How often are they like straw before the wind,
and like chaff swept away by a whirlwind?
19 You may say, 'God stores up a man's punishment for his children!'
Instead let him repay the man himself
so that he may know it!
20 Let his own eyes see his destruction;
let him drink of the anger of the Almighty.
21 For what is his interest in his home
after his death,
when the number of his months
has been broken off?

Prelude to Ecclesiastes—The Prosperous and the Impoverished Suffer the Same Fate

- 22 Can anyone teach God knowledge,
since he judges those that are on high?
23 "One man dies in his full vigor,
completely secure and prosperous,
24 his body well nourished,
and the marrow of his bones moist.
25 And another man dies in bitterness of soul,
never having tasted anything good.
26 Together they lie down in the dust,
and worms cover over them both. [cf. [Ecc 2:15–17](#)]

Ask Those Who Travel the World—They Will Confirm the Peace and Prosperity of the Wicked

- 27 "Yes, I know what you are thinking,
the schemes by which you would wrong me.
28 For you say,
'Where now is the nobleman's house,
and where are the tents in which the wicked lived?'
29 Have you never questioned those who travel the roads?
Do you not recognize their accounts—
30 that the evil man is spared
from the day of his misfortune,
that he is delivered
from the day of God's wrath?
31 No one denounces his conduct to his face;
no one repays him for what he has done.
32 And when he is carried to the tombs,
and watch is kept over the funeral mound,
33 The clods of the torrent valley are sweet to him;
behind him everybody follows in procession,
and before him goes a countless throng.
34 So how can you console me with your futile words?
Nothing is left of your answers but deception!"

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Eliphaz's Third and Last Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 22

Eliphaz Accuses Job of Specific Sins

1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

- 2 “Is it to God that a strong man is of benefit?
Is it to him that even a wise man is profitable?
- 3 Is it of any special benefit to the Almighty
that you should be righteous,
or is it any gain to him
that you make your ways blameless?
- 4 Is it because of your piety that he rebukes you
and goes to judgment with you?
- 5 Is not your wickedness great
and is there no end to your iniquity?
- 6 “For you took pledges from your brothers
for no reason,
and you stripped the clothing from the naked.
- 7 You gave the weary no water to drink
and from the hungry you withheld food.
- 8 Although you were a powerful man, owning land,
an honored man living on it,
- 9 you sent widows away empty-handed,
and the arms of the orphans you crushed.
- 10 That is why snares surround you,
and why sudden fear terrifies you,
- 11 why it is so dark you cannot see,
and why a flood of water covers you.

You Cannot Escape Punishment for Sin

- 12 “Is not God on high in heaven?
And see the lofty stars, how high they are!
- 13 But you have said, ‘What does God know?
Does he judge through such deep darkness?’
- 14 Thick clouds are a veil for him, so he does not see us,
as he goes back and forth in the vault of heaven.’
- 15 Will you keep to the old path
that evil men have walked—
- 16 men who were carried off before their time,
when the flood was poured out
on their foundations?
- 17 They were saying to God, ‘Turn away from us,’
and ‘What can the Almighty do to us?’
- 18 But it was he who filled their houses
with good things—
yet the counsel of the wicked
was far from me.
- 19 The righteous see their destruction and rejoice;
the innocent mock them scornfully, saying,
- 20 ‘Surely our enemies are destroyed,
and fire consumes their wealth.’

Eliphaz Urges Job to Repent

- 21 “Reconcile yourself with God,
and be at peace with him;
in this way your prosperity will be good.
- 22 Accept instruction from his mouth
and store up his words in your heart.

- 23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up;
if you remove wicked behavior far from your tent,
24 and throw your gold in the dust—
your gold of Ophir
among the rocks in the ravines—
25 then the Almighty himself will be your gold,
and the choicest silver for you.
26 Surely then you will delight yourself in the Almighty,
and will lift up your face toward God.
27 You will pray to him and he will hear you,
and you will fulfill your vows to him.
28 Whatever you decide on a matter,
it will be established for you,
and light will shine on your ways.
29 When people are brought low and you say
'Lift them up!'
then he will save the downcast;
30 he will deliver even someone who is not innocent,
who will escape through the cleanness of your hands."

Job's Response to Eliphaz (c. 2200 BC)

Job 23–24

Job Ignores Eliphaz and Yearns for an Audience With God

23:1 Then Job answered:

- 2 "Even today my complaint is still bitter;
his hand is heavy despite my groaning.
3 O that I knew where I might find him,
that I could come to his place of residence!
4 I would lay out my case before him
and fill my mouth with arguments.
5 I would know with what words he would answer me,
and understand what he would say to me.
6 Would he contend with me with great power?
No, he would only pay attention to me.
7 There an upright person
could present his case before him,
and I would be delivered forever from my judge.

I May Not Know Where God Is, But He Knows Where I Am—"I Shall Come Forth as Gold"

- 8 "If I go to the east, he is not there,
and to the west, yet I do not perceive him.
9 In the north when he is at work,
I do not see him;
when he turns to the south,
I see no trace of him.
10 But he knows the pathway that I take;
if he tested me, I would come forth like gold.
11 My feet have followed his steps closely;
I have kept to his way and have not turned aside.
12 I have not departed from the commands of his lips;
I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my allotted portion.

Job Believes That God Decreed His Suffering

- 13 But he is unchangeable, and who can change him?
Whatever he has desired, he does.
14 For he fulfills his decree against me,

and many such things are his plans.

- 15 That is why I am terrified in his presence;
when I consider, I am afraid because of him.
- 16 Indeed, God has made my heart faint;
the Almighty has terrified me.
- 17 Yet I have not been silent because of the darkness,
because of the thick darkness
that covered my face.

Job Describes the Suffering Caused by Greed, Exploitation and Injustice

- 24:1 “Why are times not appointed by the Almighty?
Why do those who know him not see his days?
- 2 Men move boundary stones;
they seize the flock and pasture them.
- 3 They drive away the orphan’s donkey;
they take the widow’s ox as a pledge.
- 4 They turn the needy from the pathway,
and the poor of the land hide themselves together.
- 5 Like wild donkeys in the desert
they go out to their labor,
seeking diligently for food;
the wasteland provides food for them
and for their children.
- 6 They reap fodder in the field,
and glean in the vineyard of the wicked.
- 7 They spend the night naked because they lack clothing;
they have no covering against the cold.
- 8 They are soaked by mountain rains
and huddle in the rocks because they lack shelter.
- 9 The fatherless child is snatched from the breast,
the infant of the poor is taken as a pledge.
- 10 They go about naked, without clothing,
and go hungry while they carry the sheaves.
- 11 They press out the olive oil between the rows of olive trees;
they tread the winepresses while they are thirsty.
- 12 From the city the dying groan,
and the wounded cry out for help,
but God charges no one with wrongdoing.
- 13 There are those who rebel against the light;
they do not know its ways
and they do not stay on its paths.
- 14 Before daybreak the murderer rises up;
he kills the poor and the needy;
in the night he is like a thief.
- 15 And the eye of the adulterer watches for the twilight,
thinking, ‘No eye can see me,’
and covers his face with a mask.
- 16 In the dark the robber breaks into houses,
but by day they shut themselves in;
they do not know the light.
- 17 For all of them, the morning is to them
like deep darkness;
they are friends with the terrors of darkness.

Let the Wicked Be Accursed

- 18 “You say, ‘He is foam on the face of the waters;
their portion of the land is cursed
so that no one goes to their vineyard.’

- 19 The drought as well as the heat carry away
the melted snow;
so the grave takes away those who have sinned.
- 20 The womb forgets him,
the worm feasts on him,
no longer will he be remembered.
Like a tree, wickedness will be broken down.
- 21 He preys on the barren and childless woman,
and does not treat the widow well.
- 22 But God drags off the mighty by his power;
when God rises up against him, he has no faith in his life.
- 23 God may let them rest in a feeling of security,
but he is constantly watching all their ways.
- 24 They are exalted for a little while,
and then they are gone,
they are brought low like all others,
and gathered in,
and like a head of grain they are cut off.'
- 25 "If this is not so, who can prove me a liar
and reduce my words to nothing?"

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Bildad's Third and Last Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 25

Bildad Insists That Men Cannot Be Righteous Before God

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

- 2 “Dominion and awesome might belong to God;
he establishes peace in his heights.
- 3 Can his armies be numbered?
On whom does his light not rise?
- 4 How then can a human being be righteous before God?
How can one born of a woman be pure?
- 5 If even the moon is not bright,
and the stars are not pure as far as he is concerned,
- 6 how much less a mortal man, who is but a maggot—
a son of man, who is only a worm!”

Job's Response to Bildad (c. 2200 BC)

Job 26

Job Responds With Sarcasm

1 Then Job replied:

- 2 “How you have helped the powerless!
How you have saved the person who has no strength!
- 3 How you have advised the one without wisdom,
and abundantly revealed your insight!
- 4 To whom did you utter these words?
And whose spirit has come forth from your mouth?

Job Shows That He is Perfectly Aware of the Greatness of God

- 5 “The dead tremble—
those beneath the waters
and all that live in them.
- 6 The underworld is naked before God;
the place of destruction lies uncovered.
- 7 He spreads out the northern skies over empty space;
he suspends the earth on nothing.
- 8 He locks the waters in his clouds,
and the clouds do not burst with the weight of them.
- 9 He conceals the face of the full moon,
shrouding it with his clouds.
- 10 He marks out the horizon on the surface of the waters
as a boundary between light and darkness.
- 11 The pillars of the heavens tremble
and are amazed at his rebuke.
- 12 By his power he stills the sea;
by his wisdom he cut Rahab the great sea monster to pieces.
- 13 By his breath the skies became fair;
his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.
- 14 Indeed, these are but the outer fringes of his ways!
How faint is the whisper we hear of him!
But who can understand the thunder of his power?”

Job Holds Fast His Integrity (c. 2200 BC)

Job 27

Job Insists That He is Righteous (in spite of his friends' view that God's justice is punishing him for sin)

1 And Job took up his discourse again:

- 2 "As surely as God lives, who has denied me justice,
the Almighty, who has made my life bitter—
3 for while my spirit is still in me,
and the breath from God is in my nostrils,
4 my lips will not speak wickedness,
and my tongue will whisper no deceit.
5 I will never declare that you three are in the right;
until I die, I will not set aside my integrity!
6 I will maintain my righteousness
and never let it go;
my conscience will not reproach me
for as long as I live.

Job Affirms His Belief in the Justice of God (in spite of not understanding how it is being worked out in his own life)

- 7 "May my enemy be like the wicked,
my adversary like the unrighteous.
8 For what hope does the godless have when he is cut off,
when God takes away his life?
9 Does God listen to his cry
when distress overtakes him?
10 Will he find delight in the Almighty?
Will he call out to God at all times?
11 I will teach you about the power of God;
What is on the Almighty's mind I will not conceal.
12 If you yourselves have all seen this,
Why in the world do you continue this meaningless talk?
13 This is the portion of the wicked man
allotted by God,
the inheritance that evildoers receive
from the Almighty.
14 If his children increase—it is for the sword!
His offspring never have enough to eat.
15 Those who survive him are buried by the plague,
and their widows do not mourn for them.
16 If he piles up silver like dust
and stores up clothing like mounds of clay,
17 what he stores up a righteous man will wear,
and an innocent man will inherit his silver.
18 The house he builds is as fragile as a moth's cocoon,
like a hut that a watchman has made.
19 He goes to bed wealthy, but will do so no more.
When he opens his eyes, it is all gone.
20 Terrors overwhelm him like a flood;
at night a whirlwind carries him off.
21 The east wind carries him away, and he is gone;
it sweeps him out of his place.
22 It hurls itself against him without pity
as he flees headlong from its power.
23 It claps its hands at him in derision
and hisses him away from his place.

Job's Discourse on Wisdom (c. 2200 BC)**Job 28****Man Knows How to Find the Hidden Treasures of the Earth**

- 1 “Surely there is a mine for silver,
and a place where gold is refined.
- 2 Iron is taken from the ground,
and rock is poured out as copper.
- 3 Man puts an end to the darkness;
he searches the farthest recesses
for the ore in the deepest darkness.
- 4 Far from where people live he sinks a shaft,
in places travelers have long forgotten,
far from other people he dangles and sways.
- 5 The earth, from which food comes,
is overturned below as though by fire;
- 6 a place whose stones are sapphires
and which contains dust of gold;
- 7 a hidden path no bird of prey knows—
no falcon's eye has spotted it.
- 8 Proud beasts have not set foot on it,
and no lion has passed along it.
- 9 On the flinty rock man has set to work with his hand;
he has overturned mountains at their bases.
- 10 He has cut out channels through the rocks;
his eyes have spotted every precious thing.
- 11 He has searched the sources of the rivers
and what was hidden he has brought into the light.

Man Does Not Know How to Find the Greatest Treasure of All—Wisdom

- 12 “But wisdom—where can it be found?
Where is the place of understanding?
- 13 Mankind does not know its place;
it cannot be found in the land of the living.
- 14 The deep says, ‘It is not with me.’
And the sea says, ‘It is not with me.’
- 15 Fine gold cannot be given in exchange for it,
nor can its price be weighed out in silver.
- 16 It cannot be measured out for purchase with the gold of Ophir,
with precious onyx or sapphires.
- 17 Neither gold nor crystal can be compared with it,
nor can a vase of gold match its worth.
- 18 Of coral and jasper no mention will be made;
the price of wisdom is more than pearls.
- 19 The topaz of Cush cannot be compared with it;
it cannot be purchased with pure gold.

Wisdom is Found Only With God

- 20 “But wisdom—where does it come from?
Where is the place of understanding?
- 21 For it has been hidden
from the eyes of every living creature,
and from the birds of the sky it has been concealed.
- 22 Destruction and Death say,
‘With our ears we have heard a rumor about where it can be found.’
- 23 God understands the way to it,
and he alone knows its place.
- 24 For he looks to the ends of the earth
and observes everything under the heavens.

- 25 When he made the force of the wind
and measured the waters with a gauge.
- 26 When he imposed a limit for the rain,
and a path for the thunderstorm,
- 27 then he looked at wisdom and assessed its value;
he established it and examined it closely.
- 28 And he said to mankind,
‘The fear of the LORD—that is wisdom,
and to turn away from evil is understanding.’”

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Job's Final Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 29–31

Job Reflects on the Past

29:1 Then Job continued his speech:

- 2 "O that I could be as I was
in the months now gone,
in the days when God watched over me,
3 when he caused his lamp
to shine upon my head,
and by his light
I walked through darkness;
4 just as I was in my most productive time,
when God's intimate friendship was experienced in my tent,
5 when the Almighty was still with me
and my children were around me;
6 when my steps were bathed with butter
and the rock poured out for me streams of olive oil!
7 When I went out to the city gate
and secured my seat in the public square,
8 the young men would see me and step aside,
and the old men would get up and remain standing;
9 the chief men refrained from talking
and covered their mouths with their hands;
10 the voices of the nobles fell silent,
and their tongues stuck to the roof of their mouths.
11 "As soon as the ear heard these things, it blessed me,
and when the eye saw them, it bore witness to me,
12 for I rescued the poor who cried out for help,
and the orphan who had no one to assist him;
13 the blessing of the dying man descended on me,
and I made the widow's heart rejoice;
14 I put on righteousness and it clothed me,
my just dealing was like a robe and a turban;
15 I was eyes for the blind
and feet for the lame;
16 I was a father to the needy,
and I investigated the case of the person I did not know;
17 I broke the fangs of the wicked,
and made him drop his prey from his teeth.
18 "Then I thought, 'I will die in my own home,
my days as numerous as the grains of sand.
19 My roots reach the water,
and the dew lies on my branches all night long.
20 My glory will always be fresh in me,
and my bow ever new in my hand.'
21 "People listened to me and waited silently;
they kept silent for my advice.
22 After I had spoken, they did not respond;
my words fell on them drop by drop.
23 They waited for me as people wait for the rain,
and they opened their mouths as for the spring rains.
24 If I smiled at them, they hardly believed it;
and they did not cause the light of my face to darken.
25 I chose the way for them
and sat as their chief;
I lived like a king among his troops;
I was like one who comforts mourners.

Job Mourns His Present Disgrace

30:1 “But now they mock me, those who are younger than I,
whose fathers I disdained too much
to put with my sheep dogs.
2 Moreover, the strength of their hands—
what use was it to me?
Men whose strength had perished;
3 gaunt with want and hunger,
they would gnaw the parched land,
in former time desolate and waste.
4 By the brush they would gather herbs from the salt marshes,
and the root of the broom tree was their food.
5 They were banished from the community—
people shouted at them
like they would shout at thieves—
6 so that they had to live
in the dry stream beds,
in the holes of the ground, and among the rocks.
7 They brayed like animals among the bushes
and were huddled together under the nettles.
8 Sons of senseless and nameless people,
they were driven out of the land with whips.
9 “And now I have become their taunt song;
I have become a byword among them.
10 They detest me and maintain their distance;
they do not hesitate to spit in my face.
11 Because God has untied my tent cord and afflicted me,
people throw off all restraint in my presence.
12 On my right the young rabble rise up;
they drive me from place to place,
and build up siege ramps against me.
13 They destroy my path;
they succeed in destroying me
without anyone assisting them.
14 They come in as through a wide breach;
amid the crash they come rolling in.
15 Terrors are turned loose on me;
they drive away my honor like the wind,
and like a cloud my deliverance has passed away.
16 “And now my soul pours itself out within me;
days of suffering take hold of me.
17 Night pierces my bones;
my gnawing pains never cease.
18 With great power God grasps my clothing;
he binds me like the collar of my tunic.
19 He has flung me into the mud,
and I have come to resemble dust and ashes.
20 I cry out to you, but you do not answer me;
I stand up, and you only look at me.
21 You have become cruel to me;
with the strength of your hand you attack me.
22 You pick me up on the wind and make me ride on it;
you toss me about in the storm.
23 I know that you are bringing me to death,
to the meeting place for all the living.
24 “Surely one does not stretch out his hand
against a broken man
when he cries for help in his distress.

- 25 Have I not wept for the unfortunate?
Was not my soul grieved for the poor?
- 26 But when I hoped for good, trouble came;
when I expected light, then darkness came.
- 27 My heart is in turmoil unceasingly;
the days of my affliction confront me.
- 28 I go about blackened, but not by the sun;
in the assembly I stand up and cry for help.
- 29 I have become a brother to jackals
and a companion of ostriches.
- 30 My skin has turned dark on me;
my body is hot with fever.
- 31 My harp is used for mourning
and my flute for the sound of weeping.

Job's Final Defense—"If..."

- 31:1 "I made a covenant with my eyes;
how then could I entertain thoughts against a virgin?
- 2 What then would be one's lot from God above,
one's heritage from the Almighty on high?
- 3 Is it not misfortune for the unjust,
and disaster for those who work iniquity?
- 4 Does he not see my ways
and count all my steps?
- 5 If I have walked in falsehood,
and if my foot has hastened to deceit—
- 6 let him weigh me with honest scales;
then God will discover my integrity.
- 7 If my footsteps have strayed from the way,
if my heart has gone after my eyes,
or if anything has defiled my hands,
- 8 then let me sow and let another eat,
and let my crops be uprooted.
- 9 If my heart has been enticed by a woman,
and I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door,
10 then let my wife turn the millstone for another man,
and may other men have sexual relations with her.
- 11 For I would have committed a shameful act,
an iniquity to be judged.
- 12 For it is a fire that devours even to Destruction,
and it would uproot all my harvest.
- 13 "If I have disregarded the right of my male servants
or my female servants
when they disputed with me,
- 14 then what will I do when God confronts me in judgment;
when he intervenes,
how will I respond to him?
- 15 Did not the one who made me in the womb make them?
Did not the same one form us in the womb?
- 16 If I have refused to give the poor what they desired,
or caused the eyes of the widow to fail,
- 17 If I ate my morsel of bread myself,
and did not share any of it with orphans—
- 18 but from my youth I raised the orphan like a father,
and from my mother's womb
I guided the widow!
- 19 If I have seen anyone about to perish for lack of clothing,
or a poor man without a coat,

20 whose heart did not bless me
as he warmed himself with the fleece of my sheep,
21 if I have raised my hand to vote against the orphan,
when I saw my support in the court,
22 then let my arm fall from the shoulder,
let my arm be broken off at the socket.
23 For the calamity from God was a terror to me,
and by reason of his majesty I was powerless.
24 “If I have put my confidence in gold
or said to pure gold,
‘You are my security!’
25 if I have rejoiced because of the extent of my wealth,
or because of the great wealth my hand had gained,
26 if I looked at the sun when it was shining,
and the moon advancing as a precious thing,
27 so that my heart was secretly enticed,
and my hand threw them a kiss from my mouth,
28 then this also would be iniquity to be judged,
for I would have been false to God above.
29 If I have rejoiced over the misfortune of my enemy
or exulted because calamity found him—
30 I have not even permitted my mouth to sin
by asking for his life through a curse—
31 if the members of my household have never said,
‘If only there were someone who has not been satisfied from Job’s meat!’—
32 But no stranger had to spend the night outside,
for I opened my doors to the traveler—
33 if I have covered my transgressions as men do,
by hiding iniquity in my heart,
34 because I was terrified of the great multitude,
and the contempt of families terrified me,
so that I remained silent
and would not go outdoors—
35 “If only I had someone to hear me!
Here is my signature—
let the Almighty answer me!
If only I had an indictment
that my accuser had written.
36 Surely I would wear it proudly on my shoulder,
I would bind it on me like a crown;
37 I would give him an accounting of my steps;
like a prince I would approach him.
38 “If my land cried out against me
and all its furrows wept together,
39 if I have eaten its produce without paying,
or caused the death of its owners,
40 then let thorns sprout up in place of wheat,
and in place of barley, weeds!”

The words of Job are ended.

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Young Elihu's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 32–33

Introduction of Elihu

32:1 So these three men refused to answer Job further, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

2 Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, became very angry. He was angry with Job for justifying himself rather than God.

3 With Job's three friends he was also angry, because they could not find an answer, and so declared Job guilty.

4 Now Elihu had waited before speaking to Job, because the others were older than he was.

5 But when Elihu saw that the three men had no further reply, he became very angry.

Elihu Explains Why He Remained Silent Until Now

6 So Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite spoke up:

“I am young, but you are elderly;
that is why I was fearful,
and afraid to explain to you what I know.

7 I said to myself, ‘Age should speak,
and length of years should make wisdom known.’

8 But it is a spirit in people,
the breath of the Almighty,
that makes them understand.

9 It is not the aged who are wise,
nor old men who understand what is right.

Elihu Rebukes Job's Three Friends

10 Therefore I say, ‘Listen to me.
I, even I, will explain what I know.’

11 Look, I waited for you to speak;
I listened closely to your wise thoughts, while you were searching for words.

12 Now I was paying you close attention,
yet there was no one proving Job wrong,
not one of you was answering his statements!

13 So do not say, ‘We have found wisdom!
God will refute him, not man!’

14 Job has not directed his words to me,
and so I will not reply to him with your arguments.

15 “They are dismayed and cannot answer any more;
they have nothing left to say.

16 And I have waited. But because they do not speak,
because they stand there and answer no more,

Elihu's Compulsion to Speak

17 I too will answer my part,
I too will explain what I know.

18 For I am full of words,
and the spirit within me constrains me.

19 Inside I am like wine which has no outlet,
like new wineskins ready to burst!

20 I will speak, so that I may find relief;
I will open my lips, so that I may answer.

21 I will not show partiality to anyone,
nor will I confer a title on any man.

22 for I do not know how to give honorary titles,
if I did, my Creator would quickly do away with me.

