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GENESIS

The Account of Creation

1 In the beginning God created* the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was empty, a formless mass cloaked in darkness. And the Spirit of God was hovering over its surface. ³Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴And God saw that it was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.” Together these made up one day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be space between the waters, to separate water from water.” And so it was. God made this space to separate the waters above from the waters below. ⁸And God called the space “sky.” This happened on the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky be gathered into one place so dry ground may appear.” And so it was. ¹⁰God named the dry ground “land” and the water “seas.” And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, “Let the land burst forth with every sort of grass and seed-bearing plant. And let there be trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. The seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came.” And so it was. ¹²The land was filled with seed-bearing plants and trees, and their seeds produced plants and trees of like kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³This all happened on the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let bright lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. They will be signs to mark off the seasons, the days, and the years. ¹⁵Let their light shine down upon the earth.” And so it was. ¹⁶For God made two great lights, the sun and the moon, to shine down upon the earth. The greater one, the sun, presides during the day; the lesser one, the moon, presides through the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set these lights in the heavens to light the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹This all happened on the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind.” ²¹So God created

great sea creatures and every sort of fish and every kind of bird. And God saw that it was good. ²²Then God blessed them, saying, “Let the fish multiply and fill the oceans. Let the birds increase and fill the earth.” ²³This all happened on the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth every kind of animal—livestock, small animals, and wildlife.” And so it was. ²⁵God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to reproduce more of its own kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make people* in our image, to be like ourselves. They will be masters over all life—the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the livestock, wild animals,* and small animals.”

²⁷ So God created people in his own image; God patterned them after himself; male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them and told them, “Multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. Be masters over the fish and birds and all the animals.” ²⁹And God said, “Look! I have given you the seed-bearing plants throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. ³⁰And I have given all the grasses and other green plants to the animals and birds for their food.” And so it was. ³¹Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was excellent in every way. This all happened on the sixth day.

2 So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. ²On the seventh day, having finished his task, God rested from all his work. ³And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from his work of creation.

⁴This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

The Man and Woman in Eden

When the LORD God made the heavens and the earth, ⁵there were no plants or grain growing on the earth, for the LORD God had not sent any rain. And no one was there to

1:1 Or *In the beginning when God created, or When God began to create.* 1:26a Hebrew *man*; also in 1:27. 1:26b As in Syriac version; Hebrew reads *all the earth*.

cultivate the soil. ⁶But water came up out of the ground and watered all the land. ⁷And the LORD God formed a man's body from the dust of the ground and breathed into it the breath of life. And the man became a living person.

⁸Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he placed the man he had created. ⁹And the LORD God planted all sorts of trees in the garden—beautiful trees that produced delicious fruit. At the center of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river flowed from the land of Eden, watering the garden and then dividing into four branches. ¹¹One of these branches is the Pishon, which flows around the entire land of Havilah, where gold is found. ¹²The gold of that land is exceptionally pure; aromatic resin and onyx stone are also found there. ¹³The second branch is the Gihon, which flows around the entire land of Cush. ¹⁴The third branch is the Tigris, which flows to the east of Asshur. The fourth branch is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and care for it. ¹⁶But the LORD God gave him this warning: "You may freely eat any fruit in the garden ¹⁷except fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat of its fruit, you will surely die."

¹⁸And the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion who will help him." ¹⁹So the LORD God formed from the soil every kind of animal and bird. He brought them to Adam* to see what he would call them, and Adam chose a name for each one. ²⁰He gave names to all the livestock, birds, and wild animals. But still there was no companion suitable for him. ²¹So the LORD God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep. He took one of Adam's ribs* and closed up the place from which he had taken it. ²²Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib and brought her to Adam.

²³"At last!" Adam exclaimed. "She is part of my own flesh and bone! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of a man." ²⁴This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. ²⁵Now, although Adam and his wife were both naked, neither of them felt any shame.

The Man and Woman Sin

3 Now the serpent was the shrewdest of all the creatures the LORD God had made. "Really?" he asked the woman. "Did God really say you must not eat any of the fruit in the garden?"

²"Of course we may eat it," the woman told him. ³"It's only the fruit from the tree at the center of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God says we must not eat it or even touch it, or we will die."

