

[39. The Seventeenth Generation]

²² Serug was 30 years old when he had a son Nachor. ²³ Serug lived 200 years after he had Nachor, and he had sons and daughters.

[40. The Eighteenth Generation]

²⁴ Nachor was 29 years old when he had a son Terach. ²⁵ Nachor lived 119 years after he had Terach, and he had sons and daughters.

[41. Abram]

²⁶ Terach was 70 years old when he fathered Abram, Nachor and Haran.

²⁷ These are the chronicles of Terach:

Terach fathered Abram, Nachor and Haran.

Haran had a son Lot. ²⁸ Haran died during the lifetime of his father Terach, in the land of his birth, Ur Casdim.*

²⁹ Abram and Nachor married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai. The name of Nachor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran (who was the father of Milcah and Yiscah*). ³⁰ Sarai was sterile; she had no children.

³¹ Terach took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran's son), and his daughter-in-law Sarai (Abram's wife). With them, he left Ur Casdim, heading toward the land of Canaan. They came as far as Charan* and settled there.

³² All of Terach's days were 205 years, and Terach died in Charan.

Lekh Lekha

[42. Abram's Call and Migration]

¹ God said to Abram, "Go away from your land, from your birthplace, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you great. You shall become a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and he who curses you, I will curse. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you."

⁴ Abram went as God had directed him, and Lot* went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he left Charan.* ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai, his

11:28 Ur Casdim. Often translated Ur of the Chaldeans. Some say that the Casdim derived their name from Arpachshad, which is Arp-casad. Others say that the name came from Kesed (22:32), and was not used until after Abraham's time (Radak). (See *Yot' lo'ah* 11:3).

11:29 Yiscah. Usually identified with Sarah (Rashi; *Targum Yonathan*: Josephus, *Antiquities* 1:6:5). In English, this is sometimes rendered as Jessica.

11:31 Charan. A city in Mesopotamia, some 400 miles northeast of the Holy Land. The journey from Ur to

22 ׀ נחני שְׂרוּגַ שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וַיֵּלֶד אֶת־נְחֹר׃ וַיְחִי שְׂרוּגַ
23 ׀ אַחֲרֵי הוּלִידוֹ אֶת־נְחֹרַ מְאַתִּים שָׁנָה וַיֵּלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת׃

24 ׀ ׀ נחני נְחֹרַ תְּשַׁע וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וַיֵּלֶד אֶת־נְחֹרַ׃ וַיְחִי
25 ׀ נְחֹרַ אַחֲרֵי הוּלִידוֹ אֶת־נְחֹרַ תְּשַׁע־עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וַיֵּמָּת׃

26 ׀ שָׁנָה וַיֵּלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת׃ ׀ וַיְחַי־תֵּרַח שְׁבַע־עָשָׂר
27 ׀ וַיֵּלֶד אֶת־אַבְרָם אֶת־נְחֹרַ וְאֶת־הָרָן׃ וְאַלָּה תוֹלַת תֵּרַח

תֵּרַח הוּלִיד אֶת־אַבְרָם אֶת־נְחֹרַ וְאֶת־הָרָן הוּלִיד

אַת־לוֹט׃ וַיָּמָת הָרָן עַל־פְּנֵי תֵּרַח אָבִיו מוֹלְדוֹ׃

28 ׀ כְּאוֹר פְּשִׁדִּים׃ וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם וְנְחֹרַ לְהֵם נָשִׁים שֵׁם אִשְׁתֵּי־

אַבְרָם שָׂרָי וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתֵּי־נְחֹרַ מְלֵכָה בַת־הָרָן אֲבִי־מְלֵכָה

וְאָבִי יִסְכָּה׃ וַיְחִי שְׂרָי עֲקָרָה אֵין לָהּ יֶלֶד׃ וַיִּקַּח תֵּרַח

אַת־אַבְרָם בְּעוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בְּקַדְקָן בְּעוֹ וְאֶת שְׂרָי בְּלוֹ׃

