

## The Project Gutenberg eBook of Genesis A, by Albert S. Cook

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Genesis A

Editor: Albert S. Cook

Translator: Lawrence Mason

Release date: April 13, 2005 [EBook #15612]

Most recently updated: December 14, 2020

Language: English

Original publication: New York Henry Holt And Company, 1915

Credits: Produced by David Starner, Jason Isbell and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team.

\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GENESIS A \*\*\*

Transcribers Note: Typographic errors in the original have been retained. In the table of contents there are two sets of page numbers. The first appears to be the page numbers from the original MS. The second set in parentheses are the page numbers from this facsimile. As the body of the text is referred to by line numbers, that section has not been rewrapped.

---

### YALE STUDIES IN ENGLISH

ALBERT S. COOK, EDITOR

XLVIII

## GENESIS A

TRANSLATED FROM THE OLD ENGLISH

BY

LAWRENCE MASON, PHD.

INSTRUCTOR IN ENGLISH IN YALE COLLEGE

NEW YORK

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1915

---

Page 134

Page 135

## PREFACE

Page 136

The purpose of the translator in offering to the public this version of the *Genesis* is to aid in forwarding—be it by but one jot or tittle—the general knowledge and appreciation of Old English literature. Professed students in this department will always have an incentive to master the language; but to the public at large the strangeness of this medium will prove an

insurmountable barrier, and the general reader must therefore either remain in ignorance of our older literary monuments or else employ translations. The present contribution<sup>[1]</sup> to the growing body of such translations possesses, perhaps, more than a single interest or appeal, in that it renders accessible not only a poem of considerable intrinsic worth, a poem associated with the earliest of the great names in English literary history, and a forerunner and possible source of *Paradise Lost*, but also an important example of a literary *genre* once immensely popular, though now quite fallen into abeyance—namely, the lengthy versified Scriptural paraphrase. For some idea of the prominent part played by this form, even so late as the seventeenth century, the reader is referred to any comprehensive manual of English literature.

In this translation, prose has been employed instead of verse, for two reasons. In the first place, no metrical form has yet been found which, in the writer's judgment, at all adequately represents in modern English the effect of the Old English alliterative verse, or stave-rime. And in the second place, to the writer's thinking, no one but a poet should attempt to write verse: and on that principle, translations would be few and far between, unless prose were used.

Page 137

But even granting the value of the *Genesis* as a fit subject for translation, and the necessity for the employment of prose, the reader may still quarrel with the particular *kind* of prose hereinbelow essayed; so a brief explanation and, it is hoped, vindication of the theory of translation here followed would seem desirable, inasmuch as considerable divergence is intended from the methods adopted by the various translators of the *Beowulf*, for example. First, Biblical phraseology has been eschewed, partly because in a modern writer it savors of affectation, but chiefly because his Bible was the point of departure for the Old English author, and to return now in the translation to our Bible would be a stultification of his purposes by a sort of *argumentum in circulo*. Secondly, archaisms, poetic diction, and unusual constructions (the "translation English" anathematized by the Rhetorics) have been so far as possible avoided, contrary to the practice of most translators from Old English poetry, because it is felt strongly that such usages will not produce upon modern readers the effect that this poetry produced originally upon the readers or hearers for whom it was intended. For this poetry could not have seemed alien or exotic to its original public: either through familiar poetic convention, or owing to the staccato and ejaculatory character of ordinary spoken language at the time, this spasmodic, apostrophic poetry must have seemed natural and beautiful, in the seventh or eighth century. But—

Why take the style of those heroic times?  
For nature brings not back the mastodon,  
Nor we those times.

Page 138

To translate is to modernize. This rendering, therefore, is not an artificial, pseudo-antique hybrid, but frankly endeavors to convey its original to modern readers in idiomatic modern literary English, devoid of any conscious mannerisms whatsoever. The writer has aimed at the utmost literal fidelity consistent with the observance of all the usages of current standard English; he has not attempted, however, to convert the explosive appositions, with prevailing asyndeton and excessive synonymy, of his original into the easy, flowing sentences more familiar to modern eyes and ears, for the change would sacrifice altogether too much of the distinctive character and flavor of Old English poetry.

The text upon which this work is based is that of the Grein-Wülker *Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Poesie*, 1894, save for a few minor changes in punctuation and the few departures recorded in the Notes. Grein's translation of the poem into modern German stave-rime, 1857, has been frequently consulted, but the writer's real indebtedness to it is felt to be slight. He takes great pleasure, finally, in acknowledging his deep sense of obligation, on many grounds, to the general editor of this series, Professor Albert S. Cook; the work was undertaken at his suggestion, and he has been most kind in giving advice and criticism.

