

The ONE  
YEAR<sup>®</sup>



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CHRONOLOGICAL  
BIBLE

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New Living  
Translation<sup>®</sup>

SECOND EDITION

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.  
Carol Stream, Illinois

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Tyndale House Publishers and Wycliffe Bible Translators share the vision for an understandable, accurate translation of the Bible for every person in the world. Each sale of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, benefits Wycliffe Bible Translators. Wycliffe is working with partners around the world to accomplish Vision 2025—an initiative to start a Bible translation program in every language group that needs it by the year 2025.

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# INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered when an event in Scripture occurred? Have you ever puzzled over the order of biblical events or how much time passed between those events? Have you struggled just to read through the Bible? A Bible that is easy to read and will help you understand the flow of the biblical story is what you need.

This edition of *The One Year Chronological Bible* contains the entire text of the New Living Translation, arranged in the order the events actually occurred. This unique viewpoint allows you to read the whole Bible as a single story and to see the unfolding of God's plan in history.

Reading the Bible in chronological order will help you gain a unique perspective on Scripture that you could not get from reading a regular Bible cover to cover. For example, after you read in 1 Samuel 19:1-17 about the time David escaped the soldiers who were sent to capture him (pages 428–429), you will immediately read in Psalm 59 how David poured out his heart to God in response to this situation (page 429). When you read one of the Gospel writer's accounts of something Jesus said or did (for instance, Mark 14:12-16, page 1432), you will also be able to see what the other Gospel writers recorded for this event (for instance, Matthew 26:17-19, page 1432 and Luke 22:7-13, page 1432). When you read the letters of Paul, you will see how they fit into the framework of his missionary journeys recorded in the book of Acts. You will be able to see how various passages fit together into a single, unfolding story.

*The One Year Chronological Bible* has been prepared especially for Bible readers wishing to read through the entire Bible chronologically in one year. Instead of following a Bible reading chart and experiencing the delay of flipping from place to place in the Bible, you will find this text in chronological sequence, arranged for your easy reading, study, and meditation.

## FEATURES OF THIS BIBLE

We have included the following features in *The One Year Chronological Bible* to help you understand the flow of the biblical story as you read:

- *General Timeline.* On page A9 is a timeline of major events, important people in the Bible, and the page number you can find them on. This timeline provides a helpful overview of Bible chronology.
- *One Year Reading Plan.* The Bible text has been divided into 365 daily readings, helping you to read through *The One Year Chronological Bible* in a year.
- *Transition Statements.* Throughout the Bible text are short paragraphs that connect the flow of biblical story and help set biblical events in their historical setting.
- *Chronological Dating.* When the events of a passage can be dated, the date is included in the heading for that passage (see, for example, Genesis 11:27-31, page 14).
- *Daily Reading Guide.* At the back of *The One Year Chronological Bible* (on page 1669) we've included a summary of the passages as they are ordered in the text. This outline can be used as a daily reading guide (the division into 365 readings is also included) or as an outline for further study.
- *Scripture Index.* We've also included a listing, in "canonical" order, of every passage in the Bible and the page on which it begins. (The Scripture Index begins on page 1679.)

It is our hope that you will enjoy this fresh, new way of reading through the Bible, that it will enrich your walk with Christ, and give you a deeper understanding of God's Word.

*The Publishers*

# GENERAL TIMELINE

## Creation and the Age of the Patriarchs

undated	God Creates the World. . . . .	1
undated	Adam and Eve Sin. . . . .	3
undated	God Sends the Flood . . . . .	8
2166 or 2000 BC <sup>i</sup>	Abram's Birth . . . . .	14
2091 or 1925 BC	The Call of Abram. . . . .	14
2080 or 1914 BC	Ishmael's Birth . . . . .	18
2066 or 1900 BC	Isaac's Birth. . . . .	24
2006 or 1840 BC	Jacob's and Esau's Births . . . . .	31
1898 or 1732 BC	Joseph Sold into Slavery . . . . .	51
1876 or 1710 BC	Jacob Goes to Egypt. . . . .	64
undated	Job Suffers. . . . .	72

## Exodus, Conquest, and the Judges

1446 or 1280 BC	The Exodus . . . . .	140
1446 or 1280 BC	Israel Wanders in the Wilderness . . . . .	142
1446 or 1280 BC	The Ten Commandments . . . . .	151, 287
1405 or 1239 BC	Israel Enters Canaan; the Period of Conquest Begins. . . . .	331
ca. 1375 or 1210 BC	The Period of the Judges. . . . .	362
ca. 1100 BC	Samuel's Birth. . . . .	403
ca. 1080 BC	Samson Becomes Israel's Judge. . . . .	382
ca. 1070 BC	Samuel Becomes Israel's Judge . . . . .	410

## The United Kingdom

ca. 1050 BC <sup>ii</sup>	Saul Becomes Israel's First King . . . . .	414
1010 BC	David Becomes King . . . . .	453
970 BC	Solomon Becomes King. . . . .	598
966 BC	The First Temple Is Built. . . . .	604
930 BC	Rehoboam Becomes King, the Kingdom Divides . . . . .	689

<sup>i</sup> There are two, generally accepted methods for dating the events of Genesis through Judges: the traditional, "earlier" system, and the more recent, "later" system. Both systems assume that the dates in the Bible are accurate. The key difference in the two systems has to do with when the Exodus occurred. The traditional system dates the Exodus to ca. 1446 BC, while the more recent system dates the Exodus to ca. 1280 BC. *The One Year Chronological Bible* lists both dates for completeness, leaving the final decision in the hands of the reader (for more information about this topic, most Bible dictionaries have an article on "Old Testament Chronology"). <sup>ii</sup> From the beginning of Saul's reign to the end of the Old Testament, dates are accurate within about a year.

## The Divided Kingdom and Period of Exile

930–913 BC	Rehoboam's Reign in Judah (the Southern Kingdom) . . . . .	695
930–910 BC	Jeroboam's Reign in Israel (the Northern Kingdom) . . . . .	689
911–870 BC	Asa's Reign in Judah . . . . .	698
874–853 BC	Ahab's Reign in Israel . . . . .	703
870–848 BC <sup>iii</sup>	Jehoshaphat's Reign in Judah . . . . .	704
ca. 870–848 BC	Elijah's Ministry . . . . .	705
852–841 BC	Joram's (Jehoram's) Reign in Israel . . . . .	721
ca. 848–797 BC	Elisha's Ministry . . . . .	725
841–814 BC	Jehu's Reign in Israel . . . . .	735
841–835 BC	Athaliah's Reign in Judah . . . . .	739
835–796 BC	Joash's (Jehoash's) Reign in Judah . . . . .	742
814–798 BC	Jehoahaz's Reign in Israel . . . . .	744
796–768 BC	Amaziah's Reign in Judah . . . . .	746
782–753 BC	Jeroboam II's Reign in Israel . . . . .	749
768–740 BC	Uzziah's (Azariah's) Reign in Judah . . . . .	749
ca. 760 BC	Amos and Jonah Prophecy . . . . .	751, 753
ca. 755–722 BC	Hosea's Ministry . . . . .	785
752–742 BC	Menahem's Reign in Israel . . . . .	767
740–732 BC	Pekah's Reign in Israel . . . . .	767
740–732 BC	Jotham's Reign in Judah . . . . .	769
732–722 BC	Hoshea's Reign in Israel . . . . .	785
ca. 740–700 BC	Isaiah's Ministry . . . . .	768
732–716 BC	Ahaz's Reign in Judah . . . . .	772
722 BC	The Northern Kingdom Falls to the Assyrians . . . . .	805
716–687 BC	Hezekiah's Reign in Judah . . . . .	784
716 BC	Hezekiah Reopens the Temple, Celebrates Passover . . . . .	825
687–643 BC	Manasseh's Reign in Judah . . . . .	989
ca. 664–612 BC	Nahum's Ministry . . . . .	1014
643–641 BC	Amon's Reign in Judah . . . . .	991
641–609 BC	Josiah's Reign in Judah . . . . .	992
ca. 627–580 BC	Jeremiah's Ministry . . . . .	992
ca. 612 BC	Zephaniah's Prophecy . . . . .	1024
ca. 605 BC	Habakkuk's Prophecy . . . . .	1019
605 BC	Daniel Exiled to Babylon . . . . .	1047
605–ca. 536 BC	Daniel's Ministry . . . . .	1047
593–571 BC	Ezekiel's Ministry . . . . .	1103
586 BC	The Fall of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) . . . . .	1152
586 BC	Obadiah's Prophecy . . . . .	1169

<sup>iii</sup> Jehoshaphat shared the reign with his father, Asa, from 873 to 870. Many of the kings of Judah were coregents with their father for part of their reign; the dates given here reflect the period of sole regency only.

**Return from Exile**

538 BC	The First Exiles Return to Jerusalem . . . . .	1223
537 BC	Rebuilding of the Temple Begins . . . . .	1226
520 BC	Haggai's and Zechariah's Prophecy . . . . .	1231
515 BC	The Temple Is Completed . . . . .	1248
ca. 479 BC	Esther Becomes Queen of Persia . . . . .	1250
458 BC	Ezra Goes to Jerusalem . . . . .	1260
445 BC	Nehemiah Goes to Jerusalem, Rebuilds the Wall . . . . .	1267
433–430 BC	Malachi's Prophecy . . . . .	1288
ca. 400 BC(?)	Joel's Prophecy . . . . .	1291

**The New Testament**

6/4 BC	John the Baptist's and Jesus' Births . . . . .	1304, 1305
4/1 BC	Wise Men Visit Jesus . . . . .	1307
ca. AD 6/8	Jesus Visits the Temple As a Boy . . . . .	1308
AD 26/28	Jesus' Baptism, Sermon on the Mount . . . . .	1311, 1332
AD 30 or 33	Jesus' Triumphal Entry, Passion Week, The Last Supper . . . . .	1410, 1432
AD 30 or 33 <sup>iv</sup>	Jesus' Trial, Death, Resurrection . . . . .	1450, 1456, 1458
AD 30 or 33	Jesus' Ascension . . . . .	1465
AD 30 or 33	Pentecost . . . . .	1466
AD 34 or 35	Paul's Conversion . . . . .	1478
ca. AD 46–49	Paul's First Missionary Journey . . . . .	1485
ca. AD 49(?)	Paul Writes Galatians . . . . .	1488
ca. AD 49	The Council at Jerusalem . . . . .	1496
ca. AD 49–50	Paul's Second Missionary Journey . . . . .	1497
ca. AD 50	Paul Writes 1 & 2 Thessalonians . . . . .	1501
ca. AD 51–54	Paul's Third Missionary Journey . . . . .	1508
AD 52/53	Paul Writes 1 Corinthians from Ephesus . . . . .	1509
ca. AD 54	Paul Writes 2 Corinthians and Romans . . . . .	1550, 1529
ca. AD 56–57	Paul's Journey to Rome . . . . .	1574
ca. AD 58/60	Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon Written from Rome . . . . .	1577, 1584, 1588
ca. AD 59/61	Philippians Written . . . . .	1589
ca. AD 60(?)	James Written . . . . .	1594
AD 60/62	1 Timothy and Titus Written . . . . .	1599, 1604
before AD 64	1 & 2 Peter Written . . . . .	1627, 1633
ca. AD 64	2 Timothy Written . . . . .	1607
60s AD	Hebrews, 1—3 John, and Jude Written; The Gospels Written . . . . .	1610, 1636, 1643, 1298
60s or 90s AD	Revelation Written . . . . .	1644

<sup>iv</sup> Jesus' death either occurred on Friday, April 7, AD 30 or on Friday, April 3, AD 33.



