

THE OXFORD ANNOTATED BIBLE WITH THE APOCRYPHA

REVISED STANDARD VERSION

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE

The Number, Order, and Names of the Books of the Bible

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INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE OLD TESTAMENT may be described as the literary expression of the religious life of ancient Israel. More than a thousand years of time separate the earliest and the latest compositions in the Old Testament. It reflects a varied social, economic, political, religious, and geographical background; slave and free, the nomad and farmer, the oppressed poor and privileged landowners and rulers, proud empires and vassal states, the desert and the sown, rain-watered highlands and the great flood plains of the Nile and Tigris-Euphrates—these are among the settings of the drama of divine revelation. The Old Testament reflects the many facets of the life of Israel, and its literature takes many forms; in it are prose and poetry, myth and legend, folk tale and history, sacred hymns and a superb love song, religious and secular laws, proverbs of the wise and oracles of the prophets, epic poems, laments, parables, and allegories. Despite the variety in content as well as in viewpoint, there is a significant unity, centered in belief in the God of judgment and redemption, of justice and mercy, and springing out of the continuity and corporate nature of that people chosen by God to play the main role in the drama of revelation and from whom was to come Jesus of Nazareth. The Israelites were more history-conscious than any other people in the ancient world. Probably as early as the time of David and Solomon, out of a matrix of myth, legend, and history, there had appeared the earliest written form of the story of the saving acts of God from Creation to the conquest of the Promised Land, an account which later in modified form became a part of Scripture. But it was to be a long time before the idea of Scripture arose and the Old Testament took its present form.

The Jews reckoned three divisions within the Scriptures: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Law is the Pentateuch, the first five books, i.e. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Prophets consist of the Former Prophets and the Latter Prophets. The books of the Former Prophets are Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings (1 and 2 Samuel are reckoned as one book, and so also 1 and 2 Kings). The Latter Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel (the "Major Prophets") and the book of the Twelve (the "Minor Prophets"—Hosea to Malachi). The remaining books belong to the Writings. In the Hebrew Bible, Ruth, Lamentations, and Daniel are placed among the Writings, a section which begins with the Psalms and ends with 1 and 2 Chronicles; this is in contrast with the English Bible, where the order is influenced by the Greek and Latin versions. Some have seen an allusion to this three-fold division in "the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms" of Luke 24.44.

That the Bible was not written originally in English is a fact not always appreciated, and there are even those who are unaware of it. What we use is the translated Bible (see pp. 1535-1539). The New Testament was written in

Greek and the Old Testament in Hebrew, with the exception of parts of Daniel (2.4b-7.28) and Ezra (4.8-6.18; 7.12-26) and one verse in Jeremiah (10.11), which are in Aramaic. The translation of Hebrew and Aramaic presents distinctive and often difficult problems; they belong to the Semitic family of languages, to which Arabic, Assyrian and Babylonian, and Canaanite also belong, in contrast to Greek and English, which are Indo-European.

The text of the Old Testament, like that of the New Testament (see p. 1169), has occasionally suffered from copyists' errors and scribal emendations, some of which can be corrected in the light of the ancient versions; the notes of the RSV give many examples of this. The translator must also decide among variant readings in the Hebrew manuscripts themselves, a task complicated by the recent discovery of much earlier manuscripts of the Hebrew Old Testament than had previously been known. Before the time of the council of Jamnia, about A.D. 90-100, there did not exist a single standard text of the various books of Scripture regarded as possessing sole authority (*a textus receptus*). Rather, as the Dead Sea (Qumran) Scrolls afford evidence, there were variant recensions of the same Old Testament book. It is true that there was already in existence a form of that Hebrew text which was to be edited later by the Jewish scholars known as Masoretes (from about A.D. 600 to the 10th century) and their predecessors and which is the standard text used today, but there were also variant forms of the text. In contrast with this Qumran evidence of variant textual recensions, the Biblical manuscripts found further south in the Wilderness of Judea at Wadi Murabbaat and belonging to the early part of the second century A.D. (after A.D. 100) are strictly Masoretic (proto-Masoretic) in character, disclosing that by this time the standard text had been adopted. Although there are variants in the preserved manuscripts of the Masoretic Text, due largely to simple scribal errors, the Masoretic Text has been transmitted with incredible accuracy.