⁴"You won't die!" the serpent hissed. ⁵"God knows that your eyes will be opened when you eat it. You will become just like God, knowing everything, both good and evil."

⁶The woman was convinced. The fruit looked so fresh and delicious, and it would make her so wise! So she ate some of the fruit. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her. Then he ate it, too. ⁷At that moment, their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they strung fig leaves together around their hips to cover themselves.

⁸Toward evening they heard the LORD God walking about in the garden, so they hid themselves among the trees. ⁹The LORD God called to Adam,* "Where are you?"

¹⁰He replied, "I heard you, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."

¹¹"Who told you that you were naked?" the LORD God asked. "Have you eaten the fruit I commanded you not to eat?"

¹²"Yes," Adam admitted, "but it was the woman you gave me who brought me the fruit, and I ate it."

¹³Then the LORD God asked the woman, "How could you do such a thing?"

"The serpent tricked me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you will be punished. You are singled out from all the domestic and wild animals of the whole earth to be cursed. You will grovel in the dust as long as you live, crawling along on your belly. ¹⁵From now on, you and the woman will be enemies, and your offspring and her offspring will be enemies. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

¹⁶Then he said to the woman, "You will bear children with intense pain and suffering. And though your desire will be for your husband,* he will be your master."

¹⁷And to Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate the fruit I told you not to eat, I have placed a curse on the ground. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. ¹⁸It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. ¹⁹All your life you will sweat to produce food, until your dying day. Then you will return to the ground from which you

2:19 Hebrew *the man*, and so throughout this chapter. **2:21** Or *took a part of Adam's side*. **3:9** Hebrew *the man*, and so throughout this chapter. **3:16** Or *And though you may desire to control your husband*.

came. For you were made from dust, and to the dust you will return.”

²⁰Then Adam named his wife Eve,* because she would be the mother of all people everywhere. ²¹And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

²²Then the LORD God said, “The people have become as we are, knowing everything, both good and evil. What if they eat the fruit of the tree of life? Then they will live forever!” ²³So the LORD God banished Adam and his wife from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. ²⁴After banishing them from the garden, the LORD God stationed mighty angelic beings* to the east of Eden. And a flaming sword flashed back and forth, guarding the way to the tree of life.

Cain, Abel, and Seth

4 Now Adam* slept with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When the time came, she gave birth to Cain,* and she said, “With the LORD’s help, I have brought forth* a man!” ²Later she gave birth to a second son and named him Abel.

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain was a farmer. ³At harvest-time Cain brought to the LORD a gift of his farm produce, ⁴while Abel brought several choice lambs from the best of his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his offering, ⁵but he did not accept Cain and his offering. This made Cain very angry and dejected.

⁶“Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked him. “Why do you look so dejected? ⁷You will be accepted if you respond in the right way. But if you refuse to respond correctly, then watch out! Sin is waiting to attack and destroy you, and you must subdue it.”

⁸Later Cain suggested to his brother, Abel, “Let’s go out into the fields.”* And while they were there, Cain attacked and killed his brother.

⁹Afterward the LORD asked Cain, “Where is your brother? Where is Abel?”

“I don’t know!” Cain retorted. “Am I supposed to keep track of him wherever he goes?”

¹⁰But the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen—your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground! ¹¹You are hereby banished from the ground you have defiled with your brother’s blood. ¹²No longer will it yield abundant crops for you, no matter how hard you

work! From now on you will be a homeless fugitive on the earth, constantly wandering from place to place.”

¹³Cain replied to the LORD, “My punishment* is too great for me to bear! ¹⁴You have banished me from my land and from your presence; you have made me a wandering fugitive. All who see me will try to kill me!”

¹⁵The LORD replied, “They will not kill you, for I will give seven times your punishment to anyone who does.” Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him. ¹⁶So Cain left the LORD’s presence and settled in the land of Nod,* east of Eden.

¹⁷Then Cain’s wife became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and they named him Enoch. When Cain founded a city, he named it Enoch after his son.

¹⁸Enoch was the father of* Irad.

Irad was the father of Mehujael.

Mehujael was the father of Methushael.

Methushael was the father of Lamech.

