

THE
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STUDY BIBLE

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Version

NOTES
AND REFERENCES BY
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GENESIS

See the Introductions, pp. 2, 30, and 32-33 above.

Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

1 In the beginning when God created^a the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God^b swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶ And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹ And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night: and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and

there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make human-kind^c in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth,^c and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

²⁷ So God created humankind^d in his image, in the image of God he created them:^c male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." ²⁹God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

^a Or when God began to create or In the beginning God created ^b Or while the spirit of God or while a mighty wind ^c Heb adam ^d Syr: Heb and over all the earth ^e Heb him

1.1-2.4a The Priestly Account of the Creation. The emphasis falls on the sovereignty of God and the orderliness of the process of creation. Throughout this section, God is given the name *elohim* in the Hebrew original.

1.2 *The earth was a formless void.* God forms and orders the world out of existing, chaotic matter. *The deep...the waters.* In the mythology of Canaan and Mesopotamia the waters were the symbols of chaos which the more powerful beneficent deities had to bring under control.

1.3 *God said.* The power of God to achieve his purpose is evident when he speaks his intention and it is accomplished.

1.4 *God separated the light from the darkness.* The ordering of light and darkness establishes the rhythm of time, with evening followed by morning, which is the principle of Israelite days beginning at sundown.

1.6-10 *God...separated the waters...the waters that were gathered together.* God's ordering of the world results in the separation of sky and earth, of sea and dry land.

1.14-19 The ordering of day and night is accomplished by the positioning of the sun, moon and stars.

1.26-28 *Let us make humankind in our image.* The Hebrew word for man is *adam*, which serves as the name of the first human being in these creation stories. Essential to the role of humans created in God's image is their exercise of authority over the earth and all living things upon it.

1.1
Jn 1.1.2; Ps
8.3; Isa
42.4; 42.5;
45.18

1.2
Jer 4.23; Ps
104.30

1.3
Ps 33.6.9;
2 Cor 4.6

1.4
Isa 45.7

1.5
Ps 74.16

1.6
Jer 10.12

1.7
Prov 8.28; Ps
148.4

1.9
Job 26.10;
Prov 8.29;
Jer 5.2.2;
2 Pet 3.5

1.10
Ps 33.7

1.11
Lk 6.44

1.14
Ps 74.16;
104.19

1.16
Ps 136.8.9;
Job 38.7

1.18
Jer 31.35

1.21
Ps 104.25.26

1.22
Gen 8.17

1.25
Jer 27.5

1.26
Ps 100.3;
Acts 17.26;
Col 3.10

1.27
1 Cor 11.7;
Gen 5.2; Mt
19.4

1.28
Gen 9.1.7;
Lev 26.9

1.29
Ps
104.14.15;
136.25

1.30
Ps 145.15;
Job 38.41

1.31
Ps 104.24

2.3 God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it. God's rest is the model for the priestly rule that all humanity shall rest on the seventh day (Ex 31.12-17).

2.4a generations. A term often used of successive human generations here implies God's plan and ordering of creation.

2.4b-3.24 The Earlier Tradition about Creation. As in the priestly tradition, the earth exists but is now shaped and ordered by Yahweh. Humans are created as males first, then plants and animals, and finally a woman.

2.4b the LORD God. The Hebrew text combines with the more general name of God used by Semitic people throughout the Middle East and preferred by the northern tribes of Israel, *elohim*, the special name of God preferred among the southern tribes of Judah: *Yahweh*, which means, "He who causes to be [all that is]."

2.5-6 As is still the case in much of the Middle East today, the fertility of the earth was made possible by water from streams rather than by falling rain.

2.8 a garden in Eden. *Eden* in Hebrew means luxury or pleasure. Variants of the Eden story appear in the prophets: in Ezek 28.11-19, Eden is the garden or mountain dwelling of God; in Isa 51.3, Ezek 36.35 and Joel 2.3 it is the symbol of the renewal of the land for God's people.