# BEGINNING PAGES FOR BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis . . . . .	1	2 Chronicles . . . . .	598	Daniel . . . . .	1047
Exodus . . . . .	125	Ezra . . . . .	1223	Hosea . . . . .	785
Leviticus . . . . .	188	Nehemiah . . . . .	1266	Joel . . . . .	1291
Numbers . . . . .	228	Esther . . . . .	1249	Amos . . . . .	753
Deuteronomy . . . . .	280	Job . . . . .	72	Obadiah . . . . .	1169
Joshua . . . . .	329	Psalms . . . . .	850	Jonah . . . . .	751
Judges . . . . .	362	Proverbs . . . . .	626	Micah . . . . .	770
Ruth . . . . .	395	Ecclesiastes . . . . .	678	Nahum . . . . .	1014
1 Samuel . . . . .	402	Song of Songs . . . . .	666	Habakkuk . . . . .	1019
2 Samuel . . . . .	451	Isaiah . . . . .	807	Zephaniah . . . . .	1024
1 Kings . . . . .	523	Jeremiah . . . . .	992	Haggai . . . . .	1231
2 Kings . . . . .	720	Lamentations . . . . .	1156	Zechariah . . . . .	1233
1 Chronicles . . . . .	7	Ezekiel . . . . .	1103	Malachi . . . . .	1288

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew . . . . .	1299	Ephesians . . . . .	1577	Hebrews . . . . .	1611
Mark . . . . .	1298	Philippians . . . . .	1589	James . . . . .	1594
Luke . . . . .	1298	Colossians . . . . .	1584	1 Peter . . . . .	1627
John . . . . .	1298	1 Thessalonians . . . . .	1501	2 Peter . . . . .	1633
Acts . . . . .	1465	2 Thessalonians . . . . .	1505	1 John . . . . .	1636
Romans . . . . .	1529	1 Timothy . . . . .	1599	2 John . . . . .	1641
1 Corinthians . . . . .	1509	2 Timothy . . . . .	1607	3 John . . . . .	1642
2 Corinthians . . . . .	1550	Titus . . . . .	1605	Jude . . . . .	1643
Galatians . . . . .	1488	Philemon . . . . .	1588	Revelation . . . . .	1644

## A NOTE TO READERS

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first published in 1996. It quickly became one of the most popular Bible translations in the English-speaking world. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the Bible Translation Committee determined that an additional investment in scholarly review and text refinement could make it even better. So shortly after its initial publication, the committee began an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing the level of the NLT's precision without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. This second-generation text was completed in 2004 and is reflected in this edition of the New Living Translation.

The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning and content of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to contemporary readers. The challenge for our translators was to create a text that would communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original texts did to readers and listeners in the ancient biblical world. The resulting translation is easy to read and understand, while also accurately communicating the meaning and content of the original biblical texts. The NLT is a general-purpose text especially good for study, devotional reading, and reading aloud in worship services.

We believe that the New Living Translation—which combines the latest biblical scholarship with a clear, dynamic writing style—will communicate God's word powerfully to all who read it. We publish it with the prayer that God will use it to speak his timeless truth to the church and the world in a fresh, new way.

*The Publishers*  
JULY 2004

## TABLE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

### WEIGHT

<i>talent</i> (60 <i>minas</i> )	75 pounds	34 kilograms
<i>mina</i> (50 <i>shekels</i> )	1.25 pounds	600 grams
<i>shekel</i>	0.4 ounces	11.4 grams
<i>pim</i> ( $\frac{2}{3}$ <i>shekel</i> )	0.25 ounces	8 grams
<i>beka</i> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>shekel</i> )	0.2 ounces	5.7 grams
<i>gerah</i> ( $\frac{1}{20}$ <i>shekel</i> )	0.02 ounces	0.6 grams
<i>litra</i>	12 ounces	327 grams

### LENGTH

<i>long cubit</i>	21 inches	53 centimeters
<i>cubit</i>	18 inches	45 centimeters
<i>span</i>	9 inches	23 centimeters
<i>fathom</i>	6 inches	15 centimeters
<i>handbreadth</i>	3 inches	8 centimeters
<i>schoinos</i> (33 <i>stadia</i> )	3.8 miles	6.1 kilometers
<i>stadion</i>	205 yards	187 meters

### CAPACITY

#### Dry Measure

<i>cor/homer</i> (10 <i>ephahs</i> )	5 bushels	182 liters
<i>letheh</i> (5 <i>ephahs</i> )	2.5 bushels	91 liters
<i>ephah</i>	0.5 bushels	18 liters
<i>seah</i> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>ephah</i> )	5 quarts	6 liters
<i>omer</i> ( $\frac{1}{10}$ <i>ephah</i> )	2 quarts	2 liters
<i>cab</i> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>omer</i> )	1 quart	1.3 liters

#### Liquid Measure

<i>bath</i>	5.5 gallons	21 liters
<i>hin</i> ( $\frac{1}{6}$ <i>bath</i> )	1 gallon	3.8 liters
<i>log</i> ( $\frac{1}{72}$ <i>bath</i> )	0.3 quarts	0.3 liters

# JANUARY 1

The Bible begins in Genesis 1-11 with the dawn of Creation and the early history of the world.

## ◆ **The Account of Creation** / Genesis 1:1–2:4a

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

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

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

<sup>6</sup>Then God said, “Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth.” <sup>7</sup>And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens. <sup>8</sup>God called the space “sky.”

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

<sup>9</sup>Then God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear.” And that is what happened. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground “land” and the waters “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came.” And that is what happened. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>2:1</sup>So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. <sup>2</sup>On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested\* from all his work. <sup>3</sup>And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

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

◆ **The Man and Woman in Eden** / Genesis 2:4b-25

<sup>4b</sup>When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup>neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. <sup>6</sup>Instead, springs\* came up from the ground and watered all the land. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!  
She will be called 'woman,'  
because she was taken from 'man.'"

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

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

◆ **The Man and Woman Sin** / Genesis 3:1-24

<sup>1</sup>The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

2:6 Or *mist*. 2:19 Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter. 2:21 Or *took a part of the man's side*.

<sup>2</sup>“Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied.  
<sup>3</sup>“It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree  
 whose fruit I commanded you not to eat,  
 the ground is cursed because of you.

All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it.

**3:8** Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter. **3:15** Or *bruise*; also in 3:15b. **3:16** Or *And though you will have desire for your husband, / he will rule over you.*

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

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

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

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

## JANUARY 2

### ◆ Cain, Abel, and Seth / Genesis 4:1-26

<sup>1</sup> Now Adam\* had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to Cain, she said, “With the LORD’s help, I have produced\* a man!” <sup>2</sup> Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.

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

<sup>6</sup> “Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? <sup>7</sup> You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

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

<sup>9</sup> Afterward the LORD asked Cain, “Where is your brother? Where is Abel?”  
“I don’t know,” Cain responded. “Am I my brother’s guardian?”

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

<sup>13</sup> Cain replied to the LORD, “My punishment\* is too great for me to bear! <sup>14</sup> You

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



have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!”

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

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

<sup>19</sup>Lamech married two women. The first was named Adah, and the second was Zillah. <sup>20</sup>Adah gave birth to Jabal, who was the first of those who raise livestock and live in tents. <sup>21</sup>His brother’s name was Jubal, the first of all who play the harp and flute. <sup>22</sup>Lamech’s other wife, Zillah, gave birth to a son named Tubal-cain. He became an expert in forging tools of bronze and iron. Tubal-cain had a sister named Naamah. <sup>23</sup>One day Lamech said to his wives,

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

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

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

#### ◆ From Adam to Noah / Genesis 5:1-32

<sup>1</sup> This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings,\* he made them to be like himself. <sup>2</sup> He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them “human.”

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

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

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

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

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 Or *man*; Hebrew reads *adam*; similarly in 5:2. 5:6 Or *the ancestor of*; also in 5:9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25. 5:7 Or *the birth of this ancestor of*; also in 5:10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26.

- <sup>15</sup>When Mahalalel was 65 years old, he became the father of Jared. <sup>16</sup>After the birth of Jared, Mahalalel lived another 830 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>17</sup>Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.
- <sup>18</sup>When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. <sup>19</sup>After the birth of Enoch, Jared lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup>Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.
- <sup>21</sup>When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. <sup>22</sup>After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for another 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup>Enoch lived 365 years, <sup>24</sup>walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.
- <sup>25</sup>When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. <sup>26</sup>After the birth of Lamech, Methuselah lived another 782 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>27</sup>Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.
- <sup>28</sup>When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son. <sup>29</sup>Lamech named his son Noah, for he said, “May he bring us relief\* from our work and the painful labor of farming this ground that the LORD has cursed.”
- <sup>30</sup>After the birth of Noah, Lamech lived another 595 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup>Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died.
- <sup>32</sup>By the time Noah was 500 years old, he was the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

◆ 1 Chronicles 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup>The descendants of Adam were Seth, Enosh, <sup>2</sup>Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, <sup>3</sup>Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, <sup>4</sup>and Noah. The sons of Noah were\* Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

◆ **Noah and the Flood** / Genesis 6:1-22

<sup>1</sup>Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them. <sup>2</sup>The sons of God saw the beautiful women\* and took any they wanted as their wives. <sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not put up with\* humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years.”

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

<sup>5</sup>The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil.

<sup>6</sup>So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart. <sup>7</sup>And the LORD said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.” <sup>8</sup>But Noah found favor with the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the

5:29 *Noah* sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “relief” or “comfort.” 1:4 As in Greek version (see also Gen 5:3-32); Hebrew lacks *The sons of Noah were*. 6:2 Hebrew *daughters of men*; also in 6:4. 6:3 Greek version reads *will not remain in*.

only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. <sup>10</sup>Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

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

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

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

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

## JANUARY 3

### ◆ The Flood Covers the Earth / Genesis 7:1-24

<sup>1</sup>When everything was ready, the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I can see that you alone are righteous. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs—male and female—of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice,\* and take one pair of each of the others. <sup>3</sup>Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that all life will survive on the earth after the flood. <sup>4</sup>Seven days from now I will make the rains pour down on the earth. And it will rain for forty days and forty nights, until I have wiped from the earth all the living things I have created.”

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>17</sup> For forty days the floodwaters grew deeper, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. <sup>18</sup> As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. <sup>19</sup> Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, <sup>20</sup> rising more than twenty-two feet\* above the highest peaks. <sup>21</sup> All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people. <sup>22</sup> Everything that breathed and lived on dry land died. <sup>23</sup> God wiped out every living thing on the earth—people, livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and the birds of the sky. All were destroyed. The only people who survived were Noah and those with him in the boat. <sup>24</sup> And the floodwaters covered the earth for 150 days.