The books accepted as authoritative Scripture are spoken of as belonging to the "canon" (see p. 1169f.) of Scripture. If by canonical one means that a book must be regarded as having a special authority, that it is holy and inspired, that it is one of a strictly limited number of books, and that there is a single, standard text with its verbal form inviolable, then one cannot speak of a canon of Old Testament Scripture before about A.D. 100. Long before this, however, the Jews had their Scriptures.

The process by which the Jews became "the people of the Book" was gradual, and the development is shrouded in the mists of history and tradition. One might designate as their earliest Scripture "the book of the law" found in the Jerusalem temple in 621 B.C. and used as the basis for Josiah's reform. It is generally agreed that it is now incorporated within the present book of Deuteronomy (chs. 5[12?]-26; 28). Another landmark is "the book of the law of Moses" brought by Ezra from Babylonia in 458 (398 ?) B.C. (Ezra 7.6-10,14; Neh. chs. 8-10). This has been variously identified by scholars as the prototype or earlier form of that legislation which became the P Code in the Pentateuch,

or the P Code itself, or the completed Pentateuch (see the Introduction to the Pentateuch). The date of the final compilation of the Pentateuch or Law, which was the first corpus or larger body of literature that came to be regarded by the Jews as authoritative Scripture, is uncertain, although some have conservatively dated it at the time of the Exile in the sixth century. Since the P Source is found in Genesis through Joshua, those responsible for the final form of the Pentateuch must have looked upon Joshua as a continuation of it, but because the career of Moses did not extend beyond Deuteronomy, only Genesis to Deuteronomy came to be regarded as Mosaic in origin, and so the Law was limited to the Pentateuch. Certainly before the middle of the third century B.C., when according to tradition the Pentateuch was first translated into Greek, it had achieved a primary status as the Scripture of the Jews. It was to retain this primary position even after the body of Scripture had been enlarged to include the Prophets and the Writings. When in the second century B.C. the Samaritans finally separated from Judaism, they retained the Pentateuch as their sole Scripture, preserving it in a script derived from the old Hebrew script which was revived in the Maccabean period.

Before the adoption of the Pentateuch as the Law of Moses, there had been compiled and edited in the spirit and diction of the Deuteronomic "school" the group of books consisting of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, in much their present form. This may have occurred in two stages, i.e. shortly before the death of Josiah in 609 B.C. and during the Exile in the middle of the sixth century. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the book of the Twelve were edited and compiled during the post-exilic period. The process of compiling and editing the Latter Prophets is illustrated by the addition of chs. 40-66 to the book of Isaiah and chs. 9-14 to the prophecies of Zechariah, by the superscriptions giving information about the person and time of the prophet, and by certain additions and changes mentioned in the annotations in this volume. The editing was both an adaptation of the books of the prophets to the needs of the post-exilic period and a recognition of the relevance of the prophetic messages for contemporary as well as historic Israel. Just when the Former Prophets and the Latter Prophets came to be regarded as a definitely limited body of Scripture is not clear. Ben Sirach, the author of the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, writing around 180 B.C., seems to have regarded his work as a continuation of the Prophets and the books of Wisdom. The grandson of Ben Sirach (in his Preface to Ecclesiasticus) refers to the three-fold division of Scripture as the Law, the Prophets, and the other or rest of the books, although he does not necessarily imply a closed canon. The Former Prophets perhaps came to be associated with the Latter Prophets because of allusions in the Former Prophets to prophetic figures and because of a tradition that they were composed largely by prophets. Such a tradition is suggested in 1 Chr.29.29; 2 Chr.9.29; 12.15; 13.22; 20.34; 26.22; 32.32.

In contrast with the Pentateuch, the Former Prophets, and the Latter Prophets, the books of the Writings contain less homogeneous materials. They were not edited in groups or combined as in the case of the other books, but circulated

separately. This should be qualified by the recognition that 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah are a connected history and the work of a single author ("the Chronicler"). It was not until about A.D. 100 that the authority of disputed books among the Writings was settled.