2.10-14 A river flows out of Eden and becomes four branches. A geographical parenthesis in the Eden story. Except for the Tigris and Euphrates in what is now Iraq, these rivers cannot be identified. Pishon may be the Persian Gulf, and Gihon is probably an unknown stream in lower Mesopotamia, unless Cush is Ethiopia here, in which case the river is the Nile. Havilah may be northeastern Arabia, as in Gen 25.18. The prominence of places in Mesopotamia suggests that the Eden story may have originated there, in the ancestral land of Abraham (Gen 11.31).

2.9 the tree of life...the tree of knowledge. These are symbols of the means by which human life is sustained and human understanding is attained. The Semitic terms for knowledge mean not merely information but participation. Hence the prohibition of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge in 2.17, since those who eat may perform evil as well as good deeds.

2.19-20 out of the ground. The Hebrew word for ground, *adamah*, sounds like the word for and name of the first human, Adam. For a human to give names to the animals is an indication of human control of, and responsibility for, other forms of life in the created order.

2.21-24 flesh. Flesh means the softer parts of the human body and the sexual organs, but it also represents the weaker and more

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. ²And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Another Account of the Creation

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; ⁶but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground,¹ and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. ⁸And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. ¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; ¹²and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." ¹⁹So out of the ground the LORD God formed every

¹Or formed a man (Heb *adam*) of dust from the ground (Heb *adamah*)
¹Heb *ish* ¹Or gods

animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man⁹ there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman,^h

for out of Manⁱ this one was taken."
²⁴Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

The First Sin and Its Punishment

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" ²The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; ³but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,^l knowing good and evil." ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

8 They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, and

⁹Or for Adam ^hHeb *ishshah*

vulnerable dimensions of human existence.

3.1 the serpent. In Semitic mythology, the serpent is pictured as a creature from the sea that opposes the purposes of the good deity. A variant of that is found here, where the sly aim of

the serpent is to estrange humans from the creator by urging them to exploit and pervert the special role they have in the purpose of God.

3.5-7 The serpent promises. *You will be like God*, but what results from the eating of the fruit of

knowledge is that man and woman are aware of sexual urges and inherent limitations.

3.9-13 The negative effect of partaking of the fruit of knowledge is evident in the human effort to shift blame for disobedience to the serpent and to God.

3.10
1 Jn 3.20

3.12
Prov 28.13

3.13
2 Cor 11.3;
1 Tim 2.14

3.14
Isa 65.25;
Mic 7.17

3.15
Jn 8.44; Acts
13.10; 1 Jn
3.8; Isa 7.14;
Mt 1.23;
Rom 16.20;
Rev 12.7

3.16
Isa 13.8;
Gen 4.7;
1 Cor 11.3;
Eph 5.22

3.17
1 Sam 15.23;
Gen 2.17;
Rom 8.20-22

3.18
Ps 104.14

3.19
Gen 2.7; Ps
90.3;
104.29; Eccl
12.7

3.22
Rev 22.2

3.23
Gen 4.2

3.24
Gen 2.8,9

4.2
Lk 11.50,51

4.3
Num 18.12

4.4
Num 18.17;
Lev 3.16;
Heb 11.4

4.5
Isa 3.9; Jude
11

4.8
Mt 23.35;
1 Jn 3.12

4.10
Heb 12.24;
Rev 6.10

4.12
ver 14

4.14
Ps 51.11;
Gen 9.6;
Num 35.19,
21,27

4.15
Ps 79.12;
Ezek 9.4,6

said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." ¹¹He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹²The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." ¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. ¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." ¹⁶To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

¹⁷And to the man^k he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ¹⁸thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

²⁰The man named his wife Eve,^l because she was the mother of all living. ²¹And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man^m and for his wife, and clothed them.

^k Or to Adam ^l In Heb Eve resembles the word for living ^m Or for Adam ⁿ The verb in Heb resembles the word for Cain ^o Sam Gk Syr Compare Vg: MT lacks *Let us go out to the field*

²² Then the LORD God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— ²³therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

Cain Murders Abel

4 Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have produced" a man with the help of the LORD." ²Next she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. ³In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. ⁶The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door: its desire is for you, but you must master it."