#### ◆ The Flood Recedes / Genesis 8:1-22

<sup>1</sup> But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and livestock with him in the boat. He sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the floodwaters began to recede. <sup>2</sup> The underground waters stopped flowing, and the torrential rains from the sky were stopped. <sup>3</sup> So the floodwaters gradually receded from the earth. After 150 days, <sup>4</sup> exactly five months from the time the flood began,\* the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup> Two and a half months later,\* as the waters continued to go down, other mountain peaks became visible.

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

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

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

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

**7:20** Hebrew *15 cubits* [6.9 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.

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

◆ **God’s Covenant with Noah** / Genesis 9:1-17

<sup>1</sup>Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth. <sup>2</sup>All the animals of the earth, all the birds of the sky, all the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the fish in the sea will look on you with fear and terror. I have placed them in your power. <sup>3</sup>I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables. <sup>4</sup>But you must never eat any meat that still has the lifeblood in it.

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

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

<sup>12</sup>Then God said, “I am giving you a sign of my covenant with you and with all living creatures, for all generations to come. <sup>13</sup>I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I send clouds over the earth, the rainbow will appear in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>and I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures. Never again will the floodwaters destroy all life. <sup>16</sup>When I see the rainbow in the clouds, I will remember the eternal covenant between God and every living creature on earth.” <sup>17</sup>Then God said to Noah, “Yes, this rainbow is the sign of the covenant I am confirming with all the creatures on earth.”

◆ **Noah’s Sons** / Genesis 9:18–10:1

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

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

<sup>24</sup>When Noah woke up from his stupor, he learned what Ham, his youngest son, had done. <sup>25</sup>Then he cursed Canaan, the son of Ham:

8:20 Hebrew *every clean animal and every clean bird*. 9:6 Or *man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*.

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>10:1</sup> This is the account of the families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the three sons of Noah. Many children were born to them after the great flood.

◆ **Descendants of Japheth** / Genesis 10:2-5

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

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

<sup>4</sup> The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.\*

<sup>5</sup> Their descendants became the seafaring peoples that spread out to various lands, each identified by its own language, clan, and national identity.

◆ 1 Chronicles 1:5-7

<sup>5</sup> The descendants of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

<sup>6</sup> The descendants of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath,\* and Togarmah.

<sup>7</sup> The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

◆ **Descendants of Ham** / Genesis 10:6-20

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

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

<sup>8</sup> Cush was also the ancestor of Nimrod, who was the first heroic warrior on earth. <sup>9</sup> Since he was the greatest hunter in the world,\* his name became proverbial. People would say, “This man is like Nimrod, the greatest hunter in the world.” <sup>10</sup> He built his kingdom in the land of Babylonia,\* with the cities of Babylon, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh. <sup>11</sup> From there he expanded his territory to Assyria,\* building the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, <sup>12</sup> and Resen (the great city located between Nineveh and Calah).

<sup>13</sup> Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,

<sup>14</sup> Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines came.\*

<sup>15</sup> Canaan’s oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of the Hittites, <sup>16</sup> Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites,

**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*. **1:6** As in some Hebrew manuscripts and Greek version (see also Gen 10:3); most Hebrew manuscripts read *Diphath*. **10:9** Hebrew *a great hunter before the LORD*; also in 10:9b. **10:10** Hebrew *Shinar*. **10:11** Or *From that land Assyria went out*. **10:14** Hebrew *Casluhites, from whom the Philistines came, and Caphtorites*. Compare Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7.

<sup>17</sup>Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, <sup>18</sup>Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites. The Canaanite clans eventually spread out, <sup>19</sup>and the territory of Canaan extended from Sidon in the north to Gerar and Gaza in the south, and east as far as Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, near Lasha.

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

◆ 1 Chronicles 1:8-16

<sup>8</sup>The descendants of Ham were Cush, Mizraim,\* Put, and Canaan.

<sup>9</sup>The descendants of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. <sup>10</sup>Cush was also the ancestor of Nimrod, who was the first heroic warrior on earth.

<sup>11</sup>Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, <sup>12</sup>Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines came.\*

<sup>13</sup>Canaan's oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of the Hittites, <sup>14</sup>Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites,

<sup>15</sup>Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, <sup>16</sup>Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites.

◆ **Descendants of Shem** / Genesis 10:21-30

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

<sup>22</sup>The descendants of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

<sup>23</sup>The descendants of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

<sup>24</sup>Arphaxad was the father of Shelah,\* and Shelah was the father of Eber.

<sup>25</sup>Eber had two sons. The first was named Peleg (which means "division"), for during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups. His brother's name was Joktan.

<sup>26</sup>Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,

<sup>27</sup>Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup>Obal, Abimael, Sheba, <sup>29</sup>Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were descendants of Joktan. <sup>30</sup>The territory they occupied extended from Mesha all the way to Sephar in the eastern mountains.

◆ 1 Chronicles 1:17-23

<sup>17</sup>The descendants of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. The descendants of Aram were\* Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.\*

<sup>18</sup>Arphaxad was the father of Shelah.

Shelah was the father of Eber.

<sup>19</sup>Eber had two sons. The first was named Peleg (which means "division"), for during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups. His brother's name was Joktan.

<sup>20</sup>Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,

<sup>21</sup>Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>22</sup>Obal,\* Abimael, Sheba, <sup>23</sup>Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were descendants of Joktan.

1:8 Or *Egypt*; also in 1:11. 1:12 Hebrew *Casluhites*, from whom the Philistines came, *Caphtorites*. See 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*. Compare Luke 3:36. 1:17a As in one Hebrew manuscript and some Greek manuscripts (see also Gen 10:23); most Hebrew manuscripts lack *The descendants of Aram were*. 1:17b As in parallel text at Gen 10:23; Hebrew reads *and Meshech*. 1:22 As in some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac version (see also Gen 10:28); most Hebrew manuscripts read *Ebal*.

## ◆ Genesis 10:31-32

<sup>31</sup>These were the descendants of Shem, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity.

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

## JANUARY 4

◆ **The Tower of Babel** / Genesis 11:1-9

<sup>1</sup>At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. <sup>2</sup>As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia\* and settled there.

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

<sup>5</sup>But the LORD came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. <sup>6</sup>"Look!" he said. "The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! <sup>7</sup>Come, let's go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won't be able to understand each other."

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

◆ **From Shem to Abram** / Genesis 11:10-26

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



- <sup>20</sup>When Reu was 32 years old, he became the father of Serug. <sup>21</sup>After the birth of Serug, Reu lived another 207 years and had other sons and daughters.
- <sup>22</sup>When Serug was 30 years old, he became the father of Nahor. <sup>23</sup>After the birth of Nahor, Serug lived another 200 years and had other sons and daughters.
- <sup>24</sup>When Nahor was 29 years old, he became the father of Terah. <sup>25</sup>After the birth of Terah, Nahor lived another 119 years and had other sons and daughters.
- <sup>26</sup>When Terah was 70 years old, he had become the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

◆ 1 Chronicles 1:24-27

<sup>24</sup>So this is the family line descended from Shem: Arphaxad, Shelah,\* <sup>25</sup>Eber, Peleg, Reu, <sup>26</sup>Serug, Nahor, Terah, <sup>27</sup>and Abram, later known as Abraham.

◆ **The Family of Terah** / Genesis 11:27-31 / 2166 or 2000 BC

Beginning with the history of Terah's family, two dates are given: a traditional, earlier date and an alternative, later date. All dates are approximate.

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

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

◆ **The Call of Abram** / Genesis 12:1-9 / 2091 or 1925 BC

Some years later, when Abram was grown and married and still living with his father in Haran, the LORD called Abram to go to a new land.

<sup>1</sup>The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

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

<sup>7</sup>Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants.\*" And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the LORD, who

1:24 Some Greek manuscripts read *Arphaxad, Cainan, Shelah*. See notes on Gen 10:24; 11:12-13. 12:7 Hebrew *seed*.

had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup>After that, Abram traveled south and set up camp in the hill country, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built another altar and dedicated it to the LORD, and he worshiped the LORD. <sup>9</sup>Then Abram continued traveling south by stages toward the Negev.

◆ **Abram and Sarai in Egypt** / Genesis 12:10-20

<sup>10</sup>At that time a severe famine struck the land of Canaan, forcing Abram to go down to Egypt, where he lived as a foreigner. <sup>11</sup>As he was approaching the border of Egypt, Abram said to his wife, Sarai, “Look, you are a very beautiful woman. <sup>12</sup>When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife. Let’s kill him; then we can have her!’ <sup>13</sup>So please tell them you are my sister. Then they will spare my life and treat me well because of their interest in you.”

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

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

◆ **Abram and Lot Separate** / Genesis 13:1-18

<sup>1</sup>So Abram left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev, along with his wife and Lot and all that they owned. <sup>2</sup>(Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.) <sup>3</sup>From the Negev, they continued traveling by stages toward Bethel, and they pitched their tents between Bethel and Ai, where they had camped before. <sup>4</sup>This was the same place where Abram had built the altar, and there he worshiped the LORD again.

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

<sup>8</sup>Finally Abram said to Lot, “Let’s not allow this conflict to come between us or our herdsmen. After all, we are close relatives! <sup>9</sup>The whole countryside is open to you. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want the land to the left, then I’ll take the land on the right. If you prefer the land on the right, then I’ll go to the left.”

<sup>10</sup>Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the LORD or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) <sup>11</sup>Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle

Abram. <sup>12</sup>So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. <sup>13</sup>But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the LORD.

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

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

#### ◆ **Abram Rescues Lot** / Genesis 14:1-16

<sup>1</sup>About this time war broke out in the region. King Amraphel of Babylonia,\* King Arioch of Ellasar, King Kedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim <sup>2</sup>fought against King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (also called Zoar).

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

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

<sup>8</sup>Then the rebel kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela (also called Zoar) prepared for battle in the valley of the Dead Sea.\* <sup>9</sup>They fought against King Kedorlaomer of Elam, King Tidal of Goiim, King Amraphel of Babylonia, and King Arioch of Ellasar—four kings against five. <sup>10</sup>As it happened, the valley of the Dead Sea was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains. <sup>11</sup>The victorious invaders then plundered Sodom and Gomorrah and headed for home, taking with them all the spoils of war and the food supplies. <sup>12</sup>They also captured Lot—Abram’s nephew who lived in Sodom—and carried off everything he owned.

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

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

13:15 Hebrew *seed*; also in 13:16. 14:1 Hebrew *Shinar*; also in 14:9. 14:3 Hebrew *Salt Sea*. 14:8 Hebrew *Siddim Valley* (see 14:3); also in 14:10.

◆ **Melchizedek Blesses Abram** / Genesis 14:17-24

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>22</sup>Abram replied to the king of Sodom, “I solemnly swear to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, <sup>23</sup>that I will not take so much as a single thread or sandal thong from what belongs to you. Otherwise you might say, ‘I am the one who made Abram rich.’ <sup>24</sup>I will accept only what my young warriors have already eaten, and I request that you give a fair share of the goods to my allies—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre.”

## JANUARY 5

◆ **The LORD's Covenant with Abram** / Genesis 15:1-21

<sup>1</sup>Some time later, the LORD spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, “Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>12</sup>As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a terrifying darkness came down over him. <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said to Abram, “You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, where they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years. <sup>14</sup>But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will come away with great wealth. <sup>15</sup>(As for you, you will die in peace and be buried at a ripe old age.) <sup>16</sup>After four generations your descendants will return here to this land, for the sins of the Amorites do not yet warrant their destruction.”