YALE UNIVERSITY,  
July 17, 1913.

Lawrence Mason.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 139

With Specification of the Biblical Chapters and Verses represented in each Section of the Poem

	PAGE
<b>PREFACE</b>	III ( <a href="#">136</a> )
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	VI ( <a href="#">139</a> )
<b>GENESIS A:</b>	
Section I <sup>[2]</sup>	1 ( <a href="#">141</a> )
Section II (Gen. 1.1-5)	3 ( <a href="#">143</a> )
Section III (Gen. 1.4-10)	4 ( <a href="#">144</a> )
Lines 169-234 (Gen. 1.28, 31; 2.10-14, 18, 21, 22)	5 ( <a href="#">145</a> )
Lines 852-871 (Gen. 3.8-10)	7 ( <a href="#">147</a> )

Section X (Gen. 3.11-15)	7 ( <a href="#">147</a> )
Section XI (Gen. 3.16, 17, 19, 21, 24; 4.1-5, 8)	9 ( <a href="#">149</a> )
Section XII (Gen. 4.9-19, 21)	11 ( <a href="#">151</a> )
Section XIII (Gen. 4.22-26; 5.3-14)	13 ( <a href="#">153</a> )
Section XIV (Gen. 5.15-29, 32)	15 ( <a href="#">155</a> )
Section XV (Gen. 6.1-8, 11-19, 22)	17 ( <a href="#">157</a> )
Section XVI (Gen. 7.1-7, 11, 12, 16-23)	18 ( <a href="#">158</a> )
Section XVII (Gen. 8.1-4, 6-12)	20 ( <a href="#">160</a> )
Section XVIII (Gen. 8.15-18, 20; 9.1-9, 11-19)	22 ( <a href="#">162</a> )
Section XIX (Gen. 9.20-28; 10.1, 2, 6, 8-10; 11.1)	24 ( <a href="#">164</a> )
Section XX (Gen. 10.1, 20, 21; 11.2, 4-8, 10, 26, 27)	26 ( <a href="#">166</a> )
Section XXI (Gen. 11.29-32; 12.1-8)	28 ( <a href="#">168</a> )
Section XXII (Gen. 12.8, 10-20; 13.1-4)	30 ( <a href="#">170</a> )
Section XXIII (Gen. 13.5-13)	32 ( <a href="#">172</a> )
Section XXIV (Gen. 14.1, 2, 4, 10-16)	33 ( <a href="#">173</a> )
Section XXV (Gen. 14.17-24; 15.1)	37 ( <a href="#">177</a> )
Section XXVI (Gen. 15.2-5, 7, 18; 16.1-6)	39 ( <a href="#">179</a> )
Section XXVII (Gen. 16.6-12, 15, 16; 17.1, 2, 10-14, 19)	41 ( <a href="#">181</a> )
Section XXVIII (Gen. 17.17-21, 23, 24, 27; 18.12-14)	43 ( <a href="#">183</a> )
Section XXIX (Gen. 18.16, 17, 20-22)	44 ( <a href="#">184</a> )
Section XXX (Gen. 19.1-13, 18-26)	45 ( <a href="#">185</a> )
Section XXXI (Gen. 19.27-30, 33, 35-38)	49 ( <a href="#">189</a> )
Section XXXII (Gen. 20.1-10)	50 ( <a href="#">190</a> )
Section XXXIII (Gen. 20.11, 13-18; 21.1-4)	51 ( <a href="#">191</a> )
Section XXXIV (Gen. 21.5, 8-14, 22-24, 27)	53 ( <a href="#">193</a> )
Section XXXV (Gen. 21.33, 34; 22.1-13)	55 ( <a href="#">195</a> )
<b>NOTES</b>	58 ( <a href="#">198</a> )

## GENESIS A

### I.

Ours is a great duty—to praise in word and love at heart the heavens' Ruler, the glorious King of Hosts: He is the substance of all power, the head of all high things, the Lord Almighty. Origin or beginning was never made for Him, nor shall an end ever come to the eternal God: but, on the contrary, He is for ever supreme by His high puissance over the heavenly kingdoms; just and mighty, He rules the mansions of the sky, which were established far and wide through the power of God for the sons of glory, the keepers of souls.

