

Book 1

**FROM THE CREATION TO THE
DEATH OF ISAAC**

Flavius Josephus

Chapter 1

The Constitution of the World

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. But when the earth did not come into sight, but was covered with thick darkness, and a wind moved upon its surface, God commanded that there should be light: and when that was made, he considered the whole mass, and separated the light and the darkness; and the name he gave to one was Night, and the other he called Day: and he named the beginning of light, and the time of rest, The Evening and The Morning, and this was indeed the first day. But Moses said it was one day; the cause of which I am able to give even now; but because I have promised to give such reasons for all things in a treatise by itself, I shall put off its exposition till that time. After this, on the second day, he placed the heaven over the whole world, and separated it from the other parts, and he determined it should stand by itself. He also placed a crystalline [firmament] round it, and put it together in a manner agreeable to the earth, and fitted it for giving moisture and rain, and for affording the advantage of dews. On the third day he appointed the dry land to appear, with the sea itself round about it; and on the very same day he made the plants and the seeds to spring out of the earth. On the fourth day he adorned the heaven with the sun, the moon, and the other stars, and appointed them their motions and courses, that the vicissitudes of the seasons might be clearly signified. And on the fifth day he produced the living creatures, both those that swim, and those that fly; the former in the sea, the latter in the air: he also sorted them as to society and mixture, for procreation, and that their kinds might increase and multiply. On the sixth day he created the four-footed beasts, and made them male and female: on the same day he also formed man. Accordingly Moses says, That in just six days the world, and all that is therein, was made. And that the seventh day was a rest, and a release from the labor of such operations; whence it is that we celebrate a rest from our labors on that day,

and call it the Sabbath, which word denotes rest in the Hebrew tongue.

2. Moreover, Moses, after the seventh day was over (1) begins to talk philosophically; and concerning the formation of man, says thus: That God took dust from the ground, and formed man, and inserted in him a spirit and a soul. (2) This man was called Adam, which in the Hebrew tongue signifies one that is red, because he was formed out of red earth, compounded together; for of that kind is virgin and true earth. God also presented the living creatures, when he had made them, according to their kinds, both male and female, to Adam, who gave them those names by which they are still called. But when he saw that Adam had no female companion, no society, for there was no such created, and that he wondered at the other animals which were male and female, he laid him asleep, and took away one of his ribs, and out of it formed the woman; whereupon Adam knew her when she was brought to him, and acknowledged that she was made out of himself. Now a woman is called in the Hebrew tongue Issa; but the name of this woman was Eve, which signifies the mother of all living.

3. Moses says further, that God planted a paradise in the east, flourishing with all sorts of trees; and that among them was the tree of life, and another of knowledge, whereby was to be known what was good and evil; and that when he brought Adam and his wife into this garden, he commanded ;hem to take care of the plants. Now the garden was watered by one river, (3) which ran round about the whole earth, and was parted into four parts. And Phison, which denotes a multitude, running into India, makes its exit into the sea, and is by the Greeks called Ganges. Euphrates also, as well as Tigris, goes down into the Red Sea. (4) Now the name Euphrates, or Phrath, denotes either a dispersion, or a flower: by Tiris, or Diglath, is signified what is swift, with narrowness; and Geon runs through Egypt, and denotes what arises from the east, which the Greeks call Nile.

4. God therefore commanded that Adam and his wife should eat of all

the rest of the plants, but to abstain from the tree of knowledge; and foretold to them, that if they touched it, it would prove their destruction. But while all the living creatures had one language, (5) at that time the serpent, which then lived together with Adam and his wife, shewed an envious disposition, at his supposal of their living happily, and in obedience to the commands of God; and imagining, that when they disobeyed them, they would fall into calamities, he persuaded the woman, out of a malicious intention, to taste of the tree of knowledge, telling them, that in that tree was the knowledge of good and evil; which knowledge, when they should obtain, they would lead a happy life; nay, a life not inferior to that of a god: by which means he overcame the woman, and persuaded her to despise the command of God. Now when she had tasted of that tree, and was pleased with its fruit, she persuaded Adam to make use of it also. Upon this they perceived that they were become naked to one another; and being ashamed thus to appear abroad, they invented somewhat to cover them; for the tree sharpened their understanding; and they covered themselves with fig-leaves; and tying these before them, out of modesty, they thought they were happier than they were before, as they had discovered what they were in want of. But when God came into the garden, Adam, who was wont before to come and converse with him, being conscious of his wicked behavior, went out of the way. This behavior surprised God; and he asked what was the cause of this his procedure; and why he, that before delighted in that conversation, did now fly from it, and avoid it. When he made no reply, as conscious to himself that he had transgressed the command of God, God said, "I had before determined about you both, how you might lead a happy life, without any affliction, and care, and vexation of soul; and that all things which might contribute to your enjoyment and pleasure should grow up by my providence, of their own accord, without your own labor and pains-taking; which state of labor and pains-taking would soon bring on old age, and death would not be at any remote distance: but now thou hast abused this my goodwill, and hast disobeyed my commands; for thy silence is not the sign of thy virtue, but of thy evil conscience." However, Adam excused his sin, and

entreated God not to be angry at him, and laid the blame of what was done upon his wife; and said that he was deceived by her, and thence became an offender; while she again accused the serpent. But God allotted him punishment, because he weakly submitted to the counsel of his wife; and said the ground should not henceforth yield its fruits of its own accord, but that when it should be harassed by their labor, it should bring forth some of its fruits, and refuse to bring forth others. He also made Eve liable to the inconveniency of breeding, and the sharp pains of bringing forth children; and this because she persuaded Adam with the same arguments wherewith the serpent had persuaded her, and had thereby brought him into a calamitous condition. He also deprived the serpent of speech, out of indignation at his malicious disposition towards Adam. Besides this, he inserted poison under his tongue, and made him an enemy to men; and suggested to them, that they should direct their strokes against his head, that being the place wherein lay his mischievous designs towards men, and it being easiest to take vengeance on him, that way. And when he had deprived him of the use of his feet, he made him to go rolling all along, and dragging himself upon the ground. And when God had appointed these penalties for them, he removed Adam and Eve out of the garden into another place.

Footnotes:

1. Since Josephus, in his Preface, sect. 4, says that Moses wrote some things enigmatically, some allegorically, and the rest in plain words, since in his account of the first chapter of Genesis, and the first three verses of the second, he gives us no hints of any mystery at all; but when he here comes to ver. 4, etc. he says that Moses, after the seventh day was over, began to talk philosophically; it is not very improbable that he understood the rest of the second and the third chapters in some enigmatical, or allegorical, or philosophical sense. The change of the name of God just at this place, from Elohim to Jehovah Elohim, from God to Lord God, in the Hebrew, Samaritan, and Septuagint, does also

not a little favor some such change in the narration or construction.

2. We may observe here, that Josephus supposed man to be compounded of spirit, soul, and body, with St. Paul, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, and the rest of the ancients: he elsewhere says also, that the blood of animals was forbidden to be eaten, as having in it soul and spirit, *Antiq. B. III. ch. 11. sect. 2.*
3. Whence this strange notion came, which yet is not peculiar to Joseph,, but, as Dr. Hudson says here, is derived from older authors, as if four of the greatest rivers in the world, running two of them at vast distances from the other two, by some means or other watered paradise, is hard to say. Only since Josephus has already appeared to allegorize this history, and take notice that these four names had a particular signification; Phison for Ganges, a multitude; Phrath for Euphrates, either a dispersion or a flower; Diglath for Tigris, what is swift, with narrowness; and Geon for Nile, what arises from the east,--we perhaps mistake him when we suppose he literally means those four rivers; especially as to Geon or Nile, which arises from the east, while he very well knew the literal Nile arises from the south; though what further allegorical sense he had in view, is now, I fear, impossible to be determined.
4. By the Red Sea is not here meant the Arabian Gulf, which alone we now call by that name, but all that South Sea, which included the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf, as far as the East Indies; as Reland and Hudson here truly note, from the old geographers.
5. Hence it appears, that Josephus thought several, at least, of the brute animals, particularly the serpent, could speak before the fall. And I think few of the more perfect kinds of those animals want the organs of speech at this day. Many inducements there are also to a notion, that the present state they are in, is not their original state; and that their capacities have been once much greater than we now see them, and are capable of being restored to their former condition. But as to this most ancient, and authentic, and probably allegorical account of that grand affair of the fall of our first parents, I have somewhat more to say in way

of conjecture, but being only a conjecture, I omit it: only thus far, that the imputation of the sin of our first parents to their posterity, any further than as some way the cause or occasion of man's mortality, seems almost entirely groundless; and that both man, and the other subordinate creatures, are hereafter to be delivered from the curse then brought upon them, and at last to be delivered from that bondage of corruption, Romans 8:19-22.

Chapter 2

The Posterity of Adam

1. Adam and Eve had two sons: the elder of them was named Cain; which name, when it is interpreted, signifies a possession: the younger was Abel, which signifies sorrow. They had also daughters. Now the two brethren were pleased with different courses of life: for Abel, the younger, was a lover of righteousness; and believing that God was present at all his actions, he excelled in virtue; and his employment was that of a shepherd. But Cain was not only very wicked in other respects, but was wholly intent upon getting; and he first contrived to plough the ground. He slew his brother on the occasion following : -- They had resolved to sacrifice to God. Now Cain brought the fruits of the earth, and of his husbandry; but Abel brought milk, and the first-fruits of his flocks: but God was more delighted with the latter oblation, (1) when he was honored with what grew naturally of its own accord, than he was with what was the invention of a covetous man, and gotten by forcing the ground; whence it was that Cain was very angry that Abel was preferred by God before him; and he slew his brother, and hid his dead body, thinking to escape discovery. But God, knowing what had been done, came to Cain, and asked him what was become of his brother, because he had not seen him of many days; whereas he used to observe them conversing together at other times. But Cain was in doubt with himself, and knew not what answer to give to God. At first he said that he was himself at a loss about his brother's disappearing; but when he was provoked by God, who pressed him vehemently, as resolving to know what the matter was, he replied, he was not his brother's guardian or keeper, nor was he an observer of what he did. But, in return, God convicted Cain, as having been the murderer of his brother; and said, "I wonder at thee, that thou knowest not what is become of a man whom thou thyself hast destroyed." God therefore did not inflict the punishment [of death] upon him, on account of his offering

sacrifice, and thereby making supplication to him not to be extreme in his wrath to him; but he made him accursed, and threatened his posterity in the seventh generation. He also cast him, together with his wife, out of that land. And when he was afraid that in wandering about he should fall among Wild beasts, and by that means perish, God bid him not to entertain such a melancholy suspicion, and to go over all the earth without fear of what mischief he might suffer from wild beasts; and setting a mark upon him, that he might be known, he commanded him to depart.

2. And when Cain had traveled over many countries, he, with his wife, built a city, named Nod, which is a place so called, and there he settled his abode; where also he had children. However, he did not accept of his punishment in order to amendment, but to increase his wickedness; for he only aimed to procure everything that was for his own bodily pleasure, though it obliged him to be injurious to his neighbors. He augmented his household substance with much wealth, by rapine and violence; he excited his acquaintance to procure pleasures and spoils by robbery, and became a great leader of men into wicked courses. He also introduced a change in that way of simplicity wherein men lived before; and was the author of measures and weights. And whereas they lived innocently and generously while they knew nothing of such arts, he changed the world into cunning craftiness. He first of all set boundaries about lands: he built a city, and fortified it with walls, and he compelled his family to come together to it; and called that city Enoch, after the name of his eldest son Enoch. Now Jared was the son of Enoch; whose son was Malaliel; whose son was Mathusela; whose son was Lamech; who had seventy-seven children by two wives, Silla and Ada. Of those children by Ada, one was Jabal: he erected tents, and loved the life of a shepherd. But Jubal, who was born of the same mother with him, exercised himself in music; (2) and invented the psaltery and the harp. But Tubal, one of his children by the other wife, exceeded all men in strength, and was very expert and famous in martial performances. He procured what tended to the pleasures of the body by that method; and first of all invented the art of

making brass. Lamech was also the father of a daughter, whose name was Naamah. And because he was so skillful in matters of divine revelation, that he knew he was to be punished for Cain's murder of his brother, he made that known to his wives. Nay, even while Adam was alive, it came to pass that the posterity of Cain became exceeding wicked, every one successively dying, one after another, more wicked than the former. They were intolerable in war, and vehement in robberies; and if anyone were slow to murder people, yet was he bold in his profligate behavior, in acting unjustly, and doing injuries for gain.