Among many writings not included in the canon were the books of the Apocrypha, which are found in the Septuagint (see p. 1527), and which, with the exception of 1 and 2 Esdras, were composed in the last two centuries B.C., certainly before the council of Jamnia (about A.D. 100). They could not be accepted, in part because of the current conviction that the Old Testament canon was closed at the time of Ezra when prophetic revelation was supposed to have ceased, or because, in the case of some, they had been written in Greek or else had ceased to be copied in Hebrew and Aramaic after their translation into Greek. There was also probably no widespread demand for their canonization.

THE PENTATEUCH

THE PENTATEUCH (literally, the "five scrolls") comprises the so-called "five books of Moses," known in Jewish tradition as the Law or Torah. These books elaborate basic themes of Israel's tradition: the revelation to the patriarchs against the background of primeval history (Genesis), the exodus from Egypt (Exodus chs. 1-18); the giving of the law in connection with the Sinai covenant (Exodus chs. 19-40; Leviticus); and the Lord's guidance of his people through the wilderness toward the promised land (Numbers). The last book, Deuteronomy, which gives Moses' final address to Israel, represents a pause in the flow of the narratives toward the realization of the promise (Joshua).

The Pentateuch embraces a great diversity of material which reflects Israel's pilgrimage from the time of Abraham to the Exile. The whole tradition, however, has been shaped by basic themes found essentially in the confession of faith preserved in Dt.26.5-10 (compare Jos. ch. 24). The Pentateuch may be regarded as an elaboration of this creedal statement, according to the interests and insights of various circles of tradition. In the early monarchy (perhaps about 950 B.C.) a traditionist from Judah (J) first organized the traditions into a written epic. Sometime later (between about 900 to 750 B.C.) a traditionist from North Israel or Ephraim (E) presented another version of the sacred story. In the seventh century B.C. Deuteronomy (D) was published (2 Kg. chs. 22-23), although this version rests upon old traditions. And finally, about the time of the Exile, priestly writers (P) rounded out the expanded tradition with materials preserved by the Jerusalem priesthood.

Thus the Pentateuch took shape over a long period of time. It preserves not only the tones which reverberated in the Mosaic period, but the overtones of meaning perceived by subsequent generations. In tribute to the creative influence of Moses; the whole tradition in its manifold richness was ascribed to the leader to whom, Israel believed, God had spoken as to no other man.

GENESIS

Genesis, meaning "beginning," covers the times from the creation (i.e. the beginning of history) to the Israelite sojourn in Egypt. The book falls naturally into two main sections: chs. 1-11 deal with primeval history; chs. 12-50 treat the history of the "fathers" of Israel. The latter section tells the stories of Abraham (chs. 12-25), of Isaac and his twin sons Esau and Jacob (chs. 26-36), and of Jacob's family, the chief member of which was Joseph (chs. 37-50).

Unlike the stories of primeval history, those of the patriarchs can be read against the background of the history of the Near East in the early part of the second millennium B.C. (2000-1500), as documented from extra-Biblical sources (see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," § 6). The primary purpose of the whole book, however, is to narrate God's dealings with men and, in particular, to interpret Israel's special role in his historical plan. Thus the call of Abraham (12.1-3) is the great turning point. God's creation had been marred by man's persistent wickedness which not even the flood erased. Out of this fallible human material, however, God gradually separated one family line and eventually chose one man, Abraham, promising that he and his people would have a great historical destiny and would be instrumental in bringing divine blessing upon all the dispersed families of mankind.

The book is composed of three main literary traditions (Judean, Ephraimite, and Priestly; see Introduction to Pentateuch) and these, in turn, often preserve ancient oral tradition. Thus the voices of many generations unite in the affirmation that the only true God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose redemptive purpose, like the rainbow of his promise, spans the course of human history from its remote beginning to its unrealized future.

IN THE BEGINNING God CREATED^a the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit^b of God was moving over the face of the waters.