These angelic hosts were wont to feel joy and rapture, transcendent bliss, in the presence of their Creator: their beatitude was measureless. Glorious ministers magnified their Lord, spoke his praise with zeal, lauded the Master of their being, and were excellently happy in the majesty of God. They had no knowledge of working evil or wickedness, but dwelt in innocence forever with their Lord: from the beginning they wrought in heaven nothing but righteousness and truth, until a Prince of angels through pride strayed into sin: then they would consult their own advantage no longer, but turned away from God's lovingkindness. They had vast arrogance, in that by the might of multitudes they sought to wrest from the Lord the celestial mansions, spacious and heaven-bright. Then there fell upon them, grievously, the envy, presumption, and pride of the Angel who first began to carry out the evil plot, to weave it and promote it, when he boasted by word—

35 as he thirsted for conflict—that he wished to own the  
 home and high throne of the heavenly kingdom to the  
 north. Thereupon God became angered and hostile  
 towards the beings whom he had formerly exalted in  
 beauty and glory: he created for the traitors a marvelous  
 40 abode as penalty for their action, namely the pangs of  
 Hell, bitter afflictions; Our Lord called forth that  
 abysmal joyless house of punishment to wait for the  
 outcast keepers of souls.<sup>[3]</sup> When he knew that it was  
 ready, he enveloped it in eternal night and equipped it  
 with torment, filling it with fire and fearful cold, with  
 fume and red flame: then he commanded the terrors  
 45 of suffering to increase throughout that hapless place.

They had committed a dire sin against God: on that  
 account dire punishment befell them. They asserted,  
 in fierce mood, that they wished to seize the kingdom  
 and could easily do so: but this presumption mocked  
 50 them when their Lord, the high King of heaven, lifted  
 up his almighty hand against the throng. The mad  
 rebels, accursed ones, could not make head against God,  
 but the Highest troubled their spirits and humbled their  
 55 pride, for he was incensed; he stripped the sinners of  
 victory and might, of dominion and honor, and further  
 took from his foes happiness, peace, and all joys, as well  
 as bright glory, and finally, with his own exceeding power,  
 60 wreaked his wrath on his adversaries in mighty ruin.  
 He was stern in mood, grimly embittered, and seized  
 upon his foes with resistless grasp and broke them in  
 his grip, enraged at heart, and deprived his opponents of  
 65 their native seat,<sup>[4]</sup> their bright abodes on high. For  
 our Creator dismissed and banished from heaven the  
 overweening band of angels: the Lord sent away on a  
 long journey the faithless multitude, the hateful host,  
 70 the miserable spirits; their pride was broken, their threat  
 overthrown, their glory shattered, and their beauty  
 dimmed; thenceforth they abode in desolation, because  
 of their dark exile. They did not dare to laugh aloud,  
 but lived wearied by the torments of hell and became  
 75 familiar with woes, bitterness, and sorrow; covered with  
 darkness, they bore their pain,—a heavy sentence,  
 because they had begun to battle against God.

80 Then, as formerly, true peace existed in heaven, fair  
 amity: for the Lord was dear to all, the Sovereign to his  
 servants; and the majesty of the joyful angelic hosts  
 increased, through the favor of the Almighty.

## II.

85 So those who inhabited the sky, home of glory, were  
 at peace; hatred was gone, as well as sorrow and strife  
 among angels, ever since the rebellious hosts, bereft of the  
 light, had relinquished heaven. Behind them stood in  
 grandeur their seats rich in glorious workmanship, teeming  
 with blessings in God's kingdom, bright and perennially  
 90 bountiful,—but all devoid of occupants, ever since the  
 miserable spirits had gone to their place of punishment,  
 their vile prison. Then our Lord bethought him, in  
 meditative mood, how he might people again, and with

95 a better race, his high creation, the noble seats and glory-  
crowned abodes which the haughty rebels had left  
vacant, high in heaven. Therefore Holy God willed by  
his plenteous power that under the circle of the firma-  
100 ment the earth should be established, with sky above and  
wide water, a world-creation in place of the foes whom  
in their apostasy he hurled from bliss.

As yet there was nothing at all created here, except  
105 shadows, but this broad earth stood deep and dim, idle  
and useless, alien even to God himself; on it the King  
whose purpose never falters turned his eyes and beheld  
the place void of joy; he saw dark clouds, black under  
110 the firmament, throng in the eternal night, dun and  
waste, until this world-creation came to pass through  
the word of the King of Glory. First the everlasting  
Lord, protector of all things, created heaven and earth;  
115 as the almighty King put forth the firmament and with  
victorious might established this ample world. The  
earth was as yet unadorned by vegetation: the ocean  
covered it far and wide, turbid waves in the eternal  
120 night. Then was the glorious Spirit of heaven's guardian  
borne over the sea with sovereign virtue. For the King  
of the angels commanded Light, dispenser of life, to  
come forth over the broad expanse: quickly was the  
125 Arch-King's mandate fulfilled, and Holy Light appeared  
over the waste spaces, as the Creator had ordained it.  
The Wielder of Victory next sundered light from darkness,  
shadow from radiance, over the surge of the sea. Then  
he formed the two names of the dispensers of life: light  
130 was first called "Day" by the word of the Lord, a  
beauteous creation. This period of creation greatly  
pleased God, in the beginning: the first day saw the  
dark shadows duskily flee away over the wide earth.