Elihu Tells Job to Listen

33:1 “But now, O Job, listen to my words,
and hear everything I have to say!

- 2 See now, I have opened my mouth;
my tongue in my mouth has spoken.
- 3 My words come from the uprightness of my heart,
and my lips will utter knowledge sincerely.
- 4 The Spirit of God has made me,
and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.
- 5 Reply to me, if you can;
set your arguments in order before me
and take your stand!
- 6 Look, I am just like you in relation to God;
I too have been molded from clay.
- 7 Therefore no fear of me should terrify you,
nor should my pressure be heavy on you.

Elihu's Perception of Job's Statements

- 8 "Indeed, you have said in my hearing
(I heard the sound of the words!):
- 9 'I am pure, without transgression;
I am clean and have no iniquity.
- 10 Yet God finds occasions with me;
he regards me as his enemy!
- 11 He puts my feet in shackles;
he watches closely all my paths.'

Elihu's Answer—God Disciplines Men in Various Ways

- 12 Now in this, you are not right—I answer you,
for God is greater than a human being.
- 13 Why do you contend against him,
that he does not answer all a person's words?
- 14 "For God speaks, the first time in one way,
the second time in another,
though a person does not perceive it.

God Disciplines Men through Dreams

- 15 In a dream, a night vision,
when deep sleep falls on people
as they sleep in their beds.
- 16 Then he gives a revelation to people,
and terrifies them with warnings,
to turn a person from his sin,
and to cover a person's pride.
- 18 He spares a person's life from corruption,
his very life from crossing over the river.

God Disciplines Men through Pain and Illness

- 19 Or a person is chastened by pain on his bed,
and with the continual strife of his bones,
so that his life loathes food,
and his soul rejects appetizing fare.
- 21 His flesh wastes away from sight,
and his bones, which were not seen,
are easily visible.
- 22 He draws near to the place of corruption,
and his life to the messengers of death.

Elihu Believes There is a Special Angel (lit. "Messenger") Who Acts as Mediator for the Sinner

- 23 If there is an angel beside him,
one mediator out of a thousand,

- to tell a person what constitutes his uprightness;
 24 and if God is gracious to him and says,
 ‘Spare him from going down
 to the place of corruption,
 I have found a ransom for him,’
 25 then his flesh is restored like a youth’s;
 he returns to the days of his youthful vigor.

God Accepts Those Who Repent of Their Sin

- 26 He entreats God, and God delights in him,
 he sees God’s face with rejoicing,
 and God restores to him his righteousness.
 27 That person sings to others, saying:
 ‘I have sinned and falsified what is right,
 but I was not punished according to what I deserved.
 28 He redeemed my life
 from going down to the place of corruption,
 and my life sees the light!’
 29 “Indeed, God does all these things,
 twice, three times, in his dealings with a person,
 30 to turn back his life from the place of corruption,
 that he may be enlightened with the light of life.

Elihu Tells Job to Speak if He Must or Be Silent and Listen to Wisdom

- 31 Pay attention, Job—listen to me;
 be silent, and I will speak.
 32 If you have any words, reply to me;
 speak, for I want to justify you.
 33 If not, you listen to me;
 be silent, and I will teach you wisdom.”

Young Elihu’s Second Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 34

Job Remains Silent and Elihu Continues

- 1 Elihu answered:
 2 “Listen to my words, you wise men;
 hear me, you learned men.
 3 For the ear assesses words
 as the mouth tastes food.
 4 Let us evaluate for ourselves what is right;
 let us come to know among ourselves what is good.

Elihu Twists Job’s Words

- 5 For Job says, ‘I am innocent,
 but God turns away my right.
 6 Concerning my right, should I lie?
 My wound is incurable,
 although I am without transgression.’
 7 What man is like Job,
 who drinks derision like water!
 8 He goes about in company with evildoers,
 he goes along with wicked men.
 9 For he says, ‘It does not profit a man
 when he makes his delight with God.’

Elihu's Premise—God Rules Justly and Repays Men According to Their Deeds

- 10 “Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding.
Far be it from God to do wickedness,
from the Almighty to do evil.
- 11 For he repays a person for his work,
and according to the conduct of a person,
he causes the consequences to find him.
- 12 Indeed, in truth, God does not act wickedly,
and the Almighty does not pervert justice.
- 13 Who entrusted to him the earth?
And who put him over the whole world?
- 14 If God were to set his heart on it,
and gather in his spirit and his breath,
15 all flesh would perish together
and human beings would return to dust.

Defense of the Premise

- 16 “If you have understanding, listen to this,
hear what I have to say.
- 17 Do you really think
that one who hates justice can govern?
And will you declare guilty
the supremely righteous One,
18 who says to a king, ‘Worthless man’
and to nobles, ‘Wicked men,’
19 who shows no partiality to princes,
and does not take note of the rich more than the poor,
because all of them are the work of his hands?
20 In a moment they die, in the middle of the night,
people are shaken and they pass away.
The mighty are removed effortlessly.
- 21 For his eyes are on the ways of an individual,
he observes all a person's steps.
- 22 There is no darkness, and no deep darkness,
where evildoers can hide themselves.
- 23 For he does not still consider a person,
that he should come before God in judgment.
- 24 He shatters the great without inquiry,
and sets up others in their place.
- 25 Therefore, he knows their deeds,
he overthrows them in the night
and they are crushed.
- 26 He strikes them for their wickedness,
in a place where people can see,
27 because they have turned away from following him,
and have not understood any of his ways,
28 so that they caused the cry of the poor
to come before him,
so that he hears the cry of the needy.
- 29 But if God is quiet, who can condemn him?
If he hides his face, then who can see him?
Yet he is over the individual and the nation alike,
30 so that the godless man should not rule,
and not lay snares for the people.

Elihu Challenges Job to Repent

- 31 “Has anyone said to God,
‘I have endured chastisement,

but I will not act wrongly any more.

32 Teach me what I cannot see.

If I have done evil, I will do so no more.’

33 Is it your opinion that God should recompense it,
because you reject this?

But you must choose, and not I,
so tell us what you know.

Elihu Condemns Job When He Does Not

34 Men of understanding say to me—
any wise man listening to me says—

35 that Job speaks without knowledge
and his words are without understanding.

36 But Job will be tested to the end,
because his answers are like those of wicked men.

37 For he adds transgression to his sin;
in our midst he claps his hands,
and multiplies his words against God.”

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Young Elihu's Third Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 35

Elihu Again Twists Job's Words

1 Then Elihu answered:

- 2 "Do you think this to be just:
when you say, 'My right before God.'
3 But you say, 'What will it profit you,'
and, 'What do I gain by not sinning?'

Elihu's Answer—Nothing You Do Obligates God in Any Way

- 4 I will reply to you,
and to your friends with you.
5 Gaze at the heavens and see;
consider the clouds, which are higher than you!
6 If you sin, how does it affect God?
If your transgressions are many,
what does it do to him?
7 If you are righteous, what do you give to God,
or what does he receive from your hand?
8 Your wickedness affects only a person like yourself,
and your righteousness only other people.

Elihu's Answer—God Does Not Hear You Because He Does Not Hear the Wicked

- 9 "People cry out
because of the excess of oppression;
they cry out for help
because of the power of the mighty.
10 But no one says, 'Where is God, my Creator,
who gives songs in the night,
11 who teaches us more than the wild animals of the earth,
and makes us wiser than the birds of the sky?'
12 Then they cry out—but he does not answer—
because of the arrogance of the wicked.
13 Surely it is an empty cry—God does not hear it;
the Almighty does not take notice of it.
14 How much less, then,
when you say that you do not perceive him,
that the case is before him
and you are waiting for him!
15 And further, when you say
that his anger does not punish,
and that he does not know transgression!

Elihu Concludes With a Harsh Judgment against Job

- 16 So Job opens his mouth to no purpose;
without knowledge he multiplies words."

Young Elihu's Fourth and Final Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 36–37

Elihu Claims to Have Perfect Knowledge

36:1 Elihu said further:

- 2 "Be patient with me a little longer
and I will instruct you,
for I still have words to speak on God's behalf.

- 3 With my knowledge I will speak comprehensively,
and to my Creator I will ascribe righteousness.
- 4 For in truth, my words are not false;
it is one complete in knowledge
who is with you.

Elihu's Central Message—God Uses Suffering to Turn People from Their Sin

- 5 Indeed, God is mighty; and he does not despise people,
he is mighty, and firm in his intent.
- 6 He does not allow the wicked to live,
but he gives justice to the poor.
- 7 He does not take his eyes off the righteous;
but with kings on the throne
he seats the righteous and exalts them forever.
- 8 But if they are bound in chains,
and held captive by the cords of affliction,
9 then he reveals to them what they have done,
and their transgressions,
that they were behaving proudly.
- 10 And he reveals this for correction,
and says that they must turn from evil.
- 11 If they obey and serve him,
they live out their days in prosperity
and their years in pleasantness.
- 12 But if they refuse to listen,
they pass over the river of death,
and expire without knowledge.
- 13 The godless at heart nourish anger,
they do not cry out even when he binds them.
- 14 They die in their youth,
and their life ends among the male cultic prostitutes.
- 15 He delivers the afflicted by their afflictions,
he reveals himself to them by their suffering.

Elihu Again Urges Job to Repent

- 16 And surely, he drew you from the mouth of distress,
to a wide place, unrestricted,
and to the comfort of your table
filled with rich food.
- 17 But now you are preoccupied with the judgment due the wicked,
judgment and justice take hold of you.
- 18 Be careful that no one entices you with riches;
do not let a large bribe turn you aside.
- 19 Would your wealth sustain you,
so that you would not be in distress,
even all your mighty efforts?
- 20 Do not long for the cover of night
to drag people away from their homes.
- 21 Take heed, do not turn to evil,
for because of this you have been tested by affliction.

Elihu's Description of God's Power—The Thunderstorm

- 22 Indeed, God is exalted in his power;
who is a teacher like him?
- 23 Who has prescribed his ways for him?
Or said to him, 'You have done what is wicked'?
- 24 Remember to extol his work,
which people have praised in song.

- 25 All humanity has seen it;
people gaze on it from afar.
- 26 “Yes, God is great—beyond our knowledge!
The number of his years is unsearchable.
- 27 He draws up drops of water;
they distill the rain into its mist,
- 28 which the clouds pour down
and shower on humankind abundantly.
- 29 Who can understand the spreading of the clouds,
the thunderings of his pavilion?
- 30 See how he scattered his lightning about him;
he has covered the depths of the sea.
- 31 It is by these that he judges the nations
and supplies food in abundance.
- 32 With his hands he covers the lightning,
and directs it against its target.
- 33 His thunder announces the coming storm,
the cattle also, concerning the storm’s approach.

Elihu’s Description of God’s Power—The Icy Blasts of Winter

- 37:1 At this also my heart pounds
and leaps from its place.
- 2 Listen carefully to the thunder of his voice,
to the rumbling that proceeds from his mouth.
- 3 Under the whole heaven he lets it go,
even his lightning to the far corners of the earth.
- 4 After that a voice roars;
he thunders with an exalted voice,
and he does not hold back his lightning bolts
when his voice is heard.
- 5 God thunders with his voice in marvelous ways;
he does great things beyond our understanding.
- 6 For to the snow he says, ‘Fall to earth,’
and to the torrential rains, ‘Pour down.’
- 7 He causes everyone to stop working,
so that all people may know his work.
- 8 The wild animals go to their lairs,
and in their dens they remain.
- 9 A tempest blows out from its chamber,
icy cold from the driving winds.
- 10 The breath of God produces ice,
and the breadth of the waters freeze solid.
- 11 He loads the clouds with moisture;
he scatters his lightning through the clouds.
- 12 The clouds go round in circles,
wheeling about according to his plans,
to carry out all that he commands them
over the face of the whole inhabited world.
- 13 Whether it is for punishment for his land,
or whether it is for mercy,
he causes it to find its mark.

Elihu’s Rebuke—God’s Greatness Precludes Any Attempt by Job to Present His Case

- 14 “Pay attention to this, Job!
Stand still and consider the wonders God works.
- 15 Do you know how God commands them,
how he makes lightning flash in his storm cloud?
- 16 Do you know about the balancing of the clouds,

that wondrous activity of him who is perfect in knowledge?

- 17 You, whose garments are hot
when the earth is still because of the south wind,
18 will you, with him, spread out the clouds,
solid as a mirror of molten metal?
19 Tell us what we should say to him.
We cannot prepare a case because of the darkness.
20 Should he be informed that I want to speak?
If a man speaks, surely he would be swallowed up!

Elihu's Concluding Description of God's Greatness—The Brilliance of the Sun After the Storm

- 21 But now, the sun cannot be looked at—
it is bright in the skies—
after a wind passed and swept the clouds away.
22 From the north he comes in golden splendor;
around God is awesome majesty.
23 As for the Almighty, we cannot attain to him!
He is great in power,
but justice and abundant righteousness he does not oppress.
24 Therefore people fear him,
for he does not regard all the wise in heart."

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God Questions Job About Creation (c. 2200 BC)

Job 38:1–38

Yahweh’s Introductory Challenge—“I will question you...”

1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:

- 2 “Who is this who darkens counsel
with words without knowledge?
3 Get ready for a difficult task like a man;
I will question you
and you will inform me!

Creation of the Earth

- 4 “Where were you
when I laid the foundation of the earth?
Tell me, if you possess understanding!
5 Who set its measurements—if you know—
or who stretched a measuring line across it?
6 On what were its bases set,
or who laid its cornerstone—
7 when the morning stars sang in chorus,
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

The Sea

- 8 “Who shut up the sea with doors
when it burst forth, coming out of the womb,
9 when I made the storm clouds its garment,
and thick darkness its swaddling band,
10 when I prescribed its limits,
and set in place its bolts and doors,
11 when I said, ‘To here you may come
and no farther,
here your proud waves will be confined’?

The Rotation of the Earth

- 12 Have you ever in your life commanded the morning,
or made the dawn know its place,
13 that it might seize the corners of the earth,
and shake the wicked out of it?
14 The earth takes shape like clay under a seal;
its features are dyed like a garment.
15 Then from the wicked the light is withheld,
and the arm raised in violence is broken.

The Underworld

- 16 Have you gone to the springs that fill the sea,
or walked about in the recesses of the deep?
17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you?
Have you seen the gates of deepest darkness?
18 Have you considered the vast expanses of the earth?
Tell me, if you know it all!

Light and Darkness

- 19 “In what direction does light reside,
and darkness, where is its place,
20 that you may take them to their borders
and perceive the pathways to their homes?
21 You know, for you were born before them;
and the number of your days is great!

The Weather

- 22 Have you entered the storehouse of the snow,
or seen the armory of the hail,
23 which I reserve for the time of trouble,
for the day of war and battle?
24 In what direction is lightning dispersed,
or the east winds scattered over the earth?
25 Who carves out a channel for the heavy rains,
and a path for the rumble of thunder,
26 to cause it to rain on an uninhabited land,
a desert where there are no human beings,
27 to satisfy a devastated and desolate land,
and to cause it to sprout with vegetation?
28 Does the rain have a father,
or who has fathered the drops of the dew?
29 From whose womb does the ice emerge,
and the frost from the sky, who gives birth to it,
30 when the waters become hard like stone,
when the surface of the deep is frozen solid?

The Stars

- 31 Can you tie the bands of the Pleiades,
or release the cords of Orion?
32 Can you lead out
the constellations in their seasons,
or guide the Bear with its cubs?
33 Do you know the laws of the heavens,
or can you set up their rule over the earth?

The Clouds

- 34 Can you raise your voice to the clouds
so that a flood of water covers you?
35 Can you send out lightning bolts, and they go?
Will they say to you, 'Here we are'?
36 Who has put wisdom in the heart,
or has imparted understanding to the mind?
37 Who by wisdom can count the clouds,
and who can tip over the water jars of heaven,
38 when the dust hardens into a mass,
and the clumps of earth stick together?

God Questions Job About the Animals (c. 2200 BC)

Job 38:39–39:30

Lions and Ravens

- 38:39 "Do you hunt prey for the lioness,
and satisfy the appetite of the lions,
40 when they crouch in their dens,
when they wait in ambush in the thicket?
41 Who prepares prey for the raven,
when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?

Mountain Goats

- 39:1 "Are you acquainted with the way
the mountain goats give birth?
Do you watch as the wild deer give birth to their young?
2 Do you count the months they must fulfill,
and do you know the time they give birth?

- 3 They crouch, they bear their young,
they bring forth the offspring they have carried.
- 4 Their young grow strong, and grow up in the open;
they go off, and do not return to them.

Wild Donkeys

- 5 Who let the wild donkey go free?
Who released the bonds of the donkey,
6 to whom I appointed the steppe for its home,
the salt wastes as its dwelling place?
- 7 It scorns the tumult in the town;
it does not hear the shouts of a driver.
- 8 It ranges the hills as its pasture,
and searches after every green plant.

Wild Oxen

- 9 Is the wild ox willing to be your servant?
Will it spend the night at your feeding trough?
- 10 Can you bind the wild ox to a furrow with its rope,
will it till the valleys, following after you?
- 11 Will you rely on it because its strength is great?
Will you commit your labor to it?
- 12 Can you count on it to bring in your grain,
and gather the grain to your threshing floor?

Ostriches

- 13 “The wings of the ostrich flap with joy,
but are they the pinions and plumage of a stork?
- 14 For she leaves her eggs on the ground,
and lets them be warmed on the soil.
- 15 She forgets that a foot might crush them,
or that a wild animal might trample them.
- 16 She is harsh with her young,
as if they were not hers;
she is unconcerned
about the uselessness of her labor.
- 17 For God deprived her of wisdom,
and did not impart understanding to her.
- 18 But as soon as she springs up,
she laughs at the horse and its rider.

Horses

- 19 “Do you give the horse its strength?
Do you clothe its neck with a mane?
- 20 Do you make it leap like a locust?
Its proud neighing is terrifying!
- 21 It paws the ground in the valley,
exulting mightily,
it goes out to meet the weapons.
- 22 It laughs at fear and is not dismayed;
it does not shy away from the sword.
- 23 On it the quiver rattles;
the lance and javelin flash.
- 24 In excitement and impatience it consumes the ground;
it cannot stand still when the trumpet is blown.
- 25 At the sound of the trumpet, it says, ‘Aha!’
And from a distance it catches the scent of battle,
the thunderous shouting of commanders,

and the battle cries.

Hawks

- 26 “Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars,
and spreads its wings toward the south?
27 Is it at your command that the eagle soars,
and builds its nest on high?
28 It lives on a rock and spends the night there,
on a rocky crag and a fortress.
29 From there it spots its prey,
its eyes gaze intently from a distance.
30 And its young ones devour the blood,
and where the dead carcasses are,
there it is.”

God Questions Job About the Behemoth and the Leviathan (c. 2200 BC)

Job 40–41

Concluding Challenge

40:1 Then the LORD answered Job:

- 2 “Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him?
Let the person who accuses God give him an answer!”

Job Recognizes His Lack of Knowledge and Power, and Does Not Presume to Answer God

3 Then Job answered the LORD:

- 4 “Indeed, I am completely unworthy—how could I reply to you?
I put my hand over my mouth to silence myself.
5 I have spoken once, but I cannot answer;
twice, but I will say no more.”

Yahweh Continues to Question Job

6 Then the LORD answered Job from the whirlwind:

- 7 “Get ready for a difficult task like a man.
I will question you and you will inform me!

God’s Justice

- 8 Would you indeed annul my justice?
Would you declare me guilty so that you might be right?
9 Do you have an arm as powerful as God’s,
and can you thunder with a voice like his?
10 Adorn yourself, then, with majesty and excellency,
and clothe yourself with glory and honor!
11 Scatter abroad the abundance of your anger.
Look at every proud man and bring him low;
12 Look at every proud man and abase him;
crush the wicked on the spot!
13 Hide them in the dust together,
imprison them in the grave.
14 Then I myself will acknowledge to you
that your own right hand can save you.

The “Behemoth”

- 15 “Look now at Behemoth, which I made as I made you;
it eats grass like the ox.
16 Look at its strength in its loins,

- and its power in the muscles of its belly.
- 17 It makes its tail stiff like a cedar,
the sinews of its thighs are tightly wound.
- 18 Its bones are tubes of bronze,
its limbs like bars of iron.
- 19 It ranks first among the works of God,
the One who made it
has furnished it with a sword.
- 20 For the hills bring it food,
where all the wild animals play.
- 21 Under the lotus trees it lies,
in the secrecy of the reeds and the marsh.
- 22 The lotus trees conceal it in their shadow;
the poplars by the stream conceal it.
- 23 If the river rages, it is not disturbed,
it is secure, though the Jordan
should surge up to its mouth.
- 24 Can anyone catch it by its eyes,
or pierce its nose with a snare?

The “Leviathan”

- 41:1 “Can you pull in Leviathan with a hook,
and tie down its tongue with a rope?
- 2 Can you put a cord through its nose,
or pierce its jaw with a hook?
- 3 Will it make numerous supplications to you,
will it speak to you with tender words?
- 4 Will it make a pact with you,
so you could take it as your slave for life?
- 5 Can you play with it, like a bird,
or tie it on a leash for your girls?
- 6 Will partners bargain for it?
Will they divide it up among the merchants?
- 7 Can you fill its hide with harpoons
or its head with fishing spears?
- 8 If you lay your hand on it,
you will remember the fight,
and you will never do it again!
- 9 See, his expectation is wrong,
he is laid low even at the sight of it.
- 10 Is it not fierce when it is awakened?
Who is he, then, who can stand before it?
- 11 (Who has confronted me that I should repay?
Everything under heaven belongs to me!)
- 12 I will not keep silent about its limbs,
and the extent of its might,
and the grace of its arrangement.
- 13 Who can uncover its outer covering?
Who can penetrate to the inside of its armor?
- 14 Who can open the doors of its mouth?
Its teeth all around are fearsome.
- 15 Its back has rows of shields,
shut up closely together as with a seal;
- 16 each one is so close to the next
that no air can come between them.
- 17 They lock tightly together, one to the next;
they cling together and cannot be separated.
- 18 Its snorting throws out flashes of light;

- its eyes are like the red glow of dawn.
- 19 Out of its mouth go flames,
sparks of fire shoot forth!
- 20 Smoke streams from its nostrils
as from a boiling pot over burning rushes.
- 21 Its breath sets coals ablaze
and a flame shoots from its mouth.
- 22 Strength lodges in its neck,
and despair runs before it.
- 23 The folds of its flesh are tightly joined;
they are firm on it, immovable.
- 24 Its heart is hard as rock,
hard as a lower millstone.
- 25 When it rises up, the mighty are terrified,
at its thrashing about they withdraw.
- 26 Whoever strikes it with a sword
will have no effect,
nor with the spear, arrow, or dart.
- 27 It regards iron as straw
and bronze as rotten wood.
- 28 Arrows do not make it flee;
slingstones become like chaff to it.
- 29 A club is counted as a piece of straw;
it laughs at the rattling of the lance.
- 30 Its underparts are the sharp points of potsherds,
it leaves its mark in the mud
like a threshing sledge.
- 31 It makes the deep boil like a cauldron
and stirs up the sea like a pot of ointment,
- 32 It leaves a glistening wake behind it;
one would think the deep had a head of white hair.
- 33 The likes of it is not on earth,
a creature without fear.
- 34 It looks on every haughty being;
it is king over all that are proud.”