³ And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

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

⁹ And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. ¹⁰ God

^a Or When God began to create ^b Or wind

1.1-2.4a: The first story of creation. Out of primordial chaos God created an orderly world and assigned a pre-eminent place to man among his creatures. 1: Probably a preface to the whole account (but see note a). 2: According to ancient belief the world originated from and was suspended upon a watery chaos (*the deep*; compare Ps.24.1), personified as a dragon in the Babylonian creation epic (Is.51.9). 3-5: Creation by the word of God (Ps.33.6-9) indicates God's unchallenged lordship and prepares for the later doctrine of creation out of nothing (2 Macc. 7.28). Light was created first (compare 2 Cor.4.6), even before the sun. *Night*, a remnant of uncreated darkness (v. 2), was separated from the created light. Since the Jewish day began with sundown, the order is *evening* and *morning*. 6-8: A firmament, regarded as a solid dome (Job 37.18), separated the upper from the lower waters (Ex.20.4; Ps.148.4). See 7.11 n. 9-10: The

called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹ And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth." And it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

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

²⁰ And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens." ²¹ So God created the great sea mon-

sters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." ²³ And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after 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 earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God 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." ²⁹ And God said, "Behold, I

seas, a portion of the watery chaos, were assigned boundaries at the edge of the earth (Ps.139.9; Pr.8.29), where they continue to menace God's creation (Jer.5.22; Ps.104.7-9). **11-13:** *Vegetation* was created only indirectly by God; his creative command was directed to *the earth*. **14-19:** The sun, moon, and stars are not divine powers that control man's destiny, as was believed in antiquity, but are only *lights*. Implicitly worship of the heavenly host is forbidden (Dt.4.19; Zeph.1.5). **20-23:** The creation of birds and fishes. *Sea monsters*, see Ps.74.13; Job 7.12. **24-25:** God's command for the earth to *bring forth* (compare v. 11) suggests that the animals are immediately bound to *the ground* and only indirectly related to God, in contrast with man. **26-27:** The solemn divine decision emphasizes man's supreme place at the climax of God's creative work. **26:** The plural *us, our* (3.22; 11.7) probably refers to the divine beings who surround God in his heavenly court (1 Kg.22.19; Job 1.6; Is.6.8; compare Ps.29.1) and in whose *image* man was made. **27:** *Him . . . them*; man was not created to be alone but is *male and female* (2.18-24). The Hebrew word for man (Adam) is collective, referring not to an individual but men as a whole. **28:** Man's honor is his task: to exercise *dominion* over the earth as God's representative (Ps. 8). **29-30:** The vegetarian requirement, modified in Noah's time (9.2-3), suggests the paradisiac peace of the

have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And 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. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

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

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ when 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 man to till the ground; ⁶ but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground— ⁷ then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into

his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. ⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out 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 flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; ¹² and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ And the 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. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; ¹⁷ but 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;

c Or flood

primeval age (compare Hos.2.18; Is.11.6-8). **31:** God's works are *very good* (vv. 4,10,12, etc.) for they correspond perfectly to his intention. **2.1-3:** The verb *rested* is the basis of the noun sabbath. The creation-sabbath is the sign of the "rest" which God ordained for his people (Ex.31.12-17).

2.4b-3.24: The creation and the fall of man. This is a different tradition from that in 1.1-2.4a, as evidenced by the flowing style and the different order of events, e.g. man is created before vegetation, animals, and woman. **6:** A *mist (or flood)* probably refers to the water which surged up from the subterranean ocean, the source of fertility (49.25). **7:** The word-play on *man* ('adham) and *ground* ('adhamah) introduces a motif characteristic of this early tradition: man's relation to the ground from which he was *formed*, like a potter molds clay (Jer.18.4). Man is not body and soul (a Greek distinction) but is dust animated by the LORD God's *breath* or "spirit" which constitutes him a *living being* or psycho-physical self (Ps.104.29-30; Job 34.14-15). **8-9:** *Eden*, meaning "delight," is a "garden of God" (Is.51.3; Ezek.31.8-9; Jl.2.3) or divine park. **9:** The *tree of life* was believed to confer eternal life (3.22; see Pr.3.18 n.; Rev.22.2,14,19), as the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* confers wisdom (see 2 Sam.14.17; Is.7.15). **10-14:** The rivers, springing from the subterranean ocean (v. 6), flowed out to the four corners of the known

I will make him a helper fit for him.”