### III.

135 Time now went forth over the frame-work of the  
world: after this shining splendor, the Lord our Creator  
fashioned the first evening, but on its track rushed a  
thronging welter of darkness which the Lord himself  
140 called by the name of "Night." Our Saviour sundered  
these two: ever since then they have ceaselessly wrought  
and fulfilled the will of the Lord over the earth.  
Then the second day advanced, light after darkness;  
145 and the Ruler of Life straightway commanded a glad  
sky-substance to appear in the midst of the flood: our  
Master parted the waves and wrought there the found-  
ations of the firmament: this the Mighty One, omnipotent  
150 King, reared aloft from the earth through his own word.  
The flood was divided under the high heavens by holy  
power, the waters from the waters, and still they remain  
so under the firmament which roofs all nations.

155 Then swiftly came advancing over the world the third  
great morn. Nor were the spreading lands and ways  
yet deemed needful by our Lord, but the earth stood  
girt fast by water. Through his word, the Ruler of  
the angels bade the waters be gathered together, which  
160 now hold their course beneath the skies in an appointed

place. Then speedily the broad ocean stood all together  
under heaven, as the Holy One commanded, for the  
flood was sundered from the dry land. Thereupon  
Life's Ruler looked upon the dry land, the Preserver of  
165 mankind [found it] widely visible, and the King of  
Glory called it "Earth." He established a proper  
channel for the waves, the broad flood, and fettered....

---

(*Lacuna in MS.*<sup>[5]</sup>)

---

170 The Ruler of Heaven did not think it fitting that  
Adam, the keeper of Paradise and shepherd of the new  
creation, should be alone any longer: so the supreme  
King, Ruler Almighty, made a companion for him—  
175 created Woman, and gave this helpmate to his cherished  
Man as the first and fruitful light of his life. He took his  
material from Adam's body and skilfully removed a  
rib from his side: the latter was deep in repose and  
180 slumbered peacefully; he felt no pain, though a little  
uneasiness, nor did a drop of blood come from the wound,  
but the Prince of the Angels took from his body a living  
bone while the man was unwounded. From this God  
fashioned a noble woman, and put into her the breath  
185 of life and an immortal soul: these two were like the  
angels. Thus was Adam's bride<sup>[6]</sup> endowed with a  
living spirit. They were both radiantly beautiful in their  
youthfulness, in the world prepared by the might of  
190 the Lord: they did not know how to undertake or  
work evil, but on the contrary there was in the breast  
of each a burning love of God. Then the benign King,  
Ruler of everyone born of the race of man, blessed these  
first two creatures, father and mother, woman and  
195 man. Thereafter he spoke these words:

"Be fruitful now and increase; fill the verdant earth  
with progeny, your race, both sons and daughters. Under  
your sway shall be the salt water and all the created  
200 world. Enjoy prosperous days, [ruling over] both  
the fishes of the deep and the fowls of the air. Into  
your power are given the sacred herd and the wild beasts  
and every living thing that walks the earth; all breath-  
205 ing creatures, whatsoever the sea brings forth over the  
whale-paths, all things belong to you two."

Then our Maker beheld the beauty of his works and  
the fullness of his abundance, his new creations. Pa-  
210 radise stood, good and holy, filled with blessings, ever-  
lasting bounty. That kindly soil was beauteously  
watered by the rushing seas and springing fountains;  
for never yet had clouds dark with wind brought down  
rains over the broad earth: but none the less the ground  
215 stood crowned with its harvest. From this new Garden  
four noble river-streams have their outflow: these were  
all partitioned out of one fair-shining water by the might  
220 of the Lord, when he created the earth, and [were thus]  
sent out into the world. Men dwelling on the earth,

225 the peoples of the nations, call one of these Fison, which  
broadly girdles with its bright streams a quarter of the  
earth beyond Hebeleac<sup>[7]</sup>: in that ancestral soil the sons  
of men, nations near and far, find the best gold and  
precious stones,<sup>[8]</sup> as the books tell us. Then the second  
230 [river], whose name is Geon, girdles the land and govern-  
ment of Ethiopia, an ample kingdom. The third is  
Tigris, a foaming stream which encircles the people of  
Assyria. Such likewise is the fourth, which men among  
many a nation now widely call Eufrates....<sup>[9]</sup>

Page 147

---

(Genesis B intervenes here.)