⁸ Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let us go out to the field." ⁹And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. ¹⁰Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" ¹¹And the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! ¹²And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹³When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." ¹⁴Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! ¹⁵Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me." ¹⁶Then the LORD said to

3.14-19 In a series of poetic pronouncements God brings judgments which explain unhappy aspects of human existence: the hostility between humans and snakes; the pains of women in childbirth and the subservience of women to men; the necessity for men to toil in order to produce crops and to face inevitable death. **3.21** the LORD God made garments of skins. Even in their disobedient condition, God provides the basic needs for the chief of his creatures.

3.22-23 tree of life. Having disobeyed God and thereby ruined the peaceful conditions of original creation, humans are delivered from an endless existence in sorrow and suffering by being denied access to the fruits of this tree.

4.1-26 Cain as Symbol of Human Alienation from God.

4.1 Cain. The name is a pun on the word for "I have given birth."

4.2 Abel. The name means "breath, vapor," symbolizing the brevity and frailty of human existence.

4.3 Cain brought to the LORD an offering. This is the first instance of an offering being presented to God, and is depicted as a means of approaching the deity in order to gain acceptance. the firstlings of the flock... fat portions. Details of the appropriate offerings to God are given in Lev 1.8-9.24. The sanctity of the firstborn of any species is set forth in Ex 13.2.12, 15, including firstborn sons (Ex 22.29). Also in Lev 27.26; Num 3.12.

4.10 your brother's blood is crying out to me. The life of animals and humans is understood to be located in the blood (Lev 17.11, 14).

4.14 Having murdered his brother out of envy, Cain is the symbol of human alienation and fear-ridden mobility.

4.15 the LORD put a mark on Cain. This special sign of Cain and his posterity is an indication of tribal blood vengeance common among primitive people; the penalty for killing anyone in Cain's tribe is especially severe.

4.17-25 The progeny of Cain indicate by name and role the complexity of civilization. *Enoch* (17) is probably from the Hebrew word meaning "dedicated"; he had a special relationship of closeness with God, as Gen 5.24 indicates. *Tubal-cain* means "metal-worker"; *Jabal* is "leader" of flocks; *Jubal* means "trumpet," and he is the prototype of musicians. Two of the names include as a final syllable a reference to God = *el*: *Mehujael*, *Methusael*.

4.24 *seven...seventy-sevenfold*. As this poetic warning declares, the vengeance promised to Cain against any who attacked him (4.15) is now greatly multiplied. **4.26** *Enosh*. Adam's grandson is fittingly called "human being." *To invoke the name of the LORD*. Even though the special name of God, *Yahweh*, is said to have been revealed much later to Israel through Moses (Ex 3.14), the Yahwist editor of this tradition reports it as in use very early. **5.1-32** This ten-stage genealogy, which extends the list from Adam to Noah and includes the number of years each one lived, probably derives from the priestly editors for whom the continuity of family line was of major importance. The gradual decrease in length of human life may be the priestly equivalent of the fall of humanity and the imposition of death as a punishment for sin in the J tradition of human origins and early existence.

5.24 Unlike the other descendants of Adam who die after lives of many centuries in length, *Enoch*, who has *walked with God*, leaves the earth because *God took him*. *Enoch* is linked in the biblical tradition with others like *Moses* and *Elijah* who were believed to have been taken up to God when their earthly lives ended (Deut 34.6; 2 Kings 2.11; Heb 11.5). **5.29** *Noah*. The name derives from the Hebrew word for "comfort" or "consolation," which in this context refers to the deliverance from extinction of a group of human beings as well as the partial relief that Noah brings for working the soil after God cursed it (Gen 3.17-19).

him, "Not so!^p Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance." And the LORD put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him.¹⁶ Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod,^q east of Eden.

Beginnings of Civilization

17 Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch; and he built a city, and named it Enoch after his son Enoch.¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael the father of Methushael, and Methushael the father of Lamech.¹⁹ Lamech took two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.²⁰ Adah bore Jabal; he was the ancestor of those who live in tents and have livestock.²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the ancestor of all those who play the lyre and pipe.²² Zillah bore Tubal-cain, who made all kinds of bronze and iron tools. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

23 Lamech said to his wives:

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say;

I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me.

²⁴ If Cain is avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

25 Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, for she said, "God has appointed^r for me another child instead of Abel: because Cain killed him."²⁶ To Seth also a son was born, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to invoke the name of the LORD.