¹⁹Lamech married two women—Adah and Zillah. ²⁰Adah gave birth to a baby named Jubal. He became the first of the herdsmen who live in tents. ²¹His brother’s name was Jubal, the first musician—the inventor of the harp and flute. ²²To Lamech’s other wife, Zillah, was born Tubal-cain. He was the first to work with metal, forging instruments of bronze and iron. Tubal-cain had a sister named Naamah.

²³One day Lamech said to Adah and Zillah, “Listen to me, my wives. I have killed a youth who attacked and wounded me. ²⁴If anyone who kills Cain is to be punished seven times, anyone who takes revenge against me will be punished seventy-seven times!”

²⁵Adam slept with his wife again, and she gave birth to another son. She named him Seth,* for she said, “God has granted me another son in place of Abel, the one Cain killed.” ²⁶When Seth grew up, he had a son and named him Enosh. It was during his lifetime that people first began to worship the LORD.

From Adam to Noah

5 This is the history of the descendants of Adam. When God created people,* he made them in the likeness of God. ²He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them “human.”*

3:20 *Eve* sounds like a Hebrew term that means “to give life.” 3:24 Hebrew *cherubim*. 4:1a Hebrew *the man*. 4:1b *Cain* sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “bring forth” or “acquire.” 4:1c *Or I have acquired*. 4:8 As in Samaritan Pentateuch, Greek and Syriac versions, Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text lacks “Let’s go out into the fields.” 4:13 *Or My sin*. 4:16 *Nod* means “wandering.” 4:18 *Or the ancestor of*, and so throughout the verse. 4:25 *Seth* probably means “granted”; the name may also mean “appointed.” 5:1 Hebrew *man*. 5:2 Hebrew *man*.

- ³When Adam was 130 years old, his son Seth was born,* and Seth was the very image of his father.* ⁴After the birth of Seth,* Adam lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ⁵He died at the age of 930.
- ⁶When Seth was 105 years old, his son Enosh was born. ⁷After the birth of Enosh, Seth lived another 807 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ⁸He died at the age of 912.
- ⁹When Enosh was 90 years old, his son Kenan was born. ¹⁰After the birth of Kenan, Enosh lived another 815 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ¹¹He died at the age of 905.
- ¹²When Kenan was 70 years old, his son Mahalalel was born. ¹³After the birth of Mahalalel, Kenan lived another 840 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ¹⁴He died at the age of 910.
- ¹⁵When Mahalalel was 65 years old, his son Jared was born. ¹⁶After the birth of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷He died at the age of 895.
- ¹⁸When Jared was 162 years old, his son Enoch was born. ¹⁹After the birth of Enoch, Jared lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ²⁰He died at the age of 962.
- ²¹When Enoch was 65 years old, his son Methuselah was born. ²²After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch lived another 300 years in close fellowship with God, and he had other sons and daughters. ²³Enoch lived 365 years in all. ²⁴He enjoyed a close relationship with God throughout his life. Then suddenly, he disappeared because God took him.
- ²⁵When Methuselah was 187 years old, his son Lamech was born. ²⁶After the birth of Lamech, Methuselah lived another 782 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ²⁷He died at the age of 969.
- ²⁸When Lamech was 182 years old, his son Noah was born. ²⁹Lamech named his son Noah,* for he said, “He will bring us relief from the painful labor of farming this ground that the LORD has cursed.” ³⁰After the birth of Noah, Lamech lived 595 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ³¹He died at the age of 777.
- ³²By the time Noah was 500 years old, he had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Noah and the Flood

6 When the human population began to grow rapidly on the earth, ²the sons of God saw the beautiful women of the human race and took any they wanted as their wives. ³Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not put up with humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, they will live no more than 120 years.”

⁴In those days, and even afterward, giants* lived on the earth, for whenever the sons of God had intercourse with human women, they gave birth to children who became the heroes mentioned in legends of old.

⁵Now the LORD observed the extent of the people’s wickedness, and he saw that all their thoughts were consistently and totally evil. ⁶So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them. It broke his heart. ⁷And the LORD said, “I will completely wipe out this human race that I have created. Yes, and I will destroy all the animals and birds, too. I am sorry I ever made them.” ⁸But Noah found favor with the LORD.