God Restores the Fortunes of Job (c. 2200 BC)

Job 42

Job Humbles Himself Before Yahweh

1 Then Job answered the LORD:

- 2 “I know that you can do all things;
no purpose of yours can be thwarted;
- 3 you asked,
‘Who is this who darkens counsel
without knowledge?’
But I have declared without understanding
things too wonderful for me to know.
- 4 You said,
‘Pay attention, and I will speak;
I will question you, and you will answer me.’
- 5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,
but now my eye has seen you.
- 6 Therefore I despise myself,
and I repent in dust and ashes!”

God Is Angry With Job's Friends

7 After the LORD had spoken these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My anger is stirred up against you and your two friends, because you have not spoken about me what is right, as my servant Job has.

8 So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job will intercede for you, and I will respect him, so that I do not deal with you according to your folly, because you have not spoken about me what is right, as my servant Job has."

9 So they went, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, and did just as the LORD had told them; and the LORD had respect for Job.

God Restores the Fortunes of Job

10 So the LORD restored what Job had lost after he prayed for his friends, and the LORD doubled all that had belonged to Job.

11 So they came to him, all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and they dined with him in his house. They comforted him and consoled him for all the trouble the LORD had brought on him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring.

12 So the LORD blessed the second part of Job's life more than the first. He had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys.

13 And he also had seven sons and three daughters.

14 The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-Happuch.

15 Nowhere in all the land could women be found who were as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance alongside their brothers.

16 After this Job lived 140 years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation.

17 And so Job died, old and full of days.

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The Death of Noah (2168 BC)

Genesis 9:28–29

28 After the flood Noah lived 350 years.

29 The entire lifetime of Noah was 950 years, and then he died.

Toledot of Terah (2166 BC)

Genesis 11:27–30

27 This is the account of Terah.

Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
And Haran became the father of Lot.

28 Haran died in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans,
while his father Terah was still alive.

29 And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name
of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was
Milcah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milcah
and Iscah.

30 But Sarai was barren; she had no children.

Joshua 24:2

2 Joshua told all the people,
"Here is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'In the distant past
your ancestors lived beyond the Euphrates River,
including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor.

They worshiped other gods,

God Calls Abraham in Ur (c. 2100 BC)

Genesis 12:1

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go out from your country,
your relatives, and your father's household
to the land that I will show you. [[Heb 11:8](#)]

Acts 7:2–3

2 So he replied, "Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of
glory appeared to our forefather Abraham when he was in
Mesopotamia, before he settled in Haran,
3 and said to him, 'Go out from your country
and from your relatives,
and come to the land I will show you.'

The Abrahamic Covenant (c. 2100 BC)

Genesis 12:2–3

- 2 Then I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you,
and I will make your name great,
so that you will exemplify divine blessing.
- 3 I will bless those who bless you,
but the one who treats you lightly I must curse,
and all the families of the earth will [be blessed in you (or through you)]."

Abraham Moves From Ur to Haran (c. 2100 BC)

Genesis 11:31–32

31 Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (the son of
Haran), and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and
with them he set out from Ur of the Chaldeans
to go to Canaan.

When they came to Haran, they settled there.

32 The lifetime of Terah was 205 years, and he died in Haran.

Acts 7:4

4 Then he went out from the country of the Chaldeans

and settled in Haran.

After his father died,
God made him move to this country where you now live.

Abraham Moves From Haran to Canaan (2091 BC)

Genesis 12:4–9

- 4 So Abram left, just as the LORD had told him to do, and Lot went with him. (Now Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran.)
- 5 And Abram took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they left for the land of Canaan. They entered the land of Canaan.
- 6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the oak tree of Moreh at Shechem. (At that time the Canaanites were in the land.)
- 7 The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” So Abram built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.
- 8 Then he moved from there to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and worshiped the LORD.
- 9 Abram continually journeyed by stages down to the Negev. [[Heb 11:9–10](#)]

Abraham Travels to Egypt to Avoid a Famine (2091 – c. 2085 BC)

Genesis 12:10–20

- 10 There was a famine in the land, so Abram went down to Egypt to stay for a while because the famine was severe.
- 11 As he approached Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, “Look, I know that you are a beautiful woman.
- 12 When the Egyptians see you they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will keep you alive.
- 13 So tell them you are my sister so that it may go well for me because of you and my life will be spared on account of you.”
- 14 When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful.
- 15 When Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. So Abram’s wife was taken into the household of Pharaoh,
- 16 and he did treat Abram well on account of her. Abram received sheep and cattle, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.
- 17 But the LORD struck Pharaoh and his household with severe diseases because of Sarai, Abram’s wife.
- 18 So Pharaoh summoned Abram and said, “What is this you have done to me? Why didn’t you 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 is your wife! Take her and go!”
- 20 Pharaoh gave his men orders about Abram, and so they expelled him, along with his wife and all his possessions.

Abraham and Lot Separate (2091 – c. 2085 BC)

Genesis 13

- 1 So Abram went up from Egypt into the Negev. He took his wife and all his possessions with him, as well as Lot.
- 2 (Now Abram was very wealthy in livestock, silver, and gold.)
- 3 And he journeyed from place to place from the Negev as far as Bethel. He returned to the place where he had pitched his tent at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai.
- 4 This was the place where he had first built the altar, and there Abram worshiped the LORD.
- 5 Now Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents.
- 6 But the land could not support them while they were living side by side. Because their possessions were so great, they were not able to live alongside one another.
- 7 So there were quarrels between Abram’s herdsmen and Lot’s herdsmen. (Now the Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land at that time.)
- 8 Abram said to Lot, “Let there be no quarreling between me and you, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are close relatives.
- 9 Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself now from me. If you go to the left, then I’ll go to the right, but if you go to the right, then I’ll go to the left.”
- 10 Lot looked up and saw the whole region of the Jordan. He noticed that all of it was well-watered (before the LORD obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, all the way to Zoar.
- 11 Lot chose for himself the whole region of the Jordan and traveled toward the east. So the relatives separated from each other.
- 12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, but Lot settled among the cities of the Jordan plain and pitched his tents next to Sodom.
- 13 (Now the people of Sodom were extremely wicked rebels against the LORD.)
- 14 After Lot had departed, the LORD said to Abram, “Look from the place where you stand to the north, south, east, and west.
- 15 I will give all the land that you see to you and your descendants forever.
- 16 And I will make your descendants like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone is able to count the dust of the earth, then your descendants also can be counted.
- 17 Get up and walk throughout the land, for I will give it to you.”
- 18 So Abram moved his tents and went to live by the oaks of Mamre in Hebron, and he built an altar to the LORD there.

Abraham Rescues Lot (2091 – c. 2085 BC)

Genesis 14:1–17

1 At that time Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations
 2 went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).
 3 These last five kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea).
 4 For twelve years they had served Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.
 5 In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings who were his allies came and defeated the Rephaites in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emites in Shaveh Kiriathaim,
 6 and the Horites in their hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is near the desert.
 7 Then they attacked En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh) again, and they conquered all the territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar.
 8 Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and prepared for battle. In the Valley of Siddim they met
 9 Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar. Four kings fought against five.
 10 Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits. When the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell into them, but some survivors fled to the hills.
 11 The four victorious kings took all the possessions and food of Sodom and Gomorrah and left.
 12 They also took Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions when they left, for Lot was living in Sodom.
 13 A fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eshcol and Aner. (All these were allied by treaty with Abram.)
 14 When Abram heard that his nephew had been taken captive, he mobilized his 318 trained men who had been born in his household, and he pursued the invaders as far as Dan.
 15 Then, during the night, Abram divided his forces against them and defeated them. He chased them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.
 16 He retrieved all the stolen property. He also brought back his nephew Lot and his possessions, as well as the women and the rest of the people.
 17 After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet Abram in the Valley of Shaveh (known as the King's Valley).

Melchizedek Blesses Abraham (2091 – c. 2085 BC)

Genesis 14:18–24

Hebrews 7:1–4

18 Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine.
 (Now he was the priest of the Most High God.)

19 He blessed Abram, saying,

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

20 Worthy of praise is the Most High God,
 who delivered your enemies into your hand.”

Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything.

21 Then the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the people and take the possessions for yourself.”

22 But Abram replied to the king of Sodom, “I raise my hand to the LORD, the Most High God, Creator of heaven and earth, and vow

23 that I will take nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the strap of a sandal. That way you can never say, ‘It is I who

1 Now this Melchizedek, king of Salem,
 priest of the most high God,
 met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and
 blessed him.

2 To him also Abraham apportioned a tithe of everything.
 His name first means king of righteousness,
 then king of Salem, that is, king of peace.

3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, he has
 neither beginning of days nor end of life but is like the son of
 God, and he remains a priest for all time.

4 But see how great he must be, if Abraham the patriarch gave
 him a tithe of his plunder.

| | |
|---|--|
| made Abram rich.’ 24 I will take nothing except compensation for what the young men have eaten. As for the share of the men who went with me—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre—let them take their share.” | |
|---|--|

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The account of Noah’s death concludes the Toledot of Adam and provides a literary bridge to the Toledot of his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth (Gen 10). However, chronological reckoning puts Noah’s death at 2168—just 2 years before the birth of Abraham in 2166. For this reason, Noah’s death has been placed just before the Toledot of Terah.
- 2) Patriarchal Chronology.¹
 - A) There are two well-established anchor points for Old Testament chronology: Solomon’s reign from 971t–932t, and the exodus from Egypt in Nisan 1446 BC. From these two anchor points we can reconstruct a chronology of OT events from Abraham to the end of the post-exilic period.²
 - B) The chronology of Israel’s patriarchs is relatively easy to establish once the date of the exodus is known.³ Jacob and his family entered Egypt 430 years to the day before the exodus (Exod 12:40–41). Therefore, Jacob entered Egypt on 14 Nisan 1876 BC (1446 + 430). Jacob was 130 years old when he entered Egypt (Gen 47:9), so he was born in 2006 BC (1876 + 130). Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born (Gen 25:26), so Isaac was born in 2066 BC. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born (Gen 21:5), so Abraham was born in 2166 BC.⁴
- 3) Stephen’s sermon in Acts 7 (esp. 7:2) confirms that God’s call to Abraham first came while Abraham still lived in Ur (before the move to Haran). Thus Genesis 12:1–3 should be placed before Genesis 11:31–32.
- 4) Abraham in Egypt.⁵
 - A) Abram’s visit to Egypt occurred toward the end of the First Intermediate Period, probably during the Tenth or Eleventh Dynasty. Since Abram arrived in Canaan about 2091 BC and went to Egypt not much later, the king to whom he lied about Sarai, his wife, was most likely Wahkare Achthoes III (ca. 2120–2070) of the Tenth Dynasty, the possible composer of the famous “Instruction for King Meri-ka-Re.” This work of advice for his son concerning the treachery of the “Asiatics” may well be related in some way to Abram’s duplicity.

¹ Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2011), pp. 67–80.

² Steinmann, 37–65.

³ For earlier discussions of the chronology of this period see Eugene H. Merrill, “Fixed Dates in Patriarchal Chronology,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 137:547 (July 1980), 242–248, and Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Rev. Ed., (Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 197–224.

⁴ Steinmann, 37.

⁵ Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 51.

Abraham is Justified by Faith (c. 2085 BC)

Genesis 15

Abraham Believed God

- 1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram! I am your shield and the one who will reward you in great abundance.”
- 2 But Abram said, “O sovereign LORD, what will you give me since I continue to be childless, and my heir is Eliezer of Damascus?”
- 3 Abram added, “Since you have not given me a descendant, then look, one born in my house will be my heir!”
- 4 But look, the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but instead a son who comes from your own body will be your heir.”
- 5 The LORD took him outside and said, “Gaze into the sky and count the stars—if you are able to count them!” Then he said to him, “So will your descendants be.”
- 6 Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD [counted it to him as righteousness]. [[Rom 4:18–25](#)]

Cutting the Covenant

- 7 The LORD said to him, “I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess.”
- 8 But Abram said, “O sovereign LORD, by what can I know that I am to possess it?”
- 9 The LORD said to him, “Take for me a heifer, a goat, and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.”
- 10 So Abram took all these for him and then cut them in two and placed each half opposite the other, but he did not cut the birds in half.
- 11 When birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.
- 12 When the sun went down, Abram fell sound asleep, and great terror overwhelmed him.
- 13 Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign country. They will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years.
- 14 But I will execute judgment on the nation that they will serve. Afterward they will come out with many possessions. [[Acts 7:6–7](#)]
- 15 But as for you, you will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age.
- 16 In the fourth generation your descendants will return here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its limit.”
- 17 When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking firepot with a flaming torch passed between the animal parts.
- 18 That day the LORD made a covenant with Abram: “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River—
- 19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites,
- 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites,
- 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites.”

Birth of Ishmael (2080 BC)

Genesis 16

- 1 Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had not given birth to any children, but she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar.
- 2 So Sarai said to Abram, “Since the LORD has prevented me from having children, have sexual relations with my servant. Perhaps I can have a family by her.” Abram did what Sarai told him.
- 3 So after Abram had lived in Canaan for ten years, Sarai, Abram’s wife, gave Hagar, her Egyptian servant, to her husband to be his wife.
- 4 He had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. Once Hagar realized she was pregnant, she despised Sarai.
- 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, “You have brought this wrong on me! I allowed my servant to have sexual relations with you, but when she realized that she was pregnant, she despised me. May the LORD judge between you and me!”
- 6 Abram said to Sarai, “Since your servant is under your authority, do to her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai treated Hagar harshly, so she ran away from Sarai.
- 7 The LORD’s angel found Hagar near a spring of water in the desert—the spring that is along the road to Shur.
- 8 He said, “Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?” She replied, “I’m running away from my mistress, Sarai.”
- 9 Then the LORD’s angel said to her, “Return to your mistress and submit to her authority.
- 10 I will greatly multiply your descendants,” the LORD’s angel added, “so that they will be too numerous to count.”
- 11 Then the LORD’s angel said to her,

“You are now pregnant
and are about to give birth to a son.
You are to name him Ishmael,
for the LORD has heard your painful groans.

12 He will be a wild donkey of a man.
He will be hostile to everyone,
and everyone will be hostile to him.
He will live away from his brothers.”

13 So Hagar named the LORD who spoke to her, “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “Here I have seen one who sees me!”
14 That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi. (It is located between Kadesh and Bered.)
15 So Hagar gave birth to Abram’s son, whom Abram named Ishmael.
16 (Now Abram was 86 years old when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.)

Circumcision Given as the Sign of the Covenant (2067 BC)

Genesis 17

Yahweh Appears to Abram

1 When Abram was 99 years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am the sovereign God. Walk before me and be blameless.
2 Then I will confirm my covenant between me and you, and I will give you a multitude of descendants.”

Abraham: Father of Many Nations

3 Abram bowed down with his face to the ground, and God said to him,
4 “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of a multitude of nations.
5 No longer will your name be Abram. Instead, your name will be Abraham because I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. [[Rom 4:17](#)]
6 I will make you extremely fruitful. I will make nations of you, and kings will descend from you.
7 I will confirm my covenant as a perpetual covenant between me and you. It will extend to your descendants after you throughout their generations. I will be your God and the God of your descendants after you.
8 I will give the whole land of Canaan—the land where you are now residing—to you and your descendants after you as a permanent possession. I will be their God.”

The Covenant of Circumcision

9 Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep the covenantal requirement I am imposing on you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.
10 This is my requirement that you and your descendants after you must keep: Every male among you must be circumcised.
11 You must circumcise the flesh of your foreskins. This will be a reminder of the covenant between me and you.
12 Throughout your generations every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, whether born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not one of your descendants.
13 They must indeed be circumcised, whether born in your house or bought with money. The sign of my covenant will be visible in your flesh as a permanent reminder.
14 Any uncircumcised male who has not been circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin will be cut off from his people— he has failed to carry out my requirement.”

Sarah: Mother of Nations

15 Then God said to Abraham, “As for your wife, you must no longer call her Sarai; Sarah will be her name.
16 I will bless her and will give you a son through her. I will bless her and she will become a mother of nations. Kings of countries will come from her!”

Abraham’s Reaction of Disbelief

17 Then Abraham bowed down with his face to the ground and laughed as he said to himself, “Can a son be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?”
18 Abraham said to God, “O that Ishmael might live before you!”

The Promise of Isaac

19 God said, “No, Sarah your wife is going to bear you a son, and you will name him Isaac. I will confirm my covenant with him as a perpetual covenant for his descendants after him.
20 As for Ishmael, I have heard you. I will indeed bless him, make him fruitful, and give him a multitude of descendants. He will become the father of twelve princes; I will make him into a great nation.
21 But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this set time next year.”
22 When he finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him.

Abraham Obeys Yahweh

23 Abraham took his son Ishmael and every male in his household (whether born in his house or bought with money) and circumcised them on that very same day, just as God had told him to do.

24 Now Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised;

25 his son Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised.

26 Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised on the very same day. [[Rom 4:9-12](#)]

27 All the men of his household, whether born in his household or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

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God Tells Abraham About His Decision to Destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (2067 BC)

Genesis 18

“Is anything too hard for the LORD?”

- 1 The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent during the hottest time of the day.
- 2 Abraham looked up and saw three men standing across from him. When he saw them he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.
- 3 He said, “My lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by and leave your servant.
- 4 Let a little water be brought so that you may all wash your feet and rest under the tree.
- 5 And let me get a bit of food so that you may refresh yourselves since you have passed by your servant’s home. After that you may be on your way.” “All right,” they replied, “you may do as you say.”
- 6 So Abraham hurried into the tent and said to Sarah, “Quick! Take three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make bread.”
- 7 Then Abraham ran to the herd and chose a fine, tender calf, and gave it to a servant, who quickly prepared it.
- 8 Abraham then took some curds and milk, along with the calf that had been prepared, and placed the food before them. They ate while he was standing near them under a tree.
- 9 Then they asked him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” He replied, “There, in the tent.”
- 10 One of them said, “I will surely return to you when the season comes round again, and your wife Sarah will have a son!” (Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, not far behind him. [\[Rom 9:9\]](#))
- 11 Abraham and Sarah were old and advancing in years; Sarah had long since passed menopause.)
- 12 So Sarah laughed to herself, thinking, “After I am worn out will I have pleasure, especially when my husband is old too?”
- 13 The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child when I am old?’
- 14 Is anything impossible for the LORD? I will return to you when the season comes round again and Sarah will have a son.”
- 15 Then Sarah lied, saying, “I did not laugh,” because she was afraid. But the LORD said, “No! You did laugh.”

“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?”

- 16 When the men got up to leave, they looked out over Sodom. (Now Abraham was walking with them to see them on their way.)
- 17 Then the LORD said, “Should I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?
- 18 After all, Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all the nations on the earth will [be blessed in him].
- 19 I have chosen him so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just. Then the LORD will give to Abraham what he promised him.”
- 20 So the LORD said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so blatant
- 21 that I must go down and see if they are as wicked as the outcry suggests. If not, I want to know.”
- 22 The two men turned and headed toward Sodom, but Abraham was still standing before the LORD.
- 23 Abraham approached and said, “Will you sweep away the godly along with the wicked?
- 24 What if there are fifty godly people in the city? Will you really wipe it out and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty godly people who are in it?
- 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the godly with the wicked, treating the godly and the wicked alike! Far be it from you! Will not the judge of the whole earth do what is right?”
- 26 So the LORD replied, “If I find in the city of Sodom fifty godly people, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”
- 27 Then Abraham asked, “Since I have undertaken to speak to the Lord (although I am but dust and ashes),
- 28 what if there are five less than the fifty godly people? Will you destroy the whole city because five are lacking?” He replied, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.”
- 29 Abraham spoke to him again, “What if forty are found there?” He replied, “I will not do it for the sake of the forty.”
- 30 Then Abraham said, “May the Lord not be angry so that I may speak! What if thirty are found there?” He replied, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”
- 31 Abraham said, “Since I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty are found there?” He replied, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty.”
- 32 Finally Abraham said, “May the Lord not be angry so that I may speak just once more. What if ten are found there?” He replied, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten.”
- 33 The LORD went on his way when he had finished speaking to Abraham. Then Abraham returned home.

The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (2067 BC)

Genesis 19:1–29

The Angels Enter Sodom and Stay with Lot

- 1 The two angels came to Sodom in the evening while Lot was sitting in the city’s gateway. When Lot saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face toward the ground.

2 He said, “Here, my lords, please turn aside to your servant’s house. Stay the night and wash your feet. Then you can be on your way early in the morning.” “No,” they replied, “we’ll spend the night in the town square.”

3 But he urged them persistently, so they turned aside with him and entered his house. He prepared a feast for them, including bread baked without yeast, and they ate.

4 Before they could lie down to sleep, all the men—both young and old, from every part of the city of Sodom—surrounded the house.

5 They shouted to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so we can have sex with them!”

6 Lot went outside to them, shutting the door behind him.

7 He said, “No, my brothers! Don’t act so wickedly!

8 Look, I have two daughters who have never had sexual relations with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do to them whatever you please. Only don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

9 “Out of our way!” they cried, and “This man came to live here as a foreigner, and now he dares to judge us! We’ll do more harm to you than to them!” They kept pressing in on Lot until they were close enough to break down the door.

10 So the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house as they shut the door.

11 Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, from the youngest to the oldest, with blindness. The men outside wore themselves out trying to find the door.

Lot Tries to Warn His Family

12 Then the two visitors said to Lot, “Who else do you have here? Do you have any sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or other relatives in the city? Get them out of this place

13 because we are about to destroy it. The outcry against this place is so great before the LORD that he has sent us to destroy it.”

14 Then Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law who were going to marry his daughters. He said, “Quick, get out of this place because the LORD is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was ridiculing them.

The Angels Force Lot to Leave

15 At dawn the angels hurried Lot along, saying, “Get going! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or else you will be destroyed when the city is judged!”

16 When Lot hesitated, the men grabbed his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters because the LORD had compassion on them. They led them away and placed them outside the city. [cf. [2 Pet 2:4–9](#)]

17 When they had brought them outside, they said, “Run for your lives! Don’t look behind you or stop anywhere in the valley! Escape to the mountains or you will be destroyed!”

18 But Lot said to them, “No, please, Lord!

19 Your servant has found favor with you, and you have shown me great kindness by sparing my life. But I am not able to escape to the mountains because this disaster will overtake me and I’ll die.

20 Look, this town over here is close enough to escape to, and it’s just a little one. Let me go there. It’s just a little place, isn’t it? Then I’ll survive.”

21 “Very well,” he replied, “I will grant this request too and will not overthrow the town you mentioned.

22 Run there quickly, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.” (This incident explains why the town was called Zoar.)

23 The sun had just risen over the land as Lot reached Zoar.

The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

24 Then the LORD rained down sulfur and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah. It was sent down from the sky by the LORD.

25 So he overthrew those cities and all that region, including all the inhabitants of the cities and the vegetation that grew from the ground.

26 But Lot’s wife looked back longingly and was turned into a pillar of salt. [cf. [Luke 17:28–33](#)]

27 Abraham got up early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the LORD.

28 He looked out toward Sodom and Gomorrah and all the land of that region. As he did so, he saw the smoke rising up from the land like smoke from a furnace.

29 So when God destroyed the cities of the region, God honored Abraham’s request. He removed Lot from the midst of the destruction when he destroyed the cities Lot had lived in.

Origin of Moabites and Ammonites (2067–66 BC)

Genesis 19:30–38

30 Lot went up from Zoar with his two daughters and settled in the mountains because he was afraid to live in Zoar. So he lived in a cave with his two daughters.

31 Later the older daughter said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man anywhere nearby to have sexual relations with us, according to the way of all the world.

32 Come, let's make our father drunk with wine so we can have sexual relations with him and preserve our family line through our father."

33 So that night they made their father drunk with wine, and the older daughter came and had sexual relations with her father. But he was not aware that she had sexual relations with him and then got up.

