



Genesis

Heaven and Earth

1 First this: God created the Heavens and Earth—all you see, all you don't see. Earth was a soup of nothingness, a bottomless emptiness, an inky blackness. God's Spirit brooded like a bird above the watery abyss.

God spoke: "Light!"

And light appeared.

God saw that light was good
and separated light from dark.

God named the light Day,
he named the dark Night.

It was evening, it was morning—
Day One.

God spoke: "Sky! In the middle of the waters;
separate water from water!"

God made sky.

He separated the water under sky
from the water above sky.

And there it was:
he named sky the Heavens;

It was evening, it was morning—
Day Two.

God spoke: "Separate!

Water-beneath-Heaven, gather into one place;
Land, appear!"

And there it was.

God named the land Earth.

He named the pooled water Ocean.

God saw that it was good.

God spoke: "Earth, green up! Grow all varieties
of seed-bearing plants,
Every sort of fruit-bearing tree."

And there it was.

Earth produced green seed-bearing plants,
all varieties,

And fruit-bearing trees of all sorts.

God saw that it was good.

It was evening, it was morning—
Day Three.

God spoke: "Lights! Come out!
Shine in Heaven's sky!

Separate Day from Night.

Mark seasons and days and years,



Lights in Heaven's sky to give light to Earth."
And there it was.

God made two big lights, the larger
to take charge of Day,
The smaller to be in charge of Night;
and he made the stars.
God placed them in the heavenly sky
to light up Earth
And oversee Day and Night,
to separate light and dark.
God saw that it was good.
It was evening, it was morning—
Day Four.

God spoke: "Swarm, Ocean, with fish and all sea life!
Birds, fly through the sky over Earth!"
God created the huge whales,
all the swarm of life in the waters,
And every kind and species of flying birds.
God saw that it was good.
God blessed them: "Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Ocean!
Birds, reproduce on Earth!"
It was evening, it was morning—
Day Five.

God spoke: "Earth, generate life! Every sort and kind:
cattle and reptiles and wild animals—all kinds."
And there it was:
wild animals of every kind,
Cattle of all kinds, every sort of reptile and bug.
God saw that it was good.

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them
reflecting our nature
So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea,
the birds in the air, the cattle,
And, yes, Earth itself,
and every animal that moves on the face of Earth."
God created human beings;
he created them godlike,
Reflecting God's nature.
He created them male and female.
God blessed them:
"Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!
Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air,
for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth."

Then God said, "I've given you
every sort of seed-bearing plant on Earth
And every kind of fruit-bearing tree,
given them to you for food.
To all animals and all birds,
everything that moves and breathes,
I give whatever grows out of the ground for food."
And there it was.

God looked over everything he had made;
 it was so good, so very good!
 It was evening, it was morning—
 Day Six.

2 Heaven and Earth were finished,
 down to the last detail.

By the seventh day
 God had finished his work.
 On the seventh day
 he rested from all his work.
 God blessed the seventh day.
 He made it a Holy Day
 Because on that day he rested from his work,
 all the creating God had done.

This is the story of how it all started,
 of Heaven and Earth when they were created.

Adam and Eve

At the time GOD made Earth and Heaven, before any grasses or shrubs had sprouted from the ground—GOD hadn't yet sent rain on Earth, nor was there anyone around to work the ground (the whole Earth was watered by underground springs)—GOD formed Man out of dirt from the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life. The Man came alive—a living soul!

Then GOD planted a garden in Eden, in the east. He put the Man he had just made in it. GOD made all kinds of trees grow from the ground, trees beautiful to look at and good to eat. The Tree-of-Life was in the middle of the garden, also the Tree-of-Knowledge-of-Good-and-Evil.

A river flows out of Eden to water the garden and from there divides into four rivers. The first is named Pishon; it flows through Havilah where there is gold. The gold of this land is good. The land is also known for a sweet-scented resin and the onyx stone. The second river is named Gihon; it flows through the land of Cush. The third river is named Hiddekel and flows east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

GOD took the Man and set him down in the Garden of Eden to work the ground and keep it in order.

GOD commanded the Man, "You can eat from any tree in the garden, except from the Tree-of-Knowledge-of-Good-and-Evil. Don't eat from it. The moment you eat from that tree, you're dead."

GOD said, "It's not good for the Man to be alone; I'll make him a helper, a companion." So GOD formed from the dirt of the ground all the animals of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the Man to see what he would name them. Whatever the Man called each living creature, that was its name. The Man named the cattle, named the birds of the air, named the wild animals; but he didn't find a suitable companion.

GOD put the Man into a deep sleep. As he slept he removed one of his ribs and replaced it with flesh. GOD then used the rib that he had taken from the Man to make Woman and presented her to the Man.

The Man said,
 "Finally! Bone of my bone,
 flesh of my flesh!
 Name her Woman
 for she was made from Man."

Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and embraces his wife. They become one flesh.

The two of them, the Man and his Wife, were naked, but they felt no shame.

3 The serpent was clever, more clever than any wild animal God made. He spoke to the Woman: “Do I understand that God told you not to eat from any tree in the garden?”

The Woman said to the serpent, “Not at all. We can eat from the trees in the garden. It’s only about the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, ‘Don’t eat from it; don’t even touch it or you’ll die.’”

The serpent told the Woman, “You won’t die. God knows that the moment you eat from that tree, you’ll see what’s really going on. You’ll be just like God, knowing everything, ranging all the way from good to evil.”

When the Woman saw that the tree looked like good eating and realized what she would get out of it—she’d know everything!—she took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate.

Immediately the two of them did “see what’s really going on”—saw themselves naked! They sewed fig leaves together as makeshift clothes for themselves.

When they heard the sound of God strolling in the garden in the evening breeze, the Man and his Wife hid in the trees of the garden, hid from God.

God called to the Man: “Where are you?”

He said, “I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked. And I hid.”

God said, “Who told you you were naked? Did you eat from that tree I told you not to eat from?”

The Man said, “The Woman you gave me as a companion, she gave me fruit from the tree, and, yes, I ate it.”

God said to the Woman, “What is this that you’ve done?”

“The serpent seduced me,” she said, “and I ate.”

God told the serpent:

“Because you’ve done this, you’re cursed,
cursed beyond all cattle and wild animals,

Cursed to slink on your belly
and eat dirt all your life.

I’m declaring war between you and the Woman,
between your offspring and hers.

He’ll wound your head,
you’ll wound his heel.”

He told the Woman:

“I’ll multiply your pains in childbirth;
you’ll give birth to your babies in pain.

You’ll want to please your husband,
but he’ll lord it over you.”

He told the Man:

“Because you listened to your wife
and ate from the tree

That I commanded you not to eat from,
‘Don’t eat from this tree,’

The very ground is cursed because of you;
getting food from the ground

Will be as painful as having babies is for your wife;

you'll be working in pain all your life long.
 The ground will sprout thorns and weeds,
 you'll get your food the hard way,
 Planting and tilling and harvesting,
 sweating in the fields from dawn to dusk,
 Until you return to that ground yourself, dead and buried;
 you started out as dirt, you'll end up dirt."

The Man, known as Adam, named his wife Eve because she was the mother of all the living.

GOD made leather clothing for Adam and his wife and dressed them.

GOD said, "The Man has become like one of us, capable of knowing everything, ranging from good to evil. What if he now should reach out and take fruit from the Tree-of-Life and eat, and live forever? Never—this cannot happen!"

So GOD expelled them from the Garden of Eden and sent them to work the ground, the same dirt out of which they'd been made. He threw them out of the garden and stationed angel-cherubim and a revolving sword of fire east of it, guarding the path to the Tree-of-Life.

4 Adam slept with Eve his wife. She conceived and had Cain. She said, "I've gotten a man, with GOD's help!"

Then she had another baby, Abel. Abel was a herdsman and Cain a farmer.

Time passed. Cain brought an offering to GOD from the produce of his farm. Abel also brought an offering, but from the firstborn animals of his herd, choice cuts of meat. GOD liked Abel and his offering, but Cain and his offering didn't get his approval. Cain lost his temper and went into a sulk.

GOD spoke to Cain: "Why this tantrum? Why the sulking? If you do well, won't you be accepted? And if you don't do well, sin is lying in wait for you, ready to pounce; it's out to get you, you've got to master it."

Cain had words with his brother. They were out in the field; Cain came at Abel his brother and killed him.

GOD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?"

He said, "How should I know? Am I his babysitter?"

GOD said, "What have you done! The voice of your brother's blood is calling to me from the ground. From now on you'll get nothing but curses from this ground; you'll be driven from this ground that has opened its arms to receive the blood of your murdered brother. You'll farm this ground, but it will no longer give you its best. You'll be a homeless wanderer on Earth."

Cain said to GOD, "My punishment is too much. I can't take it! You've thrown me off the land and I can never again face you. I'm a homeless wanderer on Earth and whoever finds me will kill me."

GOD told him, "No. Anyone who kills Cain will pay for it seven times over." GOD put a mark on Cain to protect him so that no one who met him would kill him.

Cain left the presence of GOD and lived in No-Man's-Land, east of Eden.

Cain slept with his wife. She conceived and had Enoch. He then built a city and named it after his son, Enoch.

Enoch had Irad,

Irad had Mehujael,

Mehujael had Methushael,

Methushael had Lamech.

Lamech married two wives, Adah and Zillah. Adah gave birth to Jabal, the ancestor of all who live in tents and herd cattle. His brother's name