3. Now Adam, who was the first man, and made out of the earth, (for our discourse must now be about him,) after Abel was slain, and Cain fled away, on account of his murder, was solicitous for posterity, and had a vehement desire of children, he being two hundred and thirty years old; after which time he lived other seven hundred, and then died. He had indeed many other children, (3) but Seth in particular. As for the rest, it would be tedious to name them; I will therefore only endeavor to give an account of those that proceeded from Seth. Now this Seth, when he was brought up, and came to those years in which he could discern what was good, became a virtuous man; and as he was himself of an excellent character, so did he leave children behind him who imitated his virtues. (4) All these proved to be of good dispositions. They also inhabited the same country without dissensions, and in a happy condition, without any misfortunes falling upon them, till they died. They also were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies, and their order. And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam's prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water, they made two pillars, (5) the one of brick, the other of stone: they inscribed their discoveries on them both, that in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone might remain, and exhibit those discoveries to mankind; and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick

erected by them. Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day.

Footnotes:

1. St. John's account of the reason why God accepted the sacrifice of Abel, and rejected that of Cain; as also why Cain slew Abel, on account of that his acceptance with God, is much better than this of Josephus: I mean, because "Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous," 1 John 3:12. Josephus's reason seems to be no better than a pharisaical notion or tradition.
2. From this Jubal, not improbably, came Jobel, the trumpet of jubel or jubilee; that large and loud musical instrument, used in proclaiming the liberty at the year of jubilee.
3. The number of Adam's children, as says the old tradition was thirty-three sons, and twenty-three daughters.
4. What is here said of Seth and his posterity, that they were very good and virtuous, and at the same time very happy, without any considerable misfortunes, for seven generations, [see ch. 2. sect. 1, before; and ch. 3. sect. 1, hereafter,] is exactly agreeable to the state of the world and the conduct of Providence in all the first ages.
5. Of Josephus's mistake here, when he took Seth the son of Adam, for Seth or Sesostris, king of Egypt, the erector of this pillar in the land of Siriad, see Essay on the Old Testament, Appendix, p. 159, 160. Although the main of this relation might be true, and Adam might foretell a conflagration and a deluge, which all antiquity witnesses to be an ancient tradition; nay, Seth's posterity might engrave their inventions in astronomy on two such pillars; yet it is no way credible that they could survive the deluge, which has buried all such pillars and edifices far under ground in the sediment of its waters, especially since the like pillars of the Egyptian Seth or Sesostris were extant after the flood, in the land of Siriad, and perhaps in the days of Josephus also, as is shown

in the place here referred to.

Chapter 3

The Flood and After

1. Now this posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, and to have an entire regard to virtue, for seven generations; but in process of time they were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers; and did neither pay those honors to God which were appointed them, nor had they any concern to do justice towards men. But for what degree of zeal they had formerly shown for virtue, they now showed by their actions a double degree of wickedness, whereby they made God to be their enemy. For many angels (1) of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for the tradition is, that these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants. But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better: but seeing they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land.

2. Now God loved this man for his righteousness: yet he not only condemned those other men for their wickedness, but determined to destroy the whole race of mankind, and to make another race that should be pure from wickedness; and cutting short their lives, and making their years not so many as they formerly lived, but one hundred and twenty only, (2) he turned the dry land into sea; and thus were all these men destroyed: but Noah alone was saved; for God suggested to him the following contrivance and way of escape : - That he should make an ark of four stories high, three hundred cubits (3) long, fifty cubits broad, and thirty cubits high. Accordingly he entered into that ark, and his wife, and sons, and their wives, and put into it

not only other provisions, to support their wants there, but also sent in with the rest all sorts of living creatures, the male and his female, for the preservation of their kinds; and others of them by sevens. Now this ark had firm walls, and a roof, and was braced with cross beams, so that it could not be any way drowned or overborne by the violence of the water. And thus was Noah, with his family, preserved. Now he was the tenth from Adam, as being the son of Lamech, whose father was Mathusela; he was the son of Enoch, the son of Jared; and Jared was the son of Malaleel, who, with many of his sisters, were the children of Cainan, the son of Enos. Now Enos was the son of Seth, the son of Adam.

3. This calamity happened in the six hundredth year of Noah's government, [age,] in the second month, (4) called by the Macedonians Dios, but by the Hebrews Marchesuan: for so did they order their year in Egypt. But Moses appointed that ú Nisan, which is the same with Xanthicus, should be the first month for their festivals, because he brought them out of Egypt in that month: so that this month began the year as to all the solemnities they observed to the honor of God, although he preserved the original order of the months as to selling and buying, and other ordinary affairs. Now he says that this flood began on the twenty-seventh [seventeenth] day of the fore mentioned month; and this was two thousand six hundred and fifty-six [one thousand six hundred and fifty-six] years from Adam, the first man; and the time is written down in our sacred books, those who then lived having noted down, (5) with great accuracy, both the births and deaths of illustrious men.

4. For indeed Seth was born when Adam was in his two hundred and thirtieth year, who lived :nine hundred and thirty years. Seth begat Enos in his two hundred and fifth year; who, when he had lived nine hundred and twelve years, delivered the government to Cainan his son, whom he had in his hundred and ninetieth year. He lived nine hundred and five years. Cainan, when he had lived nine hundred and ten years, had his son Malaleel, who was born in his hundred and seventieth year. This Malaleel, having lived

eight hundred and ninety-five years, died, leaving his son Jared, whom he begat when he was in his hundred and sixty-fifth year. He lived nine hundred and sixty-two years; and then his son Enoch succeeded him, who was born when his father was one hundred and sixty-two years old. Now he, when he had lived three hundred and sixty-five years, departed and went to God; whence it is that they have not written down his death. Now Mathusela, the son of Enoch, who was born to him when he was one hundred and sixty-five years old, had Lamech for his son when he was one hundred and eighty-seven years of age; to whom he delivered the government, when he had retained it nine hundred and sixty-nine years. Now Lamech, when he had governed seven hundred and seventy-seven years, appointed Noah, his son, to be ruler of the people, who was born to Lamech when he was one hundred and eighty-two years old, and retained the government nine hundred and fifty years. These years collected together make up the sum before set down. But let no one inquire into the deaths of these men; for they extended their lives along together with their children and grandchildren; but let him have regard to their births only.

5. When God gave the signal, and it began to rain, the water poured down forty entire days, till it became fifteen cubits higher than the earth; which was the reason why there was no greater number preserved, since they had no place to fly to. When the rain ceased, the water did but just begin to abate after one hundred and fifty days, (that is, on the seventeenth day of the seventh month,) it then ceasing to subside for a little while. After this, the ark rested on the top of a certain mountain in Armenia; which, when Noah understood, he opened it; and seeing a small piece of land about it, he continued quiet, and conceived some cheerful hopes of deliverance. But a few days afterward, when the water was decreased to a greater degree, he sent out a raven, as desirous to learn whether any other part of the earth were left dry by the water, and whether he might go out of the ark with safety; but the raven, finding all the land still overflowed, returned to Noah again. And after seven days he sent out a dove, to know the state of the ground; which

came back to him covered with mud, and bringing an olive branch: hereby Noah learned that the earth was become clear of the flood. So after he had staid seven more days, he sent the living creatures out of the ark; and both he and his family went out, when he also sacrificed to God, and feasted with his companions. However, the Armenians call this place, (GREEK) (6) The Place of Descent; for the ark being saved in that place, its remains are shown there by the inhabitants to this day.

6. Now all the writers of barbarian histories make mention of this flood, and of this ark; among whom is Berosus the Chaldean. For when he is describing the circumstances of the flood, he goes on thus: "It is said there is still some part of this ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyaeans; and that some people carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they take away, and use chiefly as amulets for the averting of mischiefs." Hieronymus the Egyptian also, who wrote the Phoenician Antiquities, and Mnaseas, and a great many more, make mention of the same. Nay, Nicolaus of Damascus, in his ninety-sixth book, hath a particular relation about them; where he speaks thus: "There is a great mountain in Armenia, over Minyas, called Baris, upon which it is reported that many who fled at the time of the Deluge were saved; and that one who was carried in an ark came on shore upon the top of it; and that the remains of the timber were a great while preserved. This might be the man about whom Moses the legislator of the Jews wrote."

7. But as for Noah, he was afraid, since God had determined to destroy mankind, lest he should drown the earth every year; so he offered burnt-offerings, and besought God that nature might hereafter go on in its former orderly course, and that he would not bring on so great a judgment any more, by which the whole race of creatures might be in danger of destruction: but that, having now punished the wicked, he would of his goodness spare the remainder, and such as he had hitherto judged fit to be delivered from so severe a calamity; for that otherwise these last must be more miserable than the first, and that they must be condemned to a worse condition than the

others, unless they be suffered to escape entirely; that is, if they be reserved for another deluge; while they must be afflicted with the terror and sight of the first deluge, and must also be destroyed by a second. He also entreated God to accept of his sacrifice, and to grant that the earth might never again undergo the like effects of 'his wrath; that men might be permitted to go on cheerfully in cultivating the same; to build cities, and live happily in them; and that they might not be deprived of any of those good things which they enjoyed before the Flood; but might attain to the like length of days, and old age, which the ancient people had arrived at before.

8. When Noah had made these supplications, God, who loved the man for his righteousness, granted entire success to his prayers, and said, that it was not he who brought the destruction on a polluted world, but that they underwent that vengeance on account of their own wickedness; and that he had not brought men into the world if he had himself determined to destroy them, it being an instance of greater wisdom not to have granted them life at all, than, after it was granted, to procure their destruction; "But the injuries," said he, "they offered to my holiness and virtue, forced me to bring this punishment upon them. But I will leave off for the time to come to require such punishments, the effects of so great wrath, for their future wicked actions, and especially on account of thy prayers. But if I shall at any time send tempests of rain, in an extraordinary manner, be not affrighted at the largeness of the showers; for the water shall no more overspread the earth. However, I require you to abstain from shedding the blood of men, and to keep yourselves pure from murder; and to punish those that commit any such thing. I permit you to make use of all the other living creatures at your pleasure, and as your appetites lead you; for I have made you lords of them all, both of those that walk on the land, and those that swim in the waters, and of those that fly in the regions of the air on high, excepting their blood, for therein is the life. But I will give you a sign that I have left off my anger by my bow [whereby is meant the rainbow, for they determined that the rainbow was the bow of God]. And when God had said and promised thus,

he went away.

9. Now when Noah had lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood, and that all that time happily, he died, having lived the number of nine hundred and fifty years. But let no one, upon comparing the lives of the ancients with our lives, and with the few years which we now live, think that what we have said of them is false; or make the shortness of our lives at present an argument, that neither did they attain to so long a duration of life, for those ancients were beloved of God, and [lately] made by God himself; and because their food was then fitter for the prolongation of life, might well live so great a number of years: and besides, God afforded them a longer time of life on account of their virtue, and the good use they made of it in astronomical and geometrical discoveries, which would not have afforded the time of foretelling [the periods of the stars] unless they had lived six hundred years; for the great year is completed in that interval. Now I have for witnesses to what I have said, all those that have written Antiquities, both among the Greeks and barbarians; for even Manetho, who wrote the Egyptian History, and Berosus, who collected the Chaldean Monuments, and Mochus, and Hestieus, and, besides these, Hieronymus the Egyptian, and those who composed the Phoenician History, agree to what I here say: Hesiod also, and Hecatseus, Hellanicus, and Acusilaus; and, besides these, Ephorus and Nicolaus relate that the ancients lived a thousand years. But as to these matters, let every one look upon them as he thinks fit.

Footnotes:

1. This notion, that the fallen angels were, in some sense, the fathers of the old giants, was the constant opinion of antiquity.
2. Josephus here supposes that the life of these giants, for of them only do I understand him, was now reduced to 120 years; which is confirmed by the fragment of Enoch, sect. 10, in Authent. Rec. Part I. p. 268. For as to the rest of mankind, Josephus himself confesses their lives were much

longer than 120 years, for many generations after the flood, as we shall see presently; and he says they were gradually shortened till the days of Moses, and then fixed [for some time] at 120, ch. 6. sect. 5. Nor indeed need we suppose that either Enoch or Josephus meant to interpret these 120 years for the life of men before the flood, to be different from the 120 years of God's patience [perhaps while the ark was preparing] till the deluge; which I take to be the meaning of God when he threatened this wicked world, that if they so long continued impenitent, their days should be no more than 120 years.

3. A cubit is about 21 English inches.
4. Josephus here truly determines, that the year at the Flood began about the autumnal equinox. As to what day of the month the Flood began, our Hebrew and Samaritan, and perhaps Josephus's own copy, more rightly placed it on the 17th day, instead of the 27th, as here; for Josephus agrees with them, as to the distance of 150 days to the 17th day of the 7th month, as Genesis 7. ult. with 8:3.
5. Josephus here takes notice, that these ancient genealogies were first set down by those that then lived, and from them were transmitted down to posterity; which I suppose to be the true account of that matter. For there is no reason to imagine that men were not taught to read and write soon after they were taught to speak; and perhaps all by the Messiah himself, who, under the Father, was the Creator or Governor of mankind, and who frequently in those early days appeared to them.
6. This (GREEK), or Place of Descent, is the proper rendering of the Armenian name of this very city. It is called in Ptolemy Naxuana, and by Moses Chorenensis, the Armenian historian, Idsheuan; but at the place itself Nachidsheuan, which signifies The first place of descent, and is a lasting monument of the preservation of Noah in the ark, upon the top of that mountain, at whose foot it was built, as the first city or town after the flood. See Antiq. B. XX. ch. 2. sect. 3; and Moses Chorenensis, who also says elsewhere, that another town was related by tradition to have been called Seron, or, The Place of Dispersion, on account of the

dispersion of Xisuthrus's or Noah's sons, from thence first made. Whether any remains of this ark be still preserved, as the people of the country suppose, I cannot certainly tell. Mons. Tournefort had, not very long since, a mind to see the place himself, but met with too great dangers and difficulties to venture through them.