⁹This is the history of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless man living on earth at the time. He consistently followed God’s will and enjoyed a close relationship with him. ¹⁰Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹Now the earth had become corrupt in God’s sight, and it was filled with violence. ¹²God observed all this corruption in the world, and he saw violence and depravity everywhere. ¹³So God said to Noah, “I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Yes, I will wipe them all from the face of the earth!

¹⁴“Make a boat* from resinous wood and seal it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior. ¹⁵Make it 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.* ¹⁶Construct an opening all the way around the boat, 18 inches* below the roof. Then put three decks inside the boat—bottom, middle, and upper—and put a door in the side.

¹⁷“Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing. Everything on earth will die! ¹⁸But I solemnly swear to keep you safe in the boat, with your wife and your sons and their wives. ¹⁹Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them

5:3a Or his son, the ancestor of Seth, was born; similarly in 5:6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25. **5:3b** Hebrew was in his own likeness, after his image. **5:4** Or After the birth of this ancestor of Seth; similarly in 5:7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26. **5:29** Noah sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “relief” or “comfort.” **6:4** Hebrew Nephilim. **6:14** Traditionally rendered an ark. **6:15** Hebrew 300 cubits [135 meters] long, 50 cubits [22.5 meters] wide, and 30 cubits [13.5 meters] high. **6:16** Hebrew 1 cubit [45 centimeters].

alive during the flood. ²⁰Pairs of each kind of bird and each kind of animal, large and small alike, will come to you to be kept alive. ²¹And remember, take enough food for your family and for all the animals.”

²²So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

The Flood Covers the Earth

7 Finally, the day came when the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I consider you alone to be righteous. ²Take along seven pairs of each animal that I have approved for eating and for sacrifice, and take one pair of each of the others. ³Then select seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that every kind of living creature will survive the flood. ⁴One week from today I will begin forty days and forty nights of rain. And I will wipe from the earth all the living things I have created.”

⁵So Noah did exactly as the LORD had commanded him. ⁶He was 600 years old when the flood came, ⁷and he went aboard the boat to escape—he and his wife and his sons and their wives. ⁸With them were all the various kinds of animals—those approved for eating and sacrifice and those that were not—along with all the birds and other small animals. ⁹They came into the boat in pairs, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰One week later, the flood came and covered the earth.

¹¹When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, the underground waters burst forth on the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky. ¹²The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights. ¹³But Noah had gone into the boat that very day with his wife and his sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—and their wives. ¹⁴With them in the boat were pairs of every kind of breathing animal—domestic and wild, large and small—along with birds and flying insects of every kind. ¹⁵Two by two they came into the boat, ¹⁶male and female, just as God had commanded. Then the LORD shut them in.

¹⁷For forty days the floods prevailed, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. ¹⁸As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. ¹⁹Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, ²⁰standing more than twenty-

two feet* above the highest peaks. ²¹All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all kinds of small animals, and all the people. ²²Everything died that breathed and lived on dry land. ²³Every living thing on the earth was wiped out—people, animals both large and small, and birds. They were all destroyed, and only Noah was left alive, along with those who were with him in the boat. ²⁴And the water covered the earth for 150 days.

The Flood Recedes

8 But God remembered Noah and all the animals in the boat. He sent a wind to blow across the waters, and the floods began to disappear. ²The underground water sources ceased their gushing, and the torrential rains stopped. ³So the flood gradually began to recede. After 150 days, ⁴exactly five months from the time the flood began,* the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵Two and a half months later,* as the waters continued to go down, other mountain peaks began to appear.

⁶After another forty days, Noah opened the window he had made in the boat ⁷and released a raven that flew back and forth until the earth was dry. ⁸Then he sent out a dove to see if it could find dry ground. ⁹But the dove found no place to land because the water was still too high. So it returned to the boat, and Noah held out his hand and drew the dove back inside. ¹⁰Seven days later, Noah released the dove again. ¹¹This time, toward evening, the bird returned to him with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Noah now knew that the water was almost gone. ¹²A week later, he released the dove again, and this time it did not come back.

¹³Finally, when Noah was 601 years old, ten and a half months after the flood began,* Noah lifted back the cover to look. The water was drying up. ¹⁴Two more months went by,* and at last the earth was dry! ¹⁵Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶“Leave the boat, all of you. ¹⁷Release all the animals and birds so they can breed and reproduce in great numbers.” ¹⁸So Noah, his wife, and his sons and their wives left the boat. ¹⁹And all the various kinds of animals and birds came out, pair by pair.