אַשְׁת אַבְרָם בְּעוֹ וַיֵּצְאוּ אִתָּם מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים לְלֶבֶת אֲרָצָה

כְּעוֹן וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־הָרָן וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם׃ וַיְחִי וַיְמִי־תֵרַח חֲמִשָּׁ

שָׁנִים וּמְאַתִּים שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת תֵּרַח בְּהָרָן׃

1 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם לְדִלְגָה מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִמְּלִדְתְּךָ וּמִבְּיֹת

2 אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ׃ וְאַעֲשֶׂה לְעוֹי גְּדוֹל וְאֶבְרַכְךָ

3 וְאֶנְדְּלָה שְׁמֹךְ וְהָיָה בְרַכָּה׃ וְאֶבְרַכְךָ מְבַרְכְּךָ וּמְקַלְלְךָ

4 אֶעֱר וְנִבְרַכְו בְּךָ כֹּל מְשַׁפְּחֹת הָאָרֶץ׃ וַיֵּלֶד אַבְרָם בְּאֶשֶׁר

5 הָיָה אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֵּלֶד אִתּוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בְּן־חֲמִישׁ שָׁנָיו

Charan was close to 600 miles.

12:4 Lot. See 11:31, 37:25. Also see note on Exodus 7:22.

12:5 75 years old ... According to the genealogies, Abram was born in 1948, so this was the year 2023.

nephew Lot, and all their belongings, as well as the people they had gathered,* and they left, heading toward Canaan. When they came to Canaan, ⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as the area of Shechem,* coming to the Plain of Moreh.* The Canaanites were then in the land.

⁷ God appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your offspring." [Abram] built an altar there to God who had appeared to him.

⁸ From there, [Abram] moved on to the mountains east of Bethel.* He set up his tent with Bethel to the west and Ai* to the east. He built an altar there and called in God's name. ⁹ Abram then continued on his way, moving steadily toward the south.*

[43. Troubles]

¹⁰ There was a famine in the land. Abram headed south* to Egypt to stay there for a while, since the famine had grown very severe in the land. ¹¹ As they approached Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I realize that you are a good-looking woman. ¹² When the Egyptians see you, they will assume that you are my wife* and kill me, allowing you to live. ¹³ If you would, say that you are my sister. They will then be good to me for your sake, and through your efforts, my life will be spared."

¹⁴ When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that his wife* was very beautiful. ¹⁵ Pharaoh's officials saw her, and spoke highly of her to Pharaoh.* The woman was taken to Pharaoh's palace. ¹⁶ He treated Abram well because of her, and [Abram] thus acquired sheep, cattle, donkeys, male and female slaves, she-donkeys, and camels.

Second Reading

— the people they had gathered. Literally, "the soul that they had made," or "the souls that they had made." It can be interpreted to mean the servants they had acquired (Rashi), or the people that they had converted to God's cause (Rashi; Ibn Ezra). It can also denote the spiritual gifts that they had acquired (*Sefer Yetsarah* 6; Raavad *ad loc.*)

¹¹:⁶ Shechem. A city near the center of the Holy Land, in the vicinity of the present Nablus.

— Plain of Moreh. (*Targum*; Rashi). *Eilon Moreh* in Hebrew. See Deuteronomy 11:30. Other sources translate it as "the Terebinth of Moreh" (Ibn Ezra; Ramban on 14:6). The terebinth of the Torah is a large tree (*Pistacia atlantica*) of the sumac family, also related to the pistachio. It is also sometimes identified with the oak. The terebinth could live for over a thousand years, and was often as much as twenty feet in diameter. The Terebinth of Moreh would have been a particularly large tree that served as a landmark in the area. See Genesis 35:4, Judges 9:6.

¹²:⁸ Bethel. *Beit El* in Hebrew, literally, "the house of God." This was a city some 20 miles south of Shechem. It is identified with the modern Beitin, some 10 miles north of Jerusalem.

— Ai. A town a little less than two miles east of Bethel. Identified with the modern Haiyin. south. Negev in Hebrew, literally the drylands.



Terebinth

Identified with the modern Haiyin.