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

◆ **The Birth of Ishmael** / Genesis 16:1-16 / 2080 or 1914 BC

<sup>1</sup>Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar. <sup>2</sup>So Sarai said to Abram, “The LORD has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her.” And Abram agreed with Sarai’s proposal. <sup>3</sup>So Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)

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

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

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

“I’m running away from my mistress, Sarai,” she replied.

<sup>9</sup>The angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority.” <sup>10</sup>Then he added, “I will give you more descendants than you can count.”

<sup>11</sup>And the angel also said, “You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You are to name him Ishmael (which means ‘God hears’), for the LORD has heard your cry of distress. <sup>12</sup>This son of yours will be a wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey! He will raise his fist against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives.”

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

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). 16:13 Hebrew *El-roi*.

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

◆ **Abram Is Named Abraham** / Genesis 17:1-8 / 2067 or 1901 BC

<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am El-Shaddai—‘God Almighty.’ Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life.

<sup>2</sup>I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants.”

<sup>3</sup>At this, Abram fell face down on the ground. Then God said to him, <sup>4</sup>“This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations!

<sup>5</sup>What’s more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham,\* for you will be the father of many nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them!

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

◆ **The Sign of Circumcision** / Genesis 17:9-14

<sup>9</sup>Then God said to Abraham, “Your responsibility is to obey the terms of the covenant. You and all your descendants have this continual responsibility. <sup>10</sup>This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised. <sup>11</sup>You must cut off the flesh of your foreskin as a sign of the covenant between me and you. <sup>12</sup>From generation to generation, every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This applies not only to members of your family but also to the servants born in your household and the foreign-born servants whom you have purchased. <sup>13</sup>All must be circumcised. Your bodies will bear the mark of my everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup>Any male who fails to be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family for breaking the covenant.”

◆ **Sarai Is Named Sarah** / Genesis 17:15-27

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

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

<sup>19</sup>But God replied, “No—Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac,\* and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant. <sup>20</sup>As for Ishmael, I will bless him also, just as you have asked. I will make him extremely fruitful and multiply his descendants. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. <sup>21</sup>But

17:5 Abram means “exalted father”; Abraham sounds like a Hebrew term that means “father of many.” 17:7 Hebrew seed; also in 17:7b, 8, 9, 10, 19. 17:15 Sarai and Sarah both mean “princess.” 17:19 Isaac means “he laughs.”

my covenant will be confirmed with Isaac, who will be born to you and Sarah about this time next year.”<sup>22</sup> When God had finished speaking, he left Abraham.

<sup>23</sup>On that very day Abraham took his son, Ishmael, and every male in his household, including those born there and those he had bought. Then he circumcised them, cutting off their foreskins, just as God had told him. <sup>24</sup>Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, <sup>25</sup>and Ishmael, his son, was thirteen. <sup>26</sup>Both Abraham and his son, Ishmael, were circumcised on that same day, <sup>27</sup>along with all the other men and boys of the household, whether they were born there or bought as servants. All were circumcised with him.

## JANUARY 6

### ◆ **A Son Promised to Sarah** / Genesis 18:1-15 / 2067 or 1901 BC

<sup>1</sup>The LORD appeared again to Abraham near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. One day Abraham was sitting at the entrance to his tent during the hottest part of the day. <sup>2</sup>He looked up and noticed three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he ran to meet them and welcomed them, bowing low to the ground.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### ◆ **Abraham Intercedes for Sodom** / Genesis 18:16-33

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

18:6 Hebrew 3 *seahs*, about 15 quarts or 18 liters.

<sup>17</sup>“Should I hide my plan from Abraham?” the LORD asked. <sup>18</sup>“For Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. <sup>19</sup>I have singled him out so that he will direct his sons and their families to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just. Then I will do for Abraham all that I have promised.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### ◆ Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed / Genesis 19:1-29

<sup>1</sup>That evening the two angels came to the entrance of the city of Sodom. Lot was sitting there, and when he saw them, he stood up to meet them. Then he welcomed them and bowed with his face to the ground. <sup>2</sup>“My lords,” he said, “come to my home to wash your feet, and be my guests for the night. You may then get up early in the morning and be on your way again.”

“Oh no,” they replied. “We’ll just spend the night out here in the city square.”

<sup>3</sup>But Lot insisted, so at last they went home with him. Lot prepared a feast for them, complete with fresh bread made without yeast, and they ate. <sup>4</sup>But before they retired for the night, all the men of Sodom, young and old, came from all



over the city and surrounded the house. <sup>5</sup>They shouted to Lot, “Where are the men who came to spend the night with you? Bring them out to us so we can have sex with them!”

<sup>6</sup>So Lot stepped outside to talk to them, shutting the door behind him. <sup>7</sup>“Please, my brothers,” he begged, “don’t do such a wicked thing. <sup>8</sup>Look, I have two virgin daughters. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do with them as you wish. But please, leave these men alone, for they are my guests and are under my protection.”

<sup>9</sup>“Stand back!” they shouted. “This fellow came to town as an outsider, and now he’s acting like our judge! We’ll treat you far worse than those other men!” And they lunged toward Lot to break down the door.

<sup>10</sup>But the two angels\* reached out, pulled Lot into the house, and bolted the door. <sup>11</sup>Then they blinded all the men, young and old, who were at the door of the house, so they gave up trying to get inside.

<sup>12</sup>Meanwhile, the angels questioned Lot. “Do you have any other relatives here in the city?” they asked. “Get them out of this place—your sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone else. <sup>13</sup>For we are about to destroy this city completely. The outcry against this place is so great it has reached the LORD, and he has sent us to destroy it.”

<sup>14</sup>So Lot rushed out to tell his daughters’ fiancés, “Quick, get out of the city! The LORD is about to destroy it.” But the young men thought he was only joking.

<sup>15</sup>At dawn the next morning the angels became insistent. “Hurry,” they said to Lot. “Take your wife and your two daughters who are here. Get out right now, or you will be swept away in the destruction of the city!”

<sup>16</sup>When Lot still hesitated, the angels seized his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters and rushed them to safety outside the city, for the LORD was merciful. <sup>17</sup>When they were safely out of the city, one of the angels ordered, “Run for your lives! And don’t look back or stop anywhere in the valley! Escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away!”

<sup>18</sup>“Oh no, my lord!” Lot begged. <sup>19</sup>“You have been so gracious to me and saved my life, and you have shown such great kindness. But I cannot go to the mountains. Disaster would catch up to me there, and I would soon die. <sup>20</sup>See, there is a small village nearby. Please let me go there instead; don’t you see how small it is? Then my life will be saved.”

<sup>21</sup>“All right,” the angel said, “I will grant your request. I will not destroy the little village. <sup>22</sup>But hurry! Escape to it, for I can do nothing until you arrive there.” (This explains why that village was known as Zoar, which means “little place.”)

<sup>23</sup>Lot reached the village just as the sun was rising over the horizon. <sup>24</sup>Then the LORD rained down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>25</sup>He utterly destroyed them, along with the other cities and villages of the plain, wiping out all the people and every bit of vegetation. <sup>26</sup>But Lot’s wife looked back as she was following behind him, and she turned into a pillar of salt.

<sup>27</sup>Abraham got up early that morning and hurried out to the place where he had stood in the LORD’s presence. <sup>28</sup>He looked out across the plain toward Sodom and Gomorrah and watched as columns of smoke rose from the cities like smoke from a furnace.

<sup>29</sup>But God had listened to Abraham's request and kept Lot safe, removing him from the disaster that engulfed the cities on the plain.

◆ **Lot and His Daughters** / Genesis 19:30-38

<sup>30</sup>Afterward Lot left Zoar because he was afraid of the people there, and he went to live in a cave in the mountains with his two daughters. <sup>31</sup>One day the older daughter said to her sister, "There are no men left anywhere in this entire area, so we can't get married like everyone else. And our father will soon be too old to have children. <sup>32</sup>Come, let's get him drunk with wine, and then we will have sex with him. That way we will preserve our family line through our father."

<sup>33</sup>So that night they got him drunk with wine, and the older daughter went in and had intercourse with her father. He was unaware of her lying down or getting up again.

<sup>34</sup>The next morning the older daughter said to her younger sister, "I had sex with our father last night. Let's get him drunk with wine again tonight, and you go in and have sex with him. That way we will preserve our family line through our father." <sup>35</sup>So that night they got him drunk with wine again, and the younger daughter went in and had intercourse with him. As before, he was unaware of her lying down or getting up again.

<sup>36</sup>As a result, both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their own father. <sup>37</sup>When the older daughter gave birth to a son, she named him Moab.\* He became the ancestor of the nation now known as the Moabites. <sup>38</sup>When the younger daughter gave birth to a son, she named him Ben-ammi.\* He became the ancestor of the nation now known as the Ammonites.

◆ **Abraham Deceives Abimelech** / Genesis 20:1-18

<sup>1</sup>Abraham moved south to the Negev and lived for a while between Kadesh and Shur, and then he moved on to Gerar. While living there as a foreigner, <sup>2</sup>Abraham introduced his wife, Sarah, by saying, "She is my sister." So King Abimelech of Gerar sent for Sarah and had her brought to him at his palace.

<sup>3</sup>But that night God came to Abimelech in a dream and told him, "You are a dead man, for that woman you have taken is already married!"

<sup>4</sup>But Abimelech had not slept with her yet, so he said, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation? <sup>5</sup>Didn't Abraham tell me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'Yes, he is my brother.' I acted in complete innocence! My hands are clean."

<sup>6</sup>In the dream God responded, "Yes, I know you are innocent. That's why I kept you from sinning against me, and why I did not let you touch her. <sup>7</sup>Now return the woman to her husband, and he will pray for you, for he is a prophet. Then you will live. But if you don't return her to him, you can be sure that you and all your people will die."

<sup>8</sup>Abimelech got up early the next morning and quickly called all his servants together. When he told them what had happened, his men were terrified. <sup>9</sup>Then Abimelech called for Abraham. "What have you done to us?" he demanded. "What crime have I committed that deserves treatment like this, making me and my kingdom guilty of this great sin? No one should ever do what you have done!

<sup>10</sup>Whatever possessed you to do such a thing?"

<sup>11</sup>Abraham replied, “I thought, ‘This is a godless place. They will want my wife and will kill me to get her.’ <sup>12</sup>And she really is my sister, for we both have the same father, but different mothers. And I married her. <sup>13</sup>When God called me to leave my father’s home and to travel from place to place, I told her, ‘Do me a favor. Wherever we go, tell the people that I am your brother.’”

<sup>14</sup>Then Abimelech took some of his sheep and goats, cattle, and male and female servants, and he presented them to Abraham. He also returned his wife, Sarah, to him. <sup>15</sup>Then Abimelech said, “Look over my land and choose any place where you would like to live.” <sup>16</sup>And he said to Sarah, “Look, I am giving your ‘brother’ 1,000 pieces of silver\* in the presence of all these witnesses. This is to compensate you for any wrong I may have done to you. This will settle any claim against me, and your reputation is cleared.”