²⁰Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and sacrificed on it the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose. ²¹And the LORD was pleased with the sacrifice and said to himself, “I will never again curse the earth, destroying all living things, even

7:20 Hebrew *15 cubits* [6.8 meters]. 8:4 Hebrew *on the seventeenth day of the seventh month*; see 7:11. 8:5 Hebrew *On the first day of the tenth month*; see 7:11 and note on 8:4. 8:13 Hebrew *on the first day of the first month*; see 7:11. 8:14 Hebrew *The twenty-seventh day of the second month arrived*; see note on 8:13.

though people's thoughts and actions are bent toward evil from childhood. ²²As long as the earth remains, there will be springtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night."

God's Covenant with Noah

9 God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, "Multiply and fill the earth. ²All the wild animals, large and small, and all the birds and fish will be afraid of you. I have placed them in your power. ³I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables. ⁴But you must never eat animals that still have their lifeblood in them. ⁵And murder is forbidden. Animals that kill people must die, and any person who murders must be killed. ⁶Yes, you must execute anyone who murders another person, for to kill a person is to kill a living being made in God's image. ⁷Now you must have many children and repopulate the earth. Yes, multiply and fill the earth!"

⁸Then God told Noah and his sons, ⁹"I am making a covenant with you and your descendants, ¹⁰and with the animals you brought with you—all these birds and livestock and wild animals. ¹¹I solemnly promise never to send another flood to kill all living creatures and destroy the earth." ¹²And God said, "I am giving you a sign as evidence of my eternal covenant with you and all living creatures. ¹³I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my permanent promise to you and to all the earth. ¹⁴When I send clouds over the earth, the rainbow will be seen in the clouds, ¹⁵and I will remember my covenant with you and with everything that lives. Never again will there be a flood that will destroy all life. ¹⁶When I see the rainbow in the clouds, I will remember the eternal covenant between God and every living creature on earth." ¹⁷Then God said to Noah, "Yes, this is the sign of my covenant with all the creatures of the earth."

Noah's Sons

¹⁸Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the three sons of Noah, survived the Flood with their father. (Ham is the ancestor of the Canaanites.) ¹⁹From these three sons of Noah came all the people now scattered across the earth.

²⁰After the Flood, Noah became a farmer and planted a vineyard. ²¹One day he became drunk on some wine he had made and lay naked in his tent. ²²Ham, the father of Canaan, saw that his father was naked and went out-

side and told his brothers. ²³Shem and Japheth took a robe, held it over their shoulders, walked backward into the tent, and covered their father's naked body. As they did this, they looked the other way so they wouldn't see him naked. ²⁴When Noah woke up from his drunken stupor, he learned what Ham, his youngest son, had done. ²⁵Then he cursed the descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham:

"A curse on the Canaanites!
May they be the lowest of servants
to the descendants of Shem and
Japheth."

²⁶Then Noah said,

"May Shem be blessed by the LORD my
God;
and may Canaan be his servant.

²⁷May God enlarge the territory of Japheth,
and may he share the prosperity of
Shem;*
and let Canaan be his servant."

²⁸Noah lived another 350 years after the Flood. ²⁹He was 950 years old when he died.

10 This is the history of the families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the three sons of Noah. Many children were born to them after the Flood.

Descendants of Japheth

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

³The descendants of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.

⁴The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.* ⁵Their descendants became the seafaring peoples in various lands, each tribe with its own language.

Descendants of Ham

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

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

⁸One of Cush's descendants was Nimrod, who became a heroic warrior. ⁹He was a mighty hunter in the LORD's sight.* His name became proverbial, and people would speak of someone as being "like Nimrod, a mighty hunter in the LORD's

9:27 Hebrew *may he live in the tents of Shem*. **10:4** As in some Hebrew manuscripts and Greek version (see also 1 Chr 1:7); most Hebrew manuscripts read *Dodanim*. **10:6** Or *Egypt*; also in 10:13. **10:9** Hebrew *a mighty hunter before the LORD*; also in 10:9b.

sight.”¹⁰He built the foundation for his empire in the land of Babylonia,* with the cities of Babel, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh.