34 So in the morning the older daughter said to the younger, "Since I had sexual relations with my father last night, let's make him drunk again tonight. Then you go and have sexual relations with him so we can preserve our family line through our father."

35 So they made their father drunk that night as well, and the younger one came and had sexual relations with him. But he was not aware that she had sexual relations with him and then got up.

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

37 The older daughter gave birth to a son and named him Moab. He is the ancestor of the Moabites of today.

38 The younger daughter also gave birth to a son and named him Ben-Ammi. He is the ancestor of the Ammonites of today.

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Abraham Deceives King Abimelech (2066 BC)

Genesis 20

- 1 Abraham journeyed from there to the Negev region and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While he lived as a temporary resident in Gerar,
- 2 Abraham said about his wife Sarah, “She is my sister.” So Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent for Sarah and took her.
- 3 But God appeared to Abimelech in a dream at night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken, for she is someone else’s wife.”
- 4 Now Abimelech had not gone near her. He said, “Lord, would you really slaughter an innocent nation?”
- 5 Did Abraham not say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ I have done this with a clear conscience and with innocent hands!”
- 6 Then in the dream God replied to him, “Yes, I know that you have done this with a clear conscience. That is why I have kept you from sinning against me and why I did not allow you to touch her.
- 7 But now give back the man’s wife. Indeed he is a prophet and he will pray for you; thus you will live. But if you don’t give her back, know that you will surely die along with all who belong to you.”
- 8 Early in the morning Abimelech summoned all his servants. When he told them about all these things, they were terrified.
- 9 Abimelech summoned Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? What sin did I commit against you that would cause you to bring such great guilt on me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should not be done!”
- 10 Then Abimelech asked Abraham, “What prompted you to do this thing?”
- 11 Abraham replied, “Because I thought, ‘Surely no one fears God in this place. They will kill me because of my wife.’”
- 12 What’s more, she is indeed my sister, my father’s daughter, but not my mother’s daughter. She became my wife.
- 13 When God made me wander from my father’s house, I told her, ‘This is what you can do to show your loyalty to me: Every place we go, say about me, “He is my brother.”’”
- 14 So Abimelech gave sheep, cattle, and male and female servants to Abraham. He also gave his wife Sarah back to him.
- 15 Then Abimelech said, “Look, my land is before you; live wherever you please.”
- 16 To Sarah he said, “Look, I have given a thousand pieces of silver to your ‘brother.’ This is compensation for you so that you will stand vindicated before all who are with you.”
- 17 Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, as well as his wife and female slaves so that they were able to have children.
- 18 For the LORD had caused infertility to strike every woman in the household of Abimelech because he took Sarah, Abraham’s wife.

The Birth of Isaac (2066 BC)

Genesis 21:1–7

- 1 The LORD visited Sarah just as he had said he would and did for Sarah what he had promised.
- 2 So Sarah became pregnant and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the appointed time that God had told him. [[Heb 11:11](#)]
- 3 Abraham named his son—whom Sarah bore to him—Isaac.
- 4 When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him just as God had commanded him to do.
- 5 (Now Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.)
- 6 Sarah said, “God has made me laugh. Everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.”
- 7 She went on to say, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have given birth to a son for him in his old age!”

Sarah Asks Abraham to Make Hagar and Ishmael Leave (c. 2064–63 BC)

Genesis 21:8–21

- 8 The child grew and was weaned. Abraham prepared a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.
- 9 But Sarah noticed the son of Hagar the Egyptian—the son whom Hagar had borne to Abraham—mocking.
- 10 So she said to Abraham, “Banish that slave woman and her son, for the son of that slave woman will not be an heir along with my son Isaac!” [[Gal 4:30](#)]
- 11 Sarah’s demand displeased Abraham greatly because Ishmael was his son.
- 12 But God said to Abraham, “Do not be upset about the boy or your slave wife. Do all that Sarah is telling you because through Isaac your descendants will be counted. [[Rom 9:6–8](#); [Heb 11:18](#)]
- 13 But I will also make the son of the slave wife into a great nation, for he is your descendant too.”
- 14 Early in the morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He put them on her shoulders, gave her the child, and sent her away. So she went wandering aimlessly through the wilderness of Beer Sheba.
- 15 When the water in the skin was gone, she shoved the child under one of the shrubs.
- 16 Then she went and sat down by herself across from him at quite a distance, about a bowshot away; for she thought, “I refuse to watch the child die.” So she sat across from him and wept uncontrollably.

- 17 But God heard the boy's voice. The angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and asked her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Don't be afraid, for God has heard the boy's voice right where he is crying.
 18 Get up! Help the boy up and hold him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation."
 19 Then God enabled Hagar to see a well of water. She went over and filled the skin with water, and then gave the boy a drink.
 20 God was with the boy as he grew. He lived in the wilderness and became an archer.
 21 He lived in the wilderness of Paran. His mother found a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

The Covenant Between Abraham and King Abimelech (c. 2063 BC)

Genesis 21:22–34

- 22 At that time Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, said to Abraham, "God is with you in all that you do.
 23 Now swear to me right here in God's name that you will not deceive me, my children, or my descendants. Show me, and the land where you are staying, the same loyalty that I have shown you."
 24 Abraham said, "I swear to do this."
 25 But Abraham lodged a complaint against Abimelech concerning a well that Abimelech's servants had seized.
 26 "I do not know who has done this thing," Abimelech replied. "Moreover, you did not tell me. I did not hear about it until today."
 27 Abraham took some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech. The two of them made a treaty.
 28 Then Abraham set seven ewe lambs apart from the flock by themselves.
 29 Abimelech asked Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs that you have set apart?"
 30 He replied, "You must take these seven ewe lambs from my hand as legal proof that I dug this well."
 31 That is why he named that place Beer Sheba, because the two of them swore an oath there.
 32 So they made a treaty at Beer Sheba. Then Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, returned to the land of the Philistines.
 33 Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beer Sheba. There he worshiped the LORD, the eternal God.
 34 So Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines for quite some time.

God Asks Abraham to Sacrifice Isaac as a Burnt Offering (c. 2050 BC)

Genesis 22:1–19

- 1 Some time after these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am!" Abraham replied.
 2 God said, "Take your son—your only son, whom you love, Isaac—and go to the land of Moriah! Offer him up there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will indicate to you."
 3 Early in the morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took two of his young servants with him, along with his son Isaac. When he had cut the wood for the burnt offering, he started out for the place God had spoken to him about.
 4 On the third day Abraham caught sight of the place in the distance.
 5 So he said to his servants, "You two stay here with the donkey while the boy and I go up there. We will worship and then return to you."
 6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on his son Isaac. Then he took the fire and the knife in his hand, and the two of them walked on together.
 7 Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father?" "What is it, my son?" he replied. "Here is the fire and the wood," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"
 8 "God will provide for himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham replied. The two of them continued on together.
 9 When they came to the place God had told him about, Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood on it. Next he tied up his son Isaac and placed him on the altar on top of the wood.
 10 Then Abraham reached out his hand, took the knife, and prepared to slaughter his son.
 11 But the LORD's angel called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am!" he answered.
 12 "Do not harm the boy!" the angel said. "Do not do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God because you did not withhold your son, your only son, from me."
 13 Abraham looked up and saw behind him a ram caught in the bushes by its horns. So he went over and got the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.
 14 And Abraham called the name of that place "The LORD provides." It is said to this day, "In the mountain of the LORD provision will be made." [[Heb 11:17–19](#); [Jam 2:20–24](#)]
 15 The LORD's angel called to Abraham a second time from heaven
 16 and said, "'I solemnly swear by my own name,' decrees the LORD, 'that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,
 17 I will indeed bless you, and I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be as countless as the stars in the sky or the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the strongholds of their enemies. [[Heb 6:13–14](#)]"

18 [In your seed (singular)], all the nations of the earth will [be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."] [[Gal 3:16](#)]

19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.

Nahor's Descendants [Rebekah's Grandfather] (c. 2050 BC)

Genesis 22:20–24

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

21 Uz the firstborn, his brother Buz, Kemuel (the father of Aram),

22 Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel."

23 (Now Bethuel became the father of Rebekah.) These were the eight sons Milcah bore to Abraham's brother Nahor.

24 His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore him children—Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

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The Death of Sarah (2029 BC)

Genesis 23

1 Sarah lived 127 years.
 2 Then 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 Then Abraham got up from mourning his dead wife and said to the sons of Heth,
 4 “I am a temporary settler among you. Grant me ownership of a burial site among you so that I may bury my dead.”
 5 The sons of Heth answered Abraham,
 6 “Listen, sir, you are a mighty prince among us! You may bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb to prevent you from burying your dead.”
 7 Abraham got up and bowed down to the local people, the sons of Heth.
 8 Then he said to them, “If you agree that I may bury my dead, then hear me out. Ask Ephron the son of Zohar
 9 if he will sell me the cave of Machpelah that belongs to him; it is at the end of his field. Let him sell it to me publicly for the full price, so that I may own it as a burial site.”
 10 (Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth.) Ephron the Hethite replied to Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth—before all who entered the gate of his city—
 11 “No, my lord! Hear me out. I sell you both the field and the cave that is in it. In the presence of my people I sell it to you. Bury your dead.”
 12 Abraham bowed before the local people
 13 and said to Ephron in their hearing, “Hear me, if you will. I pay to you the price of the field. Take it from me so that I may bury my dead there.”
 14 Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him,
 15 “Hear me, my lord. The land is worth 400 pieces of silver, but what is that between me and you? So bury your dead.”
 16 So Abraham agreed to Ephron’s price and weighed out for him the price that Ephron had quoted in the hearing of the sons of Heth—400 pieces of silver, according to the standard measurement at the time.
 17 So Abraham secured Ephron’s field in Machpelah, next to Mamre, including the field, the cave that was in it, and all the trees that were in the field and all around its border,
 18 as his property in the presence of the sons of Heth before all who entered the gate of Ephron’s city.
 19 After this Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah next to Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan.
 20 So Abraham secured the field and the cave that was in it as a burial site from the sons of Heth.

A Wife for Isaac (2026 BC)

Genesis 24

Abraham’s Charge to His Servant

1 Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years, and the LORD had blessed him in everything.
 2 Abraham said to his servant, the senior one in his household who was in charge of everything he had, “Put your hand under my thigh
 3 so that I may make you solemnly promise by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth: You must not acquire a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living.
 4 You must go instead to my country and to my relatives to find a wife for my son Isaac.”
 5 The servant asked him, “What if the woman is not willing to come back with me to this land? Must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?”
 6 “Be careful never to take my son back there!” Abraham told him.
 7 “The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and the land of my relatives, promised me with a solemn oath, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ He will send his angel before you so that you may find a wife for my son from there.
 8 But if the woman is not willing to come back with you, you will be free from this oath of mine. But you must not take my son back there!”
 9 So the servant placed his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and gave his solemn promise he would carry out his wishes.

The Servant’s Prayer

10 Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed with all kinds of gifts from his master at his disposal. He journeyed to the region of Aram Naharaim and the city of Nahor.
 11 He made the camels kneel down by the well outside the city. It was evening, the time when the women would go out to draw water.
 12 He prayed, “O LORD, God of my master Abraham, guide me today. Be faithful to my master Abraham.
 13 Here I am, standing by the spring, and the daughters of the people who live in the town are coming out to draw water.
 14 I will say to a young woman, ‘Please lower your jar so I may drink.’ May the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac reply,

‘Drink, and I’ll give your camels water too.’ In this way I will know that you have been faithful to my master.”

God’s Answer

15 Before he had finished praying, there came Rebekah with her water jug on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah (Milcah was the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor).

16 Now the young woman was very beautiful. She was a virgin; no man had ever had sexual relations with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jug, and came back up.

17 Abraham’s servant ran to meet her and said, “Please give me a sip of water from your jug.”

18 “Drink, my lord,” she replied, and quickly lowering her jug to her hands, she gave him a drink.

19 When she had done so, she said, “I’ll draw water for your camels too, until they have drunk as much as they want.”

20 She quickly emptied her jug into the watering trough and ran back to the well to draw more water until she had drawn enough for all his camels.

21 Silently the man watched her with interest to determine if the LORD had made his journey successful or not.

22 After the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a beka and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels and gave them to her.

23 “Whose daughter are you?” he asked. “Tell me, is there room in your father’s house for us to spend the night?”

24 She said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom Milcah bore to Nahor.

25 We have plenty of straw and feed,” she added, “and room for you to spend the night.”

26 The man bowed his head and worshiped the LORD,

27 saying “Praised be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his faithful love for my master! The LORD has led me to the house of my master’s relatives!”

28 The young woman ran and told her mother’s household all about these things.

Rebekah’s Brother Laban and Her Father Bethuel

29 (Now Rebekah had a brother named Laban.) Laban rushed out to meet the man at the spring.

30 When he saw the bracelets on his sister’s wrists and the nose ring and heard his sister Rebekah say, “This is what the man said to me,” he went out to meet the man. There he was, standing by the camels near the spring.

31 Laban said to him, “Come, you who are blessed by the LORD! Why are you standing out here when I have prepared the house and a place for the camels?”

32 So Abraham’s servant went to the house and unloaded the camels. Straw and feed were given to the camels, and water was provided so that he and the men who were with him could wash their feet.

33 When food was served, he said, “I will not eat until I have said what I want to say.” “Tell us,” Laban said.

34 “I am the servant of Abraham,” he began.

35 “The LORD has richly blessed my master and he has become very wealthy. The Lord has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.

36 My master’s wife Sarah bore a son to him when she was old, and my master has given him everything he owns.

37 My master made me swear an oath. He said, ‘You must not acquire a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living,

38 but you must go to the family of my father and to my relatives to find a wife for my son.’

39 But I said to my master, ‘What if the woman does not want to go with me?’

40 He answered, ‘The LORD, before whom I have walked, will send his angel with you. He will make your journey a success and you will find a wife for my son from among my relatives, from my father’s family.

41 You will be free from your oath if you go to my relatives and they will not give her to you. Then you will be free from your oath.’

42 When I came to the spring today, I prayed, ‘O LORD, God of my master Abraham, if you have decided to make my journey successful, may events unfold as follows:

43 Here I am, standing by the spring. When the young woman goes out to draw water, I’ll say, “Give me a little water to drink from your jug.”

44 Then she will reply to me, “Drink, and I’ll draw water for your camels too.” May that woman be the one whom the LORD has chosen for my master’s son.’

45 “Before I finished praying in my heart, along came Rebekah with her water jug on her shoulder! She went down to the spring and drew water. So I said to her, ‘Please give me a drink.’

46 She quickly lowered her jug from her shoulder and said, ‘Drink, and I’ll give your camels water too.’ So I drank, and she also gave the camels water.

47 Then I asked her, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She replied, ‘The daughter of Bethuel the son of Nahor, whom Milcah bore to Nahor.’ I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her wrists.

48 Then I bowed down and worshiped the LORD. I praised the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right path to find the granddaughter of my master’s brother for his son.

49 Now, if you will show faithful love to my master, tell me. But if not, tell me as well, so that I may go on my way.”

Bethuel and Laban Agree to Give Rebekah in Marriage

50 Then Laban and Bethuel replied, “This is the LORD’s doing. Our wishes are of no concern.

51 Rebekah stands here before you. Take her and go so that she may become the wife of your master’s son, just as the LORD has decided.”

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

53 Then he brought out gold, silver jewelry, and clothing and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave valuable gifts to her brother and to her mother.

54 After this, he and the men who were with him ate a meal and stayed there overnight. When they got up in the morning, he said, “Let me leave now so I can return to my master.”

55 But Rebekah’s brother and her mother replied, “Let the girl stay with us a few more days, perhaps ten. Then she can go.”

56 But he said to them, “Don’t detain me—the LORD has granted me success on my journey. Let me leave now so I may return to my master.”

Rebekah Agrees to Marry Isaac

57 Then they said, “We’ll call the girl and find out what she wants to do.”

58 So they called Rebekah and asked her, “Do you want to go with this man?” She replied, “I want to go.”

59 So they sent their sister Rebekah on her way, accompanied by her female attendant, with Abraham’s servant and his men.

60 They blessed Rebekah with these words:

“Our sister, may you become the mother of thousands of ten thousands!

May your descendants possess the strongholds of their enemies.”

The Journey Home

61 Then Rebekah and her female servants mounted the camels and rode away with the man. So Abraham’s servant took Rebekah and left.

62 Now Isaac came from Beer Lahai Roi, for he was living in the Negev.

63 He went out to relax in the field in the early evening. Then he looked up and saw that there were camels approaching.

64 Rebekah looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel

65 and asked Abraham’s servant, “Who is that man walking in the field toward us?” “That is my master,” the servant replied. So she took her veil and covered herself.

66 The servant told Isaac everything that had happened.

67 Then Isaac brought Rebekah into his mother Sarah’s tent. He took her as his wife and loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

Abraham Marries Keturah—Origin of the Midianites (c. 2020 BC)

Genesis 25:1–6

1 Abraham had taken another wife, named Keturah.

2 She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

3 Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Asshurites, Letushites, and Leummites.

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

5 Everything he owned Abraham left to his son Isaac.

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

Toledot of Ishmael (c. 2050–1900 BC)

Genesis 25:12–16

12 This is the account of Abraham’s son Ishmael, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s servant, bore to Abraham.

13 These are the names of Ishmael’s sons, by their names according to their records: Nebaioth (Ishmael’s firstborn), Kedar, Adbeel, Mihsam,

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 settlements and their camps— twelve princes according to their clans.

Toledot of Isaac (2006 BC)

Genesis 25:19–26

19 This is the account of Isaac, the son of Abraham. Abraham became the father of Isaac.

20 When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramean.

21 Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife because she was childless. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.

22 But the children struggled inside her, and she said, "If it is going to be like this, I'm not so sure I want to be pregnant!" So she asked the LORD,

23 and the LORD said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples will be separated from within you.
One people will be stronger than the other,
and the older will serve the younger." [[Rom 9:12](#)]

24 When the time came for Rebekah to give birth, there were twins in her womb.

25 The first came out reddish all over, like a hairy garment, so they named him Esau.

26 When his brother came out with his hand clutching Esau's heel, they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

The Death of Abraham (1991 BC)

Genesis 25:7–11

7 Abraham lived a total of 175 years. [[Heb 11:13–16](#)]

8 Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man who had lived a full life. He joined his ancestors.

9 His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar, the Hethite.

10 This was the field Abraham had purchased from the sons of Heth. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah.

11 After Abraham's death, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac lived near Beer Lahai Roi.

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Esau Despises His Birthright (1991–1966 BC)

Genesis 25:27–34

27 When the boys grew up, Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the open fields, but Jacob was an even-tempered man, living in tents.
 28 Isaac loved Esau because he had a taste for fresh game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.
 29 Now Jacob cooked some stew, and when Esau came in from the open fields, he was famished.
 30 So Esau said to Jacob, “Feed me some of the red stuff—yes, this red stuff—because I’m starving!” (That is why he was also called Edom.)
 31 But Jacob replied, “First sell me your birthright.”
 32 “Look,” said Esau, “I’m about to die! What use is the birthright to me?”
 33 But Jacob said, “Swear an oath to me now.” So Esau swore an oath to him and sold his birthright to Jacob.
 34 Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew; Esau ate and drank, then got up and went out. So Esau despised his birthright. [[Heb 12:16](#)]

Isaac Deceives King Abimelech (1991–1966 BC)

Genesis 26:1–11

1 There was a famine in the land, subsequent to the earlier famine that occurred in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines at Gerar.
 2 The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; settle down in the land that I will point out to you.
 3 Stay in this land. Then I will be with you and will bless you, for I will give all these lands to you and to your descendants, and I will fulfill the solemn promise I made to your father Abraham.
 4 I will multiply your descendants so they will be as numerous as the stars in the sky, and I will give them all these lands. [And in your seed (singular) all the nations of the earth will be blessed].
 5 All this will come to pass because Abraham obeyed me and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”
 6 So Isaac settled in Gerar.
 7 When the men of that place asked him about his wife, he replied, “She is my sister.” He was afraid to say, “She is my wife,” for he thought to himself, “The men of this place will kill me to get Rebekah because she is very beautiful.”
 8 After Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines happened to look out a window and observed Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah.
 9 So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said, “She is really your wife! Why did you say, ‘She is my sister’?” Isaac replied, “Because I thought someone might kill me to get her.”
 10 Then Abimelech exclaimed, “What in the world have you done to us? One of the men might easily have had sexual relations with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us!”
 11 So Abimelech commanded all the people, “Whoever touches this man or his wife will surely be put to death.”

The Covenant Between Isaac and King Abimelech (1991–1966 BC)

Genesis 26:12–33

12 When Isaac planted in that land, he reaped in the same year a hundred times what he had sown, because the LORD blessed him.
 13 The man became wealthy. His influence continued to grow until he became very prominent.
 14 He had so many sheep and cattle and such a great household of servants that the Philistines became jealous of him.
 15 So the Philistines took dirt and filled up all the wells that his father’s servants had dug back in the days of his father Abraham.
 16 Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “Leave us and go elsewhere, for you have become much more powerful than we are.”
 17 So Isaac left there and settled in the Gerar Valley.
 18 Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug back in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham died. Isaac gave these wells the same names his father had given them.
 19 When Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and discovered a well with fresh flowing water there,
 20 the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “The water belongs to us!” So Isaac named the well Esek because they argued with him about it.
 21 His servants dug another well, but they quarreled over it too, so Isaac named it Sitnah.
 22 Then he moved away from there and dug another well. They did not quarrel over it, so Isaac named it Rehoboth, saying, “For now the LORD has made room for us, and we will prosper in the land.”
 23 From there Isaac went up to Beer Sheba.
 24 The LORD appeared to him that night and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham.”
 25 Then Isaac built an altar there and worshiped the LORD. He pitched his tent there, and his servants dug a well.

26 Now Abimelech had come to him from Gerar along with Ahuzzah his friend and Phicol the commander of his army.
 27 Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to me? You hate me and sent me away from you.”
 28 They replied, “We could plainly see that the LORD is with you. So we decided there should be a pact between us—between us and you. Allow us to make a treaty with you
 29 so that you will not do us any harm, just as we have not harmed you, but have always treated you well before sending you away in peace. Now you are blessed by the LORD.”
 30 So Isaac held a feast for them and they celebrated.
 31 Early in the morning the men made a treaty with each other. Isaac sent them off; they separated on good terms.
 32 That day Isaac’s servants came and told him about the well they had dug. “We’ve found water,” they reported.
 33 So he named it Shibah; that is why the name of the city has been Beer Sheba to this day.

Esau’s Wives Make Life Bitter for Isaac and Rebekah (1966 BC)

Genesis 26:34–35

34 When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, as well as Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.
 35 They caused [bitterness of spirit to] Isaac and Rebekah.

The Death of Ishmael (1943 BC)

Genesis 25:17–18

17 Ishmael lived a total of 137 years. He breathed his last and died; then he joined his ancestors.
 18 His descendants settled from Havilah to Shur, which runs next to Egypt all the way to Asshur. They settled away from all their relatives.

Rebekah and Jacob Deceive Isaac (1930 BC)

Genesis 27:1–40

Isaac Sends Esau to Prepare a Meal for the Blessing

1 When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he was almost blind, he called his older son Esau and said to him, “My son!”
 “Here I am!” Esau replied.
 2 Isaac said, “Since I am so old, I could die at any time.
 3 Therefore, take your weapons—your quiver and your bow—and go out into the open fields and hunt down some wild game for me.
 4 Then prepare for me some tasty food, the kind I love, and bring it to me. Then I will eat it so that I may bless you before I die.”