¹⁹ So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast 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. ²⁰ The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; ²² and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,^d
because she was taken out of
Man.”^e

²⁴ Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

3 Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree

which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So 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, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” ¹¹ He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹² The man said, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent beguiled me, and I ate.” ¹⁴ The LORD

^d Heb *ishshah* ^e Heb *ish*

historical world. **15-17:** Man is given a task: to *till* and *keep* the garden. The prohibition against eating the forbidden fruit (3.3) stresses God’s lordship and man’s obedience. **18:** *To be alone* is not good, for man is social by nature (see 1.27 n.). *A helper fit for him* means a partner who is suitable for him, who completes his being. **19:** Naming the animals signifies man’s dominion over them (compare 1.28). **21-23:** The deep affinity between man and woman is portrayed in the statement that God made the woman from the man’s *rib*. **24-25:** Sex is not regarded as evil but as a God-given impulse which draws man and woman together so that *they become one flesh*. **25:** The two were unashamedly *naked*, a symbol of their guiltless relation to God and to one another. **3.1-7:** The temptation begins with the insinuation of doubt (vv. 1-3), increases as suspicion is cast upon God’s motive (vv. 4-5), and becomes irresistible when the couple sense the possibilities of freedom (v. 6). **1:** *The serpent* is merely one of the wild creatures, distinguished from the others by his uncanny wisdom (Mt.10.16). **5:** *Like God* should perhaps be “like gods” (Septuagint), that is, like the divine beings of the heavenly court (v. 22; see 1.26 n.). On *knowing good and evil*, see 2.9 n. **7:** Bodily shame (2.25) symbolizes inner anxiety about a broken relationship with God. **8-13:** Such anxiety leads to a guilty attempt to hide from God (Ps.139.7-12), who is described anthropomorphically as strolling in his garden. **14-15:** The curse contains an

God said to the serpent,
“Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all cattle,
and above all wild animals;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and
the woman,
and between your seed and her
seed;

he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

¹⁶ To the woman he said,
“I will greatly multiply your pain in
childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth
children,

yet your desire shall be for your
husband,

and he shall rule over you.”

¹⁷ And to Adam he said,
“Because you have listened to the
voice of your wife,
and have eaten of the tree
of 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;

¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring
forth to you;
and you shall eat the plants of the
field.

¹⁹ In the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread

old explanation of why the serpent crawls rather than walks and why men are instinctively hostile to it. **16:** This divine judgment contains an old explanation of woman’s pain in child-birth, her sexual *desire* for her husband (i.e. her motherly impulse, compare 30.1), and her subordinate position to man in ancient society. **17-19:** An explanation of man’s struggle to eke an existence from the soil. Work is not essentially evil (2.15) but it becomes *toil* as a result of man’s broken relationship with his Creator. **17:** The Hebrew word *Adam* is usually translated “man” in this story (see 1.27 n.). Note that the curse is upon the ground, not man. **19:** *Till you return to the ground:* The mortal nature of man was implicit in the circumstances of his origin (2.7); because of man’s disobedience, God now makes death an inevitable fate that haunts man throughout life. **21:** *Garments of skins*, a sign of God’s protective care even in the time of judgment (4.15). **22:** *Like one of us*, see 3.5 n. *The tree of life* (2.9) does not figure in the temptation story, which explicitly speaks of only one tree in the center of the garden (3.3-6, 11-12, 17). **24:** *The cherubim*, guardians of sacred areas (1 Kg.8.6-7), were represented as winged creatures like the Sphynx of Egypt, half human and half lion (Ezek.41.18-19). *A flaming sword* (compare Jer.47.6) was placed near the cherubim to remind banished man of the impossibility of overstepping his creaturely bounds (compare Ezek.28.13-16).

4.1-26: *Cain, Abel, and Seth.* **2-5:** The story reflects the tension between farmers and seminomads, two different ways of life that are symbolized in the two types of offerings. No reason

till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

²⁰ The man called his wife’s name
Eve,^f because she was the mother of
all living. ²¹ And the LORD God made
for Adam and for his wife garments of
skins, and clothed them.