<sup>17</sup>Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants, so they could have children. <sup>18</sup>For the LORD had caused all the women to be infertile because of what happened with Abraham’s wife, Sarah.

◆ **The Birth of Isaac** / Genesis 21:1-7 / 2066 or 1900 BC

<sup>1</sup>The LORD kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what he had promised. <sup>2</sup>She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God had said it would. <sup>3</sup>And Abraham named their son Isaac. <sup>4</sup>Eight days after Isaac was born, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. <sup>5</sup>Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born.

<sup>6</sup>And Sarah declared, “God has brought me laughter.\* All who hear about this will laugh with me. <sup>7</sup>Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse a baby? Yet I have given Abraham a son in his old age!”

## JANUARY 7

◆ **Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away** / Genesis 21:8-21 / ca. 2062 or 1896 BC

<sup>8</sup>When Isaac grew up and was about to be weaned, Abraham prepared a huge feast to celebrate the occasion. <sup>9</sup>But Sarah saw Ishmael—the son of Abraham and her Egyptian servant Hagar—making fun of her son, Isaac.\* <sup>10</sup>So she turned to Abraham and demanded, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son. He is not going to share the inheritance with my son, Isaac. I won’t have it!”

<sup>11</sup>This upset Abraham very much because Ishmael was his son. <sup>12</sup>But God told Abraham, “Do not be upset over the boy and your servant. Do whatever Sarah tells you, for Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted. <sup>13</sup>But I will also make a nation of the descendants of Hagar’s son because he is your son, too.”

<sup>14</sup>So Abraham got up early the next morning, prepared food and a container of water, and strapped them on Hagar’s shoulders. Then he sent her away with their son, and she wandered aimlessly in the wilderness of Beersheba.

<sup>15</sup>When the water was gone, she put the boy in the shade of a bush. <sup>16</sup>Then she went and sat down by herself about a hundred yards\* away. “I don’t want to watch the boy die,” she said, as she burst into tears.

**20:16** Hebrew 1,000 shekels of silver, about 25 pounds or 11.4 kilograms in weight. **21:6** The name *Isaac* means “he laughs.” **21:9** As in Greek version and Latin Vulgate; Hebrew omits *of her son, Isaac*. **21:16** Hebrew a *bowsheba*.

<sup>17</sup>But God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, “Hagar, what’s wrong? Do not be afraid! God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. <sup>18</sup>Go to him and comfort him, for I will make a great nation from his descendants.”

<sup>19</sup>Then God opened Hagar’s eyes, and she saw a well full of water. She quickly filled her water container and gave the boy a drink.

<sup>20</sup>And God was with the boy as he grew up in the wilderness. He became a skillful archer, <sup>21</sup>and he settled in the wilderness of Paran. His mother arranged for him to marry a woman from the land of Egypt.

#### ◆ **A Treaty with Abimelech** / Genesis 21:22-34

<sup>22</sup>About this time, Abimelech came with Phicol, his army commander, to visit Abraham. “God is obviously with you, helping you in everything you do,” Abimelech said. <sup>23</sup>“Swear to me in God’s name that you will never deceive me, my children, or any of my descendants. I have been loyal to you, so now swear that you will be loyal to me and to this country where you are living as a foreigner.”

<sup>24</sup>Abraham replied, “Yes, I swear to it!” <sup>25</sup>Then Abraham complained to Abimelech about a well that Abimelech’s servants had taken by force from Abraham’s servants.

<sup>26</sup>“This is the first I’ve heard of it,” Abimelech answered. “I have no idea who is responsible. You have never complained about this before.”

<sup>27</sup>Abraham then gave some of his sheep, goats, and cattle to Abimelech, and they made a treaty. <sup>28</sup>But Abraham also took seven additional female lambs and set them off by themselves. <sup>29</sup>Abimelech asked, “Why have you set these seven apart from the others?”

<sup>30</sup>Abraham replied, “Please accept these seven lambs to show your agreement that I dug this well.” <sup>31</sup>Then he named the place Beersheba (which means “well of the oath”), because that was where they had sworn the oath.

<sup>32</sup>After making their covenant at Beersheba, Abimelech left with Phicol, the commander of his army, and they returned home to the land of the Philistines. <sup>33</sup>Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he worshiped the LORD, the Eternal God.\* <sup>34</sup>And Abraham lived as a foreigner in Philistine country for a long time.

#### ◆ **Abraham’s Obedience Tested** / Genesis 22:1-24

<sup>1</sup>Some time later, God tested Abraham’s faith. “Abraham!” God called.

“Yes,” he replied. “Here I am.”

<sup>2</sup>“Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you.”

<sup>3</sup>The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. <sup>4</sup>On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. <sup>5</sup>“Stay here with the donkey,” Abraham told the servants. “The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back.”

<sup>6</sup>So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, <sup>7</sup>Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?"

<sup>8</sup>"God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together.

<sup>9</sup>When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup>And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. <sup>11</sup>At that moment the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Yes," Abraham replied. "Here I am!"

<sup>12</sup>"Don't lay a hand on the boy!" the angel said. "Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son."

<sup>13</sup>Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. <sup>14</sup>Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means "the LORD will provide"). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

<sup>15</sup>Then the angel of the LORD called again to Abraham from heaven. <sup>16</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that <sup>17</sup>I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants\* beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. <sup>18</sup>And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me."

<sup>19</sup>Then they returned to the servants and traveled back to Beersheba, where Abraham continued to live.

<sup>20</sup>Soon after this, Abraham heard that Milcah, his brother Nahor's wife, had borne Nahor eight sons. <sup>21</sup>The oldest was named Uz, the next oldest was Buz, followed by Kemuel (the ancestor of the Arameans), <sup>22</sup>Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel. <sup>23</sup>(Bethuel became the father of Rebekah.) In addition to these eight sons from Milcah, <sup>24</sup>Nahor had four other children from his concubine Reumah. Their names were Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

#### ◆ **The Burial of Sarah** / Genesis 23:1-20

<sup>1</sup>When Sarah was 127 years old, <sup>2</sup>she died at Kiriath-arba (now called Hebron) in the land of Canaan. There Abraham mourned and wept for her.

<sup>3</sup>Then, leaving her body, he said to the Hittite elders, <sup>4</sup>"Here I am, a stranger and a foreigner among you. Please sell me a piece of land so I can give my wife a proper burial."

<sup>5</sup>The Hittites replied to Abraham, <sup>6</sup>"Listen, my lord, you are an honored prince among us. Choose the finest of our tombs and bury her there. No one here will refuse to help you in this way."

<sup>7</sup>Then Abraham bowed low before the Hittites and said, <sup>8</sup>“Since you are willing to help me in this way, be so kind as to ask Ephron son of Zohar <sup>9</sup>to let me buy his cave at Machpelah, down at the end of his field. I will pay the full price in the presence of witnesses, so I will have a permanent burial place for my family.”

<sup>10</sup>Ephron was sitting there among the others, and he answered Abraham as the others listened, speaking publicly before all the Hittite elders of the town. <sup>11</sup>“No, my lord,” he said to Abraham, “please listen to me. I will give you the field and the cave. Here in the presence of my people, I give it to you. Go and bury your dead.”

<sup>12</sup>Abraham again bowed low before the citizens of the land, <sup>13</sup>and he replied to Ephron as everyone listened. “No, listen to me. I will buy it from you. Let me pay the full price for the field so I can bury my dead there.”

<sup>14</sup>Ephron answered Abraham, <sup>15</sup>“My lord, please listen to me. The land is worth 400 pieces\* of silver, but what is that between friends? Go ahead and bury your dead.”

<sup>16</sup>So Abraham agreed to Ephron’s price and paid the amount he had suggested—400 pieces of silver, weighed according to the market standard. The Hittite elders witnessed the transaction.

<sup>17</sup>So Abraham bought the plot of land belonging to Ephron at Machpelah, near Mamre. This included the field itself, the cave that was in it, and all the surrounding trees. <sup>18</sup>It was transferred to Abraham as his permanent possession in the presence of the Hittite elders at the city gate. <sup>19</sup>Then Abraham buried his wife, Sarah, there in Canaan, in the cave of Machpelah, near Mamre (also called Hebron). <sup>20</sup>So the field and the cave were transferred from the Hittites to Abraham for use as a permanent burial place.

◆ **The Death of Terah** / Genesis 11:32 / 2031 or 1865 BC

<sup>32</sup>Terah lived for 205 years\* and died while still in Haran.

◆ **Isaac Marries Rebekah** / Genesis 24:1-67 / 2026 or 1860 BC

<sup>1</sup>Abraham was now a very old man, and the LORD had blessed him in every way.

<sup>2</sup>One day Abraham said to his oldest servant, the man in charge of his household, “Take an oath by putting your hand under my thigh. <sup>3</sup>Swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. <sup>4</sup>Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son Isaac.”

<sup>5</sup>The servant asked, “But what if I can’t find a young woman who is willing to travel so far from home? Should I then take Isaac there to live among your relatives in the land you came from?”

<sup>6</sup>“No!” Abraham responded. “Be careful never to take my son there. <sup>7</sup>For the LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and my native land, solemnly promised to give this land to my descendants.\* He will send his angel ahead of you, and he will see to it that you find a wife there for my son. <sup>8</sup>If she is unwilling to come back with you, then you are free from this oath of mine. But under no circumstances are you to take my son there.”

<sup>9</sup>So the servant took an oath by putting his hand under the thigh of his master,

**23:15** Hebrew 400 shekels, about 10 pounds or 4.6 kilograms in weight; also in 23:16. **11:32** Some ancient versions read 145 years; compare 11:26 and 12:4. **24:7** Hebrew seed; also in 24:60.

Abraham. He swore to follow Abraham's instructions. <sup>10</sup>Then he loaded ten of Abraham's camels with all kinds of expensive gifts from his master, and he traveled to distant Aram-naharaim. There he went to the town where Abraham's brother Nahor had settled. <sup>11</sup>He made the camels kneel beside a well just outside the town. It was evening, and the women were coming out to draw water.

<sup>12</sup>"O LORD, God of my master, Abraham," he prayed. "Please give me success today, and show unfailing love to my master, Abraham. <sup>13</sup>See, I am standing here beside this spring, and the young women of the town are coming out to draw water. <sup>14</sup>This is my request. I will ask one of them, 'Please give me a drink from your jug.' If she says, 'Yes, have a drink, and I will water your camels, too!'—let her be the one you have selected as Isaac's wife. This is how I will know that you have shown unfailing love to my master."

<sup>15</sup>Before he had finished praying, he saw a young woman named Rebekah coming out with her water jug on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Abraham's brother Nahor and his wife, Milcah. <sup>16</sup>Rebekah was very beautiful and old enough to be married, but she was still a virgin. She went down to the spring, filled her jug, and came up again. <sup>17</sup>Running over to her, the servant said, "Please give me a little drink of water from your jug."

<sup>18</sup>"Yes, my lord," she answered, "have a drink." And she quickly lowered her jug from her shoulder and gave him a drink. <sup>19</sup>When she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll draw water for your camels, too, until they have had enough to drink." <sup>20</sup>So she quickly emptied her jug into the watering trough and ran back to the well to draw water for all his camels.