¹¹From there he extended his reign to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah,¹²and Resen—the main city of the empire, located between Nineveh and Calah.

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

¹⁵Canaan’s oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of the Hittites,¹⁶Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites,¹⁷Hivites, Arkites, Sinites,¹⁸Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites.¹⁹Eventually the territory of Canaan spread from Sidon to Gerar, near Gaza, and to Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, near Lasha.

²⁰These were the descendants of Ham, identified according to their tribes, languages, territories, and nations.

Descendants of Shem

²¹Sons were also born to Shem, the older brother of Japheth.* Shem was the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber.

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

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

²⁴Arphaxad was the father of Shelah,* and Shelah was the father of Eber.²⁵Eber had two sons. The first was named Peleg—“division”—for during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups and dispersed. His brother’s name was Joktan.

²⁶Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,²⁷Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,²⁸Obal, Abimael, Sheba,²⁹Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab.³⁰The descendants of Joktan lived in the area extending from Mesha toward the eastern hills of Sehar.

³¹These were the descendants of Shem, identified according to their tribes, languages, territories, and nations.

³²These are the families that came from Noah’s sons, listed nation by nation accord-

ing to their lines of descent. The earth was populated with the people of these nations after the Flood.

The Tower of Babel

11 At one time the whole world spoke a single language and used the same words.²As the people migrated eastward, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia* and settled there.³They began to talk about construction projects. “Come,” they said, “let’s make great piles of burnt brick and collect natural asphalt to use as mortar.”⁴Let’s build a great city with a tower that reaches to the skies—a monument to our greatness! This will bring us together and keep us from scattering all over the world.”

⁵But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building.⁶“Look!” he said. “If they can accomplish this when they have just begun to take advantage of their common language and political unity, just think of what they will do later. Nothing will be impossible for them!”⁷Come, let’s go down and give them different languages. Then they won’t be able to understand each other.”

⁸In that way, the LORD scattered them all over the earth; and that ended the building of the city.⁹That is why the city was called Babel,* because it was there that the LORD confused the people by giving them many languages, thus scattering them across the earth.

From Shem to Abram

¹⁰This is the history of Shem’s family.

When Shem was 100 years old, his son Arphaxad was born. This happened two years after the Flood.¹¹After the birth of Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹²When Arphaxad was 35 years old, his son Shelah was born.*¹³After the birth of Shelah, Arphaxad lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.*

¹⁴When Shelah was 30 years old, his son Eber was born.¹⁵After the birth of Eber, Shelah lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁶When Eber was 34 years old, his son Peleg was born.¹⁷After the birth of Peleg, Eber lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

10:10 Hebrew *Shinar*. **10:14** Hebrew *Casluhites*, from whom the Philistines came, *Caphtorites*. Compare Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7. **10:21** Or *Shem*, whose older brother was *Japheth*. **10:24** Greek version reads *Arphaxad was the father of Cainan*, *Cainan was the father of Shelah*. **11:2** Hebrew *Shinar*. **11:9** *Babel* sounds like a Hebrew term that means “confusion.” **11:12** Or *his son*, the ancestor of *Shelah*, was born; similarly in 11:14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24. **11:12-13** Greek version reads ¹²When *Arphaxad* was 135 years old, his son *Cainan* was born. ¹³After the birth of *Cainan*, *Arphaxad* lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When *Cainan* was 130 years old, his son *Shelah* was born. After the birth of *Shelah*, *Cainan* lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died.

¹⁸When Peleg was 30 years old, his son Reu was born. ¹⁹After the birth of Reu, Peleg lived another 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰When Reu was 32 years old, his son Serug was born. ²¹After the birth of Serug, Reu lived another 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

²²When Serug was 30 years old, his son Nahor was born. ²³After the birth of Nahor, Serug lived another 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁴When Nahor was 29 years old, his son Terah was born. ²⁵After the birth of Terah, Nahor lived another 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁶When Terah was 70 years old, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

The Family of Terah

²⁷This is the history of Terah's family. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran had a son named Lot. ²⁸But while Haran was still young, he died in Ur of the Chaldeans, the place of his birth. He was survived by Terah, his father. ²⁹Meanwhile, Abram married Sarai, and his brother Nahor married Milcah, the daughter of their brother Haran. (Milcah had a sister named Ischah.) ³⁰Now Sarai was not able to have any children.