²² Then the LORD God said, “Be-
hold, the man has become like one of
us, knowing good and evil; and now,
lest he put forth his hand and take also
of the tree of life, and eat, and live for
ever”— ²³ therefore the LORD God
sent him forth from the garden of Eden,
to till the ground from which he was
taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man; and
at the east of the garden of Eden he
placed the cherubim, and a flaming
sword which turned every way, to
guard the way to the tree of life.

4 Now Adam knew Eve his wife,
and she conceived and bore Cain,
saying, “I have gotten^g a man with the
help of the LORD.” ² And again, she
bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was
a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of
the ground. ³ In the course of time
Cain brought to the LORD an offering
of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel
brought of the firstlings of his flock and
of their fat portions. And the LORD
had regard for Abel and his offering,

^f The name in Hebrew resembles the word for *living*
^g Heb *qanah*, get

⁶ but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. ⁶ The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is couching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it."

⁸ Cain said to Abel his brother, "Let us go out to the field."^h And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ And the LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. ¹¹ And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength; you shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."¹³ Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. ¹⁴ Behold, thou hast driven me this day away from the ground; and from thy face I shall be hidden; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will slay me."¹⁵ Then the LORD said to him, "Not so!ⁱ If any one slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who came upon him should kill him. ¹⁶ Then Cain went away from the

presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod,^j east of Eden.

¹⁷ Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. ¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad was the father of Me-hu'ja-el, and Me-hu'ja-el the father of Me-thu'sha-el, and Me-thu'sha-el the father of Lamech. ¹⁹ And 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 father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. ²² Zillah bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Na'amah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, hearken to what I say:

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

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

²⁵ And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another child instead of Abel, for Cain slew him." ²⁶ To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of the LORD.

^h Sam Gk Syr Compare Vg: Heb lacks Let us go out to the field
ⁱ Gk Syr Vg: Heb Therefore ^j That is Wandering

is given for the acceptance of Abel's offering (compare Ex.33.19). ⁷: Perhaps the meaning is that Cain himself will be *accepted*, even though his offering is not, if his deed springs from the right motive. Sin is pictured as a predatory animal, *couching at the door*. ¹⁰⁻¹¹: Blood is sacred to God, for it is the seat of life (Dt.12.23) and cries *from the ground* for vindication. ¹³⁻¹⁴: Cain concludes that exile from the farmland is also exile from the LORD's *face*, i.e. protective presence, exposing him to blood revenge. ¹⁵: The "mark of Cain" was a protective mark, perhaps a tattoo, signifying divine mercy. ¹⁷: Here Cain is not the ancestor of nomadic tribesmen (vv. 11-16) but the founder of sedentary culture. ¹⁹⁻²²: Cultural advance is evidenced by the three occupations of Lamech's sons: shepherds, musicians, and smiths. ²³⁻²⁴: An ancient song, probably once sung in praise of Lamech, is here quoted to illustrate the development of wickedness from murder to measureless blood revenge. ²⁵⁻²⁶: From Cain's genealogy the narrator returns to the sequel of Cain's banishment (vv. 11-16) and introduces the new line of Seth. ^{26b}: This tradition traces the worship of the LORD (Yahweh) back to the time of Adam's grandson, in contrast to other traditions which claim that the sacred name was introduced in Moses' time (Ex.3.13-15; 6.2-3).

⁵ This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. ² Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. ³ When Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. ⁴ The days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years; and he had other sons and daughters. ⁵ Thus all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

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

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

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

¹⁵ When Ma-hal'alel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶ Ma-hal'alel lived after the

birth of Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷ Thus all the days of Ma-hal'alel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

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

²¹ When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methu'selah. ²² Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methu'selah three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. ²³ Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

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

²⁸ When Lamech had lived a hundred and eighty-two years, he became the father of a son, ²⁹ and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground which the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands." ³⁰ Lamech lived after the birth of Noah five hundred and ninety-five years, and had