<sup>21</sup>The servant watched her in silence, wondering whether or not the LORD had given him success in his mission. <sup>22</sup>Then at last, when the camels had finished drinking, he took out a gold ring for her nose and two large gold bracelets\* for her wrists.

<sup>23</sup>"Whose daughter are you?" he asked. "And please tell me, would your father have any room to put us up for the night?"

<sup>24</sup>"I am the daughter of Bethuel," she replied. "My grandparents are Nahor and Milcah. <sup>25</sup>Yes, we have plenty of straw and feed for the camels, and we have room for guests."

<sup>26</sup>The man bowed low and worshiped the LORD. <sup>27</sup>"Praise the LORD, the God of my master, Abraham," he said. "The LORD has shown unfailing love and faithfulness to my master, for he has led me straight to my master's relatives."

<sup>28</sup>The young woman ran home to tell her family everything that had happened. <sup>29</sup>Now Rebekah had a brother named Laban, who ran out to meet the man at the spring. <sup>30</sup>He had seen the nose-ring and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and had heard Rebekah tell what the man had said. So he rushed out to the spring, where the man was still standing beside his camels. Laban said to him, <sup>31</sup>"Come and stay with us, you who are blessed by the LORD! Why are you standing here outside the town when I have a room all ready for you and a place prepared for the camels?"

<sup>32</sup>So the man went home with Laban, and Laban unloaded the camels, gave him straw for their bedding, fed them, and provided water for the man and the camel drivers to wash their feet. <sup>33</sup>Then food was served. But Abraham's servant said, "I don't want to eat until I have told you why I have come."

24:22 Hebrew a gold nose-ring weighing a half shekel [0.2 ounces or 6 grams] and two gold bracelets weighing 10 shekels [4 ounces or 114 grams].

“All right,” Laban said, “tell us.”

<sup>34</sup>“I am Abraham’s servant,” he explained. <sup>35</sup>“And the LORD has greatly blessed my master; he has become a wealthy man. The LORD has given him flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, a fortune in silver and gold, and many male and female servants and camels and donkeys.

<sup>36</sup>“When Sarah, my master’s wife, was very old, she gave birth to my master’s son, and my master has given him everything he owns. <sup>37</sup>“And my master made me take an oath. He said, ‘Do not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. <sup>38</sup>Go instead to my father’s house, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son.’

<sup>39</sup>“But I said to my master, ‘What if I can’t find a young woman who is willing to go back with me?’ <sup>40</sup>He responded, ‘The LORD, in whose presence I have lived, will send his angel with you and will make your mission successful. Yes, you must find a wife for my son from among my relatives, from my father’s family. <sup>41</sup>Then you will have fulfilled your obligation. But if you go to my relatives and they refuse to let her go with you, you will be free from my oath.’

<sup>42</sup>“So today when I came to the spring, I prayed this prayer: ‘O LORD, God of my master, Abraham, please give me success on this mission. <sup>43</sup>See, I am standing here beside this spring. This is my request. When a young woman comes to draw water, I will say to her, “Please give me a little drink of water from your jug.” <sup>44</sup>If she says, “Yes, have a drink, and I will draw water for your camels, too,” let her be the one you have selected to be the wife of my master’s son.’

<sup>45</sup>“Before I had finished praying in my heart, I saw Rebekah coming out 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.’ <sup>46</sup>She quickly lowered her jug from her shoulder and said, ‘Yes, have a drink, and I will water your camels, too!’ So I drank, and then she watered the camels.

<sup>47</sup>“Then I asked, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She replied, ‘I am the daughter of Bethuel, and my grandparents are Nahor and Milcah.’ So I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her wrists.

<sup>48</sup>“Then I bowed low and worshiped the LORD. I praised the LORD, the God of my master, Abraham, because he had led me straight to my master’s niece to be his son’s wife. <sup>49</sup>So tell me—will you or won’t you show unfailing love and faithfulness to my master? Please tell me yes or no, and then I’ll know what to do next.”

<sup>50</sup>Then Laban and Bethuel replied, “The LORD has obviously brought you here, so there is nothing we can say. <sup>51</sup>Here is Rebekah; take her and go. Yes, let her be the wife of your master’s son, as the LORD has directed.”

<sup>52</sup>When Abraham’s servant heard their answer, he bowed down to the ground and worshiped the LORD. <sup>53</sup>Then he brought out silver and gold jewelry and clothing and presented them to Rebekah. He also gave expensive presents to her brother and mother. <sup>54</sup>Then they ate their meal, and the servant and the men with him stayed there overnight.

But early the next morning, Abraham’s servant said, “Send me back to my master.”

<sup>55</sup>“But we want Rebekah to stay with us at least ten days,” her brother and mother said. “Then she can go.”

<sup>56</sup>But he said, “Don’t delay me. The LORD has made my mission successful; now send me back so I can return to my master.”



<sup>57</sup>“Well,” they said, “we’ll call Rebekah and ask her what she thinks.” <sup>58</sup>So they called Rebekah. “Are you willing to go with this man?” they asked her.

And she replied, “Yes, I will go.”

<sup>59</sup>So they said good-bye to Rebekah and sent her away with Abraham’s servant and his men. The woman who had been Rebekah’s childhood nurse went along with her. <sup>60</sup>They gave her this blessing as she parted:

“Our sister, may you become  
the mother of many millions!  
May your descendants be strong  
and conquer the cities of their enemies.”

<sup>61</sup>Then Rebekah and her servant girls mounted the camels and followed the man. So Abraham’s servant took Rebekah and went on his way.

<sup>62</sup>Meanwhile, Isaac, whose home was in the Negev, had returned from Beer-lahai-roi. <sup>63</sup>One evening as he was walking and meditating in the fields, he looked up and saw the camels coming. <sup>64</sup>When Rebekah looked up and saw Isaac, she quickly dismounted from her camel. <sup>65</sup>“Who is that man walking through the fields to meet us?” she asked the servant.

And he replied, “It is my master.” So Rebekah covered her face with her veil.

<sup>66</sup>Then the servant told Isaac everything he had done.

<sup>67</sup>And Isaac brought Rebekah into his mother Sarah’s tent, and she became his wife. He loved her deeply, and she was a special comfort to him after the death of his mother.

## JANUARY 8

### ◆ Abraham’s Descendants / Genesis 25:1-4

What follows took place sometime after Sarah’s death (Gen. 23:1-20, page 26).

<sup>1</sup>Abraham married another wife, whose name was Keturah. <sup>2</sup>She gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. <sup>3</sup>Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan’s descendants were the Asshurites, Letushites, and Leummites. <sup>4</sup>Midian’s sons were Ephah, Ephher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah. These were all descendants of Abraham through Keturah.

### ◆ 1 Chronicles 1:32-33

<sup>32</sup>The sons of Keturah, Abraham’s concubine, were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

The sons of Jokshan were Sheba and Dedan.

<sup>33</sup>The sons of Midian were Ephah, Ephher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah.

All these were descendants of Abraham through his concubine Keturah.

### ◆ Genesis 25:5-6

<sup>5</sup>Abraham gave everything he owned to his son Isaac. <sup>6</sup>But before he died, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them off to a land in the east, away from Isaac.

### ◆ Ishmael’s Descendants / Genesis 25:12-18

<sup>12</sup>This is the account of the family of Ishmael, the son of Abraham through Hagar, Sarah’s Egyptian servant. <sup>13</sup>Here is a list, by their names and clans, of

Ishmael's descendants: The oldest was Nebaioth, followed by Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, <sup>14</sup>Mishma, Dumah, Massa, <sup>15</sup>Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. <sup>16</sup>These twelve sons of Ishmael became the founders of twelve tribes named after them, listed according to the places they settled and camped. <sup>17</sup>Ishmael lived for 137 years. Then he breathed his last and joined his ancestors in death. <sup>18</sup>Ishmael's descendants occupied the region from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt in the direction of Asshur. There they lived in open hostility toward all their relatives.\*

◆ 1 Chronicles 1:28-31

<sup>28</sup>The sons of Abraham were Isaac and Ishmael. <sup>29</sup>These are their genealogical records:

The sons of Ishmael were Nebaioth (the oldest), Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, <sup>30</sup>Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, <sup>31</sup>Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These were the sons of Ishmael.

◆ **Isaac's Descendants** / 1 Chronicles 1:34

<sup>34</sup>Abraham was the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac were Esau and Israel.\*

◆ **The Births of Jacob and Esau** / Genesis 25:19-26 / 2006 or 1840 BC

<sup>19</sup>This is the account of the family of Isaac, the son of Abraham. <sup>20</sup>When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan-aram and the sister of Laban the Aramean.

<sup>21</sup>Isaac pleaded with the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The LORD answered Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. <sup>22</sup>But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the LORD about it. "Why is this happening to me?" she asked.

<sup>23</sup>And the LORD told her, "The sons in your womb will become two nations. From the very beginning, the two nations will be rivals. One nation will be stronger than the other; and your older son will serve your younger son."

<sup>24</sup>And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins! <sup>25</sup>The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau.\* <sup>26</sup>Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob.\* Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born.

◆ **The Death of Abraham** / Genesis 25:7-11 / 1991 or 1825 BC

When Esau and Jacob were about fifteen years old, their grandfather Abraham died (compare Gen. 21:4-5, page 24; and Gen. 25:26, page 31).

<sup>7</sup>Abraham lived for 175 years, <sup>8</sup>and he died at a ripe old age, having lived a long and satisfying life. He breathed his last and joined his ancestors in death. <sup>9</sup>His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, near Mamre, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite. <sup>10</sup>This was the field Abraham had purchased from the Hittites and where he had buried his wife Sarah. <sup>11</sup>After Abraham's death, God blessed his son Isaac, who settled near Beer-lahai-roi in the Negev.

**25:18** The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. **1:34** *Israel* is the name that God gave to Jacob. **25:25** *Esau* sounds like a Hebrew term that means "hair." **25:26** *Jacob* sounds like the Hebrew words for "heel" and "deceiver."

## JANUARY 9

### ◆ **Esau Sells His Birthright** / Genesis 25:27-34

<sup>27</sup>As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter. He was an outdoorsman, but Jacob had a quiet temperament, preferring to stay at home. <sup>28</sup>Isaac loved Esau because he enjoyed eating the wild game Esau brought home, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

<sup>29</sup>One day when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau arrived home from the wilderness exhausted and hungry. <sup>30</sup>Esau said to Jacob, "I'm starved! Give me some of that red stew!" (This is how Esau got his other name, Edom, which means "red.")

<sup>31</sup>"All right," Jacob replied, "but trade me your rights as the firstborn son."

<sup>32</sup>"Look, I'm dying of starvation!" said Esau. "What good is my birthright to me now?"

<sup>33</sup>But Jacob said, "First you must swear that your birthright is mine." So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob.

<sup>34</sup>Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate the meal, then got up and left. He showed contempt for his rights as the firstborn.

### ◆ **Isaac Deceives Abimelech** / Genesis 26:1-11

<sup>1</sup>A severe famine now struck the land, as had happened before in Abraham's time. So Isaac moved to Gerar, where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you. <sup>3</sup>Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants,\* just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father. <sup>4</sup>I will cause your descendants to become as numerous as the stars of the sky, and I will give them all these lands. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed. <sup>5</sup>I will do this because Abraham listened to me and obeyed all my requirements, commands, decrees, and instructions." <sup>6</sup>So Isaac stayed in Gerar.