וְאֶת-לוֹט בֶּן-אֶחָיו וְאֶת-כָּל-רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת-הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר-רָעִישׁוּ בְּהָרְךָ וַיֵּצְאוּ לְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן; וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֵם עַד אֵילֹן מוֹרֵה וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי אֵץ בְּאֶרֶץ; וַיְבֵא יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְרֵעֵךְ אֵתָּן אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וַיִּבְּן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה הַנְּרָאָה אֵלָיו; וַיַּעֲתֵק מִשָּׁם הַיְהוּדָה מִקְדָּם לְבֵית-אֵל וַיִּפְּ אֶהְלֵה בֵּית-אֵל מִיָּם וְהָעֵי מִקְדָּם וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה; וַיִּפְּעֵ אַבְרָם הַלֵּל וַיִּסְּעֵ הַנֶּגֶב; פ וְהָיָ רֵעֵב בְּאֶרֶץ וַיְהִי אַבְרָם מִצְרִימָה לְגֹוֹר שָׁם בְּיַבְבַּד הַרְעֵב בְּאֶרֶץ; וַיְהִי בְּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבָנָא מִצְרִימָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-שָׂרָי אִשְׁתִּי הִנֵּה נָעָה בְּיַדְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יִפְתַּדְמִינָהּ אֵתָּן; וְהָיָה כִּי-יִרְאוּ אֹתָךְ הַמִּצְרָיִם וְאָמְרוּ אִשְׁתִּי הִיא וְהָרְגוּ אֹתָךְ וְאָמְרוּ יְהוָה: אִמְרִינָעָה אֵת לְמַעַן יִשְׁבְּלִי בְּעַבְדְּךָ וְהִתְנַחַּה נַפְשִׁי בְּנַגְלְךָ; וַיְהִי כְּבָנָא אַבְרָם מִצְרִימָה וַיְבֵאוּ הַמִּצְרָיִם אֶת-הָאִשָּׁה כִּי-יִרְעָה הוּא מֵאֵד; וַיְבֵאוּ אֹתָהּ שָׂרָי פְרִיעָה וְהִלְלוּ אֹתָהּ אֶל-פְרִיעָה וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה בֵּית פְרִיעָה; וְלֹא אַבְרָם הוּא שֵׁב בְּעַבְדְּהָ וְהָיָה לֹא-אֵמֶן וַיִּקְרָךְ הַחַמְרִים וַעֲבָדִים וְשָׂפָחַת וְאֶתְנַת וְנַמְלִים: וַיִּנְעֵ יְהוָה |

¹¹:¹⁰ headed south. Literally, "went down."
¹²:¹² they will assume. Literally, "They will say, 'This is his wife.'"
¹³:¹⁴ his wife. Literally, "the woman."
¹⁴:¹⁵ Pharaoh. A generic name for Egyptian kings (Josephus, *Antiquities* 8:6:2), coming from the Egyptian *par ao*, the "Great House." This event occurred in 2023 (1757 b.c.e.), during the Second Intermediate Period, where the pharaohs are not known by name. However, there is a possible 163 year disparity in chronologies (see note on Exodus 2:23), so that this Pharaoh may be the one who is assumed to have reigned in 1900 b.c.e. This would be Amenemhet II of the 12th Dynasty.



Pharaoh

the particular star (which was the object of their worship). Thus Jeremiah said, "Who would not fear You, O King of nations? For it befits You; for as much as among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdom, there is none like You. But in one thing they are brutish and foolish. The vanities by which they are instructed are but a stock" (Jer. 10:7-8). This means that all know that You alone are God; their error and folly consists in imagining that this vain worship is Your desire.