5.1-32: The generations from Adam to Noah. This priestly tradition bridges the times from the creation to the flood. ¹: *The book of the generations* was evidently a separate source from which the writer drew genealogical data (6.9; 10.1; 11.10,27; etc.). ^{1b-2}: See 1.26-28. ³: The divine likeness (v. 1; see 1.27 n.) was continued in Adam's son Seth, born *in his own likeness*, and thus was transmitted to succeeding generations without effacement (9.6). Priestly tradition makes no reference to the account of the fall of man. ⁴⁻³²: Babylonian tradition also reckons ten heroes before the flood but ascribes fantastically higher ages. In Hebrew tradition the ages decrease from 900-1000 (Adam to Noah), to 200-600 (Noah to Abraham), to 100-200 (the patriarchs), to the normal three-score years and ten (Ps.90.10). This list is somehow related to the genealogy of Cain (4.17-21) as shown by the resemblance of some of the names. ²⁴: Babylonian tradition also reports that the seventh hero before the flood was taken by God, i.e. translated (2 Kg.2.11). ²⁹: This verse, the only connection with the early traditions of Eden (3.17-19) and Cain and Abel, anticipates the new age inaugurated with Noah (9.20).

other sons and daughters. ³¹ Thus all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

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

6 When men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair; and they took to wife such of them as they chose. ³ Then the LORD said, "My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for he is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.

5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground, man and beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

6.1-4: The birth of the Nephilim is related to demonstrate the increase of wickedness on the earth. 1: This old fragment of mythology connects immediately with chs. 2-4. 2: *The sons of God* were divine beings who belonged to the heavenly court (1.27 n.). 3: Despite the lustful intrusion of divine beings into the human sphere, man did not become semi-divine (compare 3.22-24) but remained a mortal creature in whom the LORD's *spirit* dwells temporarily (see 2.7 n.). 4: Originally the story accounted for *the Nephilim* (Num.13.33; Dt.2.10-11), men of gigantic stature whose superhuman power was thought to result from divine-human marriage.

6.5-8.22: The great flood. God's judgment took the form of a destructive flood, and his mercy was shown in saving a remnant with whom he made a new historical beginning. 5-8: An introduction, belonging to the old literary tradition found in 2.4b-3.24; 4.1-26; 6.1-4. 5: The *heart* includes the will and reason, as shown by its capacity for *imagination* of thought. 7: The Biblical account is superficially similar to the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic. The Biblical perspective, however, is basically different, for the flood was not the expression of polytheistic caprice but of God's judgment upon the *wickedness of man*. 9: Noah was a *righteous man*, i.e. he stood in right relationship to God (15.6). 11-22: A parallel version. It is generally recognized that an earlier and a later (priestly) tradition have been combined. 11: The earth, once seen to be "good" (1.31), is called *corrupt* owing to man's *violence* or wilful, lawless deeds. 14-16: In the Babylonian epic too, the hero is commanded to build a houseboat, sealing it with pitch. 15: The dimensions: about 450 × 75 × 45 feet.

9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ And 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. ¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. ¹³ And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh; for the earth is filled with violence through them; behold, I will destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. ¹⁶ Make a roof^k for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and set the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks. ¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall die. ¹⁸ But 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. ¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you

^k Or window

shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. ²⁰ Of 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 sort shall come in to you, to keep them alive. ²¹ Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them." ²² Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

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

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. ⁷ And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark, to escape the waters of the flood. ⁸ Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, ⁹ two and two, male and female, went into the ark

7.1-10: This section is essentially a continuation of the early tradition (6.5-8). 2-3: On clean and unclean animals, see Lev. ch. 11. (The priestly version mentions two animals of every sort [v. 9; 6.19], presuming that the clean-unclean distinction was introduced at Sinai.) 4: The flood was caused by heavy rainfall, lasting *forty days and forty nights* (v. 12; compare the difference in the priestly version, v. 24). 11-24: Largely from the priestly tradition. 11: Here the flood was not caused by a rain storm but was a cosmic catastrophe resulting from opening the *windows of the heavens* (or the firmament) and the upsurging of the *fountains of the great deep* (or the subterranean watery chaos; see 1.6-8 n.). Thus the earth was threatened with a return to pre-creation chaos (1.2). 15: The animals went in *two by two* (6.19; see 7.2 n.). 16b: *The LORD shut him in*, a note from the early tradition, which delights in anthropomorphic touches. 18-20: The waters covered *all the high mountains*, thus threatening a confluence of the upper and lower waters (1.6). Archaeological evidence indicates that traditions of a prehistoric flood covering the whole earth are heightened versions of local inundations, e.g. in the Tigris-