Chapter 4

The Tower of Babylon

1. Now the sons of Noah were three, - Shem, Japhet, and Ham, born one hundred years before the Deluge. These first of all descended from the mountains into the plains, and fixed their habitation there; and persuaded others who were greatly afraid of the lower grounds on account of the flood, and so were very loath to come down from the higher places, to venture to follow their examples. Now the plain in which they first dwelt was called Shinar. God also commanded them to send colonies abroad, for the thorough peopling of the earth, that they might not raise seditions among themselves, but might cultivate a great part of the earth, and enjoy its fruits after a plentiful manner. But they were so ill instructed that they did not obey God; for which reason they fell into calamities, and were made sensible, by experience, of what sin they had been guilty: for when they flourished with a numerous youth, God admonished them again to send out colonies; but they, imagining the prosperity they enjoyed was not derived from the favor of God, but supposing that their own power was the proper cause of the plentiful condition they were in, did not obey him. Nay, they added to this their disobedience to the Divine will, the suspicion that they were therefore ordered to send out separate colonies, that, being divided asunder, they might the more easily be Oppressed.

2. Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it was through his means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness. He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. He also

said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! and that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers!

3. Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower, neither sparing any pains, nor being in any degree negligent about the work: and, by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it, it grew very high, sooner than anyone could expect; but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that thereby its great height seemed, upon the view, to be less than it really was. It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar, made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water. When God saw that they acted so madly, he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not grown wiser by the destruction of the former sinners; but he caused a tumult among them, by producing in them divers languages, and causing that, through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another. The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon, because of the confusion of that language which they readily understood before; for the Hebrews mean by the word Babel, confusion. The Sibyl also makes mention of this tower, and of the confusion of the language, when she says thus: "When all men were of one language, some of them built a high tower, as if they would thereby ascend up to heaven, but the gods sent storms of wind and overthrew the tower, and gave every one his peculiar language; and for this reason it was that the city was called Babylon." But as to the plan of Shinar, in the country of Babylonia, Hestiaeus mentions it, when he says thus: "Such of the priests as were saved, took the sacred vessels of Jupiter Enyalius, and came to Shinar of Babylonia."

Chapter 5

The Posterity of Noah

1. After this they were dispersed abroad, on account of their languages, and went out by colonies everywhere; and each colony took possession of that land which they light upon, and unto which God led them; so that the whole continent was filled with them, both the inland and the maritime countries. There were some also who passed over the sea in ships, and inhabited the islands: and some of those nations do still retain the denominations which were given them by their first founders; but some have lost them also, and some have only admitted certain changes in them, that they might be the more intelligible to the inhabitants. And they were the Greeks who became the authors of such mutations. For when in after-ages they grew potent, they claimed to themselves the glory of antiquity; giving names to the nations that sounded well (in Greek) that they might be better understood among themselves; and setting agreeable forms of government over them, as if they were a people derived from themselves.

Chapter 6

Every Nation Was Denominated

1. Now they were the grandchildren of Noah, in honor of whom names were imposed on the nations by those that first seized upon them. Japhet, the son of Noah, had seven sons: they inhabited so, that, beginning at the mountains Taurus and Amanus, they proceeded along Asia, as far as the river Tansis, and along Europe to Cadiz; and settling themselves on the lands which they light upon, which none had inhabited before, they called the nations by their own names. For Gomer founded those whom the Greeks now call Galatians, [Galls,] but were then called Gomerites. Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians. Now as to Javan and Madai, the sons of Japhet; from Madai came the Madeans, who are called Medes, by the Greeks; but from Javan, Ionia, and all the Grecians, are derived. Thobel founded the Thobelites, who are now called Iberes; and the Mosocheni were founded by Mosoch; now they are Cappadocians. There is also a mark of their ancient denomination still to be shown; for there is even now among them a city called Mazaca, which may inform those that are able to understand, that so was the entire nation once called. Thiras also called those whom he ruled over Thirasians; but the Greeks changed the name into Thracians. And so many were the countries that had the children of Japhet for their inhabitants. Of the three sons of Gomer, Aschanax founded the Aschanaxians, who are now called by the Greeks Rheginians. So did Riphath found the Ripheans, now called Paphlagonians; and Thrugramma the Thrugrammeans, who, as the Greeks resolved, were named Phrygians. Of the three sons of Javan also, the son of Japhet, Elisa gave name to the Eliseans, who were his subjects; they are now the Aeolians. Tharsus to the Tharsians, for so was Cilicia of old called; the sign of which is this, that the noblest city they have, and a metropolis also, is Tarsus, the tau being by change put for the theta.

Cethimus possessed the island Cethima: it is now called Cyprus; and from that it is that all islands, and the greatest part of the sea-coasts, are named Cethim by the Hebrews: and one city there is in Cyprus that has been able to preserve its denomination; it has been called Citius by those who use the language of the Greeks, and has not, by the use of that dialect, escaped the name of Cethim. And so many nations have the children and grandchildren of Japhet possessed. Now when I have premised somewhat, which perhaps the Greeks do not know, I will return and explain what I have omitted; for such names are pronounced here after the manner of the Greeks, to please my readers; for our own country language does not so pronounce them: but the names in all cases are of one and the same ending; for the name we here pronounce Noeas, is there Noah, and in every case retains the same termination.

2. The children of Ham possessed the land from Syria and Amanus, and the mountains of Libanus; seizing upon all that was on its sea-coasts, and as far as the ocean, and keeping it as their own. Some indeed of its names are utterly vanished away; others of them being changed, and another sound given them, are hardly to be discovered; yet a few there are which have kept their denominations entire. For of the four sons of Ham, time has not at all hurt the name of Chus; for the Ethiopians, over whom he reigned, are even at this day, both by themselves and by all men in Asia, called Chusites. The memory also of the Mesraites is preserved in their name; for all we who inhabit this country [of Judea] called Egypt Mestre, and the Egyptians Mestrians. Phut also was the founder of Libya, and called the inhabitants Phutites, from himself: there is also a river in the country of Moors which bears that name; whence it is that we may see the greatest part of the Grecian historiographers mention that river and the adjoining country by the appellation of Phut: but the name it has now has been by change given it from one of the sons of Mesraim, who was called Lybyos. We will inform you presently what has been the occasion why it has been called Africa also. Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, inhabited the country now called Judea, and

called it from his own name Canaan. The children of these [four] were these: Sabas, who founded the Sabeans; Evilas, who founded the Evileans, who are called Getuli; Sabathes founded the Sabathens, they are now called by the Greeks Astaborans; Sabactas settled the Sabactens; and Ragmus the Ragmeans; and he had two sons, the one of whom, Judadas, settled the Judadeans, a nation of the western Ethiopians, and left them his name; as did Sabas to the Sabeans: but Nimrod, the son of Chus, staid and tyrannized at Babylon, as we have already informed you. Now all the children of Mesraim, being eight in number, possessed the country from Gaza to Egypt, though it retained the name of one only, the Philistim; for the Greeks call part of that country Palestine. As for the rest, Ludieim, and Enemim, and Labim, who alone inhabited in Libya, and called the country from himself, Nedim, and Phethrosim, and Chesloim, and Cephthorim, we know nothing of them besides their names; for the Ethiopic war (1) which we shall describe hereafter, was the cause that those cities were overthrown. The sons of Canaan were these: Sidonius, who also built a city of the same name; it is called by the Greeks Sidon Amathus inhabited in Amathine, which is even now called Amathe by the inhabitants, although the Macedonians named it Epiphania, from one of his posterity: Arudeus possessed the island Aradus: Arucas possessed Arce, which is in Libanus. But for the seven others, [Eueus,] Chetteus, Jebuseus, Amorreus, Gergesus, Eudeus, Sineus, Samareus, we have nothing in the sacred books but their names, for the Hebrews overthrew their cities; and their calamities came upon them on the occasion following.

3. Noah, when, after the deluge, the earth was resettled in its former condition, set about its cultivation; and when he had planted it with vines, and when the fruit was ripe, and he had gathered the grapes in their season, and the wine was ready for use, he offered sacrifice, and feasted, and, being drunk, he fell asleep, and lay naked in an unseemly manner. When his youngest son saw this, he came laughing, and showed him to his brethren; but they covered their father's nakedness. And when Noah was made sensible

of what had been done, he prayed for prosperity to his other sons; but for Ham, he did not curse him, by reason of his nearness in blood, but cursed his prosperity: and when the rest of them escaped that curse, God inflicted it on the children of Canaan. But as to these matters, we shall speak more hereafter.

4. Shem, the third son of Noah, had five sons, who inhabited the land that began at Euphrates, and reached to the Indian Ocean. For Elam left behind him the Elamites, the ancestors of the Persians. Ashur lived at the city Nineve; and named his subjects Assyrians, who became the most fortunate nation, beyond others. Arphaxad named the Arphaxadites, who are now called Chaldeans. Aram had the Aramites, which the Greeks called Syrians; as Laod founded the Laodites, which are now called Lydians. Of the four sons of Aram, Uz founded Trachonitis and Damascus: this country lies between Palestine and Celesyria. Ul founded Armenia; and Gether the Bactrians; and Mesa the Mesaneans; it is now called Charax Spasini. Sala was the son of Arphaxad; and his son was Heber, from whom they originally called the Jews Hebrews. (2) Heber begat Joetan and Phaleg: he was called Phaleg, because he was born at the dispersion of the nations to their several countries; for Phaleg among the Hebrews signifies division. Now Joetan, one of the sons of Heber, had these sons, Elmodad, Saleph, Asermoth, Jera, Adoram, Aizel, Decla, Ebal, Abimael, Sabeus, Ophir, Euilat, and Jobab. These inhabited from Cophen, an Indian river, and in part of Asia adjoining to it. And this shall suffice concerning the sons of Shem.

5. I will now treat of the Hebrews. The son of Phaleg, whose father Was Heber, was Ragau; whose son was Serug, to whom was born Nahor; his son was Terah, who was the father of Abraham, who accordingly was the tenth from Noah, and was born in the two hundred and ninety-second year after the deluge; for Terah begat Abram in his seventieth year. Nahor begat Haran when he was one hundred and twenty years old; Nahor was born to Serug in his hundred and thirty-second year; Ragau had Serug at one hundred and

thirty; at the same age also Phaleg had Ragau; Heber begat Phaleg in his hundred and thirty-fourth year; he himself being begotten by Sala when he was a hundred and thirty years old, whom Arphaxad had for his son at the hundred and thirty-fifth year of his age. Arphaxad was the son of Shem, and born twelve years after the deluge. Now Abram had two brethren, Nahor and Haran: of these Haran left a son, Lot; as also Sarai and Milcha his daughters; and died among the Chaldeans, in a city of the Chaldeans, called Ur; and his monument is shown to this day. These married their nieces. Nabor married Milcha, and Abram married Sarai. Now Terah hating Chaldea, on account of his mourning for Ilaran, they all removed to Haran of Mesopotamia, where Terah died, and was buried, when he had lived to be two hundred and five years old; for the life of man was already, by degrees, diminished, and became shorter than before, till the birth of Moses; after whom the term of human life was one hundred and twenty years, God determining it to the length that Moses happened to live. Now Nahor had eight sons by Milcha; Uz and Buz, Kemuel, Chesed, Azau, Pheldas, Jadelph, and Bethuel. These were all the genuine sons of Nahor; for Teba, and Gaam, and Tachas, and Maaca, were born of Reuma his concubine: but Bethuel had a daughter, Rebecca, and a son, Laban.

Footnotes:

1. One observation ought not here to be neglected, with regard to that Ethiopic war which Moses, as general of the Egyptians, put an end to, Antiq. B. II. ch. 10., and about which our late writers seem very much unconcerned; viz. that it was a war of that consequence, as to occasion the removal or destruction of six or seven nations of the posterity of Mizraim, with their cities; which Josephus would not have said, if he had not had ancient records to justify those his assertions, though those records be now all lost.
2. That the Jews were called Hebrews from this their progenitor Heber, our author Josephus here rightly affirms; and not from Abram the Hebrew,

or passenger over Euphrates, as many of the moderns suppose. Shem is also called the father of all the children of Heber, or of all the Hebrews, in a history long before Abram passed over Euphrates, Genesis 10:21, though it must be confessed that, Genesis 14:13, where the original says they told Abram the Hebrew, the Septuagint renders it the passenger, (GREEK): but this is spoken only of Abram himself, who had then lately passed over Euphrates, and is another signification of the Hebrew word, taken as an appellative, and not as a proper name.