(2 In course of time, there arose among men false prophets who asserted that God had commanded and expressly told them, "Worship that particular star, or worship all the stars. Offer up to it such and such sacrifices. Pour out to it such and such libations. Erect a temple to it. Make a figure of it, to which all the people—the women, children, and the rest of the folk—shall bow down." The false prophet pointed out to them the figure which he had invented out of his own mind and asserted that it was the figure of that particular star which had been shown him in his prophetic vision. And then they began to make figures in temples, under the trees, on the mountain-tops, and the hills. There they would assemble, bow down to the figures, and tell all the people that this particular figure conferred benefits and inflicted injuries and that it was proper to worship and fear it. Their priests would say to them, "Through this worship, shall you increase and prosper. Do this and do not do that." Other imposters then sprang up who declared that the star, celestial sphere, or angel, had communed with them, and said to them, "Worship me in such and such fashion," had taught them a definite ritual, and said to them, "Do this, and do not do that." So gradually the custom spread throughout the world of worshiping figures with various modes of worship, such as offering up sacrifices to them, and bowing down to them.

As time gradually passed, the honored and revered Name of God was forgotten by mankind, vanished from their lips and hearts, and was no longer known to them. All the common people and the women and children knew only the figure of wood and stone and the temple edifice in which they had, from their childhood, been trained to prostrate themselves to the figure, worship it, and swear by its name. Even their wise men, such as priests and men of similar standing, also fancied that there was no other god but the stars and spheres, for whose sake and in whose similitude these figures had been made. But the Creator of the universe was known to none, and

truth, and thus thousands and tens of thousands joined him. These were the persons referred to in the phrase, "men of the house of Abraham."

Abraham implanted in their hearts this great doctrine, composed books on it, and taught it to Isaac, his son. Isaac settled down, instructing and exhorting. He imparted the doctrine to Jacob and ordained him to teach it. He, too, settled down, taught and morally strengthened all who joined him. The patriarch Jacob instructed all his sons, set apart Levi, appointed him head (teacher) and placed him in a college to teach the way of God and keep the charge of Abraham. He charged his sons to appoint, from the tribe of Levi, one instructor after another, in uninterrupted succession, so that the doctrine might never be forgotten. And so it went on with ever increasing vigor among Jacob's children and their adherents till they became a people that knew God. When the Israelites had stayed a long while in Egypt, they relapsed, learned the practices of their neighbors, and, like them, worshiped idols, with the exception of the tribe of Levi, that steadfastly kept the charge of the patriarch. This tribe of Levi never practiced idolatry. The doctrine implanted by Abraham would, in a very short time, have been uprooted, and Jacob's descendants would have lapsed into the error and perversities universally prevalent.

But because of God's love for us and because He kept the oath made to our ancestor Abraham, He appointed Moses to be our teacher and the teacher of all the prophets and charged him with his mission. After Moses had begun to exercise his prophetic functions and Israel had been chosen by the Almighty as His heritage, He crowned them with precepts, and showed them the way to worship Him and how to deal with idolatry and with those who go astray after it.*

Chapter 11

(1 We should not follow the customs of the Gentiles, nor imitate them in dress or in their way of trimming the hair, as it is said, "And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation which I have cast out before you" (Lev. 20:23); "Neither shall you walk in their statutes" (*ibid.* 18:3); "Take heed to yourself that you be not ensnared to follow them" (Deut. 12:30). These texts all refer to one theme and warn against imitating them. The Israelite shall, on the contrary, be

*See *Guide*, II, ch. 39.

שָׁמַךְ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה: וְאַבְרָהָהּ מְבַרְכֶיךָ וּמִקְלָלֶיךָ
 אָאֵר וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָרֶץ: וַיִּלְךָ אַבְרָם
 בְּאֵשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיִּלְךָ אִתּוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־
 חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן: הַיְיָקַח
 אַבְרָם אֶת־שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בֶּן־אָחִיו וְאֶת־כָּל־
 רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן
 וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן: וַיַּעֲבֹר
 אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׂכָם עַד אֵלּוֹן מוֹרָה
 וַהֲכַנְעֵנִי אֹו בְּאֶרֶץ: וַיִּרְא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר

אונקלוס

וַיֵּצְאוּ מִבְּרֶכֶת וּמִלְטָטָה אֵילֹוֹט וַיַּחְבְּרוּ בְּדִילָה כָּל זְרַעֵית אֶרֶץ: ד וַיֵּצֵא אַבְרָם
 כְּמֵא דְמִלִּיל עַמָּה וַיֵּצֵא עַמָּה לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בְּר־שִׁבְעִין וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנִין בְּמִסְפָּקָה מִחָרָן:
 ה וַיִּדְבֵר אַבְרָם וְיַת־שָׂרִי אִתְּחַתָּה וְיַת־לוֹט בְּר־אָחִיו וַיַּת־כָּל־קְנִינָהוֹן דִּי קִנּוּ וַיַּת־
 נַפְשָׁתָא דְשַׁעֲבִירוּ לְאוֹרִיחָא בְּחָרָן וַיַּנְפְּקוּ לְמִיּוֹל לְאֶרֶץ אֲדָמָה וְאֶתְּוּ לְאֶרֶץ דְּכַנְעַן:
 ז וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ עַד אֶתֶר שְׂכָם עַד מִישַׁר מוֹרָה וְכַנְעַנָּתָא בְּכַנְעַן אֶרֶץ: ז וַיַּחְבְּרוּ

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והיה ברכה. הַפְּרָכּוֹת נְתוּנֹת בְּנֶדֶד; עַד עֲקָשׁוֹ הָיוּ בְּרִי, בְּרַמְתִּי לְאָדָם וְנִחַ, וּמַעֲקָשׁוֹ
 אִתָּה הַבְּרָךְ אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּחֲפוּץ (כ"ר). דָּבָר אַחֵר: וְאֵעִשְׂךָ לְגוֹי גְדוֹל זֶה שְׂאוֹמְרִים: אֵלֶי
 אַבְרָהָם, וְאַבְרָכְךָ זֶה שְׂאוֹמְרִים: אֵלֶי יִצְחָק, וְאַגְדִּלָּה שְׂמֶךְ זֶה שְׂאוֹמְרִים: אֵלֶי יַעֲקֹב.
 יְכוּל יְהִיו חוֹתְמִין בְּכֶלֶן, תַּלְמוּד לומר וְהָיָה בְּרָכָה, בְּדִ חוֹתְמִין וְלֹא בְּהֵם: מֵאֶרֶץ, וְהָלֹא
 בְּבָר יֵצֵא מִשָּׁם עִם אֲבִיו וְכֹא עַד חָרָן? אֵלֹא בְּדִ אָמַר לוֹ: הַתְּרַחֵק עוֹד מִשָּׁם וַיֵּצֵא מִבֵּית
 אֲבִיךָ: אֲשֶׁר אֶרֶץ. לֹא נָלַח לוֹ הָאֶרֶץ מִיָּד, בְּדִי לְחַבְּבָהּ בְּעֵינָיו, וְלָתֵת לוֹ שָׂכָר עַל כָּל דְּבוּר
 וְדַבּוּר: כִּיֵּצֵא בּוֹ, אֵת בְּנֵדֶךָ אֵת יַחֲדָךְ אֲשֶׁר אֶחָבְבְּתָ אֵת יִצְחָק (ברא' כ"ב), כִּיֵּצֵא בּוֹ: עַל אַחַד
 הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ, וְכִיֵּב וְקָרָא אֵלֶיךָ אֵת הַקְּרִיאָה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי דוֹבֵר אֵלֶיךָ (יונה ג'):
 (ג) וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ. יֵשׁ אַנְדוֹת רַבּוֹת וְנָהוּ פְּשׁוּטִין: אָדָם אֹמַר לְבָנּוֹ, תְּהֵא בְּאַבְרָהָם. וְכֵן כָּל
 וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ שְׂפִמְקָרָא וְנָה מוֹכִיחַ: בְּדִ יְבָרַךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר וְשִׁמְךָ אֵלֶיִם בְּאַפְרִים וְכַמְנִשָּׁה
 (בר' מ"ח): (ה) אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן. שְׂהַכְנִיסֵן תַּחַת כַּנְפֵי הַשְּׂכִינָה: אַבְרָהָם מְנַיֵר אֵת הָאֲנָשִׁים
 וְשָׂרָה מְנַיֵרֵת הַנְּשִׁים, וּמַעֲלָה עֲלֵיהֶם הַכְּתוּב כְּאֵלוֹ עֲשָׂאוֹם; וּפְשׁוּטִין שֶׁל מְקָרָא: עַבְדִּים
 וְשִׁפְחוֹת שִׁקְנּוּ לָהֶם, כְּמוֹ: עֲשָׂה אֵת כָּל־הַכְּבוֹד הַזֶּה (שם ל"א), וְיִשְׂרָאֵל עָשָׂה חֵיל (במד' כ"ד),
 לְשׁוֹן קוֹנָה וְכוּנָם: (ו) וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ. עַד מְקוֹם שְׂכָם. לְהַתְּפַלֵּל עַל בְּנֵי
 יַעֲקֹב, כְּשִׁיבָאוּ לְהִלָּחֵם בְּשָׂכָם: אֵלּוֹן מוֹרָה. הִיא שְׂכָם. הִרְאֵהוּ הַר גְּרִיזִים וְהַר עֵיבָל, שְׂשָׁם קָבְלוּ
 יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂבוּעַת הַתּוֹרָה: וְהַכְנַעֲנִי אֹו בְּאֶרֶץ. הָיָה הוֹלֵךְ וְכוּבֵשׂ אֵת אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִזְרָעוֹ שֶׁל שָׁם,
 שִׁבְחָלְקוֹ שֶׁל שָׁם נִפְלָה, כְּשִׁחְלַקְנִחַ אֵת הָאֶרֶץ לְבָנָיו, שְׂנֵאֲמַר: וּמִלְפֵי צֶדֶק מְלָךְ שְׁלָם (ברא' י"ב),
 לְכִיכָה: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵל אַבְרָם לְרַעַד אֶתְּוֹן אֵת הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת, עַתִּיד אֲנִי לְהַחְוִירָהּ לְבָנֶיךָ שְׂהֵם מִזְרַעֲךָ