Adam's Descendants to Noah and His Sons

5 This is the list of the descendants of Adam. When God created humankind,^s he made them^t in the likeness of God. ²Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them "Humankind"^s when they were created.

3 When Adam had lived one hundred thirty years, he became the father of a son in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. ⁴The days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years; and he had other sons and

daughters. ⁵Thus all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred thirty years; and he died.

6 When Seth had lived one hundred five years, he became the father of Enosh. ⁷Seth lived after the birth of Enosh eight hundred seven years, and had other sons and daughters. ⁸Thus all the days of Seth were nine hundred twelve years; and he died.

9 When Enosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰Enosh lived after the birth of Kenan eight hundred fifteen years, and had other sons and daughters. ¹¹Thus all the days of Enosh were nine hundred five years; and he died.

12 When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³Kenan lived after the birth of Mahalalel eight hundred and forty years, and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁴Thus all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

15 When Mahalalel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶Mahalalel lived after the birth of Jared eight hundred thirty years, and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷Thus all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred ninety-five years; and he died.

18 When Jared had lived one hundred sixty-two years he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹Jared lived after the birth of Enoch eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. ²⁰Thus all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty-two years; and he died.

21 When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah. ²²Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methuselah three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. ²³Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years. ²⁴Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him.

25 When Methuselah had lived one hundred eighty-seven years, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶Methuselah lived after the birth of Lamech seven hundred eighty-two years, and had other sons and daughters. ²⁷Thus all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty-nine years; and he died.

28 When Lamech had lived one hundred eighty-two years, he became the father of a son; ²⁹he named him Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed this

^p Gk Syr Vg: Heb *Therefore* ^q That is *Wandering* ^r The verb in Heb resembles the word for *Seth* ^s Heb *adam* ^t Heb *him*

5.32
Gen 6.10:
10.21

6.1
Gen 1.28

6.2
Deut 7.1-4

6.3
1 Pet 3.19:
Ps 78.39

6.5
Gen 8.21

6.6
1 Sam
15.11.29;
2 Sam 24.16;
Mal 3.6;
Jas 1.17;
Isa 63.10

6.8
Gen 19.19;
Ex 33.12;
Lk 1.30;
Acts 7.46

6.9
Gen 7.1; Ezek
14.14.20;
Heb 11.7;
2 Pet 2.5;
Gen 5.22

6.10
Gen 5.32

6.12
Ps 14.1-3

6.13
Ezek 7.2.3;
ver 17

6.14
Heb 11.7;
1 Pet 3.20

6.17
Gen 7.4.21-
23

6.18
Gen 7.1.7.13;
1 Pet 3.20;
2 Pet 2.5

6.19
Gen
7.8.9.15.16

6.20
Gen 7.9.15

6.22
Heb 11.7;
Gen 7.5

7.1
Mt 24.38; Lk
17.26

7.2
Lev 11;
10.10; Ezek
44.23

7.7
Gen 6.22;
ver 1

one shall bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands.”³⁰Lamech lived after the birth of Noah five hundred ninety-five years, and had other sons and daughters.³¹Thus all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy-seven years; and he died.

32 After Noah was five hundred years old, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

The Wickedness of Humankind

6 When people began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them,²the sons of God saw that they were fair; and they took wives for themselves of all that they chose.³Then the LORD said, “My spirit shall not abide^a in mortals forever, for they are flesh: their days shall be one hundred twenty years.”⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went in to the daughters of humans, who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown.

5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.⁶And the LORD was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.⁷So the LORD said, “I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.”⁸But Noah found favor in the sight of the LORD.

