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 copyist's 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 Jannia, about A.D. 96-100, 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, 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 Murabbbaat 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. 1169) of Scripture. If by canonical one means that a book must be regarded as having special authority, that is, being 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 envisage 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. 5:12-7:25; 23). 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 composition 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; 20:3.4; 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
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 (I) 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 Kgs. 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 songs 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.

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The First Book of Moses Commonly Called

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 prehistoric 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. 25-36), 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." § 5). The primary purpose of the whole book, however, is to narrate God's dealings with man 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, Ephraimitic, 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 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 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 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, the first day. 6 And God said, "Let there be 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, the 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 called the dry land Earth, and the firmament he called Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. 11 And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures and fowl according to their kinds; and let the forests of the earth bring forth the wild beasts according to their kinds; and let all the animals of the earth bring forth their offspring according to their kinds; and let all the beasts of the earth bring forth their offspring according to their kinds; and let all the birds of the heaven bring forth their offspring according to their kinds; and let all the fishes of the sea bring forth their offspring according to their kinds." And it was so. 12 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass and vegetation and with which the earth may yield its food; and let the tree come forth and yield fruit, whose seed is within itself, after its kind; and let the earth bring forth the beast of the earth and the fowl of the heaven and the live thing that moves upon the earth according to its kind; and it was so. 13 And God blessed the earth and said, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the heaven and every living thing that moves upon the earth." And it was so. 14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to separate the day from the night and let them be signs of seasons and days and years; and let them be lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. 15 And God made the two great lights: the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night; and he made the stars. 16 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light on the earth and to govern the day and the night and the seasons and the years. 17 And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures and fowl according to their kinds; and let the forests of the earth bring forth the wild beasts according to their kinds; and let all the animals of the earth bring forth their offspring according to their kinds; and let all the beasts of the earth bring forth their offspring according to their kinds; and let all the birds of the heaven bring forth their offspring according to their kinds; and let all the fishes of the sea bring forth their offspring according to their kinds." And it was so. 18 And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. For it is the day which distinguished God from all his works that he had made in the darkness. 19 And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it he rested from all his work which he had done in creation. 20 And God said, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a helper fit for him." 21 And the Lord God made for the man a wife out of the rib which he took from him, and the name of him was Adam. 22 And the man looked at his wife and said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken from man." 23 For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two of them will become one flesh. 24 And hence the man left his father and his mother and clung to his wife, and they became one flesh. 25 And the man realized that a helper fit for him had not been placed. But Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was to become the helper of many. 26 And the Lord God provided for Adam and his wife a garden of Eden to cultivate and keep. 27 And the Lord God placed the man in the garden of Eden to cultivate and keep it. 28 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You shall not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 29 For in the day that you eat from it you shall die." 30 And the Lord God said, "The man has become like one of us and can now know good and evil; it is dangerous for him. 31 Now therefore, he must be driven out of the garden, lest he eat from the tree of life and have immortality, and live forever." 32 So the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 33 And the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make for him a helper fit for him." 34 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and he slept; and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh. 34 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and he slept; and he took one of his ribs and closed it up. 35 And the Lord God formed out of the rib a woman and brought her to the man. 36 And the man said, "This one is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken from man." 37 Then the man gave the name of his wife, saying, "This one shall be my helper in the work of the ground in tillage. 38 And it shall be that the man will be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh!"
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 bring 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 monsters 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 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

have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree of its kind, 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. 32 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. 2 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, 6 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; 7 but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground— 8 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. 9 And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 10 And out of the ground the Lord God made 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.

The garden of Eden

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 Pison; 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. 13 And 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 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; I

shall make him a helper who is like him."
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, 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, because she was taken out of Man." 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.

26 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'?” 27 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; 28 but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil God has said, 'You shall not eat of it; you shall not touch it, lest you die.'" 29 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. 30 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 31 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 wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. 32 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

33 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. 34 But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 35 And he said, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." 36 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 37 The man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 38 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." 39 The Lord said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly shall you go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 40 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; 41 he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." 42 To the woman he said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; 43 in pain you shall bring forth children, 44 and your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." 45 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,' 46 cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. 47 Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 48 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread.