be a blessing: ³And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that execrateth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. ⁴So Abram went, as the Eternal had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he went out from Haran. ⁵And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran: and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and they came into the land of Canaan. ⁶And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. ⁷And the Eternal appeared unto Abram, and

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וְאֵנִי בֹרֵךְ אֶתְּךָ וְאֵנִי בֹרֵךְ אֶתְּךָ — with wealth.¹) (ib.) וְהָיָה בְרָכָה אֲנִי וְהָיָה אֲנִי בְרָכָה AND BE THOU A BLESSING — Blessings are entrusted to you; hitherto they were in My power — I blessed Adam and Noah — but from now on you shall bless whomsoever you wish (ib.) Another explanation is: AND I WILL MAKE THEE A GREAT NATION, this alludes to the fact that we say in our prayer "God of Abraham"; AND I WILL BLESS THEE — that we say, "God of Isaac"; AND I WILL MAKE THY NAME GREAT — that we say, "God of Jacob". One might think that we should conclude the benediction in which these invocations are recited by mentioning again the names of all the patriarchs — the text therefore states "Be thou a blessing" meaning, with you (i. e. with your name only) shall they conclude the benediction and not with them (their names) (Pes. 117b).²) מֵאֶרֶץ מִן מֵאֶרֶץ FROM THY LAND — But had he not already departed from there together with his father and had reached as far as Haran (chap. XI. 31)? But thus God in effect said to him: Go still further away — leave now thy father's house also. אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶה WHICH I WILL SHOW THEE — He did not reveal to him at once which land it was in order that he should hold it in high esteem and in order to reward him for complying with each and every command. Similar is, (Gen. XXII. 2) "Take thy son — thine only son — whom thou lovest — even Isaac"; similar is (ib.) "upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of"; similar is, (Jonah III. 2) "And make unto it the proclamation that I shall tell thee of". (3) וְנִבְרַכְתָּ בְּךָ AND IN THEE SHALL BE BLESSED — There are many Agadoth concerning this but the plain sense of the text is as follows: A man says to his son, "Mayest thou become as Abraham". This, too, is the meaning wherever the phrase וְנִבְרַכְתָּ בְּךָ "And in thee shall be blessed" occurs in Scripture, and the following example proves this: (Gen. XLVIII. 20) בְּךָ יִבְרַךְ "By thee shall Israel bless their children saying, 'May God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh'". (5) אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּהָרֵן [THE SOULS] THAT THEY HAD GOTTEN (lit., made) IN HARAN — The souls which he had brought beneath the sheltering wings of the Shechinah. Abraham converted the men and Sarah converted the women and Scripture accounts it unto them as if they had made them. However, the real sense of the text is that it refers to the menservants and to the maidservants whom they had acquired for themselves. The word "עָשׂוּ" is used here as (in Gen. XXXI. 1), "he has acquired (עָשָׂה) all this wealth", and (Num. XXIV. 8), "And Israel acquires (עוֹשָׂה) wealth" — an expression for acquiring and amassing. (6) וַיַּעֲבֵר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ שֵׁכֶם AND ABRAHAM PASSED THROUGH THE LAND — he entered it.³) עַד טָקוּם שָׁכֶם UNTO THE PLACE OF SHECHEM — In order to pray on behalf of Jacob's sons, anticipating the time when they would come to fight against Shechem. אֵלּוּן טוֹרָה THE PLAIN OF MOREH — This is Shechem. He showed him Mount Gerizim