Noah Pleases God

9 These are the descendants of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God.¹⁰And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence.¹²And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth.¹³And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth.¹⁴Make yourself an ark of cypress^a wood; make rooms in the

ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.¹⁵This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.¹⁶Make a roof^b for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and put the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks.¹⁷For my part, I am going to bring a flood of waters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die.¹⁸But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.¹⁹And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.²⁰Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind shall come in to you, to keep them alive.²¹Also take with you every kind of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them.”²²Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

The Great Flood

7 Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation.²Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate;³and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth.⁴For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.”⁵And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came on the earth.⁷And Noah with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood.⁸Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground,⁹two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah.¹⁰And after seven days the waters of

6.1-8 This second story of human defiance of God’s ordering the creation includes the divine provision for the rescue of the small faithful community from the universal judgment. *Sons of God* refers to heavenly beings who should have restricted their associations to those of their own kind, but who marry human women. From now on, the human lifespan is severely limited – to no more than *one hundred twenty years*. The offspring of these wrongful sexual unions were *Nephilim*, from a word which means “fallen ones.” They may be similar to other giant figures who appear in the narratives of Deut 2.10-11; 3.11; 9.2. God intends to obliterate virtually the whole creation; Noah and his family alone escape this divine wrath.

6.9-8.19 The Flood. The present version of this story, which has close parallels in the ancient Akkadian Epic of Gilgamesh (dating back to about 2000 BCE), is composite, incorporating features of the Yahwistic and priestly traditions.

6.17 *a flood...to destroy all flesh*. The judgment of God falls on both human beings and the forms of life for which God gave humans responsibility.

6.18 *I will establish my covenant with you*. This is the first instance of the covenantal agreements into which God enters with his people through chosen leaders. Other major figures include Abra[ha]m (Gen 15.18), Moses (Ex 34.10), Joshua (Josh 24.25), David (2 Sam 23.5). A new covenant is promised through Jeremiah (Jer 31.31) and is seen to be fulfilled through Jesus (1 Cor 11.25).

6.19 *two of every kind...male and female*. Representatives of both sexes are essential for the renewal of the life of the earth after the flood.

7.1 *You alone are righteous*. Noah alone of all the human race has been obedient to God and his purpose for the world.

7.2 *Seven pairs of all clean animals*. The priestly tradition is evident here in the detail that ritually pure animals are to be included in pairs up to the sacred number seven, rather than merely two of each species of all kinds.

^a Meaning of Heb uncertain ^b Or window

7.11-12 *The fountains of the great deep burst forth...the rain fell on the earth forty days.* The flood waters come from the clouds above as well as from the waters gathered under the earth (Gen 1.7), since there is a temporary reversal of God's establishment of order in the creation (7.17-24). As the ordering once led to life for all creatures, so now the chaos leads to death for all but those preserved in the vessel of safety prescribed by God.

8.4 *The ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.* Ararat, or Urartu, is a mountainous region in what is now northeastern Turkey. It served as a natural barrier which prevented the Assyrians from extending their territory north and west from the Tigris-Euphrates valley, and was thought by them to include the world's highest mountains.

8.20-22 Noah's offering of ritually pure birds and animals is in the priestly tradition. God's response is to rule out any repetition of the universal judgment on earthly forms of life and to promise unceasing continuity of seasons, of sowings and harvests. Yet with the declaration that *the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth*, the universality of human evil is pronounced. The *heart* is the seat of human decision-making, not merely of the emotions.

the flood came on the earth.

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.¹²The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.¹³On the very same day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons entered the ark,¹⁴they and every wild animal of every kind, and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind—every bird, every winged creature.¹⁵They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life.¹⁶And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

17 The flood continued forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.¹⁸The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters.¹⁹The waters swelled so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered:²⁰the waters swelled above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep.²¹And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all human beings;²²everything on dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died.²³He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, human beings and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark.²⁴And the waters swelled on the earth for one hundred fifty days.

The Flood Subsides

8 But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided;²the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained,³and the waters gradually receded from the earth. At the end of one hundred fifty days the waters had abated;⁴and in the

seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.⁵The waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

6 At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made⁷and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth.⁸Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground;⁹but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him.¹⁰He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark;¹¹and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.¹²Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

13 In the six hundred first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying.¹⁴In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.¹⁵Then God said to Noah,¹⁶"Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you.¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."¹⁸So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives,¹⁹and every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out of the ark by families.