³¹Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai, and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's child) and left Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. But they stopped instead at the village of Haran and settled there. ³²Terah lived for 205 years* and died while still at Haran.

The Call of Abram

12 Then the LORD told Abram, "Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you. ²I will cause you to become the father of a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and I will make you a blessing to others. ³I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you."

⁴So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people who had joined his household at Haran—and finally arrived in Canaan. ⁶Traveling through Canaan, they came to a place

near Shechem and set up camp beside the oak at Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites.

⁷Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I am going to give this land to your offspring.*" And Abram built an altar there to commemorate the LORD's visit. ⁸After that, Abram traveled southward and set up camp in the hill country between Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar and worshiped the LORD. ⁹Then Abram traveled south by stages toward the Negev.

Abram and Sarai in Egypt

¹⁰At that time there was a severe famine in the land, so Abram went down to Egypt to wait it out. ¹¹As he was approaching the borders of Egypt, Abram said to Sarai, "You are a very beautiful woman. ¹²When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife. Let's kill him; then we can have her!'" ¹³But if you say you are my sister, then the Egyptians will treat me well because of their interest in you, and they will spare my life."

¹⁴And sure enough, when they arrived in Egypt, everyone spoke of her beauty. ¹⁵When the palace officials saw her, they sang her praises to their king, the pharaoh, and she was taken into his harem. ¹⁶Then Pharaoh gave Abram many gifts because of her—sheep, cattle, donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

¹⁷But the LORD sent a terrible plague upon Pharaoh's household because of Sarai, Abram's wife. ¹⁸So Pharaoh called for Abram and accused him sharply. "What is this you have done to me?" he demanded. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? ¹⁹Why were you willing to let me marry her, saying she was your sister? Here is your wife! Take her and be gone!" ²⁰Pharaoh then sent them out of the country under armed escort—Abram and his wife, with all their household and belongings.

Abram and Lot Separate

13 So they left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev—Abram with his wife and Lot and all that they owned, ²for Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold. ³Then they continued traveling by stages toward Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where they had camped before. ⁴This was the place where Abram had built the altar, and there he again worshiped the LORD.

⁵Now Lot, who was traveling with Abram, was also very wealthy with sheep, cattle, and many tents. ⁶But the land could not support

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

both Abram and Lot with all their flocks and herds living so close together. There were too many animals for the available pastureland.⁷ So an argument broke out between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. At that time Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land.

⁸Then Abram talked it over with Lot. "This arguing between our herdsmen has got to stop," he said. "After all, we are close relatives! ⁹I'll tell you what we'll do. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want that area over there, then I'll stay here. If you want to stay in this area, then I'll move on to another place."

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

¹⁴After Lot was gone, the LORD said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction.¹⁵ I am going to give all this land to you and your offspring* as a permanent possession.¹⁶ And I am going to give you so many descendants that, like dust, they cannot be counted!¹⁷ Take a walk in every direction and explore the new possessions I am giving you."¹⁸ Then Abram moved his camp to the oak grove owned by Mamre, which is at Hebron. There he built an altar to the LORD.

Abram Rescues Lot

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

³The kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela formed an alliance and mobilized their armies in Siddim Valley (that is, the valley of the Dead Sea*). ⁴For twelve

years they had all been subject to King Kedorlaomer, but now in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

⁵One year later, Kedorlaomer and his allies arrived. They conquered the Rephaites in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emites in the plain of Kiriathaim,⁶ and the Horites in Mount Seir, as far as El-paran at the edge of the wilderness.⁷ Then they swung around to En-mishpat (now called Kadesh) and destroyed the Amalekites, and also the Amorites living in Hazazon-tamar.

⁸But now the army of the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela (now called Zoar) prepared for battle in the valley of the Dead Sea* ⁹against King Kedorlaomer of Elam and the kings of Goiim, Babylonia, and Ellasar—four kings against five.¹⁰ As it happened, the valley was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some slipped into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains.¹¹ The victorious invaders then plundered Sodom and Gomorrah and began their long journey home, taking all the wealth and food with them.¹² They also captured Lot—Abram's nephew who lived in Sodom—and took everything he owned.¹³ One of the men who escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was camped at the oak grove belonging to Mamre the Amorite. Mamre and his relatives, Eshcol and Aner, were Abram's allies.