NOTES

¹) for the other two blessings are expressly mentioned in this verse.

²) The first benediction of the Amidah opens with "Blessed art Thou, O Lord . . . God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob" and concludes only with mention of Abraham's name: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Shield of Abraham". Probably the names of the other patriarchs are omitted because only to Abraham did God promise to be a בְּרִיָּה (see Gen. XV. 1).

³) See Appendix.

[slaves] bought with cash from an outsider, who is not your descendant. ¹³ [All slaves,] both household and purchased with your money must be circumcised. This shall be My covenant in your flesh, an eternal covenant. ¹⁴ The uncircumcised male whose foreskin has not been circumcised, shall have his soul cut off from his people"; he has broken My covenant."

[48. Fulfillment]

¹⁵ God said to Abraham, "Sarai your wife—do not call her by the name Sarai, for Sarah is her name. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and make her bear you a son. I will bless her so that she will be [the mother] of entire nations—kings will be her descendants."

¹⁷ Abraham fell on his face and he laughed." He said to himself, "Can a hundred-year-old man have children? Can Sarah, who is ninety, give birth?"

¹⁸ To God, Abraham said, "May it be granted that Ishmael live before you!" ¹⁹ God said, "Still, your wife Sarah will give birth to a son. You must name him Isaac." I will keep My covenant with him as an eternal treaty, for his descendants after him. ²⁰ I have also heard you with regard to Ishmael. I will bless him, and make him fruitful, increasing his numbers very greatly. He will father twelve princes,* and I will make him into a great nation. ²¹ But I will keep my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you this time next year."

²² When He finished speaking to him, God went up,* [leaving] Abraham.

²³ Abraham took his son Ishmael, everyone born in his house, and every [slave] bought for money—every male in his household—and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins. [It was] on the very day* that God had spoken to him.

²⁴ Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised on the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ His son Ishmael was thirteen years old when the flesh of his foreskin was circumcised. ²⁶ On the very day that Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised, ²⁷ all the men of the household, both homeborn and

^{17:14} cut off from his people. This denotes being cut off from one's spiritual source. It also denotes premature death and childlessness (see above, 9:11).

^{17:17} laughed. *Yitzchak* in Hebrew, equivalent to Isaac (see next note). Some interpret the word *taachak* here literally as "laughed" (Abarbanel; Sepuagim), while others interpret it as "rejoiced" (Targum; Saadia; Rashi).

^{17:19} Isaac. *Yitzchak* in Hebrew. Literally, "He will laugh," or "he laughed."

^{17:20} twelve princes. Enumerated in 25:13–15.