Chapter 7

Abram Our Forefather Went Out of the Land of the Chaldeans

1. Now Abram, having no son of his own, adopted Lot, his brother Haran's son, and his wife Sarai's brother; and he left the land of Chaldea when he was seventy-five years old, and at the command of God went into Canaan, and therein he dwelt himself, and left it to his posterity. He was a person of great sagacity, both for understanding all things and persuading his hearers, and not mistaken in his opinions; for which reason he began to have higher notions of virtue than others had, and he determined to renew and to change the opinion all men happened then to have concerning God; for he was the first that ventured to publish this notion, That there was but one God, the Creator of the universe; and that, as to other [gods], if they contributed any thing to the happiness of men, that each of them afforded it only according to his appointment, and not by their own power. This his opinion was derived from the irregular phenomena that were visible both at land and sea, as well as those that happen to the sun, and moon, and all the heavenly bodies, thus: - "If [said he] these bodies had power of their own, they would certainly take care of their own regular motions; but since they do not preserve such regularity, they make it plain, that in so far as they co-operate to our advantage, they do it not of their own abilities, but as they are subservient to Him that commands them, to whom alone we ought justly to offer our honor and thanksgiving." For which doctrines, when the Chaldeans, and other people of Mesopotamia, raised a tumult against him, he thought fit to leave that country; and at the command and by the assistance of God, he came and lived in the land of Canaan. And when he was there settled, he built an altar, and performed a sacrifice to God.

2. Berosus mentions our father Abram without naming him, when he

says thus: "In the tenth generation after the Flood, there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great, and skillful in the celestial science." But Hecatseus does more than barely mention him; for he composed, and left behind him, a book concerning him. And Nicolaus of Damascus, in the fourth book of his History, says thus: "Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldeans: but, after a long time, he got him up, and removed from that country also, with his people, and went into the land then called the land of Canaan, but now the land of Judea, and this when his posterity were become a multitude; as to which posterity of his, we relate their history in another work. Now the name of Abram is even still famous in the country of Damascus; and there is shown a village named from him, The Habitation of Abram."

Chapter 8

Abram Went Into Egypt

1. Now, after this, when a famine had invaded the land of Canaan, and Abram had discovered that the Egyptians were in a flourishing condition, he was disposed to go down to them, both to partake of the plenty they enjoyed, and to become an auditor of their priests, and to know what they said concerning the gods; designing either to follow them, if they had better notions than he, or to convert them into a better way, if his own notions proved the truest. Now, seeing he was to take Sarai with him, and was afraid of the madness of the Egyptians with regard to women, lest the king should kill him on occasion of his wife's great beauty, he contrived this device : - he pretended to be her brother, and directed her in a dissembling way to pretend the same, for he said it would be for their benefit. Now, as soon as he came into Egypt, it happened to Abram as he supposed it would; for the fame of his wife's beauty was greatly talked of; for which reason Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, would not be satisfied with what was reported of her, but would needs see her himself, and was preparing to enjoy her; but God put a stop to his unjust inclinations, by sending upon him a distemper, and a sedition against his government. And when he inquired of the priests how he might be freed from these calamities, they told him that this his miserable condition was derived from the wrath of God, upon account of his inclinations to abuse the stranger's wife. He then, out of fear, asked Sarai who she was, and who it was that she brought along with her. And when he had found out the truth, he excused himself to Abram, that supposing the woman to be his sister, and not his wife, he set his affections on her, as desiring an affinity with him by marrying her, but not as incited by lust to abuse her. He also made him a large present in money, and gave him leave to enter into conversation with the most learned among the Egyptians; from which conversation his virtue and his reputation became more conspicuous than they had been before.

2. For whereas the Egyptians were formerly addicted to different customs, and despised one another's sacred and accustomed rites, and were very angry one with another on that account, Abram conferred with each of them, and, confuting the reasonings they made use of, every one for their own practices, demonstrated that such reasonings were vain and void of truth: whereupon he was admired by them in those conferences as a very wise man, and one of great sagacity, when he discoursed on any subject he undertook; and this not only in understanding it, but in persuading other men also to assent to him. He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy; for before Abram came into Egypt they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also.

3. As soon as Abram was come back into Canaan, he parted the land between him and Lot, upon account of the tumultuous behavior of their shepherds, concerning the pastures wherein they should feed their flocks. However, he gave Lot his option, or leave, to choose which lands he would take; and he took himself what the other left, which were the lower grounds at the foot of the mountains; and he himself dwelt in Hebron, which is a city seven years more ancient than Tunis of Egypt. But Lot possessed the land of the plain, and the river Jordan, not far from the city of Sodom, which was then a fine city, but is now destroyed, by the will and wrath of God, the cause of which I shall show in its proper place hereafter.

Chapter 9

The Destruction of the Sodomites

At this time, when the Assyrians had the dominion over Asia, the people of Sodom were in a flourishing condition, both as to riches and the number of their youth. There were five kings that managed the affairs of this county: Ballas, Barsas, Senabar, and Sumobor, with the king of Bela; and each king led on his own troops: and the Assyrians made war upon them; and, dividing their army into four parts, fought against them. Now every part of the army had its own commander; and when the battle was joined, the Assyrians were conquerors, and imposed a tribute on the kings of the Sodomites, who submitted to this slavery twelve years; and so long they continued to pay their tribute: but on the thirteenth year they rebelled, and then the army of the Assyrians came upon them, under their commanders Amraphel, Arioch, Chodorlaomer, and Tidal. These kings had laid waste all Syria, and overthrown the offspring of the giants. And when they were come over against Sodom, they pitched their camp at the vale called the Slime Pits, for at that time there were pits in that place; but now, upon the destruction of the city of Sodom, that vale became the Lake Asphaltites, as it is called. However, concerning this lake we shall speak more presently. Now when the Sodomites joined battle with the Assyrians, and the fight was very obstinate, many of them were killed, and the rest were carried captive; among which captives was Lot, who had come to assist the Sodomites.

Chapter 10

Abram Fought With the Assyrians and Overcame Them

1. When, Abram heard of their calamity, he was at once afraid for Lot his kinsman, and pitied the Sodomites, his friends and neighbors; and thinking it proper to afford them assistance, he did not delay it, but marched hastily, and the fifth night fell upon the Assyrians, near Dan, for that is the name of the other spring of Jordan; and before they could arm themselves, he slew some as they were in their beds, before they could suspect any harm; and others, who were not yet gone to sleep, but were so drunk they could not fight, ran away. Abram pursued after them, till, on the second day, he drove them in a body unto Hoba, a place belonging to Damascus; and thereby demonstrated that victory does not depend on multitude and the number of hands, but the alacrity and courage of soldiers overcome the most numerous bodies of men, while he got the victory over so great an army with no more than three hundred and eighteen of his servants, and three of his friends: but all those that fled returned home ingloriously.

2. So Abram, when he had saved the captive Sodomites, who had been taken by the Assyrians, and Lot also, his kinsman, returned home in peace. Now the king of Sodom met him at a certain place, which they called The King's Dale, where Melchisedec, king of the city Salem, received him. That name signifies, the righteous king: and such he was, without dispute, insomuch that, on this account, he was made the priest of God: however, they afterward called Salem Jerusalem. Now this Melchisedec supplied Abram's army in an hospitable manner, and gave them provisions in abundance; and as they were feasting, he began to praise him, and to bless God for subduing his enemies under him. And when Abram gave him the tenth part of his prey, he accepted of the gift: but the king of Sodom desired

Abram to take the prey, but entreated that he might have those men restored to him whom Abram had saved from the Assyrians, because they belonged to him. But Abram would not do so; nor would make any other advantage of that prey than what his servants had eaten; but still insisted that he should afford a part to his friends that had assisted him in the battle. The first of them was called Eschol, and then Enner, and Mambre.

3. And God commended his virtue, and said, Thou shalt not however lose the rewards thou hast deserved to receive by such thy glorious actions. He answered, And what advantage will it be to me to have such rewards, when I have none to enjoy them after me? - for he was hitherto childless. And God promised that he should have a son, and that his posterity should be very numerous; insomuch that their number should be like the stars. When he heard that, he offered a sacrifice to God, as he commanded him. The manner of the sacrifice was this : - He took an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram in like manner of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a pigeon (1) and as he was enjoined, he divided the three former, but the birds he did not divide. After which, before he built his altar, where the birds of prey flew about, as desirous of blood, a Divine voice came to him, declaring that their neighbors would be grievous to his posterity, when they should be in Egypt, for four hundred years; (2) during which time they should be afflicted, but afterwards should overcome their enemies, should conquer the Canaanites in war, and possess themselves of their land, and of their cities.

4. Now Abram dwelt near the oak called Ogyges,--the place belongs to Canaan, not far from the city of Hebron. But being uneasy at his wife's barrenness, he entreated God to grant that he might have male issue; and God required of him to be of good courage, and said that he would add to all the rest of the benefits that he had bestowed upon him, ever since he led him out of Mesopotamia, the gift of children. Accordingly Sarai, at God's command, brought to his bed one of her handmaidens, a woman of Egyptian descent, in

order to obtain children by her; and when this handmaid was with child, she triumphed, and ventured to affront Sarai, as if the dominion were to come to a son to be born of her. But when Abram resigned her into the hand of Sarai, to punish her, she contrived to fly away, as not able to bear the instances of Sarai's severity to her; and she entreated God to have compassion on her. Now a Divine Angel met her, as she was going forward in the wilderness, and bid her return to her master and mistress, for if she would submit to that wise advice, she would live better hereafter; for that the reason of her being in such a miserable case was this, that she had been ungrateful and arrogant towards her mistress. He also told her, that if she disobeyed God, and went on still in her way, she should perish; but if she would return back, she should become the mother of a son who should reign over that country. These admonitions she obeyed, and returned to her master and mistress, and obtained forgiveness. A little while afterwards, she bare Ismael; which may be interpreted Heard of God, because God had heard his mother's prayer.

5. The forementioned son was born to Abram when he was eighty-six years old: but when he was ninety-nine, God appeared to him, and promised him that he Should have a son by Sarai, and commanded that his name should be Isaac; and showed him, that from this son should spring great nations and kings, and that they should obtain all the land of Canaan by war, from Sidon to Egypt. But he charged him, in order to keep his posterity unmixed with others, that they should be circumcised in the flesh of their foreskin, and that this should be done on the eighth day after they were born: the reason of which circumcision I will explain in another place. And Abram inquiring also concerning Ismael, whether he should live or not, God signified to him that he should live to be very old, and should be the father of great nations. Abram therefore gave thanks to God for these blessings; and then he, and all his family, and his son Ismael, were circumcised immediately; the son being that day thirteen years of age, and he ninety-nine.

Footnotes:

1. It is worth noting here, that God required no other sacrifices under the law of Moses, than what were taken from these five kinds of animals which he here required of Abram. Nor did the Jews feed upon any other domestic animals than the three here named, as Reland observes on Antiq. B. IV. ch. 4. sect. 4.
2. As to this affliction of Abram's posterity for 400 years, see Antiq. B. II. ch. 9. sect. 1.

Chapter 11

God Overthrew the Nation of the Sodomites

1. About this time the Sodomites grew proud, on account of their riches and great wealth; they became unjust towards men, and impious towards God, insomuch that they did not call to mind the advantages they received from him: they hated strangers, and abused themselves with Sodomitical practices. God was therefore much displeased at them, and determined to punish them for their pride, and to overthrow their city, and to lay waste their country, until there should neither plant nor fruit grow out of it.

2. When God had thus resolved concerning the Sodomites, Abraham, as he sat by the oak of Mambre, at the door of his tent, saw three angels; and thinking them to be strangers, he rose up, and saluted them, and desired they would accept of an entertainment, and abide with him; to which, when they agreed, he ordered cakes of meal to be made presently; and when he had slain a calf, he roasted it, and brought it to them, as they sat under the oak. Now they made a show of eating; and besides, they asked him about his wife Sarah, where she was; and when he said she was within, they said they would come again hereafter, and find her become a mother. Upon which the woman laughed, and said that it was impossible she should bear children, since she was ninety years of age, and her husband was a hundred. Then they concealed themselves no longer, but declared that they were angels of God; and that one of them was sent to inform them about the child, and two of the overthrow of Sodom.