---

855 Then the Almighty King, the great Lord, came forth  
into the garden about mid-day, by his divine will; for  
our Saviour and merciful Father wished to find out  
what his children were doing: he knew that they were  
sinful to whom he had given perfection. Bereft of  
their beatitude and stricken in spirit, they avoided his  
860 presence by retreating among the shadows of the trees;  
they hid themselves in dark recesses, when they heard  
the holy word of the Lord and feared him. Straight-  
way the King of Heaven began to call for the keeper  
of the [newly] created world; the mighty Lord bade  
865 his son come to him forthwith. He answered him then,  
the wretched one himself, destitute of clothing, [and]  
said:

"Lord of my life, I am hiding myself here because  
870 unclothed; basely sinful, I am covering my shame with  
leaves: my pain is cruel, most bitter in my heart. I dare  
not now go forth before thy presence: I am all naked!"

## X. <sup>[10]</sup>

To him then God at once replied:

[ToC](#)

875 "Tell me this, my son: why do you seek the shadows,  
in shame? You certainly received no disgrace at my  
hands, but on the contrary delight in all things! How  
come you to know evil and hide shame and behold sor-  
row and cover your body with leaves and, saddened and  
crushed by the woes of life, say that you need clothing,  
880 unless you have tasted of an apple from the tree which  
I forbade to you by express command?"

Page 148

Adam then answered him again:

885 "The woman, my Lord, the fair woman gave into  
my hand this fruit, which I accepted in sin against thee.  
Now I bear this manifest sign in myself: I know so much  
the more of sorrow!"

Then Almighty God asked Eve about this:

890 "Why did you forfeit these plenteous delights, daughter,  
the new creations of paradise, abundant blessings, when  
in your cupidity you seized on the trunk and took the



fruit from the branch of the tree and ate the accursed  
thing in defiance of me, and gave of the apple to Adam,  
895 when you both by my prohibition were so strictly for-  
bidden to do so?"

Then the fair maiden, the woman overcome by shame,  
answered him:

"The serpent tempted me and urgently prompted me  
to sin; through fair words the worm goaded me into  
900 accursed frowardness, until I basely performed the  
deadly act, committed the crime, and robbed the tree in  
the grove, as it was not lawful to do, and ate the fruit."

Then our Saviour, the Lord Almighty, ordained wide  
905 wanderings for the serpent, the venomous worm, and  
spoke further in these words:

"To far distant times shalt thou, an outcast, crawl  
over the broad earth on thy breast, thy belly; without  
feet shalt thou move about, so long as life and breath  
910 remain in thee. Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy  
life, since thou hast accomplished so evil a deed here.  
Thee the woman shall war against, and hate thee  
[worse than anything else] under heaven, and shall tread  
upon thine accursed head with her feet; thou shalt lie  
in wait at her heels, in ever-new conflict: for there  
915 shall be war between thy offspring and her offspring  
always, as long as the earth exists under the cloudy  
skies. Now dost thou understand and know, baleful  
destroyer of mankind, how thou shalt live!"

Page 149

## XI.

Then God wrathfully spoke to Eve:

"Depart now from bliss! Thou shalt be ever under  
920 the sway of men; with fear of men cruelly oppressed,  
thou shalt sorrowfully endure the heinousness of thine  
offence and wait for death, and with weeping and wailing  
and great anguish bring into the world thy sons and  
daughters!"

Likewise to Adam did the Eternal Lord, Source of  
925 Light and Life, declare a cruel edict:

"Thou shalt seek another country, a joyless dwelling-  
930 place, and wander in exile, naked and needy, driven  
away from the blessings of paradise; the separation of  
soul and body is now ordained for thee. Lo, thou hast  
wickedly originated sin: therefore thou shalt toil, and  
win thy sustenance on earth by thyself, acquire it by  
935 the sweat of thy face, and thus eat thy bread so long  
as thou livest here,—until ungentle disease, which thou  
didst recently take to thyself with the apple, strikes  
thee cruelly to the heart: then shalt thou die."

Behold, we learn thus how bitter afflictions and uni-  
940 versal miseries came upon us.

Thereupon the Guardian of Glory, our Creator, girded  
them with clothing; the Lord bade them cover their  
nakedness with some simple garments, and bade them  
set forth and depart from paradise into a harder life.

[ToC](#)



945 Behind them, by God's command, a holy angel with a  
fiery sword shut the gate of their blissful home of peace  
and joy; nor may any guileful sin-stained man ever fare  
950 thither again, for the warder has might and strength  
who keeps for the Lord that greater life rich in glories.  
Yet the Almighty, our First Father, would not take  
away all comforts from Adam and Eve, though they had  
955 fallen away from him: but he still let the lofty roof  
studded with holy stars stand as a solace for them, and  
gave them ample possessions, and bade the seas and  
land bring forth for the pair multitudes of each of the  
960 young-producing species [necessary] for the sustenance  
of this life. So, after their sin, they inhabited a more  
sorrowful land, a dwelling and country less fertile in  
every kind of blessing than their former abode had  
been, from which they had been driven out after their  
misdeed.