God's Promise to Noah

20 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.²¹And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, for the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth; nor will I

7.11
Gen
Prov
Ezek
7.12
ver 4
7.13
ver 1
7.15
Gen
7.16
ver 2
7.17
ver 4
7.18
Ps 10
7.21
Gen
7.22
Gen
7.23
1 Pet
2 Pet
7.24
Gen
8.1
Gen 1
Ex 2.2
1 Sam
Ex 14
Job 12
Ps 29
Isa 44
Nah 1
8.2
Gen 7
38.37
8.3
Gen 7
8.4
Jer 51
8.6
2 Pet 2
8.7
1 King
17.4.6
8.11
Mt 10
8.13
2 Pet 3
8.16
Gen 7
8.17
Gen 12
8.20
Gen 12
13.18:
7.2; 22
Ex 10.2
8.21
Lev 1.9
2 Cor 2
Gen 3.1
6.17;
9.11.15

8.22
Isa 54.9; Jer
33.20.25

9.1
ver 7; Gen
1.28

9.3
Deut 12.15;
Gen 1.29

9.4
Lev 17.10-
16; Deut
12.23; 1 Sam
14.33

9.5
Ex 21.28;
Gen 4.9.10

9.6
Ex 21.12.14;
Lev 24.17;
Mt 26.52;
Gen 1.27

9.7
ver 1,19

9.9
Gen 6.18;
Isa 54.9

9.10
Ps 149.9

9.11
Isa 54.9

9.12
Gen 17.11

9.13
Ezek 1.28;
Rev 4.3

9.15
Lev
26.42.45;
Deut 7.9

9.16
Gen
17.13.19

9.18
Gen 10.6

9.19
Gen 5.32

9.23
Ex 20.12

9.25
Deut 27.16

9.26
Ps 144.15

9.27
Eph 2.13,14;
3.6

10.2
1 Chr 1.5-7

10.5
Gen 5.32

ever again destroy every living creature as I have done.

²² As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

The Covenant with Noah

9 God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. ²The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the air, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. ³Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴Only, you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵For your own lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning: from every animal I will require it and from human beings, each one for the blood of another, I will require a reckoning for human life.

⁶ Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed;

for in his own image God made humankind.

⁷ And you, be fruitful and multiply, abound on the earth and multiply in it."

⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him. ⁹"As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you. ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark." ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." ¹²God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to

destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." ¹⁷God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Noah and His Sons

¹⁸ The sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. ¹⁹These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled.

²⁰ Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard. ²¹He drank some of the wine and became drunk, and he lay uncovered in his tent. ²²And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. ²³Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. ²⁴When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵he said.

"Cursed be Canaan;

lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers."

²⁶He also said.

"Blessed by the LORD my God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave.

²⁷ May God make space for * Japheth, and let him live in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his slave."

²⁸ After the flood Noah lived three hundred fifty years. ²⁹All the days of Noah were nine hundred fifty years; and he died.

Nations Descended from Noah

10 These are the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; children were born to them after the flood.

² The descendants of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³The descendants of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴The descendants of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.⁵ ⁵From these the coastland peoples spread. These are the descendants of

9.1-17 The provisions by God and the responsibility of humans under the covenant are outlined, including human responsibility for and sovereignty over other forms of life on the earth, and the sanctity of human life itself, since it is created in the divine image. The promise is repeated that there will not be another universal judgment on the earth and its inhabitants.

9.18-28 These stories, with cursings and blessings, describe the repopulation of the earth after the flood, but they also account for the differing status before God of the three major groups of people with whom the biblical accounts are concerned: Shem, ancestor of the tribes of Israel; Ham, father of Canaan, whose descendants inhabited the land when Abraham came there from Mesopotamia and later when the Israelites came from Egypt in the time of Moses; Japheth, who in 10.2-5 is described as the progenitor of many tribes and peoples throughout the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean regions.

9.21 He drank some of the wine and became drunk. Here wine is a symptom of human depravity. Elsewhere in the Old Testament wine is a symbol of productivity and prosperity (Deut 7.13; Amos 9.13-14).

9.22 Ham...saw the nakedness of his father. Both the severity of Ham's punishment and the note about what [Noah's] youngest son had done to him suggest a sexual assault.