with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon 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. ¹² And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. ¹³ On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, ¹⁴ they and every beast according to its kind, and all the cattle according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind, and every bird according to its kind, every bird of every sort. ¹⁵ They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶ And they 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 upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. ¹⁸ The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ¹⁹ And the waters prevailed so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered; ²⁰ the waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. ²¹ And all flesh died that moved upon

the earth, birds, cattle, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm upon the earth, and every man; ²² everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the ground, man 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. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.

8 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; ² the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, ³ and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters had abated; ⁴ and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ar'arat. ⁵ And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

⁶ At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made, ⁷ and sent forth a raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. ⁸ Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; ⁹ but the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put forth his hand and took her

and brought her into the ark with him. ¹⁰ He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; ¹¹ and the dove came back to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. ¹² Then he waited another seven days, and sent forth the dove; and she did not return to him any more.

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

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. ²¹ And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's

Euphrates basin. **8.1-5:** In the main a continuation of the priestly tradition. Because God remembered Noah, he stayed the cosmic destruction by water from above and below (v. 2a). **4:** In the Babylonian epic the boat also rested on a mountain. Ararat (2 Kg.19.37; Jer.51.27) is the name of a region in Armenia. **6-12:** Essentially from the early tradition. In the Babylonian epic the hero sent out two birds, a dove and a swallow, each of which came back; the third, a raven, did not return. **13-19:** A continuation of the priestly account. **20-22:** The early tradition relates that Noah sacrificed burnt offerings (Lev. ch. 1) of clean animals (see 7.2-3 n.). In the Babylonian epic the hero offered sacrifices and "the gods smelt [compare v. 21] the goodly savor." For the curse, compare 3.17. Despite the evil imagination of man's heart (6.5), the LORD's steadfast mercy will be expressed in the regularities of nature, seedtime and harvest, etc.

heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done. ²² While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

9 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. ² The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. ³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴ Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵ For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of man; of every man's brother I will require the life of man. ⁶ Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image. ⁷ And you, be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it."

⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹ I 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." ¹² And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant which 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. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will look upon it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." ¹⁷ God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

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

²⁰ Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard; ²¹ and he drank of the wine, and became drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent. ²² And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. ²³ Then Shem

¹ Gk: Heb repeats every beast of the earth

9.1-19: God's covenant with Noah included all mankind under divine promise and law. **1:** The new age opened with a renewal of the blessing which had been given at creation (v. 7; compare 1.28). **3-6:** The command to exercise dominion (1.29-30) is qualified by the permission to eat animal flesh but not with its life, i.e. its blood (see 4.10-11 n.). The violence which had corrupted the earth (6.11) is restrained by a very old law against murder, the validity of which is grounded in the creation: man is made in God's image (1.26-27). These verses set forth the laws given to Noah, binding not only on Israel but on all men (Acts 15.20; 21.25). **8-11:** The preservation of the natural order from the waters of chaos is guaranteed by a covenant (see 17.2 n.). Unlike later covenants (ch. 17; Ex. ch. 24), this is a universal covenant with Noah, his descendants, and every living creature, for Noah's three sons (6.10; 9.18-19) are regarded as the ancestors of all the nations (see ch. 10). **13:** Ancients imagined the rainbow as God's weapon (bow) from which the lightnings of his arrows were shot (Ps.7.12-13; Hab.3.9-11). God places his weapon in the heavens as a sign, or visible token, that his wrath has abated.

9.18-27: Noah's curse upon Canaan. **20:** In the new age, Noah was the first tiller of the soil. His success in agriculture fulfilled the prophecy made at his birth (5.29). **22:** Since the curse was later put on Canaan rather than Ham (v. 26), it is likely that Canaan was the actor originally.