Page 150

965 Then they began, by God's command, to produce  
children, as the Lord had charged them. To begin  
with, by Adam and Eve were brought into the world  
two fair first-born sons, Cain and Abel. The books  
970 tell us how these first toilers, loving brothers, gained  
their subsistence, riches and food: the one who was  
elder born tilled the earth with his strength; the second  
975 kept the flocks, helping his father, until a great number  
of days passed. They both brought an offering to the  
Lord: the Prince of the Angels, King of all things, looked  
upon Abel's offering with [favorable] eyes, but would  
not consider the sacrifice of Cain; that caused strong  
980 indignation in the heart of the man: rage arose in the  
youth's breast, livid hatred, and wrath by reason of  
envy: then he wrought evil deeds with his hands, slew  
985 his kinsman, his own brother, shed his blood,—yea,  
Cain [shed] Abel's. And the earth soaked up this blood  
shed by murder, the life-blood of a man.

After this fatal blow woe was aroused, the long train  
of afflictions: since then from this twig have hatefully  
990 sprouted ever longer and stronger bitter branches: these  
branches of calamity spread far and wide over the nations  
of men: hardly and sorely did the twigs of misery strike  
the sons of men (and so they still do), from which the  
995 broad leaves of all suffering began to spring. We may  
tearfully lament this account, this death-bringing fatal-  
ity, and not in vain: but the fair woman injured us  
[more] severely through the first sin which men dwelling  
1000 on earth ever committed against the Lord, since Adam  
was filled with the breath of life by the mouth of God!

Page 151

## XII.

Then the Master of Splendor asked Cain through his  
word, where Abel was, upon the earth. Quickly there-  
1005 upon the wicked worker of slaughter answered him:

"I know not Abel's coming or going, my kinsman's  
course: I was not my brother's keeper!"

Then the Prince of Angels, the Spirit rich in good  
things, spoke to him again:

[ToC](#)

1010 "Why didst thou cast that virtuous man, thy brother,  
on his death-bed with thy violent hands, and his blood  
now calleth and crieth unto me? For this murder  
1015 shalt thou undergo punishment and wander in exile  
accursed unto distant ages: nor shall the earth, fair  
for all necessary sustenance, yield thee harvest, for it  
drank sacred blood at thy hands: therefore the earth,  
verdant in beauty, denies thee its bounties. Infamous,  
thou shalt sorrowfully wander from thy native land,  
1020 because thou hast been Abel's murderer: thou shalt  
go forth an outcast over a long road, hateful to all thy  
relatives!"

Then Cain answered him<sup>[11]</sup>:

1025 "Now I dare not hope for any grace in the kingdoms  
of the world, for I have forfeited, O high King of heaven,  
thy favor as well as love and peace: therefore shall I  
travel far ways in expectation of woes, whensoever any  
one far or near shall find me, in my guilt, who may  
1030 remember my crime, my brother's murder: I shed his  
blood, his life-blood on the ground. On this day thou  
dost banish me from comfort and drive me from my  
native land: someone of my foes shall be my murderer;  
1035 accursed, O God, shall I wander from thy sight."

Then the Lord of Victory spoke to him:

1040 "Thou needst not as yet dread the terror of death  
and murder, though thou shalt depart far from thy  
friends, an outcast. If any man by his own hand  
deprives thee of life, then shall come upon him sevenfold  
vengeance for his sin, as penalty for his deed."

1045 Our Ruler and glorious Lord set on him a sign, the  
Master [set] a symbol of immunity, so that none of his  
foes far or near might dare to approach him with warlike  
intent; then he bade the wicked one leave forever his  
mother and sons, all his family. Thereupon Cain set  
1050 out and departed sorrowing from before the face of God,  
a joyless exile, and built himself a dwelling to the east,  
a habitation far from his fatherland: there a fair maiden,  
a woman of the country, bore him offspring.

1055 The eldest was called Enos, first-born of Cain; he  
began at once to build a city, with his kinsfolk: that  
was the first beneath the clouds of all the fortifications  
1060 which heroes and swordsmen have caused to be built.  
Therein his offspring first arose, born of his wife in the  
citadel: the eldest son of Enos was called Jared. Thence  
1065 arose the tribe of Cain, which increased the numbers  
of its race. Next to Jared, Malalehel was the keeper  
of the heritage after his father, until he passed away.  
Afterwards Mathusal shared the royal treasures with  
1070 his kinsfolk, with his brothers, scion after scion, until  
wise through length of days he had to consummate  
his departure from the world and forsake life. After  
his father's day, Lamech received the household  
1075 goods and domestic wealth: two wives, Ada and  
Sella, women of the country, bore offspring to him: of  
these one was Jabal by name, son of Lamech, who  
through skilful cunning first of dwellers here below

1080 awoke by his hands the song of the harp, that melo-  
dious sound.