10.1-32 A detailed genealogy of the sons of Noah follows. The descendants of Ham include many of the nations of Africa and Mesopotamia; Canaan's descendants populate what is later known as Syria and Palestine, with their [own family of] languages akin to but distinct from Hebrew (10.20). The descendants of Shem are closest linguistically and ethnically to the Semitic people of Israel. In compact form, this account depicts the spread of population, language and culture of the entire Middle East.

⁵Gk: Heb adds every animal of the earth * Heb yapht, a play on Japheth ⁹ Heb Mss Sam Gk See 1 Chr 1.7: MT Dodanim

11.1 The whole earth had one language. This statement is in tension with the preceding description of ethnic and linguistic differences among the inhabitants of the region.

11.1-9 Another story of human pride and self-will, which traits result in humans being visited by divine judgment. Here the punishment is the mixture of human languages, so that there cannot be a unified humanity or a universal scheme of independence from God. The event takes place on the plain of Shinar, which is the location of the city of Babylon. Human arrogance leads to the erection of a tower with its top in the heavens which is a ziggurat, a typical sacred pyramid of this period in Mesopotamia. Calling the city Babel is a complex pun, since the word actually means "Gate of god," but is here traced to the Hebrew term for "confusion."

11.10-32 This genealogy links Shem, son of Noah, with Abram, who is to be the crucial figure in the establishment of God's covenant with his people. Haran is the name of a brother of Abram as well as of a city in northern Mesopotamia.

Japheth^c in their lands, with their own language, by their families, in their nations.

6 The descendants of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. ⁷The descendants of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. ⁸Cush became the father of Nimrod; he was the first on earth to become a mighty warrior. ⁹He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." ¹⁰The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar. ¹¹From that land he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, and ¹²Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. ¹³Egypt became the father of Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, ¹⁴Pathrusim, Casluhim, and Caphtorim, from which the Philistines come.^d

15 Canaan became the father of Sidon his firstborn, and Heth. ¹⁶and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁷the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁸the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. ¹⁹And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon, in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. ²⁰These are the descendants of Ham, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

21 To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born. ²²The descendants of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. ²³The descendants of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. ²⁴Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. ²⁵To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg,^b for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. ²⁶Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the descendants of Joktan. ³⁰The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar, the hill country of the east. ³¹These are the descendants of Shem, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

32 These are the families of Noah's sons,

according to their genealogies, in their nations; and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

The Tower of Babel

11 Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ²And as they migrated from the east,^c they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." ⁵The LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. ⁶And the LORD said, "Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech." ⁸So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹Therefore it was called Babel, because there the LORD confused^d the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Descendants of Shem

10 These are the descendants of Shem. When Shem was one hundred years old, he became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood; ¹¹and Shem lived after the birth of Arpachshad five hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

12 When Arpachshad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah; ¹³and Arpachshad lived after the birth of Shelah four hundred three years, and had other sons and daughters.

14 When Shelah had lived thirty years, he became the father of Eber; ¹⁵and Shelah lived after the birth of Eber four hundred three years, and had other sons and daughters.

16 When Eber had lived thirty-four years,

^c Compare verses 20, 31. Heb lacks *These are the descendants of Japheth* ^c Cn: Heb *Casluhim, from which the Philistines come, and Caphtorim* ^b That is *Division* ^c Or *migrated eastward* ^d Heb *balal*, meaning to *confuse*