Rebekah Acts Quickly

5 Now Rebekah had been listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. When Esau went out to the open fields to hunt down some wild game and bring it back,
 6 Rebekah said to her son Jacob, “Look, I overheard your father tell your brother Esau,
 7 ‘Bring me some wild game and prepare for me some tasty food. Then I will eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before I die.’
 8 Now then, my son, do exactly what I tell you!
 9 Go to the flock and get me two of the best young goats. I’ll prepare them in a tasty way for your father, just the way he loves them.
 10 Then you will take it to your father. Thus he will eat it and bless you before he dies.”
 11 “But Esau my brother is a hairy man,” Jacob protested to his mother Rebekah, “and I have smooth skin!
 12 My father may touch me! Then he’ll think I’m mocking him and I’ll bring a curse on myself instead of a blessing.”
 13 So his mother told him, “Any curse against you will fall on me, my son! Just obey me! Go and get them for me!”
 14 So he went and got the goats and brought them to his mother. She prepared some tasty food, just the way his father loved it.
 15 Then Rebekah took her older son Esau’s best clothes, which she had with her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob.
 16 She put the skins of the young goats on his hands and the smooth part of his neck.
 17 Then she handed the tasty food and the bread she had made to her son Jacob.

Jacob Deceives His Father

18 He went to his father and said, “My father!” Isaac replied, “Here I am. Which are you, my son?”
 19 Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau, your firstborn. I’ve done as you told me. Now sit up and eat some of my wild game so that

you can bless me.”

20 But Isaac asked his son, “How in the world did you find it so quickly, my son?” “Because the LORD your God brought it to me,” he replied.

21 Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Come closer so I can touch you, my son, and know for certain if you really are my son Esau.”

22 So Jacob went over to his father Isaac, who felt him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s, but the hands are Esau’s.”

23 He did not recognize him because his hands were hairy, like his brother Esau’s hands. So Isaac blessed Jacob.

24 Then he asked, “Are you really my son Esau?” “I am,” Jacob replied.

25 Isaac said, “Bring some of the wild game for me to eat, my son. Then I will bless you.” So Jacob brought it to him, and he ate it. He also brought him wine, and Isaac drank.

26 Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come here and kiss me, my son.”

27 So Jacob went over and kissed him. When Isaac caught the scent of his clothing, he blessed him, saying,

“Yes, my son smells
like the scent of an open field
which the LORD has blessed.

28 May God give you
the dew of the sky
and the richness of the earth,
and plenty of grain and new wine.

29 May peoples serve you
and nations bow down to you.
You will be lord over your brothers,
and the sons of your mother will bow down to you.
May those who curse you be cursed,
and those who bless you be blessed.”

Isaac Realizes the Truth

30 Isaac had just finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely left his father’s presence, when his brother Esau returned from the hunt.

31 He also prepared some tasty food and brought it to his father. Esau said to him, “My father, get up and eat some of your son’s wild game. Then you can bless me.”

32 His father Isaac asked, “Who are you?” “I am your firstborn son,” he replied, “Esau!”

33 Isaac began to shake violently and asked, “Then who else hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it just before you arrived, and I blessed him. He will indeed be blessed!” [[Heb 11:20](#)]

Esau Tries to Get Isaac to Change His Mind

34 When Esau heard his father’s words, he wailed loudly and bitterly. He said to his father, “Bless me too, my father!”

35 But Isaac replied, “Your brother came in here deceitfully and took away your blessing.”

36 Esau exclaimed, “‘Jacob’ is the right name for him! He has tripped me up two times! He took away my birthright, and now, look, he has taken away my blessing!” Then he asked, “Have you not kept back a blessing for me?”

37 Isaac replied to Esau, “Look! I have made him lord over you. I have made all his relatives his servants and provided him with grain and new wine. What is left that I can do for you, my son?”

38 Esau said to his father, “Do you have only that one blessing, my father? Bless me too!” Then Esau wept loudly. [[Heb 12:17](#)]

39 So his father Isaac said to him,

“Indeed, your home will be
away from the richness of the earth,
and away from the dew of the sky above.

40 You will live by your sword
but you will serve your brother.
When you grow restless,
you will tear off his yoke from your neck.”

Jacob Flees to Haran (1930 BC)

Genesis 27:41–28:22

Esau Seeks Revenge and Rebekah Urges Jacob to Flee

27:41 So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing his father had given to his brother. Esau said privately, “The time of mourning for

my father is near; then I will kill my brother Jacob!”

42 When Rebekah heard what her older son Esau had said, she quickly summoned her younger son Jacob and told him, “Look, your brother Esau is planning to get revenge by killing you.

43 Now then, my son, do what I say. Run away immediately to my brother Laban in Haran.

44 Live with him for a little while until your brother’s rage subsides.

45 Stay there until your brother’s anger against you subsides and he forgets what you did to him. Then I’ll send someone to bring you back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?”

Isaac Blesses Jacob

46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am deeply depressed because of these daughters of Heth. If Jacob were to marry one of these daughters of Heth who live in this land, I would want to die!”

28:1 So Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him. Then he commanded him, “You must not marry a Canaanite woman!

2 Leave immediately for Paddan Aram! Go to the house of Bethuel, your mother’s father, and find yourself a wife there, among the daughters of Laban, your mother’s brother.

3 May the sovereign God bless you! May he make you fruitful and give you a multitude of descendants! Then you will become a large nation.

4 May he give you and your descendants the blessing he gave to Abraham so that you may possess the land God gave to Abraham, the land where you have been living as a temporary resident.” [Heb 11:20]

5 So Isaac sent Jacob on his way, and he went to Paddan Aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean and brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

Esau Attempts to Redeem Himself by Marrying Isaac’s Niece

6 Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him off to Paddan Aram to find a wife there. As he blessed him, Isaac commanded him, “You must not marry a Canaanite woman.”

7 Jacob obeyed his father and mother and left for Paddan Aram.

8 Then Esau realized that the Canaanite women were displeasing to his father Isaac.

9 So Esau went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, the sister of Nebaioth and daughter of Abraham’s son Ishmael, along with the wives he already had.

Jacob’s Vision at Bethel

10 Meanwhile Jacob left Beer Sheba and set out for Haran.

11 He reached a certain place where he decided to camp because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones and placed it near his head. Then he fell asleep in that place

12 and had a dream. He saw a stairway erected on the earth with its top reaching to the heavens. The angels of God were going up and coming down it

13 and the LORD stood at its top. He said, “I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of your father Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the ground you are lying on.

14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west, east, north, and south. All the families of the earth will [be blessed in you and your seed (singular)].

15 I am with you! I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I promised you!”

16 Then Jacob woke up and thought, “Surely the LORD is in this place, but I did not realize it!”

17 He was afraid and said, “What an awesome place this is! This is nothing else than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!”

18 Early in the morning Jacob took the stone he had placed near his head and set it up as a sacred stone. Then he poured oil on top of it.

19 He called that place Bethel, although the former name of the town was Luz.

20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God is with me and protects me on this journey I am taking and gives me food to eat and clothing to wear,

21 and I return safely to my father’s home, then the LORD will become my God.

22 Then this stone that I have set up as a sacred stone will be the house of God, and I will surely give you back a tenth of everything you give me.”

Jacob Works Seven Years for Rachel (1930–1923 BC)

Genesis 29:1–20

- 1 So Jacob moved on and came to the land of the eastern people.
- 2 He saw in the field a well with three flocks of sheep lying beside it, because the flocks were watered from that well. Now a large stone covered the mouth of the well.
- 3 When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone off the mouth of the well and water the sheep. Then they would put the stone back in its place over the well's mouth.
- 4 Jacob asked them, "My brothers, where are you from?" They replied, "We're from Haran."
- 5 So he said to them, "Do you know Laban, the grandson of Nahor?" "We know him," they said.
- 6 "Is he well?" Jacob asked. They replied, "He is well. Now look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep."
- 7 Then Jacob said, "Since it is still the middle of the day, it is not time for the flocks to be gathered. You should water the sheep and then go and let them graze some more."
- 8 "We can't," they said, "until all the flocks are gathered and the stone is rolled off the mouth of the well. Then we water the sheep."
- 9 While he was still speaking with them, Rachel arrived with her father's sheep, for she was tending them.
- 10 When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of his uncle Laban, and the sheep of his uncle Laban, he went over and rolled the stone off the mouth of the well and watered the sheep of his uncle Laban.
- 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep loudly.
- 12 When Jacob explained to Rachel that he was a relative of her father and the son of Rebekah, she ran and told her father.
- 13 When Laban heard this news about Jacob, his sister's son, he rushed out to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban how he was related to him.
- 14 Then Laban said to him, "You are indeed my own flesh and blood." So Jacob stayed with him for a month.
- 15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Should you work for me for nothing because you are my relative? Tell me what your wages should be."
- 16 (Now Laban had two daughters; the older one was named Leah, and the younger one Rachel.
- 17 Leah's eyes were tender, but Rachel had a lovely figure and beautiful appearance.)
- 18 Since Jacob had fallen in love with Rachel, he said, "I'll serve you seven years in exchange for your younger daughter Rachel."
- 19 Laban replied, "I'd rather give her to you than to another man. Stay with me."
- 20 So Jacob worked for seven years to acquire Rachel. But they seemed like only a few days to him because his love for her was so great.

Laban Deceives Jacob / Jacob Works Seven Years for Leah (1923–1916 BC)

Genesis 29:21–30

- 21 Finally Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my time of service is up. I want to have marital relations with her."
- 22 So Laban invited all the people of that place and prepared a feast.
- 23 In the evening he brought his daughter Leah to Jacob, and Jacob had marital relations with her.
- 24 (Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.)
- 25 In the morning Jacob discovered it was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What in the world have you done to me! Didn't I work for you in exchange for Rachel? Why have you tricked me?"
- 26 "It is not our custom here," Laban replied, "to give the younger daughter in marriage before the firstborn.
- 27 Complete my older daughter's bridal week. Then we will give you the younger one too, in exchange for seven more years of work."
- 28 Jacob did as Laban said. When Jacob completed Leah's bridal week, Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.
- 29 (Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.)
- 30 Jacob had marital relations with Rachel as well. He loved Rachel more than Leah, so he worked for Laban for seven more years.

God Opens Leah's Womb (1922–1919 BC)

Genesis 29:31–35

- 31 When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he enabled her to become pregnant while Rachel remained childless.
- 32 So Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, "The LORD has looked with pity on my oppressed condition. Surely my husband will love me now."
- 33 She became pregnant again and had another son. She said, "Because the LORD heard that I was unloved, he gave me this one too." So she named him Simeon.
- 34 She became pregnant again and had another son. She said, "Now this time my husband will show me affection, because I have given birth to three sons for him." That is why he was named Levi.

35 She became pregnant again and had another son. She said, “This time I will praise the LORD.” That is why she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children.

War Between Sisters (1919–1916 BC)

Genesis 30:1–21

Jacob’s Children by Bilhah

- 1 When Rachel saw that she could not give Jacob children, she became jealous of her sister. She said to Jacob, “Give me children or I’ll die!”
- 2 Jacob became furious with Rachel and exclaimed, “Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?”
- 3 She replied, “Here is my servant Bilhah! Have sexual relations with her so that she can bear children for me and I can have a family through her.”
- 4 So Rachel gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob had marital relations with her.
- 5 Bilhah became pregnant and gave Jacob a son.
- 6 Then Rachel said, “God has vindicated me. He has responded to my prayer and given me a son.” That is why she named him Dan.
- 7 Bilhah, Rachel’s servant, became pregnant again and gave Jacob another son.
- 8 Then Rachel said, “I have fought a desperate struggle with my sister, but I have won.” So she named him Naphtali.

Jacob’s Children by Zilpah

- 9 When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she gave her servant Zilpah to Jacob as a wife.
- 10 Soon Leah’s servant Zilpah gave Jacob a son.
- 11 Leah said, “How fortunate!” So she named him Gad.
- 12 Then Leah’s servant Zilpah gave Jacob another son.
- 13 Leah said, “How happy I am, for women will call me happy!” So she named him Asher.

Leah Bears More Children to Jacob

- 14 At the time of the wheat harvest Reuben went out and found some mandrake plants in a field and brought them to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, “Give me some of your son’s mandrakes.”
- 15 But Leah replied, “Wasn’t it enough that you’ve taken away my husband? Would you take away my son’s mandrakes too?” “All right,” Rachel said, “he may sleep with you tonight in exchange for your son’s mandrakes.”
- 16 When Jacob came in from the fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, “You must sleep with me because I have paid for your services with my son’s mandrakes.” So he had marital relations with her that night.
- 17 God paid attention to Leah; she became pregnant and gave Jacob a son for the fifth time.
- 18 Then Leah said, “God has granted me a reward because I gave my servant to my husband as a wife.” So she named him Issachar.
- 19 Leah became pregnant again and gave Jacob a son for the sixth time.
- 20 Then Leah said, “God has given me a good gift. Now my husband will honor me because I have given him six sons.” So she named him Zebulun.
- 21 After that she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah.

The Birth of Joseph (1916 BC)

Genesis 30:22–24

- 22 Then God took note of Rachel. He paid attention to her and enabled her to become pregnant.
- 23 She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. Then she said, “God has taken away my shame.”
- 24 She named him Joseph, saying, “May the LORD give me yet another son.”

Jacob Prospers in Spite of Laban’s Attempts to Cheat Him (1916–10 BC)

Genesis 30:25–43

- 25 After Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, “Send me on my way so that I can go home to my own country.
- 26 Let me take my wives and my children whom I have acquired by working for you. Then I’ll depart, because you know how hard I’ve worked for you.”
- 27 But Laban said to him, “If I have found favor in your sight, please stay here, for I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me on account of you.”
- 28 He added, “Just name your wages—I’ll pay whatever you want.”
- 29 “You know how I have worked for you,” Jacob replied, “and how well your livestock have fared under my care.
- 30 Indeed, you had little before I arrived, but now your possessions have increased many times over. The LORD has blessed you

wherever I worked. But now, how long must it be before I do something for my own family too?"

31 So Laban asked, "What should I give you?" "You don't need to give me a thing," Jacob replied, "but if you agree to this one condition, I will continue to care for your flocks and protect them:

32 Let me walk among all your flocks today and remove from them every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-colored lamb, and the spotted or speckled goats. These animals will be my wages.

33 My integrity will testify for me later on. When you come to verify that I've taken only the wages we agreed on, if I have in my possession any goat that is not speckled or spotted or any sheep that is not dark-colored, it will be considered stolen."

34 "Agreed!" said Laban, "It will be as you say."

35 So that day Laban removed the male goats that were streaked or spotted, all the female goats that were speckled or spotted (all that had any white on them), and all the dark-colored lambs, and put them in the care of his sons.

36 Then he separated them from Jacob by a three-day journey, while Jacob was taking care of the rest of Laban's flocks.

37 But Jacob took fresh-cut branches from poplar, almond, and plane trees. He made white streaks by peeling them, making the white inner wood in the branches visible.

38 Then he set up the peeled branches in all the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink. He set up the branches in front of the flocks when they were in heat and came to drink.

39 When the sheep mated in front of the branches, they gave birth to young that were streaked or speckled or spotted.

40 Jacob removed these lambs, but he made the rest of the flock face the streaked and completely dark-colored animals in Laban's flock. So he made separate flocks for himself and did not mix them with Laban's flocks.

41 When the stronger females were in heat, Jacob would set up the branches in the troughs in front of the flock, so they would mate near the branches.

42 But if the animals were weaker, he did not set the branches there. So the weaker animals ended up belonging to Laban and the stronger animals to Jacob.

43 In this way Jacob became extremely prosperous. He owned large flocks, male and female servants, camels, and donkeys.

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Jacob Returns to Canaan (1910 BC)**Genesis 31****Jacob Notices a Change in Laban's Attitude**

1 Jacob heard that Laban's sons were complaining, "Jacob has taken everything that belonged to our father! He has gotten rich at our father's expense!"

2 When Jacob saw the look on Laban's face, he could tell his attitude toward him had changed.

God Tells Jacob to Return to Canaan

3 The LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives. I will be with you."

4 So Jacob sent a message for Rachel and Leah to come to the field where his flocks were.

5 There he said to them, "I can tell that your father's attitude toward me has changed, but the God of my father has been with me.

6 You know that I've worked for your father as hard as I could,

7 but your father has humiliated me and changed my wages ten times. But God has not permitted him to do me any harm.

8 If he said, 'The speckled animals will be your wage,' then the entire flock gave birth to speckled offspring. But if he said, 'The streaked animals will be your wage,' then the entire flock gave birth to streaked offspring.

9 In this way God has snatched away your father's livestock and given them to me.

10 "Once during breeding season I saw in a dream that the male goats mating with the flock were streaked, speckled, and spotted.

11 In the dream the angel of God said to me, 'Jacob!' 'Here I am!' I replied.

12 Then he said, 'Observe that all the male goats mating with the flock are streaked, speckled, or spotted, for I have observed all that Laban has done to you.

13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the sacred stone and made a vow to me. Now leave this land immediately and return to your native land."

14 Then Rachel and Leah replied to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house?

15 Hasn't he treated us like foreigners? He not only sold us, but completely wasted the money paid for us!

16 Surely all the wealth that God snatched away from our father belongs to us and to our children. So now do everything God has told you."

Jacob Tricks Laban

17 So Jacob immediately put his children and his wives on the camels.

18 He took away all the livestock he had acquired in Paddan Aram and all his moveable property that he had accumulated. Then he set out toward the land of Canaan to return to his father Isaac.

19 While Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole the household idols that belonged to her father.

20 Jacob also deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him that he was leaving.

21 He left with all he owned. He quickly crossed the Euphrates River and headed for the hill country of Gilead.

Laban Pursues Jacob

22 Three days later Laban discovered Jacob had left.

23 So he took his relatives with him and pursued Jacob for seven days. He caught up with him in the hill country of Gilead.

24 But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and warned him, "Be careful that you neither bless nor curse Jacob."

25 Laban overtook Jacob, and when Jacob pitched his tent in the hill country of Gilead, Laban and his relatives set up camp there too.

26 "What have you done?" Laban demanded of Jacob. "You've deceived me and carried away my daughters as if they were captives of war!

27 Why did you run away secretly and deceive me? Why didn't you tell me so I could send you off with a celebration complete with singing, tambourines, and harps?

28 You didn't even allow me to kiss my daughters and my grandchildren good-bye. You have acted foolishly!

29 I have the power to do you harm, but the God of your father told me last night, 'Be careful that you neither bless nor curse Jacob.'

30 Now I understand that you have gone away because you longed desperately for your father's house. Yet why did you steal my gods?"

31 "I left secretly because I was afraid!" Jacob replied to Laban. "I thought you might take your daughters away from me by force.

32 Whoever has taken your gods will be put to death! In the presence of our relatives identify whatever is yours and take it." (Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.)

The Search for Laban's gods

33 So Laban entered Jacob's tent, and Leah's tent, and the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find the idols. Then he left Leah's tent and entered Rachel's.

34 (Now Rachel had taken the idols and put them inside her camel's saddle and sat on them.) Laban searched the whole tent, but

did not find them.

35 Rachel said to her father, “Don’t be angry, my lord. I cannot stand up in your presence because I am having my period.” So he searched thoroughly, but did not find the idols.

Jacob’s Tirade

36 Jacob became angry and argued with Laban. “What did I do wrong?” he demanded of Laban. “What sin of mine prompted you to chase after me in hot pursuit?

37 When you searched through all my goods, did you find anything that belonged to you? Set it here before my relatives and yours, and let them settle the dispute between the two of us!

38 “I have been with you for the past twenty years. Your ewes and female goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten rams from your flocks.

39 Animals torn by wild beasts I never brought to you; I always absorbed the loss myself. You always made me pay for every missing animal, whether it was taken by day or at night.

40 I was consumed by scorching heat during the day and by piercing cold at night, and I went without sleep.

41 This was my lot for twenty years in your house: I worked like a slave for you—fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks, but you changed my wages ten times!

42 If the God of my father—the God of Abraham, the one whom Isaac fears—had not been with me, you would certainly have sent me away empty-handed! But God saw how I was oppressed and how hard I worked, and he rebuked you last night.”

Laban and Jacob Make a Covenant

43 Laban replied to Jacob, “These women are my daughters, these children are my grandchildren, and these flocks are my flocks. All that you see belongs to me. But how can I harm these daughters of mine today or the children to whom they have given birth?

44 So now, come, let’s make a formal agreement, you and I, and it will be proof that we have made peace.”

45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a memorial pillar.

46 Then he said to his relatives, “Gather stones.” So they brought stones and put them in a pile. They ate there by the pile of stones.

47 Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed.

48 Laban said, “This pile of stones is a witness of our agreement today.” That is why it was called Galeed.

49 It was also called Mizpah because he said, “May the LORD watch between us when we are out of sight of one another.

50 If you mistreat my daughters or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no one else is with us, realize that God is witness to your actions.”

51 “Here is this pile of stones and this pillar I have set up between me and you,” Laban said to Jacob.

52 “This pile of stones and the pillar are reminders that I will not pass beyond this pile to come to harm you and that you will not pass beyond this pile and this pillar to come to harm me.

53 May the God of Abraham and the god of Nahor, the gods of their father, judge between us.” Jacob took an oath by the God whom his father Isaac feared.

54 Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain and invited his relatives to eat the meal. They ate the meal and spent the night on the mountain.

55 Early in the morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters goodbye and blessed them. Then Laban left and returned home.

Jacob And Esau (1910 BC)

Genesis 32:1–33:17

Jacob Is Met by the Angels of God

32:1 So Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him.

2 When Jacob saw them, he exclaimed, “This is the camp of God!” So he named that place Mahanaim.

Jacob Sends Messengers to Esau

3 Jacob sent messengers on ahead to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the region of Edom.

4 He commanded them, “This is what you must say to my lord Esau: ‘This is what your servant Jacob says: I have been staying with Laban until now.

5 I have oxen, donkeys, sheep, and male and female servants. I have sent this message to inform my lord, so that I may find favor in your sight.’”

6 The messengers returned to Jacob and said, “We went to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you and has four hundred men with him.”

Jacob Thinks Esau Is Coming to Kill Him

7 Jacob was very afraid and upset. So he divided the people who were with him into two camps, as well as the flocks, herds, and

camels.

8 “If Esau attacks one camp,” he thought, “then the other camp will be able to escape.”

9 Then Jacob prayed, “O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O LORD, you said to me, ‘Return to your land and to your relatives and I will make you prosper.’”

10 I am not worthy of all the faithful love you have shown your servant. With only my walking stick I crossed the Jordan, but now I have become two camps.

11 Rescue me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, as well as the mothers with their children.

12 But you said, ‘I will certainly make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand on the seashore, too numerous to count.’”

13 Jacob stayed there that night. Then he sent as a gift to his brother Esau

14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,

15 thirty female camels with their young, forty cows and ten bulls, and twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys.

16 He entrusted them to his servants, who divided them into herds. He told his servants, “Pass over before me, and keep some distance between one herd and the next.”

17 He instructed the servant leading the first herd, “When my brother Esau meets you and asks, ‘To whom do you belong? Where are you going? Whose herds are you driving?’”

18 then you must say, ‘They belong to your servant Jacob. They have been sent as a gift to my lord Esau. In fact Jacob himself is behind us.’”

19 He also gave these instructions to the second and third servants, as well as all those who were following the herds, saying, “You must say the same thing to Esau when you meet him.

20 You must also say, ‘In fact your servant Jacob is behind us.’” Jacob thought, “I will first appease him by sending a gift ahead of me. After that I will meet him. Perhaps he will accept me.”