### XIII.

[ToC](#)

1085 Likewise, at this same time, there was in this family  
the abundance of his skill was a master-smith, and first  
among men through the craft of his mind he was the  
inventor of agricultural implements upon earth: since  
then the sons of men dwelling in cities have known far  
and wide how to use brass and iron.

1090 Once on a time Lamech himself made in words a wicked  
confession to his two wives, his dear bed-fellows, Ada  
and Sella:

1095 "In murder I have slain a certain one among my near  
relations; I stained my hands with the gory death of  
Cain, destroyed with my hands the father of Enos, the  
slayer of Abel, and poured on the ground the life-blood  
of a man. Well knew I that for this shall come at last  
1100 the sevenfold vengeance of the King of Truth, great  
according to the crime: my fall and destruction shall  
be more sternly meted out, with grim horror, when I  
depart!"—

1105 Now, there came to Adam in Abel's place another  
heir born in legal wedlock, an upright son, whose name  
was Seth: he was happy and contributed greatly to the  
comfort of his parents, Adam and Eve, his father and  
1110 mother, and took Abel's place in worldly affairs.

Then the first of men spoke these words:

1115 "The Eternal Lord of Victory and Ruler of Life has  
given me a son in place of the dear one whom Cain  
slew, and our God has driven my grievous sorrow from  
my heart with this man-child: to Him be praise for this!"  
When he began again to raise up another son to him-  
self by his wife, to be his heir, Adam the vigorous cham-  
1120 pion had [numbered] 130 winters of this life in the world.  
The Scriptures tell us that on earth here for 800 years  
after that, Adam increased his family with maidens  
1125 and youths: in all he had 930<sup>[12]</sup> winters, when he had to  
give over this world through the departure of his spirit.  
After him Seth ruled over the people,<sup>[13]</sup> the son held  
1130 the heritage after the parents, and took unto himself  
a wife: he counted 105 winters when he first began to  
increase the numbers of his family by sons and daughters.  
1135 The eldest son of Seth was called Enos: he first of all  
the children of man called upon God,<sup>[14]</sup> since Adam  
stepped upon the green grass, endowed with the spirit  
of life. Seth was happy, and afterwards begot sons  
1140 and daughters for 807 winters: in all he had 912, when  
the time was fulfilled that he should accomplish his  
departure.

1145 After him, when he departed out of the world, Enos  
held the heritage, after the earth had received the body  
of Seth, fruitful in the Lord. He was dear to God, and  
lived here 90 winters before he begot children here by

1150 his wife through intercourse: to him then was Cainan  
first born, an heir in his ancestral home. Afterwards  
for 815 winters<sup>[15]</sup> in the peace of God, the wise hero  
begot offspring, sons and daughters: he died, the sage  
patriarch, when he had [fulfilled] 905 [years].

1155 After Enos, Cainan was chieftain, keeper, and leader  
of his race: he had [numbered] 70 winters before a son  
was born to him: when an heir was born for the patri-  
1160 mony, this son of Cainan was called Malalehel. There-  
after for 840 [years] he increased the number of his  
family by [begetting] children. In all, the son of Enos  
1165 had [lived] 910 winters, when he left this world, when  
the number of his appointed days under the expanse of  
the skies was fulfilled.

Page 155

#### XIV.

1170 After him Malalehel kept the land and inheritance for  
many seasons. The chieftain had [lived] 65 winters,  
when he began to beget children by his wife. His wife  
brought a son to him, the woman to the man: this son  
in his childhood, as I have heard, the man-child in his  
1175 youth, was called Jared. After this Malalehel lived  
long and rejoiced in [his] blessings, [all] the delights of  
men here below and worldly treasures: 895 winters had  
1180 he numbered when he departed; to his son he left the  
land and the government.

[ToC](#)

1185 After him for a long while Yeared dispensed gold to  
the people; the chieftain was noble, a pious hero, and a  
ruler dear to his subjects; 165 expectant winters he  
lived his life in this world, when his happiness arrived,  
for his wife brought a son into the world: this son was  
called Enoch, his fair first-born. But the father still  
1190 added descendants to the number of his race, for 800  
[years]: in all he had [counted] 965 [years] by night-  
reckoning when he departed, the ancient patriarch,  
1195 when he gave up this world. And Yeared left land and  
government to his wise [son], the dear leader.