6 He is a help meet for man. 7 He is a helper fit for man. 8 He is a helper fit for man. 9 He is a helper fit for man. 10 He is a helper fit for man. 11 He is a helper fit for man. 12 He is a helper fit for man. 13 He is a helper fit for man. 14 He is a helper fit for man. 15 He is a helper fit for man. 16 He is a helper fit for man. 17 He is a helper fit for man. 18 He is a helper fit for man. 19 He is a helper fit for man. 20 He is a helper fit for man. 21 He is a helper fit for man. 22 He is a helper fit for man. 23 He is a helper fit for man. 24 He is a helper fit for man. 25 He is a helper fit for man. 26 He is a helper fit for man. 27 He is a helper fit for man. 28 He is a helper fit for man. 29 He is a helper fit for man. 30 He is a helper fit for man. 31 He is a helper fit for man. 32 He is a helper fit for man. 33 He is a helper fit for man. 34 He is a helper fit for man. 35 He is a helper fit for man. 36 He is a helper fit for man. 37 He is a helper fit for man. 38 He is a helper fit for man. 39 He is a helper fit for man. 40 He is a helper fit for man. 41 He is a helper fit for man. 42 He is a helper fit for man. 43 He is a helper fit for man. 44 He is a helper fit for man. 45 He is a helper fit for man. 46 He is a helper fit for man. 47 He is a helper fit for man. 48 He is a helper fit for man. 49 He is a helper fit for man. 50 He is a helper fit for man. 51 He is a helper fit for man. 52 He is a helper fit for man. 53 He is a helper fit for man. 54 He is a helper fit for man. 55 He is a helper fit for man. 56 He is a helper fit for man. 57 He is a helper fit for man. 58 He is a helper fit for man. 59 He is a helper fit for man. 60 He is a helper fit for man.
but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin is crouching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.

S Cain said to Abel, his brother, "Let us go out to the field." And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" And the Lord said, "What have you done? Your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. 11 Now and 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."

Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, you have 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 shall slay me." 15 Then the Lord said to him, "No! If any one slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any one who came upon him should kill him. 17 Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, 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 Mehujael, and Mehujael the father of Methuselah, and Methuselah the father of Lamech.

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 Jabob; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. 22 Zillah bore Tubal-cain, who was the forger of every instrument of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

23 Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hearken to 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. 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 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.

The descendants of Adam

5 This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man in the likeness of God, 2 male and female he created them and 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 of Adam 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 fifty years; and he died.

12 When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel. 13 Kenan lived after the birth of Mahalalel 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 Mahalalel had lived six hundred years, he became the father of Jared. 16 Mahalalel lived after the birth of Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters.

5:1-32: The generations from Adam to Noah. This priestly tradition bridges the times from the creation to the flood. 1:4: The book of the generations was evidently a separate source from which the Priestly Trinity drew. 1:3: The book contains no reference to the history of God himself. 1:2: See 1:26-28. 3:1: The divine likeness (v. 1) was continued in the sons of Enosh, but it was transmitted to succeeding generations without effacement (9:6). Priestly tradition makes no reference to the account of the fall of man. 4:22: Babylonian tradition also reckons ten heroes before the flood but ascribes fantastically higher ages. In Hebrew tradition the ages decrease from 300-1000 (Adam to Noah), to 200-600 (Noah to Abraham), to 100-200 (the patriarchs), to the norm of 100 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. Babylonian tradition also reports that the seventh hero before the flood was taken by God, i.e., translated (2:2.11). 29:9: This verse, the only connection with the early traditions of Eden (3:1-19) and Cain and Abel, anticipates the new age inaugurated with Noah (9:20).
Noah is instructed to make an ark

9. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God.

11. Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

17. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. This is how you will make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.

21. And Noah did all that the Lord 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.

25. And Noah and his sons and his wife and her sons' wives entered the ark, all as it is recorded.

2. Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth.

18. And the waters prevailed so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.

21. And all flesh that died moved upon the ark.
Noah leaves the ark

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

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 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 all that creepeth upon the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; in your hand they are delivered.

Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, your blood. For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of every man’s brother I will require the life of man. Whosoever sheds the blood of man by man his blood shall be shed, for God has made man in His own image.

And you, be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it.”

And God said to Noah and to his sons, “Reckon, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, 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. So 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.”

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.

I set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 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. 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.”

And 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.”

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

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

9.1-19: God’s covenant with Noah included all mankind under divine promise and law. 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 4.11-16 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. 24), this is a universal covenant with Noah, his descendants, and every living creature, for Noah’s sons (6:10; 9:8-19) are regarded as the ancestors of all the nations (see ch. 10). 13: Ancient imagined the rainbow as God’s weapon (bow) from which the lightnings of his arrows were shot (Ps. 7.12-13; Heb. 3:9-11). God places his weapon in the heavens as a sign, or visible token, that his wrath has abated.