21 So the gifts were sent on ahead of him while he spent that night in the camp.

Jacob Wrestles with the Angel of God

22 During the night Jacob quickly took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok.

23 He took them and sent them across the stream along with all his possessions.

24 So Jacob was left alone. Then a man wrestled with him until daybreak.

25 When the man saw that he could not defeat Jacob, he struck the socket of his hip so the socket of Jacob’s hip was dislocated while he wrestled with him.

26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking.” “I will not let you go,” Jacob replied, “unless you bless me.”

27 The man asked him, “What is your name?” He answered, “Jacob.”

28 “No longer will your name be Jacob,” the man told him, “but Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have prevailed.”

29 Then Jacob asked, “Please tell me your name.” “Why do you ask my name?” the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there.

30 So Jacob named the place Peniel, explaining, “Certainly I have seen God face to face and have survived.”

31 The sun rose over him as he crossed over Penuel, but he was limping because of his hip.

32 That is why to this day the Israelites do not eat the sinew which is attached to the socket of the hip, because he struck the socket of Jacob’s hip near the attached sinew.

Jacob and Esau Are Reconciled

33:1 Jacob looked up and saw that Esau was coming along with four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two female servants.

2 He put the servants and their children in front, with Leah and her children behind them, and Rachel and Joseph behind them.

3 But Jacob himself went on ahead of them, and he bowed toward the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

4 But Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, hugged his neck, and kissed him. Then they both wept.

5 When Esau looked up and saw the women and the children, he asked, “Who are these people with you?” Jacob replied, “The children whom God has graciously given your servant.”

6 The female servants came forward with their children and bowed down.

7 Then Leah came forward with her children and they bowed down. Finally Joseph and Rachel came forward and bowed down.

8 Esau then asked, “What did you intend by sending all these herds to meet me?” Jacob replied, “To find favor in your sight, my lord.”

9 But Esau said, “I have plenty, my brother. Keep what belongs to you.”

10 “No, please take them,” Jacob said. “If I have found favor in your sight, accept my gift from my hand. Now that I have seen your face and you have accepted me, it is as if I have seen the face of God.

11 Please take my present that was brought to you, for God has been generous to me and I have all I need.” When Jacob urged him,

he took it.

12 Then Esau said, "Let's be on our way! I will go in front of you."

13 But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are young, and that I have to look after the sheep and cattle that are nursing their young. If they are driven too hard for even a single day, all the animals will die.

14 Let my lord go on ahead of his servant. I will travel more slowly, at the pace of the herds and the children, until I come to my lord at Seir."

15 So Esau said, "Let me leave some of my men with you." "Why do that?" Jacob replied. "My lord has already been kind enough to me."

16 So that same day Esau made his way back to Seir.

17 But Jacob traveled to Succoth where he built himself a house and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place was called Succoth.

Toledot of Esau (c. 1966–1910 BC)

Genesis 36

Esau's Immediate Family

1 What follows is the account of Esau (also known as Edom).

2 Esau took his wives from the Canaanites: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite,

3 in addition to Basemath the daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth.

4 Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, Basemath bore Reuel,

5 and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

6 Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, all the people in his household, his livestock, his animals, and all his possessions which he had acquired in the land of Canaan and went to a land some distance away from Jacob his brother

7 because they had too many possessions to be able to stay together and the land where they had settled was not able to support them because of their livestock.

8 So Esau (also known as Edom) lived in the hill country of Seir.

Esau's Sons and Grandsons

9 This is the account of Esau, the father of the Edomites, in the hill country of Seir.

10 These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz, the son of Esau's wife Adah, and Reuel, the son of Esau's wife Basemath.

11 The sons of Eliphaz were: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.

12 Timna, a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz, bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Esau's wife Adah.

13 These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Esau's wife Basemath.

14 These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon: She bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah to Esau.

Clans from Esau

15 These were the chiefs among the descendants of Esau, the sons of Eliphaz, Esau's firstborn: chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz,

16 chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek. These were the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these were the sons of Adah.

17 These were the sons of Esau's son Reuel: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah. These were the chiefs descended from Reuel in the land of Edom; these were the sons of Esau's wife Basemath.

18 These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah. These were the chiefs descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

19 These were the sons of Esau (also known as Edom), and these were their chiefs.

Genealogy of Seir

20 These were the sons of Seir the Horite, who were living in the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah,

21 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, the descendants of Seir in the land of Edom.

22 The sons of Lotan were Hori and Homam; Lotan's sister was Timna.

23 These were the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

24 These were the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah (who discovered the hot springs in the wilderness as he pastured the donkeys of his father Zibeon).

25 These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

26 These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.

27 These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.

28 These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

29 These were the chiefs of the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah,

30 chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chief lists in the land of Seir.

Kings of Edom

31 These were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king ruled over the Israelites:

32 Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom; the name of his city was Dinhabah.

33 When Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah from Bozrah reigned in his place.

34 When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites reigned in his place.

35 When Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated the Midianites in the land of Moab, reigned in his place; the name of his city was Avith.

36 When Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah reigned in his place.

37 When Samlah died, Shaul from Rehoboth by the River reigned in his place.

38 When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place.

39 When Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor died, Hadad reigned in his place; the name of his city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-Zahab.

Clans of Esau

40 These were the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their families, according to 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 were the chiefs of Edom, according to their settlements in the land they possessed. This was Esau, the father of the Edomites.

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The Rape of Dinah (c. 1902 BC)

Genesis 33:18–34:31

Jacob Camps At Shechem

33:18 After he left Paddan Aram, Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem in the land of Canaan, and he camped near the city.
19 Then he purchased the portion of the field where he had pitched his tent; he bought it from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money.
20 There he set up an altar and called it "The God of Israel is God."

Dinah (around 13 years old) is Raped by Shechem

34:1 Now Dinah, Leah's daughter whom she bore to Jacob, went to meet the young women of the land.
2 When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, who ruled that area, saw her, he grabbed her, forced himself on her, and sexually assaulted her.
3 Then he became very attached to Dinah, Jacob's daughter. He fell in love with the young woman and spoke romantically to her.

Shechem Asks for Dinah's Hand in Marriage

4 Shechem said to his father Hamor, "Acquire this young girl as my wife."
5 When Jacob heard that Shechem had violated his daughter Dinah, his sons were with the livestock in the field. So Jacob remained silent until they came in.
6 Then Shechem's father Hamor went to speak with Jacob about Dinah.
7 Now Jacob's sons had come in from the field when they heard the news. They were offended and very angry because Shechem had disgraced Israel by sexually assaulting Jacob's daughter, a crime that should not be committed.
8 But Hamor made this appeal to them: "My son Shechem is in love with your daughter. Please give her to him as his wife.
9 Intermarry with us. Let us marry your daughters, and take our daughters as wives for yourselves.
10 You may live among us, and the land will be open to you. Live in it, travel freely in it, and acquire property in it."
11 Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and brothers, "Let me find favor in your sight, and whatever you require of me I'll give.
12 You can make the bride price and the gift I must bring very expensive, and I'll give whatever you ask of me. Just give me the young woman as my wife!"

Jacob's Sons Set Circumcision as Requirement

13 Jacob's sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully when they spoke because Shechem had violated their sister Dinah.
14 They said to them, "We cannot give our sister to a man who is not circumcised, for it would be a disgrace to us.
15 We will give you our consent on this one condition: You must become like us by circumcising all your males.
16 Then we will give you our daughters to marry, and we will take your daughters as wives for ourselves, and we will live among you and become one people.
17 But if you do not agree to our terms by being circumcised, then we will take our sister and depart."
18 Their offer pleased Hamor and his son Shechem.
19 The young man did not delay in doing what they asked because he wanted Jacob's daughter Dinah badly. (Now he was more important than anyone in his father's household.)
20 So Hamor and his son Shechem went to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city,
21 "These men are at peace with us. So let them live in the land and travel freely in it, for the land is wide enough for them. We will take their daughters for wives, and we will give them our daughters to marry.
22 Only on this one condition will these men consent to live with us and become one people: They demand that every male among us be circumcised just as they are circumcised.
23 If we do so, won't their livestock, their property, and all their animals become ours? So let's consent to their demand, so they will live among us."
24 All the men who assembled at the city gate agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem. Every male who assembled at the city gate was circumcised.

Dinah's Brothers, Simeon and Levi, Kill Every Male in Shechem

25 In three days, when they were still in pain, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and went to the unsuspecting city and slaughtered every male.
26 They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword, took Dinah from Shechem's house, and left.
27 Jacob's sons killed them and looted the city because their sister had been violated.
28 They took their flocks, herds, and donkeys, as well as everything in the city and in the surrounding fields.
29 They captured as plunder all their wealth, all their little ones, and their wives, including everything in the houses.
30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought ruin on me by making me a foul odor among the inhabitants of the land—among the Canaanites and the Perizzites. I am few in number; they will join forces against me and attack me, and both I and my

family will be destroyed!”

31 But Simeon and Levi replied, “Should he treat our sister like a common prostitute?”

Jacob’s Journeys (c. 1902–1900 BC)

Genesis 35:1–27

God Tells Jacob to Move to Bethel

1 Then God said to Jacob, “Go up at once 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 told his household and all who were with him, “Get rid of the foreign gods you have among you. Purify yourselves and change your clothes.

3 Let us go up at once to Bethel. Then I will make an altar there to God, who responded to me in my time of distress and has been with me wherever I went.”

4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods that were in their possession and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob buried them under the oak near Shechem

5 and they started on their journey. The surrounding cities were afraid of God, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

6 Jacob and all those who were with him arrived at Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan.

7 He built an altar there and named the place El Bethel because there God had revealed himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother.

8 (Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died and was buried under the oak below Bethel; thus it was named Oak of Weeping.)

God Changes Jacob’s Name to Israel

9 God appeared to Jacob again after he returned from Paddan Aram and blessed him.

10 God said to him, “Your name is Jacob, but your name will no longer be called Jacob; Israel will be your name.” So God named him Israel.

11 Then God said to him, “I am the sovereign God. Be fruitful and multiply! A nation—even a company of nations—will descend from you; kings will be among your descendants!

12 The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you. To your descendants I will also give this land.”

13 Then God went up from the place where he spoke with him.

14 So Jacob set up a sacred stone pillar in the place where God spoke with him. He poured out a drink offering on it, and then he poured oil on it.

15 Jacob named the place where God spoke with him Bethel.

Rachel Dies During the Birth of Benjamin

16 They traveled on from Bethel, and when Ephrath was still some distance away, Rachel went into labor—and her labor was hard.

17 When her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, “Don’t be afraid, for you are having another son.”

18 With her dying breath, she named him Ben-Oni. But his father called him Benjamin instead.

19 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).

20 Jacob set up a marker over her grave; it is the Marker of Rachel’s Grave to this day.

Jacob’s Sons

22b Jacob had twelve sons:

23 The sons of Leah were Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, as well as Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

24 The sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin.

25 The sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s servant, were Dan and Naphtali.

26 The sons of Zilpah, Leah’s servant, were Gad and Asher.

These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan Aram.

Reuben Sleeps With Bilhah

21 Then Israel traveled on and pitched his tent beyond Migdal Eder.

22a While Israel was living in that land, Reuben had sexual relations with Bilhah, his father’s concubine, and Israel heard about it.

Jacob Returns Home to Isaac

27 So Jacob came back to his father Isaac in Mamre, to Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had stayed.

Toledot of Jacob (1899 BC)**Genesis 37****The Toledot of Jacob**

1 But Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed, in the land of Canaan.

2 This is the account of Jacob. Joseph, his seventeen-year-old son, was taking care of the flocks with his brothers. Now he was a youngster working with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons because he was a son born to him late in life, and he made a special tunic for him.

4 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated Joseph and were not able to speak to him kindly.

Joseph's Dream

5 Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him even more.

6 He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had:

7 There we were, binding sheaves of grain in the middle of the field. Suddenly my sheaf rose up and stood upright and your sheaves surrounded my sheaf and bowed down to it!"

8 Then his brothers asked him, "Do you really think you will rule over us or have dominion over us?" They hated him even more because of his dream and because of what he said.

9 Then he had another dream, and told it to his brothers. "Look," he said. "I had another dream. The sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

10 When he told his father and his brothers, his father rebuked him, saying, "What is this dream that you had? Will I, your mother, and your brothers really come and bow down to you?"

11 His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept in mind what Joseph said.

Joseph's Brothers Conspire to Kill Him

12 When his brothers had gone to graze their father's flocks near Shechem,

13 Israel said to Joseph, "Your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem. Come, I will send you to them." "I'm ready," Joseph replied.

14 So Jacob said to him, "Go now and check on the welfare of your brothers and of the flocks, and bring me word." So Jacob sent him from the valley of Hebron.

15 When Joseph reached Shechem, a man found him wandering in the field, so the man asked him, "What are you looking for?"

16 He replied, "I'm looking for my brothers. Please tell me where they are grazing their flocks."

17 The man said, "They left this area, for I heard them say, 'Let's go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

18 Now Joseph's brothers saw him from a distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

19 They said to one another, "Here comes this master of dreams!

20 Come now, let's kill him, throw him into one of the cisterns, and then say that a wild animal ate him. Then we'll see how his dreams turn out!"

21 When Reuben heard this, he rescued Joseph from their hands, saying, "Let's not take his life!"

22 Reuben continued, "Don't shed blood! Throw him into this cistern that is here in the wilderness, but don't lay a hand on him." (Reuben said this so he could rescue Joseph from them and take him back to his father.)

23 When Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of his tunic, the special tunic that he wore.

24 Then they took him and threw him into the cistern. (Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it.)

Judah Sells Joseph Into Slavery

25 When they sat down to eat their food, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were carrying spices, balm, and myrrh down to Egypt.

26 Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?"

27 Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites, but let's not lay a hand on him, for after all, he is our brother, our own flesh." His brothers agreed.

28 So when the Midianite merchants passed by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. The Ishmaelites then took Joseph to Egypt.

Reuben Returns to Rescue Joseph

29 Later Reuben returned to the cistern to find that Joseph was not in it! He tore his clothes,

30 returned to his brothers, and said, "The boy isn't there! And I, where can I go?"

31 So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a young goat, and dipped the tunic in the blood.

32 Then they brought the special tunic to their father and said, "We found this. Determine now whether it is your son's tunic or

not.”

33 He recognized it and exclaimed, “It is my son’s tunic! A wild animal has eaten him! Joseph has surely been torn to pieces!”

34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourned for his son many days.

35 All his sons and daughters stood by him to console him, but he refused to be consoled. “No,” he said, “I will go to the grave mourning my son.” So Joseph’s father wept for him.

36 Now in Egypt the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard.

Judah Marries a Canaanite (c. 1899 – c. 1897 BC)

Genesis 38:1–5

1 At that time Judah left his brothers and stayed with an Adullamite man named Hirah.

2 There Judah saw the daughter of a Canaanite man named Shua. Judah acquired her as a wife and had marital relations with her.

3 She became pregnant and had a son. Judah named him Er.

4 She became pregnant again and had another son, whom she named Onan.

5 Then she had yet another son, whom she named Shelah. She gave birth to him in Kezib.

Joseph Serves Potiphar (1899 – c. 1889 BC)

Genesis 39:1–20

God Blesses Joseph

1 Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt. An Egyptian named Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh and the captain of the guard, purchased him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him there.

2 The LORD was with Joseph. He was successful and lived in the household of his Egyptian master.

3 His master observed that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made everything he was doing successful.

4 So Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal attendant. Potiphar appointed Joseph overseer of his household and put him in charge of everything he owned.

5 From the time Potiphar appointed him over his household and over all that he owned, the LORD blessed the Egyptian’s household for Joseph’s sake. The blessing of the LORD was on everything that he had, both in his house and in his fields.

6a So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; he gave no thought to anything except the food he ate.

Potiphar’s Wife Tries to Seduce Joseph

6b Now Joseph was well built and good-looking.

7 Soon after these things, his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Have sex with me.”

8 But he refused, saying to his master’s wife, “Look, my master does not give any thought to his household with me here, and everything that he owns he has put into my care.

9 There is no one greater in this household than I am. He has withheld nothing from me except you because you are his wife. So how could I do such a great evil and sin against God?”

10 Even though she continued to speak to Joseph day after day, he did not respond to her invitation to have sex with her.

11 One day he went into the house to do his work when none of the household servants were there in the house.

12 She grabbed him by his outer garment, saying, “Have sex with me!” But he left his outer garment in her hand and ran outside.

Joseph is Thrown into Prison

13 When she saw that he had left his outer garment in her hand and had run outside,

14 she called for her household servants and said to them, “See, my husband brought in a Hebrew man to us to humiliate us. He tried to have sex with me, but I screamed loudly.

15 When he heard me raise my voice and scream, he left his outer garment beside me and ran outside.”

16 So she laid his outer garment beside her until his master came home.

17 This is what she said to him: “That Hebrew slave you brought to us tried to humiliate me,

18 but when I raised my voice and screamed, he left his outer garment and ran outside.”

19 When his master heard his wife say, “This is the way your slave treated me,” he became furious.

20 Joseph’s master took him and threw him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined. So he was there in the prison.

Chronological Notes

1) Joseph in Egypt.

A) The dates I use for Egyptian chronology will follow the “high” chronology as given by Hayes.¹ These dates are also used by Eugene Merrill in *Kingdom of Priests*. Andrew Steinmann does not specify which system he uses in *From Abraham to Paul*—sometimes the dates correspond to the “high” chronology; sometimes to the “low” (the same can be said of Jack Finegan in *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*).

(1) One of the important differences between the high, middle and low chronologies is seen in the reign of Thutmose III.² The high chronology sets the reign at 1504–1450 BC, the middle at 1490–1436 BC, and the low at 1479–1425 BC. The current trend among Egyptologists, especially from Germany, has been in the direction of the low chronology.

B) Joseph’s life “was contemporaneous with the magnificent Twelfth Dynasty of Middle Kingdom Egypt, a dynasty that commenced in 1991 and ended in 1786. Although the chronology of this period is notoriously difficult to reconstruct, the Cambridge Ancient History dates used here cannot be far off. By this system of reckoning, Joseph was sold into Egypt in the closing years of the reign of Ammenemes II (1929–1895). His was a peaceful reign characterized by an improved agricultural and economic life and by the fostering of close relationships with western Asia. Joseph would not be unwelcome on the basis of his ethnic background. His imprisonment would have occurred under Sesostri II (1897–1878), about a decade after his arrival in Egypt (i.e., in 1889); it was Sesostri whose dreams he interpreted and whom he served as a high government official. It is significant that Sesostri II was in power at the time the nomarch of Beni Hasan welcomed the Semitic chieftain Abisha to his city, an event celebrated in the famous murals of Beni Hasan. Sesostri also imported and employed great numbers of Asiatic slaves and mercenaries, a policy that shows anything but an anti-Semitic bias. Most striking of all perhaps were the massive land reclamation and flood control projects undertaken under the administration of this enlightened monarch. A principal feature of these was a canal dug to connect the Fayyum Basin with the Nile, a canal whose ruins to this very day bear the name Bahr Yusef (“River of Joseph”). Can it be that this name survives as a testimony to the contribution of Joseph to the public-works projects of Sesostri II?”³

2) The Story of Tamar and Judah.⁴

A) The expression “at that time” in Genesis 38:1 indicates that “immediately after the selling of Joseph, at that very time, Judah went down from his brothers and married the daughter of Shua.”⁵ The following verses relate the births of Judah’s three sons, “and we shall certainly not be far from the author’s true intent if we assign Er’s birth to the first year after the selling of Joseph, that of Onan to the second year, and that of Shelah to the third year, when Joseph was twenty years old.”⁶

B) Following v. 5, there is a space of time of around 15 or 16 years where Judah’s sons grow into manhood. For this reason, I have placed Genesis 38:1–5 in today’s reading (c. 1899 – c. 1897), and Genesis 38:6–30 in a later reading (c. 1880 – c. 1877).

C) “If we suppose that Er was eighteen when he married Tamar (it is probable that in the author’s time, too, it was customary ‘to marry at the age of eighteen’), from which it follows, according to our calculation, that Joseph was then thirty-six years old, in other words, that it was the sixth year of the years of plenty. Er died immediately after his marriage, in the very same year, and that Onan married his sister-in-law Tamar also in that year, when he was seventeen years old, and that he, too, died in the selfsame year, then the age of Shelah will accord well with the statement concerning him in v. 11.”⁷

D) “According to this verse Shelah, at the time of Onan’s death, was still so young that it was possible for his father to say, ‘till Shelah my son grows up’; nevertheless, he was not of such a tender age as to exclude completely the possibility of his

¹ William C. Hayes, “Chronological Tables,” *Cambridge Ancient History* (3rd ed.; Cambridge: At the University Press, 1971) 818–819.

² For more detail, see William A. Ward, “The Present Status of Egyptian Chronology,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* No. 288 (Nov 1992): 53–66.

³ Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 51.

⁴ For the most complete and satisfying examination of the chronological issues of Genesis 38, see Umberto Cassuto, “The Story of Tamar and Judah,” *Biblical & Oriental Studies, Volume 1: Bible*, (Magnes Press, 1975), 29–40.

⁵ Cassuto, 39.

⁶ Cassuto, 39.

⁷ Cassuto, 39–40.

marrying, for it was only out of fear that he might also die like his brothers that Judah was unwilling to let him marry Tamar, and since, according to our calculation and conjectures, Shelah was then sixteen, it is clear that we have so far correctly interpreted the intent of the author.”⁸

- E) “From this moment the rhythm of the narrative becomes less intense and broader; the situation remains unchanged for a long time. ‘And the days multiplied’ [this is the literal rendering of v. 12]: a complete year passed and Shelah reached the age of seventeen (at which age Onan married Tamar according to the law of Levirate), and she was not married to him; another year passed and Shelah was eighteen years old, that means, ‘Shelah was grown up’ and was a man old enough to marry, nevertheless ‘she had not been given to him in marriage’. Then Tamar was convinced that Judah intended to put her off with mere words, and she took such steps as she could to perpetuate the name of the deceased in Israel. That year, according to our argument thus far, Joseph reached the age of thirty-eight, which coincided with the first year of the period of famine. If this be so, everything is easily explained. In the second year of famine Tamar gave birth to Perez and Zerah, and in the selfsame year (45:6 ‘for the famine has been in the land these two years’) the children of Israel went down to Egypt, and with the rest of the family the two children, Perez and Zerah, who were a few months old, were also transported to Egypt.”⁹
- F) One last issue remains to be resolved—what of Genesis 46:12 which seems to indicate that Perez’s sons “Hezron and Hamul” came to Egypt with Jacob? There is simply not enough time in the narrative for Perez to have grown up and fathered two sons. Cassuto answers this question in detail (see pages 34–38) and I will give only the summation here: “We also understand why Hezron and Hamul are listed in Genesis 46:12 although at the time of the immigration into Egypt they had not yet been born; it was necessary to inform us at this stage that these two sons, who represented Er and Onan, were born to Perez, in order to justify the inclusion of the names of the deceased in the roll. The meaning of the passage in Genesis 46:12, which appeared, at the first blush, obscure and surprising, now becomes self-evident in all its details: ‘The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah,’ that is to say, these five were born to Judah, before he went down to Egypt; ‘but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan,’ that is, although these two sons, Er and Onan, died in the land of Canaan, and consequently were not among those who emigrated to Egypt, nevertheless, ‘there were the sons of Perez, Hezron and Hamul,’ who represented Er and Onan, and consequently they retained their place among the sons of Judah.”¹⁰

⁸ Cassuto, 40.

⁹ Cassuto, 40.

¹⁰ Cassuto, 38–39.