3. When Abraham heard this, he was grieved for the Sodomites; and he rose up, and besought God for them, and entreated him that he would not destroy the righteous with the wicked. And when God had replied that there was no good man among the Sodomites; for if there were but ten such man

among them, he would not punish any of them for their sins, Abraham held his peace. And the angels came to the city of the Sodomites, and Lot entreated them to accept of a lodging with him; for he was a very generous and hospitable man, and one that had learned to imitate the goodness of Abraham. Now when the Sodomites saw the young men to be of beautiful countenances, and this to an extraordinary degree, and that they took up their lodgings with Lot, they resolved themselves to enjoy these beautiful boys by force and violence; and when Lot exhorted them to sobriety, and not to offer any thing immodest to the strangers, but to have regard to their lodging in his house; and promised that if their inclinations could not be governed, he would expose his daughters to their lust, instead of these strangers; neither thus were they made ashamed.

4. But God was much displeased at their impudent behavior, so that he both smote those men with blindness, and condemned the Sodomites to universal destruction. But Lot, upon God's informing him of the future destruction of the Sodomites, went away, taking with him his wife and daughters, who were two, and still virgins; for those that were betrothed (1) to them were above the thoughts of going, and deemed that Lot's words were trifling. God then cast a thunderbolt upon the city, and set it on fire, with its inhabitants; and laid waste the country with the like burning, as I formerly said when I wrote the Jewish War. (2) But Lot's wife continually turning back to view the city as she went from it, and being too nicely inquisitive what would become of it, although God had forbidden her so to do, was changed into a pillar of salt; (3) for I have seen it, and it remains at this day. Now he and his daughters fled to a certain small place, encompassed with the fire, and settled in it: it is to this day called Zoar, for that is the word which the Hebrews use for a small thing. There it was that he lived a miserable life, on account of his having no company, and his want of provisions.

5. But his daughters, thinking that all mankind were destroyed, approached to their father, (4) though taking care not to be perceived. This

they did, that human kind might not utterly fail: and they bare sons; the son of the elder was named Moab, Which denotes one derived from his father; the younger bare Ammon, which name denotes one derived from a kinsman. The former of whom was the father of the Moabites, which is even still a great nation; the latter was the father of the Ammonites; and both of them are inhabitants of Celesyria. And such was the departure of Lot from among the Sodomites.

Footnotes:

1. These sons-in-law to Lot, as they are called, Genesis 19:12-14, might be so styled, because they were betrothed to Lot's daughters, though not yet married to them. See the note on Antiq. B. XIV. ch. 13. sect. 1.
2. Of the War, B. IV. ch. 8. sect. 4.
3. This pillar of salt was, we see here, standing in the days of Josephus, and he had seen it. That it was standing then is also attested by Clement of Rome, contemporary with Josephus; as also that it was so in the next century, is attested by Irenaeus, with the addition of an hypothesis, how it came to last so long, with all its members entire. - Whether the account that some modern travelers give be true, that it is still standing, I do not know. Its remote situation, at the most southern point of the Sea of Sodom, in the wild and dangerous deserts of Arabia, makes it exceeding difficult for inquisitive travelers to examine the place; and for common reports of country people, at a distance, they are not very satisfactory. In the mean time, I have no opinion of Le Clerc's dissertation or hypothesis about this question, which can only be determined by eye-witnesses. When Christian princes, so called, lay aside their foolish and unchristian wars and quarrels, and send a body of fit persons to travel over the east, and bring us faithful accounts of all ancient monuments, and procure us copies of all ancient records, at present lost among us, we may hope for full satisfaction in such inquiries; but hardly before.

4. I see no proper wicked intention in these daughters of Lot, when in a case which appeared to them of unavoidable necessity, they procured themselves to be with child by their father. Without such an unavoidable necessity, incest is a horrid crime; but whether in such a case of necessity, as they apprehended this to be, according to Josephus, it was any such crime, I am not satisfied. In the mean time, their making their father drunk, and their solicitous concealment of what they did from him, shows that they despaired of persuading him to an action which, at the best, could not but be very suspicious and shocking to so good a man.

Chapter 12

Abimelech and Ismael the Son Of Abraham

1. Abraham now removed to Gerar of Palestine, leading Sarah along with him, under the notion of his sister, using the like dissimulation that he had used before, and this out of fear: for he was afraid of Abimelech, the king of that country, who did also himself fall in love with Sarah, and was disposed to corrupt her; but he was restrained from satisfying his lust by a dangerous distemper which befell him from God. Now when his physicians despaired of curing him, he fell asleep, and saw a dream, warning him not to abuse the stranger's wife; and when he recovered, he told his friends that God had inflicted that disease upon him, by way of punishment, for his injury to the stranger; and in order to preserve the chastity of his wife, for that she did not accompany him as his sister, but as his legitimate wife; and that God had promised to be gracious to him for the time to come, if this person be once secure of his wife's chastity. When he had said this, by the advice of his friends, he sent for Abraham, and bid him not to be concerned about his wife, or fear the corruption of her chastity; for that God took care of him, and that it was by his providence that he received his wife again, without her suffering any abuse. And he appealed to God, and to his wife's conscience; and said that he had not any inclination at first to enjoy her, if he had known she was his wife; but since, said he, thou leddest her about as thy sister, I was guilty of no offense. He also entreated him to be at peace with him, and to make God propitious to him; and that if he thought fit to continue with him, he should have what he wanted in abundance; but that if he designed to go away, he should be honorably conducted, and have whatsoever supply he wanted when he came thither. Upon his saying this, Abraham told him that his pretense of kindred to his wife was no lie, because she was his brother's daughter; and that he did not think himself safe in his travels abroad, without this sort of dissimulation; and that he was not the cause of his distemper, but

was only solicitous for his own safety: he said also, that he was ready to stay with him. Whereupon Abimelech assigned him land and money; and they coventanted to live together without guile, and took an oath at a certain well called Beersheba, which may be interpreted, The Well of the Oath: and so it is named by the people of the country unto this day.

2. Now in a little time Abraham had a son by Sarah, as God had foretold to him, whom he named Isaac, which signifies Laughter. And indeed they so called him, because Sarah laughed when God (1) said that she should bear a son, she not expecting such a thing, as being past the age of child-bearing, for she was ninety years old, and Abraham a hundred; so that this son was born to them both in the last year of each of those decimal numbers. And they circumcised him upon the eighth day and from that time the Jews continue the custom of circumcising their sons within that number of days. But as for the Arabians, they circumcise after the thirteenth year, because Ismael, the founder of their nation, who was born to Abraham of the concubine, was circumcised at that age; concerning whom I will presently give a particular account, with great exactness.

3. As for Sarah, she at first loved Ismael, who was born of her own handmaid Hagar, with an affection not inferior to that of her own son, for he was brought up in order to succeed in the government; but when she herself had borne Isaac, she was not willing that Ismael should be brought up with him, as being too old for him, and able to do him injuries when their father should be dead; she therefore persuaded Abraham to send him and his mother to some distant country. Now, at the first, he did not agree to what Sarah was so zealous for, and thought it an instance of the greatest barbarity, to send away a young child (2) and a woman unprovided of necessaries; but at length he agreed to it, because God was pleased with what Sarah had determined: so he delivered Ismael to his mother, as not yet able to go by himself; and commanded her to take a bottle of water, and a loaf of bread, and so to depart, and to take Necessity for her guide. But as soon as her

necessary provisions failed, she found herself in an evil case; and when the water was almost spent, she laid the young child, who was ready to expire, under a fig-tree, and went on further, that so he might die while she was absent. But a Divine Angel came to her, and told her of a fountain hard by, and bid her take care, and bring up the child, because she should be very happy by the preservation of Ismael. She then took courage, upon the prospect of what was promised her, and, meeting with some shepherds, by their care she got clear of the distresses she had been in.

4. When the lad was grown up, he married a wife, by birth an Egyptian, from whence the mother was herself derived originally. Of this wife were born to Ismael twelve sons; Nabaioth, Kedar, Abdeel, Mabsam, Idumas, Masmaos, Masaos, Chodad, Theman, Jetur, Naphesus, Cadmas. These inhabited all the country from Euphrates to the Red Sea, and called it Nabatene. They are an Arabian nation, and name their tribes from these, both because of their own virtue, and because of the dignity of Abraham their father.

Footnotes:

1. It is well worth observation, that Josephus here calls that principal Angel, who appeared to Abraham and foretold the birth of Isaac, directly God; which language of Josephus here, prepares us to believe those other expressions of his, that Jesus was a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, Antiq. B. XVIII. ch. 3. sect. 3, and of God the Word, in his homily concerning Hades, may be both genuine. Nor is the other expression of Divine Angel, used presently, and before, also of any other signification.
2. Josephus here calls Ismael a young child or infant, though he was about 13 years of age; as Judas calls himself and his brethren young men, when he was 47, and had two children, Antiq. B. II. ch. 6. sect. 8, and they were of much the same age; as is a damsel of 12 years old called a

little child, Mark 5:39-42, five several times. Herod is also said by Josephus to be a very young man at 25. See the note on Antiq. B. XIV. ch. 9. sect 2, and of the War, B. I. ch. 10. And Aristobulus is styled a very little child at 16 years of age, Antiq. B. XV. ch. 2. sect. 6, 7. Domitian also is called by him a very young child, when he went on his German expedition at about 18 years of age, of the War, B. VII. ch. 4. sect. 2. Samson's wife, and Ruth, when they were widows, are called children, Antiq. B. V. ch. 8. sect. 6, and ch. 9. sect. 2 3.

Chapter 13

Isaac the Legitimate Son of Abraham

1. Now Abraham greatly loved Isaac, as being his only begotten (1) and given to him at the borders of old age, by the favor of God. The child also endeared himself to his parents still more, by the exercise of every virtue, and adhering to his duty to his parents, and being zealous in the worship of God. Abraham also placed his own happiness in this prospect, that, when he should die, he should leave this his son in a safe and secure condition; which accordingly he obtained by the will of God: who being desirous to make an experiment of Abraham's religious disposition towards himself, appeared to him, and enumerated all the blessings he had bestowed on him; how he had made him superior to his enemies; and that his son Isaac, who was the principal part of his present happiness, was derived from him; and he said that he required this son of his as a sacrifice and holy oblation. Accordingly he commanded him to carry him to the mountain Moriah, and to build an altar, and offer him for a burnt-offering upon it for that this would best manifest his religious disposition towards him, if he preferred what was pleasing to God, before the preservation of his own son.

2. Now Abraham thought that it was not right to disobey God in any thing, but that he was obliged to serve him in every circumstance of life, since all creatures that live enjoy their life by his providence, and the kindness he bestows on them. Accordingly he concealed this command of God, and his own intentions about the slaughter of his son, from his wife, as also from every one of his servants, otherwise he should have been hindered from his obedience to God; and he took Isaac, together with two of his servants, and laying what things were necessary for a sacrifice upon an ass, he went away to the mountain. Now the two servants went along with him two days; but on the third day, as soon as he saw the mountain, he left those

servants that were with him till then in the plain, and, having his son alone with him, he came to the mountain. It was that mountain upon which king David afterwards built the temple. (2) Now they had brought with them every thing necessary for a sacrifice, excepting the animal that was to be offered only. Now Isaac was twenty-five years old. And as he was building the altar, he asked his father what he was about to offer, since there was no animal there for an oblation : - to which it was answered, "That God would provide himself an oblation, he being able to make a plentiful provision for men out of what they have not, and to deprive others of what they already have, when they put too much trust therein; that therefore, if God pleased to be present and propitious at this sacrifice, he would provide himself an oblation."

3. As soon as the altar was prepared, and Abraham had laid on the wood, and all things were entirely ready, he said to his son, "O son, I poured out a vast number of prayers that I might have thee for my son; when thou wast come into the world, there was nothing that could contribute to thy support for which I was not greatly solicitous, nor any thing wherein I thought myself happier than to see thee grown up to man's estate, and that I might leave thee at my death the successor to my dominion; but since it was by God's will that I became thy father, and it is now his will that I relinquish thee, bear this consecration to God with a generous mind; for I resign thee up to God who has thought fit now to require this testimony of honor to himself, on account of the favors he hath conferred on me, in being to me a supporter and defender. Accordingly thou, my son, wilt now die, not in any common way of going out of the world, but sent to God, the Father of all men, beforehand, by thy own father, in the nature of a sacrifice. I suppose he thinks thee worthy to get clear of this world neither by disease, neither by war, nor by any other severe way, by which death usually comes upon men, but so that he will receive thy soul with prayers and holy offices of religion, and will place thee near to himself, and thou wilt there be to me a succorer and supporter in my old age; on which account I principally brought thee up,

and thou wilt thereby procure me God for my Comforter instead of thyself."