<sup>7</sup>When the men who lived there asked Isaac about his wife, Rebekah, he said, "She is my sister." He was afraid to say, "She is my wife." He thought, "They will kill me to get her, because she is so beautiful." <sup>8</sup>But some time later, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah.

<sup>9</sup>Immediately, Abimelech called for Isaac and exclaimed, "She is obviously your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister?'"

"Because I was afraid someone would kill me to get her from me," Isaac replied.

<sup>10</sup>"How could you do this to us?" Abimelech exclaimed. "One of my people might easily have taken your wife and slept with her, and you would have made us guilty of great sin."

<sup>11</sup>Then Abimelech issued a public proclamation: "Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death!"

### ◆ **Conflict over Water Rights** / Genesis 26:12-25

<sup>12</sup>When Isaac planted his crops that year, he harvested a hundred times more grain than he planted, for the LORD blessed him. <sup>13</sup>He became a very rich man,

26:3 Hebrew *seed*; also in 26:4, 24.

and his wealth continued to grow. <sup>14</sup>He acquired so many flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and servants that the Philistines became jealous of him. <sup>15</sup>So the Philistines filled up all of Isaac's wells with dirt. These were the wells that had been dug by the servants of his father, Abraham.

<sup>16</sup>Finally, Abimelech ordered Isaac to leave the country. "Go somewhere else," he said, "for you have become too powerful for us."

<sup>17</sup>So Isaac moved away to the Gerar Valley, where he set up their tents and settled down. <sup>18</sup>He reopened the wells his father had dug, which the Philistines had filled in after Abraham's death. Isaac also restored the names Abraham had given them.

<sup>19</sup>Isaac's servants also dug in the Gerar Valley and discovered a well of fresh water. <sup>20</sup>But then the shepherds from Gerar came and claimed the spring. "This is our water," they said, and they argued over it with Isaac's herdsmen. So Isaac named the well Esek (which means "argument"). <sup>21</sup>Isaac's men then dug another well, but again there was a dispute over it. So Isaac named it Sitnah (which means "hostility"). <sup>22</sup>Abandoning that one, Isaac moved on and dug another well. This time there was no dispute over it, so Isaac named the place Rehoboth (which means "open space"), for he said, "At last the LORD has created enough space for us to prosper in this land."

<sup>23</sup>From there Isaac moved to Beersheba, <sup>24</sup>where the LORD appeared to him on the night of his arrival. "I am the God of your father, Abraham," he said. "Do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you. I will multiply your descendants, and they will become a great nation. I will do this because of my promise to Abraham, my servant." <sup>25</sup>Then Isaac built an altar there and worshiped the LORD. He set up his camp at that place, and his servants dug another well.

#### ◆ **A Treaty with Abimelech** / Genesis 26:26-35

<sup>26</sup>One day King Abimelech came from Gerar with his adviser, Ahuzzath, and also Phicol, his army commander. <sup>27</sup>"Why have you come here?" Isaac asked. "You obviously hate me, since you kicked me off your land."

<sup>28</sup>They replied, "We can plainly see that the LORD is with you. So we want to enter into a sworn treaty with you. Let's make a covenant. <sup>29</sup>Swear that you will not harm us, just as we have never troubled you. We have always treated you well, and we sent you away from us in peace. And now look how the LORD has blessed you!"

<sup>30</sup>So Isaac prepared a covenant feast to celebrate the treaty, and they ate and drank together. <sup>31</sup>Early the next morning, they each took a solemn oath not to interfere with each other. Then Isaac sent them home again, and they left him in peace.

<sup>32</sup>That very day Isaac's servants came and told him about a new well they had dug. "We've found water!" they exclaimed. <sup>33</sup>So Isaac named the well Shibah (which means "oath"). And to this day the town that grew up there is called Beersheba (which means "well of the oath").

<sup>34</sup>At the age of forty, Esau married two Hittite wives: Judith, the daughter of Beerli, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. <sup>35</sup>But Esau's wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

#### ◆ **Jacob Steals Esau's Blessing** / Genesis 27:1-40

<sup>1</sup>One day when Isaac was old and turning blind, he called for Esau, his older son, and said, "My son."

“Yes, Father?” Esau replied.

<sup>24</sup>“I am an old man now,” Isaac said, “and I don’t know when I may die. <sup>3</sup>Take your bow and a quiver full of arrows, and go out into the open country to hunt some wild game for me. <sup>4</sup>Prepare my favorite dish, and bring it here for me to eat. Then I will pronounce the blessing that belongs to you, my firstborn son, before I die.”

<sup>5</sup>But Rebekah overheard what Isaac had said to his son Esau. So when Esau left to hunt for the wild game, <sup>6</sup>she said to her son Jacob, “Listen. I overheard your father say to Esau, <sup>7</sup>‘Bring me some wild game and prepare me a delicious meal. Then I will bless you in the LORD’s presence before I die.’ <sup>8</sup>Now, my son, listen to me. Do exactly as I tell you. <sup>9</sup>Go out to the flocks, and bring me two fine young goats. I’ll use them to prepare your father’s favorite dish. <sup>10</sup>Then take the food to your father so he can eat it and bless you before he dies.”

<sup>11</sup>“But look,” Jacob replied to Rebekah, “my brother, Esau, is a hairy man, and my skin is smooth. <sup>12</sup>What if my father touches me? He’ll see that I’m trying to trick him, and then he’ll curse me instead of blessing me.”

<sup>13</sup>But his mother replied, “Then let the curse fall on me, my son! Just do what I tell you. Go out and get the goats for me!”

<sup>14</sup>So Jacob went out and got the young goats for his mother. Rebekah took them and prepared a delicious meal, just the way Isaac liked it. <sup>15</sup>Then she took Esau’s favorite clothes, which were there in the house, and gave them to her younger son, Jacob. <sup>16</sup>She covered his arms and the smooth part of his neck with the skin of the young goats. <sup>17</sup>Then she gave Jacob the delicious meal, including freshly baked bread.

<sup>18</sup>So Jacob took the food to his father. “My father?” he said.

“Yes, my son,” Isaac answered. “Who are you—Esau or Jacob?”

<sup>19</sup>Jacob replied, “It’s Esau, your firstborn son. I’ve done as you told me. Here is the wild game. Now sit up and eat it so you can give me your blessing.”

<sup>20</sup>Isaac asked, “How did you find it so quickly, my son?”

“The LORD your God put it in my path!” Jacob replied.

<sup>21</sup>Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Come closer so I can touch you and make sure that you really are Esau.” <sup>22</sup>So Jacob went closer to his father, and Isaac touched him. “The voice is Jacob’s, but the hands are Esau’s,” Isaac said. <sup>23</sup>But he did not recognize Jacob, because Jacob’s hands felt hairy just like Esau’s. So Isaac prepared to bless Jacob. <sup>24</sup>“But are you really my son Esau?” he asked.

“Yes, I am,” Jacob replied.

<sup>25</sup>Then Isaac said, “Now, my son, bring me the wild game. Let me eat it, and then I will give you my blessing.” So Jacob took the food to his father, and Isaac ate it. He also drank the wine that Jacob served him. Then Isaac said to Jacob, <sup>26</sup>“Please come a little closer and kiss me, my son.”

<sup>27</sup>So Jacob went over and kissed him. And when Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he was finally convinced, and he blessed his son. He said, “Ah! The smell of my son is like the smell of the outdoors, which the LORD has blessed!

<sup>28</sup> “From the dew of heaven  
and the richness of the earth,  
may God always give you abundant harvests of grain  
and bountiful new wine.

<sup>29</sup> May many nations become your servants,  
and may they bow down to you.  
May you be the master over your brothers,  
and may your mother's sons bow down to you.  
All who curse you will be cursed,  
and all who bless you will be blessed."

<sup>30</sup>As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and almost before Jacob had left his father, Esau returned from his hunt. <sup>31</sup>Esau prepared a delicious meal and brought it to his father. Then he said, "Sit up, my father, and eat my wild game so you can give me your blessing."

<sup>32</sup>But Isaac asked him, "Who are you?"

Esau replied, "It's your son, your firstborn son, Esau."

<sup>33</sup>Isaac began to tremble uncontrollably and said, "Then who just served me wild game? I have already eaten it, and I blessed him just before you came. And yes, that blessing must stand!"

<sup>34</sup>When Esau heard his father's words, he let out a loud and bitter cry. "Oh my father, what about me? Bless me, too!" he begged.

<sup>35</sup>But Isaac said, "Your brother was here, and he tricked me. He has taken away your blessing."

<sup>36</sup>Esau exclaimed, "No wonder his name is Jacob, for now he has cheated me twice.\* First he took my rights as the firstborn, and now he has stolen my blessing. Oh, haven't you saved even one blessing for me?"

<sup>37</sup>Isaac said to Esau, "I have made Jacob your master and have declared that all his brothers will be his servants. I have guaranteed him an abundance of grain and wine—what is left for me to give you, my son?"

<sup>38</sup>Esau pleaded, "But do you have only one blessing? Oh my father, bless me, too!" Then Esau broke down and wept.

<sup>39</sup>Finally, his father, Isaac, said to him,

"You will live away from the richness of the earth,  
and away from the dew of the heaven above.

<sup>40</sup> You will live by your sword,  
and you will serve your brother.

But when you decide to break free,  
you will shake his yoke from your neck."

◆ **Jacob Flees to Paddan-Aram** / Genesis 27:41–28:5 / 1929 or 1763 BC

<sup>41</sup>From that time on, Esau hated Jacob because their father had given Jacob the blessing. And Esau began to scheme: "I will soon be mourning my father's death. Then I will kill my brother, Jacob."

<sup>42</sup>But Rebekah heard about Esau's plans. So she sent for Jacob and told him, "Listen, Esau is consoling himself by plotting to kill you. <sup>43</sup>So listen carefully, my son. Get ready and flee to my brother, Laban, in Haran. <sup>44</sup>Stay there with him until your brother cools off. <sup>45</sup>When he calms down and forgets what you have done to him, I will send for you to come back. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

<sup>46</sup>Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm sick and tired of these local Hittite women! I would rather die than see Jacob marry one of them."

**27:36** *Jacob* sounds like the Hebrew words for "heel" and "deceiver."

<sup>28:1</sup> So Isaac called for Jacob, blessed him, and said, “You must not marry any of these Canaanite women. <sup>2</sup> Instead, go at once to Paddan-aram, to the house of your grandfather Bethuel, and marry one of your uncle Laban’s daughters. <sup>3</sup> May God Almighty\* bless you and give you many children. And may your descendants multiply and become many nations! <sup>4</sup> May God pass on to you and your descendants\* the blessings he promised to Abraham. May you own this land where you are now living as a foreigner, for God gave this land to Abraham.”

<sup>5</sup> So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to stay with his uncle Laban, his mother’s brother, the son of Bethuel the Aramean.