Joseph in Prison (c. 1889–1886 BC)

Genesis 39:21–23

21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him kindness. He granted him favor in the sight of the prison warden.
 22 The warden put all the prisoners under Joseph's care. He was in charge of whatever they were doing.
 23 The warden did not concern himself with anything that was in Joseph's care because the LORD was with him and whatever he was doing the LORD was making successful.

Joseph Interprets the Cupbearer's and Baker's Dreams (1888 BC)

Genesis 40

1 After these things happened, the cupbearer to the king of Egypt and the royal baker offended their master, the king of Egypt.
 2 Pharaoh was enraged with his two officials, the cupbearer and the baker,
 3 so he imprisoned them in the house of the captain of the guard in the same facility where Joseph was confined.
 4 The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be their attendant, and he served them. They spent some time in custody.
 5 Both of them, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, had a dream the same night. Each man's dream had its own meaning.
 6 When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were looking depressed.
 7 So he asked Pharaoh's officials, who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why do you look so sad today?"
 8 They told him, "We both had dreams, but there is no one to interpret them." Joseph responded, "Don't interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me."
 9 So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph: "In my dream, there was a vine in front of me.
 10 On the vine there were three branches. As it budded, its blossoms opened and its clusters ripened into grapes.
 11 Now Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, so I took the grapes, squeezed them into his cup, and put the cup in Pharaoh's hand."
 12 "This is its meaning," Joseph said to him. "The three branches represent three days.
 13 In three more days Pharaoh will reinstate you and restore you to your office. You will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you did before when you were cupbearer.
 14 But remember me when it goes well for you, and show me kindness. Make mention of me to Pharaoh and bring me out of this prison,
 15 for I really was kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews and I have done nothing wrong here for which they should put me in a dungeon."
 16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation of the first dream was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also appeared in my dream and there were three baskets of white bread on my head.
 17 In the top basket there were baked goods of every kind for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them from the basket that was on my head."
 18 Joseph replied, "This is its meaning: The three baskets represent three days.
 19 In three more days Pharaoh will decapitate you and impale you on a pole. Then the birds will eat your flesh from you."
 20 On the third day it was Pharaoh's birthday, so he gave a feast for all his servants. He "lifted up" the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker in the midst of his servants.
 21 He restored the chief cupbearer to his former position so that he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand,
 22 but the chief baker he impaled, just as Joseph had predicted.
 23 But the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph—he forgot him.

Pharaoh Dreams of the Coming Famine (1886 BC)

Genesis 41:1–46

Pharaoh's Dream

1 At the end of two full years Pharaoh had a dream. As he was standing by the Nile,
 2 seven fine-looking, fat cows were coming up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the reeds.
 3 Then seven bad-looking, thin cows were coming up after them from the Nile, and they stood beside the other cows at the edge of the river.
 4 The bad-looking, thin cows ate the seven fine-looking, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.
 5 Then he fell asleep again and had a second dream: There were seven heads of grain growing on one stalk, healthy and good.
 6 Then seven heads of grain, thin and burned by the east wind, were sprouting up after them.
 7 The thin heads swallowed up the seven healthy and full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up and realized it was a dream.
 8 In the morning he was troubled, so he called for all the diviner-priests of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

The Cupbearer Remembers Joseph

9 Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “Today I recall my failures.

10 Pharaoh was enraged with his servants, and he put me in prison in the house of the captain of the guards—me and the chief baker.

11 We each had a dream one night; each of us had a dream with its own meaning.

12 Now a young man, a Hebrew, a servant of the captain of the guards, was with us there. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted the meaning of each of our respective dreams for us.

13 It happened just as he had said to us—Pharaoh restored me to my office, but he impaled the baker.”

14 Then Pharaoh summoned Joseph. So they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; he shaved himself, changed his clothes, and came before Pharaoh.

Joseph Explains Pharaoh’s Dream

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard about you, that you can interpret dreams.”

16 Joseph replied to Pharaoh, “It is not within my power, but God will speak concerning the welfare of Pharaoh.”

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream I was standing by the edge of the Nile.

18 Then seven fat and fine-looking cows were coming up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the reeds.

19 Then seven other cows came up after them; they were scrawny, very bad-looking, and lean. I had never seen such bad-looking cows as these in all the land of Egypt!

20 The lean, bad-looking cows ate up the seven fat cows.

21 When they had eaten them, no one would have known that they had done so, for they were just as bad-looking as before. Then I woke up.

22 I also saw in my dream seven heads of grain growing on one stalk, full and good.

23 Then seven heads of grain, withered and thin and burned with the east wind, were sprouting up after them.

24 The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads of grain. So I told all this to the diviner-priests, but no one could tell me its meaning.”

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Both dreams of Pharaoh have the same meaning. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do.

26 The seven good cows represent seven years, and the seven good heads of grain represent seven years. Both dreams have the same meaning.

27 The seven lean, bad-looking cows that came up after them represent seven years, as do the seven empty heads of grain burned with the east wind. They represent seven years of famine.

28 This is just what I told Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do.

29 Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the whole land of Egypt.

30 But seven years of famine will occur after them, and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will devastate the land.

31 The previous abundance of the land will not be remembered because of the famine that follows, for the famine will be very severe.

32 The dream was repeated to Pharaoh because the matter has been decreed by God, and God will make it happen soon.

Joseph Suggests a Solution to the Famine

33 “So now Pharaoh should look for a wise and discerning man and give him authority over all the land of Egypt.

34 Pharaoh should do this—he should appoint officials throughout the land to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance.

35 They should gather all the excess food during these good years that are coming. By Pharaoh’s authority they should store up grain so the cities will have food, and they should preserve it.

36 This food should be held in storage for the land in preparation for the seven years of famine that will occur throughout the land of Egypt. In this way the land will survive the famine.”

Pharaoh Appoints Joseph the Ruler of Egypt

37 This advice made sense to Pharaoh and all his officials.

38 So Pharaoh asked his officials, “Can we find a man like Joseph, one in whom the Spirit of God is present?”

39 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Because God has enabled you to know all this, there is no one as wise and discerning as you are!

40 You will oversee my household, and all my people will submit to your commands. Only I, the king, will be greater than you.

41 “See here,” Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I place you in authority over all the land of Egypt.”

42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his own hand and put it on Joseph’s. He clothed him with fine linen clothes and put a gold chain around his neck.

43 Pharaoh had him ride in the chariot used by his second-in-command, and they cried out before him, “Kneel down!” So he placed

him over all the land of Egypt.

44 Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, but without your permission no one will move his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt."

45 Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah. He also gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. So Joseph took charge of all the land of Egypt.

46 Now Joseph was 30 years old when he began serving Pharaoh king of Egypt. Joseph was commissioned by Pharaoh and was in charge of all the land of Egypt.

The Death of Isaac (1886 BC)

Genesis 35:28–29

28 Isaac lived to be 180 years old.

29 Then Isaac breathed his last and joined his ancestors. He died an old man who had lived a full life. His sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Seven Years of Plenty (1885–1879 BC)

Genesis 41:47–52

47 During the seven years of abundance the land produced large, bountiful harvests.

48 Joseph collected all the excess food in the land of Egypt during the seven years and stored it in the cities. In every city he put the food gathered from the fields around it.

49 Joseph stored up a vast amount of grain, like the sand of the sea, until he stopped measuring it because it was impossible to measure.

50 Two sons were born to Joseph before the famine came. Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, was their mother.

51 Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, saying, "Certainly God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's house."

52 He named the second child Ephraim, saying, "Certainly God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

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God Kills Judah's Two Sons—Er and Onan (c. 1880–1878 BC)

Genesis 38:6–11

6 Judah acquired a wife for Er his firstborn; her name was Tamar.

7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD killed him.

8 Then Judah said to Onan, "Have sexual relations with your brother's wife and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her so that you may raise up a descendant for your brother."

9 But Onan knew that the child would not be considered his. So whenever he had sexual relations with his brother's wife, he withdrew prematurely so as not to give his brother a descendant.

10 What he did was evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD killed him too.

11 Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Live as a widow in your father's house until Shelah my son grows up." For he thought, "I don't want him to die like his brothers." So Tamar went and lived in her father's house.

The Great Famine Begins (Nisan [April] 1878 BC)

Genesis 41:53–57

53 The seven years of abundance in the land of Egypt came to an end.

54 Then the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had predicted. There was famine in all the other lands, but throughout the land of Egypt there was food.

55 When all the land of Egypt experienced the famine, the people cried out to Pharaoh for food. Pharaoh said to all the people of Egypt, "Go to Joseph and do whatever he tells you."

56 While the famine was over all the earth, Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians. The famine was severe throughout the land of Egypt.

57 People from every country came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain because the famine was severe throughout the earth.

Tamar Seduces Judah (c. 1878 BC)

Genesis 38:12–26

12 After some time Judah's wife, the daughter of Shua, died. After Judah was consoled, he left for Timnah to visit his sheepshearers, along with his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

13 Tamar was told, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep."

14 So she removed her widow's clothes and covered herself with a veil. She wrapped herself and sat at the entrance to Enaim which is on the way to Timnah. (She did this because she saw that she had not been given to Shelah as a wife, even though he had now grown up.)

15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute because she had covered her face.

16 He turned aside to her along the road and said, "Come on! I want to have sex with you." (He did not realize it was his daughter-in-law.) She asked, "What will you give me in exchange for having sex with you?"

17 He replied, "I'll send you a young goat from the flock." She asked, "Will you give me a pledge until you send it?"

18 He said, "What pledge should I give you?" She replied, "Your seal, your cord, and the staff that's in your hand." So he gave them to her and had sex with her. She became pregnant by him.

19 She left immediately, removed her veil, and put on her widow's clothes.

20 Then Judah had his friend Hirah the Adullamite take a young goat to get back from the woman the items he had given in pledge, but Hirah could not find her.

21 He asked the men who were there, "Where is the cult prostitute who was at Enaim by the road?" But they replied, "There has been no cult prostitute here."

22 So he returned to Judah and said, "I couldn't find her. Moreover, the men of the place said, 'There has been no cult prostitute here.'"

23 Judah said, "Let her keep the things for herself. Otherwise we will appear to be dishonest. I did indeed send this young goat, but you couldn't find her."

24 After three months Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has turned to prostitution, and as a result she has become pregnant." Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!"

25 While they were bringing her out, she sent word to her father-in-law: "I am pregnant by the man to whom these belong." Then she said, "Identify the one to whom the seal, cord, and staff belong."

26 Judah recognized them and said, "She is more upright than I am, because I wouldn't give her to Shelah my son." He did not have sexual relations with her again.

Joseph's Brothers First Trip to Egypt (1877 BC)

Genesis 42

Jacob Sends His Sons to Egypt for Grain

- 1 When Jacob heard there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why are you looking at each other?"
2 He then said, "Look, I hear that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy grain for us so that we may live and not die."
3 So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt.
4 But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "What if some accident happens to him?"
5 So Israel's sons came to buy grain among the other travelers, for the famine was severe in the land of Canaan.

Joseph Accuses His Brothers of Being Spies

- 6 Now Joseph was the ruler of the country, the one who sold grain to all the people of the country. Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the ground.
7 When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger to them and spoke to them harshly. He asked, "Where do you come from?" They answered, "From the land of Canaan, to buy grain for food."
8 Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.
9 Then Joseph remembered the dreams he had dreamed about them, and he said to them, "You are spies; you have come to see if our land is vulnerable!"
10 But they exclaimed, "No, my lord! Your servants have come to buy grain for food!
11 We are all the sons of one man; we are honest men! Your servants are not spies."
12 "No," he insisted, "but you have come to see if our land is vulnerable."
13 They replied, "Your servants are from a family of twelve brothers. We are the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. The youngest is with our father at this time, and one is no longer alive."
14 But Joseph told them, "It is just as I said to you: You are spies!
15 You will be tested in this way: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not depart from this place unless your youngest brother comes here.
16 One of you must go and get your brother, while the rest of you remain in prison. In this way your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth. If not, then, as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies!"
17 He imprisoned them all for three days.

Joseph Sends His Brothers Back to Canaan But Keeps Simeon

- 18 On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do as I say and you will live, for I fear God.
19 If you are honest men, leave one of your brothers confined here in prison while the rest of you go and take grain back for your hungry families.
20 But you must bring your youngest brother to me. Then your words will be verified and you will not die." They did as he said.
21 They said to one other, "Surely we're being punished because of our brother, because we saw how distressed he was when he cried to us for mercy, but we refused to listen. That is why this distress has come on us!"
22 Reuben said to them, "Didn't I say to you, 'Don't sin against the boy,' but you wouldn't listen? So now we must pay for shedding his blood!"
23 (Now they did not know that Joseph could understand them, for he was speaking through an interpreter.)
24 He turned away from them and wept. When he turned around and spoke to them again, he had Simeon taken from them and tied up before their eyes.
25 Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to return each man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. His orders were carried out.
26 So they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left.
27 When one of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey at their resting place, he saw his money in the mouth of his sack.
28 He said to his brothers, "My money was returned! Here it is in my sack!" They were dismayed; they turned trembling one to another and said, "What in the world has God done to us?"
29 They returned to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan and told him all the things that had happened to them, saying,
30 "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly to us and treated us as if we were spying on the land.
31 But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies!
32 We are from a family of twelve brothers; we are the sons of one father. One is no longer alive, and the youngest is with our father at this time in the land of Canaan.'
33 "Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'This is how I will find out if you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers with me, and take grain for your hungry households and go.
34 But bring your youngest brother back to me so I will know that you are honest men and not spies. Then I will give your brother back to you and you may move about freely in the land.'
35 When they were emptying their sacks, there was each man's bag of money in his sack! When they and their father saw the bags of money, they were afraid.

36 Their father Jacob said to them, “You are making me childless! Joseph is gone. Simeon is gone. And now you want to take Benjamin! Everything is against me.”

37 Then Reuben said to his father, “You may put my two sons to death if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my care and I will bring him back to you.”

38 But Jacob replied, “My son will not go down there with you, for his brother is dead and he alone is left. If an accident happens to him on the journey you have to make, then you will bring down my gray hair in sorrow to the grave.”

Tamar Gives Birth to Twins—Perez and Zerah (c. 1877 BC)

Genesis 38:27–30

27 When it was time for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb.

28 While she was giving birth, one child put out his hand, and the midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it on his hand, saying, “This one came out first.”

29 But then he drew back his hand, and his brother came out before him. She said, “How you have broken out of the womb!” So he was named Perez.

30 Afterward his brother came out—the one who had the scarlet thread on his hand—and he was named Zerah.

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Joseph's Brothers Return to Egypt With Benjamin (1876 BC)**Genesis 43****Judah Convinces Jacob to Let Them Return to Egypt With Benjamin**

1 Now the famine was severe in the land.

2 When they finished eating the grain they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Return, buy us a little more food."

3 But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'

4 If you send our brother with us, we'll go down and buy food for you.

5 But if you will not send him, we won't go down there because the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

6 Israel said, "Why did you bring this trouble on me by telling the man you had one more brother?"

7 They replied, "The man questioned us thoroughly about ourselves and our family, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' So we answered him in this way. How could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

8 Then Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the boy with me and we will go immediately. Then we will live and not die—we and you and our little ones.

9 I myself pledge security for him; you may hold me liable. If I do not bring him back to you and place him here before you, I will bear the blame before you all my life.

10 But if we had not delayed, we could have traveled there and back twice by now!"

11 Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: Take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and take a gift down to the man—a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachios and almonds.

12 Take double the money with you; you must take back the money that was returned in the mouths of your sacks—perhaps it was an oversight.

13 Take your brother too, and go right away to the man.

14 May the sovereign God grant you mercy before the man so that he may release your other brother and Benjamin! As for me, if I lose my children I lose them."

15 So the men took these gifts, and they took double the money with them, along with Benjamin. Then they hurried down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

Joseph Welcomes His Brothers

16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the servant who was over his household, "Bring the men to the house. Slaughter an animal and prepare it, for the men will eat with me at noon."

17 The man did just as Joseph said; he brought the men into Joseph's house.

18 But the men were afraid when they were brought to Joseph's house. They said, "We are being brought in because of the money that was returned in our sacks last time. He wants to capture us, make us slaves, and take our donkeys!"

19 So they approached the man who was in charge of Joseph's household and spoke to him at the entrance to the house.

20 They said, "My lord, we did indeed come down the first time to buy food.

21 But when we came to the place where we spent the night, we opened our sacks and each of us found his money—the full amount—in the mouth of his sack. So we have returned it.

22 We have brought additional money with us to buy food. We do not know who put the money in our sacks!"

23 "Everything is fine," the man in charge of Joseph's household told them. "Don't be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks. I had your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them.

24 The servant in charge brought the men into Joseph's house. He gave them water, and they washed their feet. Then he gave food to their donkeys.

25 They got their gifts ready for Joseph's arrival at noon, for they had heard that they were to have a meal there.

26 When Joseph came home, they presented him with the gifts they had brought inside, and they bowed down to the ground before him.

27 He asked them how they were doing. Then he said, "Is your aging father well, the one you spoke about? Is he still alive?"

28 "Your servant our father is well," they replied. "He is still alive." They bowed down in humility.

29 When Joseph looked up and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, he said, "Is this your youngest brother, whom you told me about?" Then he said, "May God be gracious to you, my son."

30 Joseph hurried out, for he was overcome by affection for his brother and was at the point of tears. So he went to his room and wept there.

31 Then he washed his face and came out. With composure he said, "Set out the food."

32 They set a place for him, a separate place for his brothers, and another for the Egyptians who were eating with him. (The Egyptians are not able to eat with Hebrews, for the Egyptians think it is disgusting to do so.)

33 They sat before him, arranged by order of birth, beginning with the firstborn and ending with the youngest. The men looked at each other in astonishment.

34 He gave them portions of the food set before him, but the portion for Benjamin was five times greater than the portions for any of the others. They drank with Joseph until they all became drunk.

Joseph Tests His Brothers (1876 BC)

Genesis 44

The Silver Cup

- 1 He instructed the servant who was over his household, "Fill the sacks of the men with as much food as they can carry and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack.
- 2 Then put my cup—the silver cup—in the mouth of the youngest one's sack, along with the money for his grain." He did as Joseph instructed.
- 3 When morning came, the men and their donkeys were sent off.
- 4 They had not gone very far from the city when Joseph said to the servant who was over his household, "Pursue the men at once! When you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid good with evil?'"
- 5 "Doesn't my master drink from this cup and use it for divination? You have done wrong!"

The Brothers Are Dismayed

- 6 When the man overtook them, he spoke these words to them.
- 7 They answered him, "Why does my lord say such things? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing!"
- 8 Look, the money that we found in the mouths of our sacks we brought back to you from the land of Canaan. Why then would we steal silver or gold from your master's house?
- 9 If one of us has it, he will die, and the rest of us will become my lord's slaves!"
- 10 He replied, "You have suggested your own punishment! The one who has it will become my slave, but the rest of you will go free."
- 11 So each man quickly lowered his sack to the ground and opened it.
- 12 Then the man searched. He began with the oldest and finished with the youngest. The cup was found in Benjamin's sack!
- 13 They all tore their clothes! Then each man loaded his donkey, and they returned to the city.
- 14 So Judah and his brothers came back to Joseph's house. He was still there, and they threw themselves to the ground before him.

Judah, Who Sold Joseph, Offers Himself as Joseph's Slave

- 15 Joseph said to them, "What did you think you were doing? Don't you know that a man like me can find out things like this by divination?"
- 16 Judah replied, "What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? How can we clear ourselves? God has exposed the sin of your servants! We are now my lord's slaves, we and the one in whose possession the cup was found."
- 17 But Joseph said, "Far be it from me to do this! The man in whose hand the cup was found will become my slave, but the rest of you may go back to your father in peace."
- 18 Then Judah approached him and said, "My lord, please allow your servant to speak a word with you. Please do not get angry with your servant, for you are just like Pharaoh."
- 19 My lord asked his servants, 'Do you have a father or a brother?'
- 20 We said to my lord, 'We have an aged father, and there is a young boy who was born when our father was old. The boy's brother is dead. He is the only one of his mother's sons left, and his father loves him.'
- 21 "Then you told your servants, 'Bring him down to me so I can see him.'
- 22 We said to my lord, 'The boy cannot leave his father. If he leaves his father, his father will die.'
- 23 But you said to your servants, 'If your youngest brother does not come down with you, you will not see my face again.'
- 24 When we returned to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.
- 25 "Then our father said, 'Go back and buy us a little food.'
- 26 But we replied, 'We cannot go down there. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go, for we won't be permitted to see the man's face if our youngest brother is not with us.'
- 27 "Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife gave me two sons.
- 28 The first disappeared and I said, "He has surely been torn to pieces." I have not seen him since.
- 29 If you take this one from me too and an accident happens to him, then you will bring down my gray hair in tragedy to the grave.'
- 30 "So now, when I return to your servant my father, and the boy is not with us—his very life is bound up in his son's life.
- 31 When he sees the boy is not with us, he will die, and your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father in sorrow to the grave.
- 32 Indeed, your servant pledged security for the boy with my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I will bear the blame before my father all my life.'
- 33 "So now, please let your servant remain as my lord's slave instead of the boy. As for the boy, let him go back with his brothers.
- 34 For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I couldn't bear to see my father's pain."

Joseph and His Brothers Are Reconciled (1876 BC)

Genesis 45

Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

1 Joseph was no longer able to control himself before all his attendants, so he cried out, “Make everyone go out from my presence!” No one remained with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers.

2 He wept loudly; the Egyptians heard it and Pharaoh’s household heard about it.

3 Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” His brothers could not answer him because they were dumbfounded before him.

4 Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me,” so they came near. Then he said, “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.

5 Now, do not be upset and do not be angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to preserve life!

6 For these past two years there has been famine in the land and for five more years there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.

7 God sent me ahead of you to preserve you on the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now, it is not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me an adviser to Pharaoh, lord over all his household, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

9 Now go up to my father quickly and tell him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: “God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not delay!’

10 You will live in the land of Goshen, and you will be near me—you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and everything you have.

11 I will provide you with food there because there will be five more years of famine. Otherwise you would become poor—you, your household, and everyone who belongs to you.”

12 You and my brother Benjamin can certainly see with your own eyes that I really am the one who speaks to you.

13 So tell my father about all my honor in Egypt and about everything you have seen. But bring my father down here quickly!”

14 Then he threw himself on the neck of his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck.

15 He kissed all his brothers and wept over them. After this his brothers talked with him.

Pharaoh Tells Joseph to Bring His Family to Egypt

16 Now it was reported in the household of Pharaoh, “Joseph’s brothers have arrived.” It pleased Pharaoh and his servants.

17 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals and go to the land of Canaan!’

18 Get your father and your households and come to me! Then I will give you the best land in Egypt and you will eat the best of the land.’

19 You are also commanded to say, ‘Do this: Take for yourselves wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives. Bring your father and come.

20 Don’t worry about your belongings, for the best of all the land of Egypt will be yours.”

21 So the sons of Israel did as he said. Joseph gave them wagons as Pharaoh had instructed, and he gave them provisions for the journey.

22 He gave sets of clothes to each one of them, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of clothes.

23 To his father he sent the following: ten donkeys loaded with the best products of Egypt and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, food, and provisions for his father’s journey.

24 Then he sent his brothers on their way and they left. He said to them, “As you travel don’t be overcome with fear.”

25 So they went up from Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan.

26 They told him, “Joseph is still alive and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt!” Jacob was stunned, for he did not believe them.

27 But when they related to him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to transport him, their father Jacob’s spirit revived.