4. Now Isaac was of such a generous disposition as became the son of such a father, and was pleased with this discourse; and said, "That he was not worthy to be born at first, if he should reject the determination of God and of his father, and should not resign himself up readily to both their pleasures; since it would have been unjust if he had not obeyed, even if his father alone had so resolved." So he went immediately to the altar to be sacrificed. And the deed had been done if God had not opposed it; for he called loudly to Abraham by his name, and forbade him to slay his son; and said, "It was not out of a desire of human blood that he was commanded to slay his son, nor was he willing that he should be taken away from him whom he had made his father, but to try the temper of his mind, whether he would be obedient to such a command. Since therefore he now was satisfied as to that his alacrity, and the surprising readiness he showed in this his piety, he was delighted in having bestowed such blessings upon him; and that he would not be wanting in all sort of concern about him, and in bestowing other children upon him; and that his son should live to a very great age; that he should live a happy life, and bequeath a large principality to his children, who should be good and legitimate." He foretold also, that his family should increase into many nations (3) and that those patriarchs should leave behind them an everlasting name; that they should obtain the possession of the land of Canaan, and be envied by all men. When God had said this, he produced to them a ram, which did not appear before, for the sacrifice. So Abraham and Isaac receiving each other unexpectedly, and having obtained the promises of such great blessings, embraced one another; and when they had sacrificed, they returned to Sarah, and lived happily together, God affording them his assistance in all things they desired.

Footnotes:

1. Note, that both here and Hebrews 11:17, Isaac is called Abraham's only begotten son, though he at the same time had another son, Ismael. The Septuagint expresses the true meaning, by rendering the text the beloved son.
2. Here is a plain error in the copies which say that king David afterwards built the temple on this Mount Moriah, while it was certainly no other than king Solomon who built that temple, as indeed Procopius cites it from Josephus. For it was for certain David, and not Solomon, who built the first altar there, as we learn, 2 Samuel 24:18, etc.; 1 Chronicles 21:22, etc.; and Antiq. B. VII. ch. 13. sect. 4.
3. It seems both here, and in God's parallel blessing to Jacob, ch. 19. sect. 1, that Josephus had yet no notion of the hidden meaning of that most important and most eminent promise, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. He saith not, and of seeds, as of many, but as of one; and to thy seed, which is Christ," Galatians 3:16. Nor is it any wonder, he being, I think, as yet not a Christian. And had he been a Christian, yet since he was, to be sure, till the latter part of his life, no more than an Ebionite Christian, who, above all the apostles, rejected and despised St. Paul, it would be no great wonder if he did not now follow his interpretation. In the mean time, we have in effect St. Paul's exposition in the Testament of Reuben, sect. 6, in Authent. Rec. Part I. p. 302, who charges his sons "to worship the seed of Judah, who should die for them in visible and invisible wars; and should be among them an eternal king." Nor is that observation of a learned foreigner of my acquaintance to be despised, who takes notice, that as seeds in the plural, must signify posterity, so seed in the singular may signify either posterity, or a single person; and that in this promise of all nations being happy in the seed of Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, etc. it is always used in the singular. To which I shall add, that it is sometimes, as it were, paraphrased by the son of Abraham, the son of David, etc., which is

capable of no such ambiguity.

Chapter 14

Sarah Abraham's Wife

Now Sarah died a little while after, having lived one hundred and twenty-seven years. They buried her in Hebron; the Canaanites publicly allowing them a burying-place; which piece of ground Abraham bought for four hundred shekels, of Ephron, an inhabitant of Hebron. And both Abraham and his descendants built themselves sepulchers in that place.

Chapter 15

The Nation of the Troglodytes

Abraham after this married Keturah, by whom six sons were born to him, men of courage, and of sagacious minds: Zambran, and Jazar, and Madan, and Madian, and Josabak, and Sous. Now the sons of Sous were Sabathan and Dadan. The sons of Dadan were Latusim, and Assur, and Luom. The sons of Madiou were Ephas, and Ophren, and Anoch, and Ebidas, and Eldas. Now, for all these sons and grandsons, Abraham contrived to settle them in colonies; and they took possession of Troglodytis, and the country of Arabia the Happy, as far as it reaches to the Red Sea. It is related of this Ophren, that he made war against Libya, and took it, and that his grandchildren, when they inhabited it, called it (from his name) Africa. And indeed Alexander Polyhistor gives his attestation to what I here say; who speaks thus: "Cleodemus the prophet, who was also called Malchus, who wrote a History of the Jews, in agreement with the History of Moses, their legislator, relates, that there were many sons born to Abraham by Keturah: nay, he names three of them, Apher, and Surim, and Japhran. That from Surim was the land of Assyria denominated; and that from the other two (Apher and Japbran) the country of Africa took its name, because these men were auxiliaries to Hercules, when he fought against Libya and Antaeus; and that Hercules married Aphra's daughter, and of her he begat a son, Diodorus; and that Sophon was his son, from whom that barbarous people called Sophacians were denominated."

Chapter 16

Isaac Took Rebeka to Wife

1. Now when Abraham, the father of Isaac, had resolved to take Rebeka, who was grand-daughter to his brother Nahor, for a wife to his son Isaac, who was then about forty years old, he sent the ancientest of his servants to betroth her, after he had obliged him to give him the strongest assurances of his fidelity; which assurances were given after the manner following : - They put each other's hands under each other's thighs; then they called upon God as the witness of what was to be done. He also sent such presents to those that were there as were in esteem, on account that that they either rarely or never were seen in that country, The servant got thither not under a considerable time; for it requires much time to pass through Meopotamia, in which it is tedious traveling, both in the winter for the depth of the clay, and in summer for want of water; and, besides this, for the robberies there committed, which are not to be avoided by travelers but by caution beforehand. However, the servant came to Haran; and when he was in the suburbs, he met a considerable number of maidens going to the water; he therefore prayed to God that Rebeka might be found among them, or her whom Abraham sent him as his servant to espouse to his son, in case his will were that this marriage should be consummated, and that she might be made known to him by the sign, That while others denied him water to drink, she might give it him.

2. With this intention he went to the well, and desired the maidens to give him some water to drink: but while the others refused, on pretense that they wanted it all at home, and could spare none for him, one only of the company rebuked them for their peevish behavior towards the stranger; and said, What is there that you will ever communicate to anybody, who have not so much as given the man some water? She then offered him water in an

obliging manner. And now he began to hope that his grand affair would succeed; but desiring still to know the truth, he commended her for her generosity and good nature, that she did not scruple to afford a sufficiency of water to those that wanted it, though it cost her some pains to draw it; and asked who were her parents, and wished them joy of such a daughter. "And mayst thou be espoused," said he, "to their satisfaction, into the family of an agreeable husband, and bring him legitimate children." Nor did she disdain to satisfy his inquiries, but told him her family. "They," says she, "call me Rebeka; my father was Bethuel, but he is dead; and Laban is my brother; and, together with my mother, takes care of all our family affairs, and is the guardian of my virginity." When the servant heard this, he was very glad at what had happened, and at what was told him, as perceiving that God had thus plainly directed his journey; and producing his bracelets, and some other ornaments which it was esteemed decent for virgins to wear, he gave them to the damsel, by way of acknowledgment, and as a reward for her kindness in giving him water to drink; saying, it was but just that she should have them, because she was so much more obliging than any of the rest. She desired also that he would come and lodge with them, since the approach of the night gave him not time to proceed farther. And producing his precious ornaments for women, he said he desired to trust them to none more safely than to such as she had shown herself to be; and that he believed he might guess at the humanity of her mother and brother, that they would not be displeased, from the virtue he found in her; for he would not be burdensome, but would pay the hire for his entertainment, and spend his own money. To which she replied, that he guessed right as to the humanity of her parents; but complained that he should think them so parsimonious as to take money, for that he should have all on free cost. But she said she would first inform her brother Laban, and, if he gave her leave, she would conduct him in.

3. As soon then as this was over, she introduced the stranger; and for the camels, the servants of Laban brought them in, and took care of them; and he was himself brought in to supper by Laban. And, after supper, he says to

him, and to the mother of the damsel, addressing himself to her, "Abraham is the son of Terah, and a kinsman of yours; for Nahor, the grandfather of these children, was the brother of Abraham, by both father and mother; upon which account he hath sent me to you, being desirous to take this damsel for his son to wife. He is his legitimate son, and is brought up as his only heir. He could indeed have had the most happy of all the women in that country for him, but he would not have his son marry any of them; but, out of regard to his own relations, he desired him to match here, whose affection and inclination I would not have you despise; for it was by the good pleasure of God that other accidents fell out in my journey, and that thereby I lighted upon your daughter and your house; for when I was near to the city, I saw a great many maidens coming to a well, and I prayed that I might meet with this damsel, which has come to pass accordingly. Do you therefore confirm that marriage, whose espousals have been already made by a Divine appearance; and show the respect you have for Abraham, who hath sent me with so much solicitude, in giving your consent to the marriage of this damsel." Upon this they understood it to be the will of God, and greatly approved of the offer, and sent their daughter, as was desired. Accordingly Isaac married her, the inheritance being now come to him; for the children by Keturah were gone to their own remote habitations.

Chapter 17

The Death of Abraham

A Little while after this Abraham died. He was a man of incomparable virtue, and honored by God in a manner agreeable to his piety towards him. The whole time of his life was one hundred seventy and five years, and he was buried in Hebron, with his wife Sarah, by their sons Isaac and Ismael.

Chapter 18

The Sons of Isaac: Esau and Jacob

1. Now Isaac's wife proved with child, after the death of Abraham; (1) and when her belly was greatly burdened, Isaac was very anxious, and inquired of God; who answered, that Rebeka should bear twins; and that two nations should take the names of those sons; and that he who appeared the second should excel the elder. Accordingly she, in a little time, as God had foretold, bare twins; the elder of whom, from his head to his feet, was very rough and hairy; but the younger took hold of his heel as they were in the birth. Now the father loved the elder, who was called Esau, a name agreeable to his roughness, for the Hebrews call such a hairy roughness [Esau, (2) or] Seir; but Jacob the younger was best beloved by his mother.

2. When there was a famine in the land, Isaac resolved to go into Egypt, the land there being good; but he went to Gerar, as God commanded him. Here Abimelech the king received him, because Abraham had formerly lived with him, and had been his friend. And as in the beginning he treated him exceeding kindly, so he was hindered from continuing in the same disposition to the end, by his envy at him; for when he saw that God was with Isaac, and took such great care of him, he drove him away from him. But Isaac, when he saw how envy had changed the temper of Abimelech retired to a place called the Valley, not far from Gerar: and as he was digging a well, the shepherds fell upon him, and began to fight, in order to hinder the work; and because he did not desire to contend, the shepherds seemed to get the him, so he still retired, and dug another and when certain other shepherds of Abimelech began to offer him violence, he left that also, still retired, thus purchasing security to himself a rational and prudent conduct. At length the gave him leave to dig a well without disturbance. He named this well Rehoboth, which denotes a large space; but of the former wells, one was

called Escon, which denotes strife, the other Sitenna, name signifies enmity.

3. It was now that Isaac's affairs increased, and in a flourishing condition; and this his great riches. But Abimelech, thinking in opposition to him, while their living made them suspicious of each other, and retiring showing a secret enmity also, he afraid that his former friendship with Isaac would not secure him, if Isaac should endeavor the injuries he had formerly offered him; he therefore renewed his friendship with him, Philoc, one of his generals. And when he had obtained every thing he desired, by reason of Isaac's good nature, who preferred the earlier friendship Abimelech had shown to himself and his father to his later wrath against him, he returned home.

4. Now when Esau, one of the sons of Isaac, whom the father principally loved, was now come to the age of forty years, he married Adah, the daughter of Helon, and Aholibamah, the daughter of Esebeon; which Helon and Esebeon were great lords among the Canaanites: thereby taking upon himself the authority, and pretending to have dominion over his own marriages, without so much as asking the advice of his father; for had Isaac been the arbitrator, he had not given him leave to marry thus, for he was not pleased with contracting any alliance with the people of that country; but not caring to be uneasy to his son by commanding him to put away these wives, he resolved to be silent.

5. But when he was old, and could not see at all, he called Esau to him, and told him, that besides his blindness, and the disorder of his eyes, his very old age hindered him from his worship of God [by sacrifice]; he bid him therefore to go out a hunting, and when he had caught as much venison as he could, to prepare him a supper (3) that after this he might make supplication to God, to be to him a supporter and an assister during the whole time of his life; saying, that it was uncertain when he should die, and that he was desirous, by prayers for him, to procure, beforehand, God to be merciful to

him.

6. Accordingly, Esau went out a hunting. But Rebeka (4) thinking it proper to have the supplication made for obtaining the favor of God to Jacob, and that without the consent of Isaac, bid him kill kids of the goats, and prepare a supper. So Jacob obeyed his mother, according to all her instructions. Now when the supper was got ready, he took a goat's skin, and put it about his arm, that by reason of its hairy roughness, he might by his father be believed to be Esau; for they being twins, and in all things else alike, differed only in this thing. This was done out of his fear, that before his father had made his supplications, he should be caught in his evil practice, and lest he should, on the contrary, provoke his father to curse him. So he brought in the supper to his father. Isaac perceivest to be Esau." So suspecting no deceit, he ate the supper, and betook himself to his prayers and intercessions with God; and said, "O Lord of all ages, and Creator of all substance; for it was thou that didst propose to my father great plenty of good things, and hast vouchsafed to bestow on me what I have; and hast promised to my posterity to be their kind supporter, and to bestow on them still greater blessings; do thou therefore confirm these thy promises, and do not overlook me, because of my present weak condition, on account of which I most earnestly pray to thee. Be gracious to this my son; and preserve him and keep him from every thing that is evil. Give him a happy life, and the possession of as many good things as thy power is able to bestow. Make him terrible to his enemies, and honorable and beloved among his friends."