10.6
1 Ch

10.9
Mic

10.1
Mic

10.1
1 Ch

10.1
1 Ch

10.1:
1 Chr
18.3

10.1c
Num

10.22
1 Chr
Gen 1:
2 King
15.29;
11.10:
66.19

10.23
Job 1.1

10.24
Gen 11
Lk 3.3^c

10.25
1 Chr 1

10.26-
1 Chr 1
23

10.32
ver 1

11.2
Ex 1.11.
5.7-19

11.4
Deut 1.2

11.5
Gen 18.2

11.6
Acts 17:
Gen 9.19

11.7
Gen 1.26
42.23; Ex
4.11; 1 C
14.2.11

11.8
Lk 1.51; C
10.25.32

11.9
Gen 10.10

11.10
Gen 10.22
1 Chr 1.17

11.30
Gen 16.1

11.31
Gen 15.7;
Neh 9.7: Acts
7.4

12.1
Acts 7.3; Heb
11.8

12.2
Gen 15.5;
17.4.5;
18.18;
22.17;
28.14;
32.12;
35.11: 46.3

12.3
Gen 27.29;
Ex 23.33;
Num 24.9;
Gen 18.18;
22.18: 26.4;
Acts 3.25;
Gal 3.8

12.4
Gen
11.27,31

12.5
Gen 14.14;
11.31

12.6
Heb 11.9;
Deut 11.30;
Gen
10.18,19

12.7
Gen 17.1;
13.15; 17.8;
Ps 105.9;
Gen 13.4

12.8
Gen 13.4

12.12
Gen 20.11

12.13
Gen 20.5,13

12.15
Gen 20.2

12.16
Gen 20.14

12.17
Gen 20.18: 1
Chr 16.21;
Ps 105.14

12.18
Gen 20.9,10

he became the father of Peleg; ¹⁷and Eber lived after the birth of Peleg four hundred thirty years. and had other sons and daughters.

18 When Peleg had lived thirty years, he became the father of Reu; ¹⁹and Peleg lived after the birth of Reu two hundred nine years. and had other sons and daughters.

20 When Reu had lived thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug; ²¹and Reu lived after the birth of Serug two hundred seven years. and had other sons and daughters.

22 When Serug had lived thirty years, he became the father of Nahor; ²³and Serug lived after the birth of Nahor two hundred years. and had other sons and daughters.

24 When Nahor had lived twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah; ²⁵and Nahor lived after the birth of Terah one hundred nineteen years. and had other sons and daughters.

26 When Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram. Nahor, and Haran.

Descendants of Terah

27 Now these are the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot. ²⁸Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth. in Ur of the Chaldeans. ²⁹Abram and Nahor took wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai. and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. ³⁰Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

31 Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan; but when they came to Haran, they settled there. ³²The days of Terah were two hundred five years; and Terah died in Haran.

^eOr by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves ^fOr terebinth ^gHeb seed

11.28 in Ur of the Chaldeans.

Excavations at this site show the city to have been settled as early as 5500 BCE and to have become a major urban cultural and religious center in the period from 3000-2350 BCE. From that epoch were recovered the most impressive architectural and artistic remains. Ur continued to rise and fall under successive dynasties, including the Old Babylonian period from 2000 to 1740, which is probably the time of Abraham. Names and customs mentioned in the biblical narratives of this period match those reported in documents from Ur and other Mesopotamian sites in this period. Ur did not adopt the designation "of the Chaldees" until the sixth century BCE when the Chaldeans took over the former Babylonian empire. It was in this period and in Babylonia that Genesis received its major editing.

12.1 Abram. This form of the patriarch's name means "exalted father"; later (17.5) his name is reportedly changed to Abraham, "ancestor of a multitude." The instruction to him to go from your country and your kindred fits with other writings from Mesopotamia in this period which reflect the high mobility of tribes and peoples that is implied here.

12.2-3 I will make of you a great nation. This is the covenantal promise which the LORD now makes to Abraham. The blessings of this new relationship and new people are not the privileged possession of the family itself; they reach out to all the families of the earth.

12.6-9 Abram's route follows the main highways of commerce between Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Two of his stopping points figure importantly in the subsequent history of Israel: Shechem and Bethel. The former site forty miles north of Jerusalem is the place where the covenant with Yahweh was renewed when the tribes of Israel came out of Egypt into the land of promise (Josh 24). Bethel was the center of the worship of the God of Israel in the time of Jacob (Gen 28.19), of the judges (Judg 20.18), and of Amos (Amos 7.12-13). *To your offspring I will give this land.* For Abram and his posterity to enter the covenant relationship with God requires them to end their nomadic life. They are ultimately to settle in the land, and at Ai Abram builds a sanctuary to honor the LORD. The people's migratory existence is not yet over, however, since Abram is now to go to Egypt. In Josh 8, Ai is among the places captured by the tribes of Israel as they enter the land on their return from Egypt.

12.9 Negeb means the dry semi-desert area south and west of the Dead Sea which forms a bridge between southern Israel, Sinai and Egypt. Ancient trade routes crossed it, some following the Mediterranean on the west and others the Gulf of Aqabah on the east.