28 Then Israel said, “Enough! My son Joseph is still alive! I will go and see him before I die.”

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Jacob Moves to Egypt (1876 BC)

Genesis 46:1–7

- 1 So Israel began his journey, taking with him all that he had. When he came to Beer Sheba he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.
- 2 God spoke to Israel in a vision during the night and said, “Jacob, Jacob!” He replied, “Here I am!”
- 3 He said, “I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there.
- 4 I will go down with you to Egypt and I myself will certainly bring you back from there. Joseph will close your eyes.”
- 5 Then Jacob started out from Beer Sheba, and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little children, and their wives in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent along to transport him.
- 6 Jacob and all his descendants took their livestock and the possessions they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and they went to Egypt.
- 7 He brought with him to Egypt his sons and grandsons, his daughters and granddaughters—all his descendants.

Record of Jacob’s Descendants Who Migrated to Egypt (1876 BC)

Genesis 46:8–27

Exodus 1:1–5

- 8 These are the names of the sons of Israel who went to Egypt— Jacob and his sons:
Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob.
- 9 The sons of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.
- 10 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, 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). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.
- 13 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron.
- 14 The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.
- 15 These were the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan Aram, along with Dinah his daughter. His sons and daughters numbered thirty-three in all.
- 16 The sons of Gad: Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.
- 17 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and Serah their sister. The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malkiel.
- 18 These were the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter. She bore these to Jacob, sixteen in all.
- 19 The sons of Rachel the wife of Jacob: Joseph and Benjamin.
- 20 Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph in the land of Egypt. Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore them to him.
- 21 The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard.
- 22 These were the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob, fourteen in all.
- 23 The son of Dan: Hushim.
- 24 The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.
- 25 These were the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter. She bore these to Jacob, seven in all.
- 26 All the direct descendants of Jacob who went to Egypt with him were sixty-six in number. (This number does not include the wives of Jacob’s sons.)
- 27 Counting the two sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt, all the people of the household of Jacob who were in Egypt numbered seventy.

- 1 These are the names of the sons of Israel who entered Egypt— each man with his household entered with Jacob:
- 2 Reuben,
- Simeon,
- Levi,
and Judah,
- 3a Issachar,
Zebulun,
- 4b Gad
and Asher.
- 3b and Benjamin,
- 4a Dan
and Naphtali,
- 5 All the people who were directly descended from Jacob

numbered seventy. But Joseph was already in Egypt,

Jacob and Joseph are Reunited (1876 BC)

Genesis 46:28–47:12

A Tearful Reunion

46:28 Jacob sent Judah before him to Joseph to accompany him to Goshen. So they came to the land of Goshen.
 29 Joseph harnessed his chariot and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. When he met him, he hugged his neck and wept on his neck for quite some time.
 30 Israel said to Joseph, “Now let me die since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive.”
 31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and his father’s household, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh, ‘My brothers and my father’s household who were in the land of Canaan have come to me.’
 32 The men are shepherds; they take care of livestock. They have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.’
 33 Pharaoh will summon you and say, ‘What is your occupation?’
 34 Tell him, ‘Your servants have taken care of cattle from our youth until now, both we and our fathers,’ so that you may live in the land of Goshen, for everyone who takes care of sheep is disgusting to the Egyptians.”

Joseph Presents Five of His Brothers to Pharaoh

47:1 Joseph went and told Pharaoh, “My father, my brothers, their flocks and herds, and all that they own have arrived from the land of Canaan. They are now in the land of Goshen.”
 2 He took five of his brothers and introduced them to Pharaoh.
 3 Pharaoh said to Joseph’s brothers, “What is your occupation?” They said to Pharaoh, “Your servants take care of flocks, just as our ancestors did.”
 4 Then they said to Pharaoh, “We have come to live as temporary residents in the land. There is no pasture for your servants’ flocks because the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. So now, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen.”
 5 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Your father and your brothers have come to you.
 6 The land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best region of the land. They may live in the land of Goshen. If you know of any highly capable men among them, put them in charge of my livestock.”

Jacob Blesses Pharaoh

7 Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and presented him before Pharaoh. Jacob blessed Pharaoh.
 8 Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How long have you lived?”
 9 Jacob said to Pharaoh, “All the years of my travels are 130. All the years of my life have been few and painful; the years of my travels are not as long as those of my ancestors.”
 10 Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence.
 11 So Joseph settled his father and his brothers. He gave them territory in the land of Egypt, in the best region of the land, the land of Rameses, just as Pharaoh had commanded.
 12 Joseph also provided food for his father, his brothers, and all his father’s household, according to the number of their little children.

The Famine Intensifies (1876–1871 BC)

Genesis 47:13–26

13 But there was no food in all the land because the famine was very severe; the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan wasted away because of the famine.
 14 Joseph collected all the money that could be found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan as payment for the grain they were buying. Then Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh’s palace.
 15 When the money from the lands of Egypt and Canaan was used up, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, “Give us food! Why should we die before your very eyes because our money has run out?”
 16 Then Joseph said, “If your money is gone, bring your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock.”
 17 So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for their horses, the livestock of their flocks and herds, and their donkeys. He got them through that year by giving them food in exchange for livestock.
 18 When that year was over, they came to him the next year and said to him, “We cannot hide from our lord that the money is used up and the livestock and the animals belong to our lord. Nothing remains before our lord except our bodies and our land.
 19 Why should we die before your very eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we, with our land, will become Pharaoh’s slaves. Give us seed that we may live and not die. Then the land will not become desolate.”
 20 So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. Each of the Egyptians sold his field, for the famine was severe. So the land became Pharaoh’s.
 21 Joseph made all the people slaves from one end of Egypt’s border to the other end of it.
 22 But he did not purchase the land of the priests because the priests had an allotment from Pharaoh and they ate from their

allotment that Pharaoh gave them. That is why they did not sell their land.

23 Joseph said to the people, “Since I have bought you and your land today for Pharaoh, here is seed for you. Cultivate the land.

24 When you gather in the crop, give one-fifth of it to Pharaoh, and the rest will be yours for seed for the fields and for you to eat, including those in your households and your little children.”

25 They replied, “You have saved our lives! You are showing us favor, and we will be Pharaoh’s slaves.”

26 So Joseph made it a statute, which is in effect to this day throughout the land of Egypt: One-fifth belongs to Pharaoh. Only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh’s.

Jacob Dwells in the Land of Goshen (1876–1859 BC)

Genesis 47:27–28a

27 Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen, and they owned land there. They were fruitful and increased rapidly in number.

28a Jacob lived in the land of Egypt 17 years;

Jacob Adopts Joseph’s Two Sons as His Own (1859 BC)

Genesis 47:29–48:22

Jacob Makes Joseph Swear to Bury Him in Canaan

47:29 The time for Israel to die approached, so he called for his son Joseph and said to him, “If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and show me kindness and faithfulness. Do not bury me in Egypt,

30 but when I rest with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place.” Joseph said, “I will do as you say.”

31 Jacob said, “Swear to me that you will do so.” So Joseph gave him his word. Then Israel bowed down at the head of his bed.

Jacob Near Death

48:1 After these things Joseph was told, “Your father is weakening.” So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him.

2 When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has just come to you,” Israel regained strength and sat up on his bed.

3 Jacob said to Joseph, “The sovereign God appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me.

4 He said to me, ‘I am going to make you fruitful and will multiply you. I will make you into a group of nations, and I will give this land to your descendants as an everlasting possession.’

5 “Now, as for your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, they will be mine. Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine just as Reuben and Simeon are.

6 Any children that you father after them will be yours; they will be listed under the names of their brothers in their inheritance.

7 But as for me, when I was returning from Paddan, Rachel died—to my sorrow—in the land of Canaan. It happened along the way, some distance from Ephrath. So I buried her there on the way to Ephrath” (that is, Bethlehem).

Jacob Blesses Manasseh and Ephraim

8 When Israel saw Joseph’s sons, he asked, “Who are these?”

9 Joseph said to his father, “They are the sons God has given me in this place.” His father said, “Bring them to me so I may bless them.”

10 Now Israel’s eyes were failing because of his age; he was not able to see well. So Joseph brought his sons near to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them.

11 Israel said to Joseph, “I never expected to see you again, but now God has allowed me to see your children too.”

12 So Joseph moved them from Israel’s knees and bowed down with his face to the ground.

13 Joseph positioned them; he put Ephraim on his right hand across from Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh on his left hand across from Israel’s right hand. Then Joseph brought them closer to his father.

14 Israel stretched out his right hand and placed it on Ephraim’s head, although he was the younger. Crossing his hands, he put his left hand on Manasseh’s head, for Manasseh was the firstborn.

15 Then he blessed Joseph and said,

“May the God before whom my fathers
Abraham and Isaac walked—
the God who has been my shepherd
all my life long to this day,

16 the Angel who has protected me
from all harm—
bless these boys.

May my name be named in them,

and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac.
May they grow into a multitude on the earth.” [[Heb 11:21](#)]

Jacob Places Ephraim Before Manasseh

17 When Joseph saw that his father placed his right hand on Ephraim’s head, it displeased him. So he took his father’s hand to move it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head.

18 Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head.”

19 But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a nation and he too will become great. In spite of this, his younger brother will be even greater and his descendants will become a multitude of nations.”

20 So he blessed them that day, saying,

“By you will Israel bless, saying,
‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.’”

So he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph, “I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you back to the land of your fathers.

22 As one who is above your brothers, I give to you the mountain slope, which I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow.”

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Jacob Blesses His Sons (1859 BC)

Genesis 49:1–28

1 Jacob called for his sons and said,

“Gather together so I can tell you
what will happen to you in the future.

2 “Assemble and listen, you sons of Jacob;
listen to Israel, your father.

Reuben

3 Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might and the beginning of my strength,
outstanding in dignity, outstanding in power.
4 You are destructive like water and will not excel,
for you got on your father’s bed,
then you defiled it—he got on my couch!

Simeon and Levi

5 Simeon and Levi are brothers,
weapons of violence are their knives!
6 O my soul, do not come into their council,
do not be united to their assembly, my heart,
for in their anger they have killed men,
and for pleasure they have hamstringed oxen.
7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,
and their fury, for it was cruel.
I will divide them in Jacob,
and scatter them in Israel!

Judah

8 Judah, your brothers will praise you.
Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies,
your father’s sons will bow down before you.
9 You are a lion’s cub, Judah,
from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He crouches and lies down like a lion;
like a lioness—who will rouse him?
10 The scepter will not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,
until he comes to whom it belongs;
the nations will obey him.
11 Binding his foal to the vine,
and his colt to the choicest vine,
he will wash his garments in wine,
his robes in the blood of grapes.
12 His eyes will be dark from wine,
and his teeth white from milk.

Zebulun

13 Zebulun will live by the haven of the sea
and become a haven for ships;
his border will extend to Sidon.

Issachar

14 Issachar is a strong-boned donkey
lying down between two saddlebags.
15 When he sees a good resting place,
and the pleasant land,
he will bend his shoulder to the burden

and become a slave laborer.

Dan

- 16 Dan will judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.
- 17 May Dan be a snake beside the road,
a viper by the path,
that bites the heels of the horse
so that its rider falls backward.
- 18 I wait for your deliverance, O LORD.

Gad

- 19 Gad will be raided by marauding bands,
but he will attack them at their heels.

Asher

- 20 Asher's food will be rich,
and he will provide delicacies to royalty.

Naphtali

- 21 Naphtali is a free running doe,
he speaks delightful words.

Joseph

- 22 Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough near a spring
whose branches climb over the wall.
- 23 The archers will attack him,
they will shoot at him and oppose him.
- 24 But his bow will remain steady,
and his hands will be skillful;
because of the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
- 25 because of the God of your father,
who will help you,
because of the sovereign God,
who will bless you
with blessings from the sky above,
blessings from the deep that lies below,
and blessings of the breasts and womb.
- 26 The blessings of your father are greater
than the blessings of the eternal mountains
or the desirable things of the age-old hills.
They will be on the head of Joseph
and on the brow of the prince of his brothers.

Benjamin

- 27 Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;
in the morning devouring the prey,
and in the evening dividing the plunder."

Conclusion

- 28 These are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He gave each of them an appropriate blessing.

The Death of Jacob (1859 BC)

Genesis 47:28b; 49:29–33; 50:1–21

Jacob's Death

49:29 Then he instructed them, "I am about to go to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite.

30 It is the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought for a burial plot from Ephron the Hittite.

31 There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah; there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah; and there I buried Leah.

32 The field and the cave in it were acquired from the sons of Heth."

33 When Jacob finished giving these instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet up onto the bed, breathed his last breath, and went to his people.

47:28b The years of Jacob's life were 147 in all.

Joseph Buries Jacob in Canaan

50:1 Then Joseph hugged his father's face. He wept over him and kissed him.

2 Joseph instructed the physicians in his service to embalm his father, so the physicians embalmed Israel.

3 They took forty days, for that is the full time needed for embalming. The Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

4 When the days of mourning had passed, Joseph said to Pharaoh's royal court, "If I have found favor in your sight, please say to Pharaoh,

5 'My father made me swear an oath. He said, "I am about to die. Bury me in my tomb that I dug for myself there in the land of Canaan." Now let me go and bury my father; then I will return.'"

6 So Pharaoh said, "Go and bury your father, just as he made you swear to do."

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father; all Pharaoh's officials went with him—the senior courtiers of his household, all the senior officials of the land of Egypt,

8 all Joseph's household, his brothers, and his father's household. But they left their little children and their flocks and herds in the land of Goshen.

9 Chariots and horsemen also went up with him, so it was a very large entourage.

10 When they came to the threshing floor of Atad on the other side of the Jordan, they mourned there with very great and bitter sorrow. There Joseph observed a seven day period of mourning for his father.

11 When the Canaanites who lived in the land saw them mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a very sad occasion for the Egyptians." That is why its name was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

12 So the sons of Jacob did for him just as he had instructed them.

13 His sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, near Mamre. This is the field Abraham purchased as a burial plot from Ephron the Hittite.

14 After he buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, along with his brothers and all who had accompanied him to bury his father.

Joseph's Brothers Fear Him After Jacob's Death

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph bears a grudge and wants to repay us in full for all the harm we did to him?"

16 So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave these instructions before he died:

17 'Tell Joseph this: Please forgive the sin of your brothers and the wrong they did when they treated you so badly.' Now please forgive the sin of the servants of the God of your father." When this message was reported to him, Joseph wept.

18 Then his brothers also came and threw themselves down before him; they said, "Here we are; we are your slaves."

19 But Joseph answered them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God?"

20 As for you, you meant to harm me, but God intended it for a good purpose, so he could preserve the lives of many people, as you can see this day.

21 So now, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your little children." Then he consoled them and spoke kindly to them.

The Death of Joseph (1806 BC)

Genesis 50:22–26

22 Joseph lived in Egypt, along with his father's family. Joseph lived 110 years.

23 Joseph saw the descendants of Ephraim to the third generation. He also saw the children of Makir the son of Manasseh; they were given special inheritance rights by Joseph.

24 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will surely come to you and lead you up from this land to the land he swore on oath to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

25 Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath. He said, "God will surely come to you. Then you must carry my bones up from this place."

26 So Joseph died at the age of 110. After they embalmed him, his body was placed in a coffin in Egypt. [\[Heb 11:22\]](#)

Israel in Egypt (1806–1526 BC)

Exodus 1:6–22

Israel Fills the Land

6 and in time Joseph and his brothers and all that generation died.

7 The Israelites, however, were fruitful, increased greatly, multiplied, and became extremely strong, so that the land was filled with them.

Oppression Under a New King (Hyksos c. 1730?)

8 Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt. [[Acts 7:18](#)]

9 He said to his people, “Look at the Israelite people, more numerous and stronger than we are!

10 Come, let’s deal wisely with them. Otherwise they will continue to multiply, and if a war breaks out, they will ally themselves with our enemies and fight against us and leave the country.”

11 So they put foremen over the Israelites to oppress them with hard labor. As a result they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh.

Continued Oppression (18th Dynasty c. 1570)

12 But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more they multiplied and spread. As a result the Egyptians loathed the Israelites,

13 and they made the Israelites serve rigorously.

14 They made their lives bitter by hard service with mortar and bricks and by all kinds of service in the fields. Every kind of service the Israelites were required to give was rigorous.

Pharaoh Orders the Murder of Newborn Israelite Males

15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah,

16 “When you assist the Hebrew women in childbirth, observe at the delivery: If it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she may live.”

17 But the midwives feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live.

18 Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this and let the boys live?”

19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women— for the Hebrew women are vigorous; they give birth before the midwife gets to them!”

20 So God treated the midwives well, and the people multiplied and became very strong.

21 And because the midwives feared God, he made households for them.

22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “All sons that are born you must throw into the river, but all daughters you may let live.”

The Birth of Moses (1526 BC)

Exodus 2:1–10

Numbers 26:59

1 A man from the household of Levi married a woman who was a descendant of Levi.

2 The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was [beautiful], she hid him for three months. [[Acts 7:20–21](#); [Heb 11:23](#)]

59 Now the name of Amram’s wife was Jochebed, daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt. And to Amram she bore Aaron, Moses, and Miriam their sister.

3 But when she was no longer able to hide him, she took a papyrus basket for him and sealed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and set it among the reeds along the edge of the Nile.

4 His sister stationed herself at a distance to find out what would happen to him.

5 Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself by the Nile, while her attendants were walking alongside the river, and she saw the basket among the reeds. She sent one of her attendants, took it,

6 opened it, and saw the child—a boy, crying!—and she felt compassion for him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”

7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get a nursing woman for you from the Hebrews, so that she may nurse the child for you?”

8 Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes, do so.” So the young girl went and got the child’s mother.

9 Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him.

10 When the child grew older she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, “Because I drew him from the water.”

Chronological Notes

1) Length of the Sojourn.

A) My chronology places the length of the Israelite sojourn in Egypt at 430 years (see Exodus 12:40–41). For a defense of this view, see the following:

- Harold W. Hoehner, “The Duration of the Egyptian Bondage,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 125 (1969): 306–316.
- Jack R. Riggs, “The Length of Israel’s Sojourn in Egypt,” *Grace Theological Journal* 12.1 (Winter 1971): 18–35.
- Paul J. Ray, Jr., “The Duration of the Israelite Sojourn in Egypt,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 24.3 (Autumn 1986): 231–248.
- Gleason Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, (Moody Press, 1994), 238.
- Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 93–96.
- Andrew E. Steinmann, “Israel’s Patriarchs,” *From Abraham to Paul*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2011), 68–70.

B) Below is an overview of the various references to Israel’s time in Egypt:

- (1) Paul’s statement in Galatians 3:17 to “the law, which came 430 years afterward” (ESV) refers, not to the original promise to Abraham, but to God’s last promise to Jacob as he was beginning the journey to Goshen in 1876 BC (see Gen 46:1–6). From Jacob’s entry into Egypt to the Exodus in 1446 BC is $1876 - 1446 = 430$ years.
- (2) God’s statement in Genesis 15:13 that “your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years” (NASB, see also Acts 7:6) is a round number referring to the length of time Israel would sojourn in Egypt. From Jacob’s death in 1859 BC to the Exodus in 1446 BC is $1859 - 1446 = 413$ years or about 400 years.
 - (a) The “fourth generation” of Genesis 15:16 should be understood in context. The word “generation” can reference a person’s entire lifetime (see *TWOT* 418c.1). Since Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all lived well over 100 years, the “fourth generation” may well be intended to indicate somewhat less than four complete lifetimes in terms understandable to Abraham.
- (3) Paul’s statement in Acts 13:17–20 that from Israel’s stay in the land of Egypt until the end of the Canaan conquest was “about 450 years” (ESV) is a reasonable approximation of the total time involved. The actual time was 447 years: the 400 year sojourn (Gen 15:13) plus the 40 years of wilderness wandering (Num 32:13) plus the 7 years of conquest (Josh 14:6–12) is $400 + 40 + 7 = 447$.

2) A New King Over Egypt.

A) Some identify the unnamed Pharaoh mentioned in Exodus 1:8 as one of the first kings of the Hyksos (lit. “foreign rulers”). Proponents of this view include:

- George Bush, *Notes on the Book of Exodus*, Vol. 1, (Boston, 1841), 11–12.
- John Rea, “The Time of the Oppression and the Exodus,” *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 3.3 (Summer 1960): 58–66.
- John J. Davis, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt*, Second Edition, (BHM Books, 1998), 53–57.
- Bryant G. Wood, “From Ramesses to Shiloh: Archaeological Discoveries Bearing on the Exodus-Judges Period,” *Giving the Sense: Understanding and Using Old Testament Historical Texts*, ed. David M. Howard, Jr. and Michael A. Grisanti (Kregel Publications, 2003) 256–282.

B) Others identify the unnamed Pharaoh as the first king of Egypt’s 18th Dynasty (c. 1570 BC). Proponents of this view include:

- John D. Hannah, “Exodus,” *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, (Victor Books, 1985), 108.
- Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Rev. Ed., (Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 227–228.
- Douglas K. Stuart, “Exodus,” *The New American Commentary*, (Broadman & Holman, 2006), 62.
- Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 75.
- Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2011), 82.

3) Historical Setting of Moses' Birth.¹A) Kings of the 18th Dynasty ("high" dates from *Cambridge Ancient History*).

- Amosis (Ahmose) 1570–1546
- Amenhotep I 1546–1526
- Thutmose I 1526–1512
- Thutmose II 1512–1504
- Hatshepsut 1503–1483
- Thutmose III 1504–1450
- Amenhotep II 1450–1425

- B) Given a 1446 BC date for the exodus, we can establish the birth date of Moses, a fact of greatest interest at this juncture. The Old Testament relates that Moses was 80 just before the exodus (7:7) and 120 at his death (Deut. 34:7). Since his death was at the very close of the wilderness period, it occurred in 1406. Simple calculation yields a birth date of 1526. Thus Moses was born in the very year of Amenhotep's death.
- C) Amenhotep was succeeded by Thutmose I (1526–1512), a commoner who had married the king's sister. He was probably the author of the decree of infanticide, for, although Moses was in imminent danger of death, Aaron, born three years earlier (Exod 7:7), appears to have been exempt. One must assume that the king who promulgated the policy came to the throne after the birth of Aaron and before that of Moses. Thus the biblical evidence points directly at Thutmose I.
- D) Thutmose II (1512–1504) married his older half-sister Hatshepsut. He died young under mysterious circumstances. Sensing, no doubt, his impending demise, he had named his son Thutmose III (1504–1450) as coregent and heir. This energetic ruler, the most illustrious and powerful of the entire New Kingdom, distinguished himself in many ways. His beginnings were not promising—he was the son of a concubine and married his own half-sister, the daughter of Hatshepsut and Thutmose II—but he eventually went on to achieve notable victories in surrounding lands, including sixteen campaigns to Palestine alone. The first twenty years or so of his reign, however, were dominated by his powerful mother-in-law, Hatshepsut. Forbidden by custom to be pharaoh, she acted out the part nonetheless and by all criteria was one of the most fascinating and influential persons of Egyptian history. Without question, she pulled the strings in the early years of Thutmose III, a relationship he detested but was powerless to oppose. Only after her death did he show his contempt by expunging as many inscriptional and monumental references to her as possible.
- E) The general picture of Hatshepsut leads to the possibility that this bold queen was the pharaoh's daughter who rescued Moses. Only she, of all known women of the period, possessed the presumption and independence to violate an ordinance of the king, and under his very nose at that. Although the birth date of this daughter of Thutmose I is unknown, she was probably several years older than her husband, Thutmose II, who died in 1504 while in his late twenties. She may have been in her early teens by 1526, Moses's birth date, and therefore able to effect his deliverance.

¹ Sourced from Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 75–78.