7. Thus did Isaac pray to God, thinking his prayers had been made for Esau. He had but just finished them, when Esau came in from hunting. And when Isaac perceived his mistake, he was silent: but Esau required that he might be made partaker of the like blessing from his father that his brother had partook of; but his father refused it, because all his prayers had been spent upon Jacob: so Esau lamented the mistake. However, his father being grieved at his weeping, said, that "he should excel in hunting and strength of

body, in arms, and all such sorts of work; and should obtain glory for ever on those accounts, he and his posterity after him; but still should serve his brother."

8. Now the mother delivered Jacob, when she was afraid that his brother would inflict some punishment upon him because of the mistake about the prayers of Isaac; for she persuaded her husband to take a wife for Jacob out of Mesopotamia, of her own kindred, Esau having married already Basemmath, the daughter of Ismael, without his father's consent; for Isaac did not like the Canaanites, so that he disapproved of Esau's former marriages, which made him take Basemmath to wife, in order to please him; and indeed he had a great affection for her.

Footnotes:

1. The birth of Jacob and Esau is here said to be after Abraham's death: it should have been after Sarah's death. The order of the narration in Genesis, not always exactly according to the order of time, seems to have led Josephus into this error, as Dr. Bernard observes here.
2. For Seir in Josephus, the coherence requires that we read Esau or Seir, which signify the same thing.
3. The supper of savory meat, as we call it, Genesis 27:4, to be caught by hunting, was intended plainly for a festival or a sacrifice; and upon the prayers that were frequent at sacrifices, Isaac expected, as was then usual in such eminent cases, that a divine impulse would come upon him, in order to the blessing of his son there present, and his foretelling his future behavior and fortune. Whence it must be, that when Isaac had unwittingly blessed Jacob, and was afterwards made sensible of his mistake, yet did he not attempt to alter it, how earnestly soever his affection for Esau might incline him to wish it might be altered, because he knew that this blessing came not from himself, but from God, and that an alteration was out of his power. A second afflatus then came

upon him, and enabled him to foretell Esau's future behavior and foretell Esau's future behavior and fortune also.

4. Whether Jacob or his mother Rebeka were most blameable in this imposition upon Isaac in his old age, I cannot determine. However the blessing being delivered as a prediction of future events, by a Divine impulse, and foretelling things to befall to the posterity of Jacob and Esau in future ages, was for certain providential; and according to what Rebeka knew to be the purpose of God, when he answered her inquiry, "before the children were born," Genesis 25:23, "that one people should be stronger than the other people; and the elder, Esau, should serve the younger, Jacob." Whether Isaac knew or remembered this old oracle, delivered in our copies only to Rebeka; or whether, if he knew and remembered it, he did not endeavor to alter the Divine determination, out of his fondness for his elder and worsen son Esau, to the damage of his younger and better son Jacob, as Josephus elsewhere supposes, *Antiq. B. II. ch. 7. sect. 3*; I cannot certainly say. if so, this might tempt Rebeka to contrive, and Jacob to put this imposition upon him. However, Josephus says here, that it was Isaac, and not Rebeka, who inquired of God at first, and received the forementioned oracle, *sect. 1*; which, if it be the true reading, renders Isaac's procedure more inexcusable. Nor was it probably any thing else that so much encouraged Esau formerly to marry two Canaanitish wives, without his parents' consent, as Isaac's unhappy fondness for him.

Chapter 19

Jacob's Flight Into Mesopotamia

1. Now Jacob was sent by his mother to Mesopotamia, in order to marry Laban her brother's daughter (which marriage was permitted by Isaac, on account of his obsequiousness to the desires of his wife); and he accordingly journeyed through the land of Canaan; and because he hated the people of that country, he would not lodge with any of them, but took up his lodging in the open air, and laid his head on a heap of stones that he had gathered together. At which time he saw in his sleep such a vision standing by him: - he seemed to see a ladder that reached from the earth unto heaven, and persons descending upon the ladder that seemed more excellent than human; and at last God himself stood above it, and was plainly visible to him, who, calling him by his name, spake to him in these words: -

2. "O Jacob, it is not fit for thee, who art the son of a good father, and grandson of one who had obtained a great reputation for his eminent virtue, to be dejected at thy present circumstances, but to hope for better times, for thou shalt have great abundance of all good things, by my assistance: for I brought Abraham hither, out of Mesopotamia, when he was driven away by his kinsmen, and I made thy father a happy man, nor will I bestow a lesser degree of happiness on thyself: be of good courage, therefore, and under my conduct proceed on this thy journey, for the marriage thou goest so zealously about shall be consummated. And thou shalt have children of good characters, but their multitude shall be innumerable; and they shall leave what they have to a still more numerous posterity, to whom, and to whose posterity, I give the dominion of all the land, and their posterity shall fill the entire earth and sea, so far as the sun beholds them: but do not thou fear any danger, nor be afraid of the many labors thou must undergo, for by my providence I will direct thee what thou art to do in the time present, and still

much more in the time to come."

3. Such were the predictions which God made to Jacob; whereupon he became very joyful at what he had seen and heard; and he poured oil on the stones, because on them the prediction of such great benefits was made. He also vowed a vow, that he would offer sacrifices upon them, if he lived and returned safe; and if he came again in such a condition, he would give the tithe of what he had gotten to God. He also judged the place to be honorable and gave it the name of Bethel, which, in the Greek, is interpreted, The House of God.

4. So he proceeded on his journey to Mesopotamia, and at length came to Haran; and meeting with shepherds in the suburbs, with boys grown up, and maidens sitting about a certain well, he staid with them, as wanting water to drink; and beginning to discourse with them, he asked them whether they knew such a one as Laban, and whether he was still alive. Now they all said they knew him, for he was not so inconsiderable a person as to be unknown to any of them; and that his daughter fed her father's flock together with them; and that indeed they wondered that she was not yet come, for by her means thou mightest learn more exactly whatever thou desirest to know about that family. While they were saying this the damsel came, and the other shepherds that came down along with her. Then they showed her Jacob, and told her that he was a stranger, who came to inquire about her father's affairs. But she, as pleased, after the custom of children, with Jacob's coming, asked him who he was, and whence he came to them, and what it was he lacked that he came thither. She also wished it might be in their power to supply the wants he came about.

5. But Jacob was quite overcome, not so much by their kindred, nor by that affection which might arise thence, as by his love to the damsel, and his surprise at her beauty, which was so flourishing, as few of the women of that age could vie with. He said then, "There is a relation between thee and me,

elder than either thy or my birth, if thou be the daughter of Laban; for Abraham was the son of Terah, as well as Haran and Nahor. Of the last of whom (Nahor) Bethuel thy grandfather was the son. Isaac my father was the son of Abraham and of Sarah, who was the daughter of Haran. But there is a nearer and later cement of mutual kindred which we bear to one another, for my mother Rebeka was sister to Laban thy father, both by the same father and mother; I therefore and thou are cousin-germans. And I am now come to salute you, and to renew that affinity which is proper between us." Upon this the damsel, at the mention of Rebeka, as usually happens to young persons, wept, and that out of the kindness she had for her father, and embraced Jacob, she having learned an account of Rebeka from her father, and knew that her parents loved to hear her named; and when she had saluted him, she said that "he brought the most desirable and greatest pleasures to her father, with all their family, who was always mentioning his mother, and always thinking of her, and her alone; and that this will make thee equal in his eyes to any advantageous circumstances whatsoever." Then she bid him go to her father, and follow her while she conducted him to him; and not to deprive him of such a pleasure, by staying any longer away from him.

6. When she had said thus, she brought him to Laban; and being owned by his uncle, he was secure himself, as being among his friends; and he brought a great deal of pleasure to them by his unexpected coning. But a little while afterward, Laban told him that he could not express in words the joy he had at his coming; but still he inquired of him the occasion of his coming, and why he left his aged mother and father, when they wanted to be taken care of by him; and that he would afford him all the assistance he wanted. Then Jacob gave him an account of the whole occasion of his journey, and told him, "that Isaac had two sons that were twins, himself and Esau; who, because he failed of his father's prayers, which by his mother's wisdom were put up for him, sought to kill him, as deprived of the kingdom (1) which was to be given him of God, and of the blessings for which their father prayed; and that this was the occasion of his coming hither, as his

mother had commanded him to do: for we are all (says he) brethren one to another; but our mother esteems an alliance with your family more than she does one with the families of the country; so I look upon yourself and God to be the supporters of my travels, and think myself safe in my present circumstances."

7. Now Laban promised to treat him with great humanity, both on account of his ancestors, and particularly for the sake of his mother, towards whom, he said, he would show his kindness, even though she were absent, by taking care of him; for he assured him he would make him the head shepherd of his flock, and give him authority sufficient for that purpose; and when he should have a mind to return to his parents, he would send him back with presents, and this in as honorable a manner as the nearness of their relation should require. This Jacob heard gladly; and said he would willingly, and with pleasure, undergo any sort of pains while he tarried with him, but desired Rachel to wife, as the reward of those pains, who was not only on other accounts esteemed by him, but also because she was the means of his coming to him; for he said he was forced by the love of the damsel to make this proposal. Laban was well pleased with this agreement, and consented to give the damsel to him, as not desirous to meet with any better son-in-law; and said he would do this, if he would stay with him some time, for he was not willing to send his daughter to be among the Canaanites, for he repented of the alliance he had made already by marrying his sister there. And when Jacob had given his consent to this, he agreed to stay seven years; for so many years he had resolved to serve his father-in-law, that, having given a specimen of his virtue, it might be better known what sort of a man he was. And Jacob, accepting of his terms, after the time was over, he made the wedding-feast; and when it was night, without Jacob's perceiving it, he put his other daughter into bed to him, who was both elder than Rachel, and of no comely countenance: Jacob lay with her that night, as being both in drink and in the dark. However, when it was day, he knew what had been done to him; and he reproached Laban for his unfair proceeding with him; who asked

pardon for that necessity which forced him to do what he did; for he did not give him Lea out of any ill design, but as overcome by another greater necessity: that, notwithstanding this, nothing should hinder him from marrying Rachel; but that when he had served another seven years, he would give him her whom he loved. Jacob submitted to this condition, for his love to the damsel did not permit him to do otherwise; and when another seven years were gone, he took Rachel to wife.

8. Now each of these had handmaids, by their father's donation. Zilpha was handmaid to Lea, and Bilha to Rachel; by no means slaves, (2) but however subject to their mistresses. Now Lea was sorely troubled at her husband's love to her sister; and she expected she should be better esteemed if she bare him children: so she entreated God perpetually; and when she had borne a son, and her husband was on that account better reconciled to her, she named her son Reubel, because God had had mercy upon her, in giving her a son, for that is the signification of this name. After some time she bare three more sons; Simeon, which name signifies that God had hearkened to her prayer. Then she bare Levi, the confirmer of their friendship. After him was born Judah, which denotes thanksgiving. But Rachel, fearing lest the fruitfulness of her sister should make herself enjoy a lesser share of Jacob's affections, put to bed to him her handmaid Bilha; by whom Jacob had Dan: one may interpret that name into the Greek tongue, a divine judgment. And after him Nephthalim, as it were, unconquerable in stratagems, since Rachel tried to conquer the fruitfulness of her sister by this stratagem. Accordingly, Lea took the same method, and used a counter-stratagem to that of her sister; for she put to bed to him her own handmaid. Jacob therefore had by Zilpha a son, whose name was Gad, which may be interpreted fortune; and after him Asher, which may be called a happy man, because he added glory to Lea. Now Reubel, the eldest son of Lea, brought apples of mandrakes (3) to his mother. When Rachel saw them, she desired that she would give her the apples, for she longed to eat them; but when she refused, and bid her be content that she had deprived her of the benevolence she ought to have had

from her husband, Rachel, in order to mitigate her sister's anger, said she would yield her husband to her; and he should lie with her that evening. She accepted of the favor, and Jacob slept with Lea, by the favor of Rachel. She bare then these sons: Issachar, denoting one born by hire; and Zabulon, one born as a pledge of benevolence towards her; and a daughter, Dina. After some time Rachel had a son, named Joseph, which signified there should be another added to him.

9. Now Jacob fed the flocks of Laban his father-in-law all this time, being twenty years, after which he desired leave of his father-in-law to take his wives and go home; but when his father-in-law would not give him leave, he contrived to do it secretly. He made trial therefore of the disposition of his wives what they thought of this journey; - when they appeared glad, and approved of it. Rachel took along with her the images of the gods, which, according to their laws, they used to worship in their own country, and ran away together with her sister. The children also of them both, and the handmaids, and what possessions they had, went along with them. Jacob also drove away half the cattle, without letting Laban know of it beforehand But the reason why Rachel took the images of the gods, although Jacob had taught her to despise such worship of those gods, was this, That in case they were pursued, and taken by her father, she might have recourse to these images, in order obtain his pardon.