## JANUARY 10

### ◆ **Esau Marries Ishmael’s Daughter** / Genesis 28:6-9 / 1929 or 1763 BC

<sup>6</sup> Esau knew that his father, Isaac, had blessed Jacob and sent him to Paddan-aram to find a wife, and that he had warned Jacob, “You must not marry a Canaanite woman.” <sup>7</sup> He also knew that Jacob had obeyed his parents and gone to Paddan-aram. <sup>8</sup> It was now very clear to Esau that his father did not like the local Canaanite women. <sup>9</sup> So Esau visited his uncle Ishmael’s family and married one of Ishmael’s daughters, in addition to the wives he already had. His new wife’s name was Mahalath. She was the sister of Nebaioth and the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son.

### ◆ **Jacob’s Dream at Bethel** / Genesis 28:10-22

<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. <sup>11</sup> At sundown he arrived at a good place to set up camp and stopped there for the night. Jacob found a stone to rest his head against and lay down to sleep. <sup>12</sup> As he slept, he dreamed of a stairway that reached from the earth up to heaven. And he saw the angels of God going up and down the stairway.

<sup>13</sup> At the top of the stairway stood the LORD, and he said, “I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham, and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I am giving it to you and your descendants. <sup>14</sup> Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will spread out in all directions—to the west and the east, to the north and the south. And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. <sup>15</sup> What’s more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you.”

<sup>16</sup> Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I wasn’t even aware of it!” <sup>17</sup> But he was also afraid and said, “What an awesome place this is! It is none other than the house of God, the very gateway to heaven!”

<sup>18</sup> The next morning Jacob got up very early. He took the stone he had rested his head against, and he set it upright as a memorial pillar. Then he poured olive oil over it. <sup>19</sup> He named that place Bethel (which means “house of God”), although the name of the nearby village was Luz.

<sup>20</sup> Then Jacob made this vow: “If God will indeed be with me and protect me on

this journey, and if he will provide me with food and clothing, <sup>21</sup>and if I return safely to my father's home, then the LORD will certainly be my God. <sup>22</sup>And this memorial pillar I have set up will become a place for worshiping God, and I will present to God a tenth of everything he gives me."

◆ **Jacob Arrives at Paddan-Aram** / Genesis 29:1-14a

<sup>1</sup>Then Jacob hurried on, finally arriving in the land of the east. <sup>2</sup>He saw a well in the distance. Three flocks of sheep and goats lay in an open field beside it, waiting to be watered. But a heavy stone covered the mouth of the well.

<sup>3</sup>It was the custom there to wait for all the flocks to arrive before removing the stone and watering the animals. Afterward the stone would be placed back over the mouth of the well. <sup>4</sup>Jacob went over to the shepherds and asked, "Where are you from, my friends?"

"We are from Haran," they answered.

<sup>5</sup>"Do you know a man there named Laban, the grandson of Nahor?" he asked.

"Yes, we do," they replied.

<sup>6</sup>"Is he doing well?" Jacob asked.

"Yes, he's well," they answered. "Look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the flock now."

<sup>7</sup>Jacob said, "Look, it's still broad daylight—too early to round up the animals. Why don't you water the sheep and goats so they can get back out to pasture?"

<sup>8</sup>"We can't water the animals until all the flocks have arrived," they replied. "Then the shepherds move the stone from the mouth of the well, and we water all the sheep and goats."

<sup>9</sup>Jacob was still talking with them when Rachel arrived with her father's flock, for she was a shepherd. <sup>10</sup>And because Rachel was his cousin—the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother—and because the sheep and goats belonged to his uncle Laban, Jacob went over to the well and moved the stone from its mouth and watered his uncle's flock. <sup>11</sup>Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and he wept aloud. <sup>12</sup>He explained to Rachel that he was her cousin on her father's side—the son of her aunt Rebekah. So Rachel quickly ran and told her father, Laban.

<sup>13</sup>As soon as Laban heard that his nephew Jacob had arrived, he ran out to meet him. He embraced and kissed him and brought him home. When Jacob had told him his story, <sup>14</sup>Laban exclaimed, "You really are my own flesh and blood!"

◆ **Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel** / Genesis 29:14b-30

<sup>14b</sup>After Jacob had stayed with Laban for about a month, <sup>15</sup>Laban said to him, "You shouldn't work for me without pay just because we are relatives. Tell me how much your wages should be."

<sup>16</sup>Now Laban had two daughters. The older daughter was named Leah, and the younger one was Rachel. <sup>17</sup>There was no sparkle in Leah's eyes,\* but Rachel had a beautiful figure and a lovely face. <sup>18</sup>Since Jacob was in love with Rachel, he told her father, "I'll work for you for seven years if you'll give me Rachel, your younger daughter, as my wife."

<sup>19</sup>"Agreed!" Laban replied. "I'd rather give her to you than to anyone else. Stay

29:17 Or *Leah had dull eyes*, or *Leah had soft eyes*. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.



and work with me.”<sup>20</sup> So Jacob worked seven years to pay for Rachel. But his love for her was so strong that it seemed to him but a few days.

<sup>21</sup> Finally, the time came for him to marry her. “I have fulfilled my agreement,” Jacob said to Laban. “Now give me my wife so I can marry her.”

<sup>22</sup> So Laban invited everyone in the neighborhood and prepared a wedding feast. <sup>23</sup> But that night, when it was dark, Laban took Leah to Jacob, and he slept with her. <sup>24</sup> (Laban had given Leah a servant, Zilpah, to be her maid.)

<sup>25</sup> But when Jacob woke up in the morning—it was Leah! “What have you done to me?” Jacob raged at Laban. “I worked seven years for Rachel! Why have you tricked me?”

<sup>26</sup> “It’s not our custom here to marry off a younger daughter ahead of the first-born,” Laban replied. <sup>27</sup> “But wait until the bridal week is over, then we’ll give you Rachel, too—provided you promise to work another seven years for me.”

<sup>28</sup> So Jacob agreed to work seven more years. A week after Jacob had married Leah, Laban gave him Rachel, too. <sup>29</sup> (Laban gave Rachel a servant, Bilhah, to be her maid.) <sup>30</sup> So Jacob slept with Rachel, too, and he loved her much more than Leah. He then stayed and worked for Laban the additional seven years.

#### ◆ **Jacob’s Many Children** / Genesis 29:31–30:24

<sup>31</sup> When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he enabled her to have children, but Rachel could not conceive. <sup>32</sup> So Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben,\* for she said, “The LORD has noticed my misery, and now my husband will love me.”

<sup>33</sup> She soon became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She named him Simeon,\* for she said, “The LORD heard that I was unloved and has given me another son.”

<sup>34</sup> Then she became pregnant a third time and gave birth to another son. She named him Levi,\* for she said, “Surely this time my husband will feel affection for me, since I have given him three sons!”

<sup>35</sup> Once again Leah became pregnant and gave birth to another son. She named him Judah,\* for she said, “Now I will praise the LORD!” And then she stopped having children.

<sup>30:1</sup> When Rachel saw that she wasn’t having any children for Jacob, she became jealous of her sister. She pleaded with Jacob, “Give me children, or I’ll die!”

<sup>2</sup> Then Jacob became furious with Rachel. “Am I God?” he asked. “He’s the one who has kept you from having children!”

<sup>3</sup> Then Rachel told him, “Take my maid, Bilhah, and sleep with her. She will bear children for me,\* and through her I can have a family, too.” <sup>4</sup> So Rachel gave her servant, Bilhah, to Jacob as a wife, and he slept with her. <sup>5</sup> Bilhah became pregnant and presented him with a son. <sup>6</sup> Rachel named him Dan,\* for she said, “God has vindicated me! He has heard my request and given me a son.” <sup>7</sup> Then Bilhah became pregnant again and gave Jacob a second son. <sup>8</sup> Rachel named him Naphtali,\* for she said, “I have struggled hard with my sister, and I’m winning!”

<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, Leah realized that she wasn’t getting pregnant anymore, so she

29:32 *Reuben* means “Look, a son!” It also sounds like the Hebrew for “He has seen my misery.” 29:33 *Simeon* probably means “one who hears.” 29:34 *Levi* sounds like a Hebrew term that means “being attached” or “feeling affection for.” 29:35 *Judah* sounds like the Hebrew term for “praise.” 30:3 Hebrew *bear children on my knees*. 30:6 *Dan* means “he judged” or “he vindicated.” 30:8 *Naphtali* means “my struggle.”

took her servant, Zilpah, and gave her to Jacob as a wife. <sup>10</sup>Soon Zilpah presented him with a son. <sup>11</sup>Leah named him Gad,\* for she said, “How fortunate I am!” <sup>12</sup>Then Zilpah gave Jacob a second son. <sup>13</sup>And Leah named him Asher,\* for she said, “What joy is mine! Now the other women will celebrate with me.”

<sup>14</sup>One day during the wheat harvest, Reuben found some mandrakes growing in a field and brought them to his mother, Leah. Rachel begged Leah, “Please give me some of your son’s mandrakes.”

<sup>15</sup>But Leah angrily replied, “Wasn’t it enough that you stole my husband? Now will you steal my son’s mandrakes, too?”

Rachel answered, “I will let Jacob sleep with you tonight if you give me some of the mandrakes.”

<sup>16</sup>So that evening, as Jacob was coming home from the fields, Leah went out to meet him. “You must come and sleep with me tonight!” she said. “I have paid for you with some mandrakes that my son found.” So that night he slept with Leah.

<sup>17</sup>And God answered Leah’s prayers. She became pregnant again and gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob. <sup>18</sup>She named him Issachar,\* for she said, “God has rewarded me for giving my servant to my husband as a wife.” <sup>19</sup>Then Leah became pregnant again and gave birth to a sixth son for Jacob. <sup>20</sup>She named him Zebulun,\* for she said, “God has given me a good reward. Now my husband will treat me with respect, for I have given him six sons.” <sup>21</sup>Later she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah.

<sup>22</sup>Then God remembered Rachel’s plight and answered her prayers by enabling her to have children. <sup>23</sup>She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. “God has removed my disgrace,” she said. <sup>24</sup>And she named him Joseph,\* for she said, “May the LORD add yet another son to my family.”

## JANUARY 11

### ◆ **Jacob’s Wealth Increases** / Genesis 30:25-43 / ca. 1915 or 1749 BC

<sup>25</sup>Soon after Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, “Please release me so I can go home to my own country. <sup>26</sup>Let me take my wives and children, for I have earned them by serving you, and let me be on my way. You certainly know how hard I have worked for you.”

<sup>27</sup>“Please listen to me,” Laban replied. “I have become wealthy, for\* the LORD has blessed me because of you. <sup>28</sup>Tell me how much I owe you. Whatever it is, I’ll pay it.”

<sup>29</sup>Jacob replied, “You know how hard I’ve worked for you, and how your flocks and herds have grown under my care. <sup>30</sup>You had little indeed before I came, but your wealth has increased enormously. The LORD has blessed you through everything I’ve done. But now, what about me? When can I start providing for my own family?”

<sup>31</sup>“What wages do you want?” Laban asked again.

Jacob replied, “Don’t give me anything. Just do this one thing, and I’ll continue to tend and watch over your flocks. <sup>32</sup>Let me inspect your flocks today and remove all the sheep and goats that are speckled or spotted, along with all the

30:11 Gad means “good fortune.” 30:13 Asher means “happy.” 30:18 Issachar sounds like a Hebrew term that means “reward.” 30:20 Zebulun probably means “honor.” 30:24 Joseph means “may he add.” 30:27 Or I have learned by divination that.

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