^{17:22} went up. This indicates that the prophetic vision ended (*Ma'aseh Nevu'ahum* 1:10). See note on 11:5. ^{17:23} on the very day. Literally, "on that very day" (cf. Rashi). Others have, "in broad daylight" (*Prakey Rabbi Eitzur* 29; see note on 7:13). Some say that this took place on Yom Kippur (*ibid.*). According to others, it was on Passover (cf. Rashi on 19:3).

לָדַתְיִכֶם וְלִיד וּמִקְרַתְכֶם מִכֹּל בֶּן־נֶגֶד אִשָּׁר לֹא
 מִזְרֵיכֶּה הוּא: הַפְּעוּל אִלּוּ בֵיתְךָ וּמִקְרַת כִּסְפְּךָ
 וְהוּתָה בְרִיתִי בְּבִשְׂרְכֶם לְבְרִית עוֹלָם: וְעָרַל אֶנְךָ אִשָּׁר
 לֹא־יְמוּל אֶת־בִּשְׂרֵךְ עָרְלָתוֹ וּנְבַרְתָּהּ הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַזֹּאת מֵעַמִּי
 אֶת־פְּרִיתִי הַזֶּה: ׀ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שְׂרֵי
 אֲשַׁחֲךָ לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמֹךָ שְׂרֵי וְיִבְרַכְתָּהּ לְגוֹיִם
 אֲתָה וְגַם נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנָּה לָךְ בֶּן וּבְרַכְתֶּיהָ וְהָיְתָה לְגוֹיִם
 מְלֻכֵי עַמִּים מִמֶּנָּה יְהוּ: וַיַּפֵּל אַבְרָהָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּצְטַק
 וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל־פְּלֹי הֲלֹכֵן מֵאֲדָמָה וְיִלְד וְאִם־שָׂרָה הִבְתִּי
 תִשְׁמַעִים שְׂעָה תִלְד: וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הַאֱלֹהִים לוֹ
 יִשְׁמַעֲאֵל יְהוּה לְפָנֶיךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶבֶל שָׂרָה אֲשַׁחֲךָ
 יִלְדָה לָךְ בֶּן וְקִרְאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִצְחָק וְהִקְמַתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי
 אִתָּה לְבְרִית עוֹלָם לְזָרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו: וְלִישְׁמַעֲאֵל שְׂמַעְתֶּיךָ
 הָיְתָה אֲבִיבְתִי אִתּוֹ וְהִפְרִיתִי אִתּוֹ וְהִרְבִּיתִי אִתּוֹ כַּמֵּאָה
 מֵאָדָּ שְׁנַיִם־עֶשְׂרֵי נְשִׂאִים וְיִלְד וּנְתַתִּנוּ לָנוּ יָדוּל: וְאֶת־
 בְּרִיתִי אֶקִּים אֶת־יִצְחָק אִשָּׁר תִּלְד לָךְ שָׂרָה לַמּוֹעֵד הַזֶּה
 כַּשְׁנֵה הַזֶּה־תָּרַת: וַיִּבֶל לְדָבָר אִתּוֹ וַיַּעַל אֱלֹהִים מֵעַל
 אַבְרָהָם: וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־ישְׁמַעֲאֵל כְּנֹו וְאֶת כָּל־יְלִדֵי
 בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶת כָּל־מִקְרַת כִּסְפּוֹ כָּל־זָכָר כַּאֲנִשֵּׁי בֵית אַבְרָהָם
 וַיַּמַּל אֶת־בִּשְׂרֵךְ עָרְלָתָם כִּי־עָצַם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
 אֱתוֹ אֱלֹהִים: וְאַבְרָהָם כָּרַת־שְׁעִים וְהָשַׁע שְׂעָה כַּהֲפֹלִי
 כַּשָּׂר עָרְלָתוֹ: וַיִּשְׁמַעֲאֵל כְּנֹו כַּדִּישְׁלֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה כַּהֲפֹלִי
 אֶת כַּשָּׂר עָרְלָתוֹ: כַּעֲצַם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִמּוּל אַבְרָהָם