10. But Laban, after one day's time, being acquainted with Jacob's and his daughters' departure, was much troubled, and pursued after them, leading a band of men with him; and on the seventh day overtook them, and found them resting on a certain hill; and then indeed he did not meddle with them, for it was even-tide; but God stood by him in a dream, and warned him to receive his son-in-law and his daughters in a peaceable manner; and not to venture upon any thing rashly, or in wrath to but to make a league with Jacob. And he him, that if he despised their small number, attacked them in a hostile manner, he would assist them. When Laban had been thus forewarned

by God, he called Jacob to him the next day, in order to treat with him, and showed him what dream he had; in dependence whereupon he came confidently to him, and began to accuse him, alleging that he had entertained him when he was poor, and in want of all things, and had given him plenty of all things which he had. "For," said he, "I have joined my daughters to thee in marriage, and supposed that thy kindness to me be greater than before; but thou hast had no regard to either thy mother's relations to me, nor to the affinity now newly contracted between us; nor to those wives whom thou hast married; nor to those children, of whom I am the grandfather. Thou hast treated me as an enemy, driving away my cattle, and by persuading my daughters to run away from their father; and by carrying home those sacred paternal images which were worshipped by my forefathers, and have been honored with the like worship which they paid them by myself. In short, thou hast done this whilst thou art my kinsman, and my sister's son, and the husband of my daughters, and was hospitably treated by me, and didst eat at my table." When Laban had said this, Jacob made his defense - That he was not the only person in whom God had implanted the love of his native country, but that he had made it natural to all men; and that therefore it was but reasonable that, after so long time, he should go back to it. "But as to the prey, of whose driving away thou accusest me, if any other person were the arbitrator, thou wouldst be found in the wrong; for instead of those thanks I ought to have had from thee, for both keeping thy cattle, and increasing them, how is it that thou art unjustly angry at me because I have taken, and have with me, a small portion of them? But then, as to thy daughters, take notice, that it is not through any evil practices of mine that they follow me in my return home, but from that just affection which wives naturally have to their husbands. They follow therefore not so properly myself as their own children." And thus far of his apology was made, in order to clear himself of having acted unjustly. To which he added his own complaint and accusation of Laban; saying, "While I was thy sister's son, and thou hadst given me thy daughters in marriage, thou hast worn me out with thy harsh commands, and detained me twenty years under them. That indeed which was required in

order to my marrying thy daughters, hard as it was, I own to have been tolerable; but as to those that were put upon me after those marriages, they were worse, and such indeed as an enemy would have avoided." For certainly Laban had used Jacob very ill; for when he saw that God was assisting to Jacob in all that he desired, he promised him, that of the young cattle which should be born, he should have sometimes what was of a white color, and sometimes what should be of a black color; but when those that came to Jacob's share proved numerous, he did not keep his faith with him, but said he would give them to him the next year, because of his envying him the multitude of his possessions. He promised him as before, because he thought such an increase was not to be expected; but when it appeared to be fact, he deceived him.

11. But then, as to the sacred images, he bid him search for them; and when Laban accepted of the offer, Rachel, being informed of it, put those images into that camel's saddle on which she rode, and sat upon it; and said, that her natural purgation hindered her rising up: so Laban left off searching any further, not supposing that his daughter in such circumstances would approach to those images. So he made a league with Jacob, and bound it by oaths, that he would not bear him any malice on account of what had happened; and Jacob made the like league, and promised to love Laban's daughters. And these leagues they confirmed with oaths also, which they made upon certain as whereon they erected a pillar, in the form of an altar: whence that hill is called Gilead; and from thence they call that land the Land of Gilead at this day. Now when they had feasted, after the making of the league, Laban returned home.

Footnotes:

1. By this "deprivation of the kingdom that was to be given Esau of God," as the first-born, it appears that Josephus thought that a "kingdom to be derived from God" was due to him whom Isaac should bless as his first-

born, which I take to be that kingdom which was expected under the Messiah, who therefore was to be born of his posterity whom Isaac should so bless. Jacob therefore by obtaining this blessing of the first-born, became the genuine heir of that kingdom, in opposition to Esau.

2. Here we have the difference between slaves for life and servants, such as we now hire for a time agreed upon on both sides, and dismiss again after the time contracted for is over, which are no slaves, but free men and free women. Accordingly, when the Apostolical Constitutions forbid a clergyman to marry perpetual servants or slaves, B. VI. ch. 17., it is meant only of the former sort; as we learn elsewhere from the same Constitutions, ch. 47. Can. LXXXII. But concerning these twelve sons of Jacob, the reasons of their several names, and the times of their several births in the intervals here assigned, their several excellent characters, their several faults and repentance, the several accidents of their lives, with their several prophecies at their deaths, see the Testaments of these twelve patriarchs, still preserved at large in the Authent. Rec. Part I. p. 294-443.
3. I formerly explained these mandrakes, as we, with the Septuagint, and Josephus, render the Hebrew word Dudaïm, of the Syrian Maud, with Ludolphus, Authent. Rec. Part I. p. 420; but have since seen such a very probable account in M. S. of my learned friend Mr. Samuel Barker, of what we still call mandrakes, and their description by the ancient naturalists and physicians, as inclines me to think these here mentioned were really mandrakes, and no other.

Chapter 20

The Meeting of Jacob and Esau

1. Now as Jacob was proceeding on his journey to the land of Canaan, angels appeared to him, and suggested to him good hope of his future condition; and that place he named the Camp of God. And being desirous of knowing what his brother's intentions were to him, he sent messengers, to give him an exact account of every thing, as being afraid, on account of the enmities between them. He charged those that were sent, to say to Esau, "Jacob had thought it wrong to live together with him while he was in anger against him, and so had gone out of the country; and that he now, thinking the length of time of his absence must have made up their differences, was returning; that he brought with him his wives, and his children, with what possessions he had gotten; and delivered himself, with what was most dear to him, into his hands; and should think it his greatest happiness to partake together with his brother of what God had bestowed upon him." So these messengers told him this message. Upon which Esau was very glad, and met his brother with four hundred men. And Jacob, when he heard that he was coming to meet him with such a number of men, was greatly afraid: however, he committed his hope of deliverance to God; and considered how, in his present circumstances, he might preserve himself and those that were with him, and overcome his enemies if they attacked him injuriously. He therefore distributed his company into parts; some he sent before the rest, and the others he ordered to come close behind, that so, if the first were overpowered when his brother attacked them, they might have those that followed as a refuge to fly unto. And when he had put his company in this order, he sent some of them to carry presents to his brother. The presents were made up of cattle, and a great number of four-footed beasts, of many kinds, such as would be very acceptable to those that received them, on account of their rarity. Those who were sent went at certain intervals of

space asunder, that, by following thick, one after another, they might appear to be more numerous, that Esau might remit of his anger on account of these presents, if he were still in a passion. Instructions were also given to those that were sent to speak gently to him.

2. When Jacob had made these appointments all the day, and night came on, he moved on with his company; and, as they were gone over a certain river called Jabboc, Jacob was left behind; and meeting with an angel, he wrestled with him, the angel beginning the struggle: but he prevailed over the angel, who used a voice, and spake to him in words, exhorting him to be pleased with what had happened to him, and not to suppose that his victory was a small one, but that he had overcome a divine angel, and to esteem the victory as a sign of great blessings that should come to him, and that his offspring should never fall, and that no man should be too hard for his power. He also commanded him to be called Israel, which in the Hebrew tongue signifies one that struggled with the divine angel. (1) These promises were made at the prayer of Jacob; for when he perceived him to be the angel of God, he desired he would signify to him what should befall him hereafter. And when the angel had said what is before related, he disappeared; but Jacob was pleased with these things, and named the place Phaul, which signifies, the face of God. Now when he felt pain, by this struggling, upon his broad sinew, he abstained from eating that sinew himself afterward; and for his sake it is still not eaten by us.

3. When Jacob understood that his brother was near, he ordered his wives to go before, each by herself, with the handmaids, that they might see the actions of the men as they were fighting, if Esau were so disposed. He then went up to his brother Esau, and bowed down to him, who had no evil design upon him, but saluted him; and asked him about the company of the children and of the women; and desired, when he had understood all he wanted to know about them, that he would go along with him to their father; but Jacob pretending that the cattle were weary, Esau returned to Seir, for

there was his place of habitation, he having named the place Roughness, from his own hairy roughness.

Footnote:

1. Perhaps this may be the proper meaning of the word Israel, by the present and the old Jerusalem analogy of the Hebrew tongue. In the mean time, it is certain that the Hellenists of the first century, in Egypt and elsewhere, interpreted Israel to be a man seeing God, as is evident from the argument fore-cited.

Chapter 21

The Violation of Dina's Chastity

1. Hereupon Jacob came to the place, till this day called Tents (Succoth); from whence he went to Shechem, which is a city of the Canaanites. Now as the Shechemites were keeping a festival Dina, who was the only daughter of Jacob, went into the city to see the finery of the women of that country. But when Shechem, the son of Hamor the king, saw her, he defiled her by violence; and being greatly in love with her, desired of his father that he would procure the damsel to him for a wife. To which desire he condescended, and came to Jacob, desiring him to give leave that his son Shechem might, according to law, marry Dina. But Jacob, not knowing how to deny the desire of one of such great dignity, and yet not thinking it lawful to marry his daughter to a stranger, entreated him to give him leave to have a consultation about what he desired him to do. So the king went away, in hopes that Jacob would grant him this marriage. But Jacob informed his sons of the defilement of their sister, and of the address of Hamor; and desired them to give their advice what they should do. Upon fills, the greatest part said nothing, not knowing what advice to give. But Simeon and Levi, the brethren of the damsel by the same mother, agreed between themselves upon the action following: It being now the time of a festival, when the Shechemites were employed in ease and feasting, they fell upon the watch when they were asleep, and, coming into the city, slew all the males (1) as also the king, and his son, with them; but spared the women. And when they had done this without their father's consent, they brought away their sister.

2. Now while Jacob was astonished at the greatness of this act, and was severely blaming his sons for it, God stood by him, and bid him be of good courage; but to purify his tents, and to offer those sacrifices which he had vowed to offer when he went first into Mesopotamia, and saw his vision. As

he was therefore purifying his followers, he lighted upon the gods of Laban; (for he did not before know they were stolen by Rachel;) and he hid them in the earth, under an oak, in Shechem. And departing thence, he offered sacrifice at Bethel, the place where he saw his dream, when he went first into Mesopotamia.

3. And when he was gone thence, and was come over against Ephrata, he there buried Rachel, who died in child-bed: she was the only one of Jacob's kindred that had not the honor of burial at Hebron. And when he had mourned for her a great while, he called the son that was born of her Benjamin, (2) because of the sorrow the mother had with him. These are all the children of Jacob, twelve males and one female. - Of them eight were legitimate, - viz. six of Lea, and two of Rachel; and four were of the handmaids, two of each; all whose names have been set down already.

Footnotes:

1. Of this slaughter of the Shechemites by Simeon and Levi, see Authent. Rec. Part I. p. 309, 418, 432-439. But why Josephus has omitted the circumcision of these Shechemites, as the occasion of their death; and of Jacob's great grief, as in the Testament of Levi, sect. 5; I cannot tell.
2. Since Benoni signifies the son of my sorrow, and Benjamin the son of days, or one born in the father's old age, Genesis 44:20, I suspect Josephus's present copies to be here imperfect, and suppose that, in correspondence to other copies, he wrote that Rachel called her son's name Benoni, but his father called him Benjamin, Genesis 35:18. As for Benjamin, as commonly explained, the son of the right hand, it makes no sense at all, and seems to be a gross modern error only. The Samaritan always writes this name truly Benjamin, which probably is here of the same signification, only with the Chaldee termination in, instead of im in the Hebrew; as we pronounce cherubin or cherubim indifferently. Accordingly, both the Testament of Benjamin, sect. 2, p.

401, and Philo de Nominum Mutatione, p. 1059, write the name Benjamin, but explain it not the son of the right hand, but the son of days.

Chapter 22

Isaac Died and Was Buried in Hebron

From thence Jacob came to Hebron, a city situate among the Canaanites; and there it was that Isaac lived: and so they lived together for a little while; for as to Rebeka, Jacob did not find her alive. Isaac also died not long after the coming of his son; and was buried by his sons, with his wife, in Hebron, where they had a monument belonging to them from their forefathers. Now Isaac was a man who was beloved of God, and was vouchsafed great instances of providence by God, after Abraham his father, and lived to be exceeding old; for when he had lived virtuously one hundred and eighty-five years, he then died.