¹⁴When Abram learned that Lot had been captured, he called together the men born into his household, 318 of them in all. He chased after Kedorlaomer's army until he caught up with them in Dan.¹⁵ There he divided his men and attacked during the night from several directions. Kedorlaomer's army fled, but Abram chased them to Hobah, north of Damascus.¹⁶ Abram and his allies recovered everything—the goods that had been taken, Abram's nephew Lot with his possessions, and all the women and other captives.

Melchizedek Blesses Abram

¹⁷As Abram returned from his victory over Kedorlaomer and his allies, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).¹⁸ Then Melchizedek, the king of Salem and a priest of God Most High, brought him bread and wine.¹⁹ Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing:

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

²⁰ And blessed be God Most High,

who has helped you conquer your enemies.”

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

²¹The king of Sodom told him, “Give back my people who were captured. But you may keep for yourself all the goods you have recovered.”

²²Abram replied, “I have solemnly promised the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, ²³that I will not take so much as a single thread or sandal thong from you. Otherwise you might say, ‘I am the one who made Abram rich!’ ²⁴All I’ll accept is what these young men of mine have already eaten. But give a share of the goods to my allies—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre.”

The LORD’s Covenant with Abram

15 Afterward the LORD spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, “Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great.”

²But Abram replied, “O Sovereign LORD, what good are all your blessings when I don’t even have a son? Since I don’t have a son, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. ³You have given me no children, so one of my servants will have to be my heir.”

⁴Then the LORD said to him, “No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own to inherit everything I am giving you.” ⁵Then the LORD brought Abram outside beneath the night sky and told him, “Look up into the heavens and count the stars if you can. Your descendants will be like that—too many to count!” ⁶And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD declared him righteous because of his faith. ⁷Then the LORD told him, “I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land.”

⁸But Abram replied, “O Sovereign LORD, how can I be sure that you will give it to me?”

⁹Then the LORD told him, “Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” ¹⁰Abram took all these and killed them. He cut each one down the middle and laid the halves side by side. He did not, however, divide the birds in half. ¹¹Some vultures came down to eat the carcasses, but Abram chased them away. ¹²That evening, as the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep. He saw a terrifying vision of darkness and horror.

¹³Then the LORD told Abram, “You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, and they will be oppressed as slaves for four hundred years. ¹⁴But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will come away with great wealth. ¹⁵(But you will die in peace, at a ripe old age.) ¹⁶After four generations your descendants will return here to this land, when the sin of the Amorites has run its course.”

¹⁷As the sun went down and it became dark, Abram saw a smoking firepot and a flaming torch pass between the halves of the carcasses. ¹⁸So the LORD made a covenant with Abram that day and said, “I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt* to the great Euphrates River—¹⁹the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, ²⁰Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, ²¹Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites.”

The Birth of Ishmael

16 But Sarai, Abram’s wife, had no children. So Sarai took her servant, an Egyptian woman named Hagar, ²and gave her to Abram so she could bear his children. “The LORD has kept me from having any children,” Sarai said to Abram. “Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her.” And Abram agreed. ³So Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram first arrived in the land of Canaan.)

⁴So Abram slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress Sarai with contempt. ⁵Then Sarai said to Abram, “It’s all your fault! Now this servant of mine is pregnant, and she despises me, though I myself gave her the privilege of sleeping with you. The LORD will make you pay for doing this to me!”

⁶Abram replied, “Since she is your servant, you may deal with her as you see fit.” So Sarai treated her harshly, and Hagar ran away.

⁷The angel of the LORD found Hagar beside a desert spring along the road to Shur. ⁸The angel said to her, “Hagar, Sarai’s servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?”

“I am running away from my mistress,” she replied.

⁹Then the angel of the LORD said, “Return to your mistress and submit to her authority.” ¹⁰The angel added, “I will give you more

15:18 Hebrew *the river of Egypt*, referring either to an eastern branch of the Nile River or to the brook of Egypt in the Sinai (see Num 34:5). **16:5** Hebrew *Let the LORD judge between you and me*.