1200 After this Enoch raised aloft the sovereignty, the sagaci-  
ous leadership of the people: in no wise did he let fall the  
dominion and authority<sup>[16]</sup> while he was guardian of his  
kinsfolk: he enjoyed days of happiness, and begot sons,  
for 300 winters; the Lord, the Ruler of the Skies, was  
gracious to him. From this world the hero sought in  
1205 the body the joy and bliss of the Lord; in no wise did  
he die the death of this earth, as men [ordinarily] do  
here, young and old, when God takes away from them  
their possessions and substance, [all] earth's treasures,  
and their life as well: but while living he set forth with  
1210 the King of Angels out of this transitory life into bliss,<sup>[17]</sup>  
[clad] in the robes which his spirit received before his  
mother brought him forth to men. He left the people  
1215 to his to his eldest son, his first-born; 365 winters had he  
[numbered] when he left the world.

Page 156

1220 For some time after him, his son Mathusal held the  
inheritance, who for the longest space of time enjoyed  
the pleasures of the world in this body: he begot a

multitude of sons and daughters, before the day of his death. When he had to depart from among men, the venerable hero had [enjoyed] 970 winters.

1225 After him, his son Lamech held the government: for a long time thereafter he ruled over the world; he had [lived] 102 winters when the season came for the chief-tain to begin to beget noble heirs, sons and daughters.

1230 After this the lord and chief of the people lived 595 [years], enjoyed many a winter under the skies, ruled the race well, and begot children: youths and maidens arose as heirs to him. The eldest of them he named  
1235 Noe, who reigned over the land among men after Lamech departed.

This sage ruler of the noblemen was 500 years old when he first began to beget children, as the books tell.  
1240 The eldest son of Noe was called Sem, the next Cham, the third Jafeth.

The people multiplied widely under the skies: the  
1245 race of men increased in number over the earth, by [the birth of] sons and daughters. Now the descendants of Seth, that beloved leader of the people, were still very much cherished, dear to the Lord and prosperous.

## XV.

Page 157

[ToC](#)

1250 But when the sons of God began to seek brides among the race of Cain, the accursed folk, and chose wives from among them against the will of God, the children of men from among the sinful maidens, beautiful and bright, then the Ruler of the heavens pronounced his wrath against mankind and spoke these words:

1255 "The men of Cain's race have not been absent from my mind, but that stock has sorely offended me. Now the sons of Seth renew my wrath and take to themselves  
1260 the maidens of my enemies as wives: the fairness of the women, the maidens' faces, and the eternal Fiend have shamefully captivated the multitude of men who were formerly in peace."

1265 After that, for 120 winters, duly numbered, exile afflicted the accursed race in this world; then the Lord wished to inflict punishment upon the covenant-breakers, and to smite with death the doers of evil, the giant folk unloved by God, the great and sinful foes hateful to the  
1270 Lord, when the Wielder of Victory himself saw what was man's wickedness on earth, and how they all were bold in crime and utterly vicious. He thought to  
1275 punish rigorously the races of men, to seize upon the peoples grimly and sorely, with cruel might: he repented exceedingly that he had ever created the author of the nations, the source of the peoples, when he fashioned Adam. He said that on account of the sins of men he  
1280 would utterly blot out all that there was on earth, destroy every one of the bodies in whose bosom the breath of life was concealed: all that came near to the sons of men, the Lord determined to annihilate.

1285 Noe, the son of Lamech, just and honorable, was dear

1290 to God, the Preserver. The Lord knew that the virtue  
of the true man prevailed in the innermost thoughts of  
his breast; therefore the Lord, holy in helpfulness, Pro-  
1295 tector of all men, told him by revelation what he pur-  
posed inflicting upon the wicked ones: for he saw the  
earth full of unrighteousness, the broad plains laden  
with sin, polluted with foulness. Then spoke the Al-  
mighty, our Saviour, and said to Noe:

1300 "I am resolved to destroy humanity by means of a  
deluge, and also every kind of living thing that the air  
and waters produce and support, both beast and bird:  
but thou shalt have shelter, with thy sons, when the  
dark waters, the black floods of death, destroy mankind,  
the vile sinners. Begin to build thee a ship, a mighty  
sea-house, in which thou shalt give a place of refuge  
1305 to many a one and a safe home to every species on earth,  
after thine own. Build partitions in the midst of the  
ship. Make the boat fifty cubits wide, thirty high,  
1310 three hundred long, and joint it stoutly against the  
assault of the waves. There shall be a creature of every  
living species, a scion of every race on earth, led within  
that wooden fortress; so must the Ark be the greater!"

1315 Noe did as the Lord commanded him, obeyed the  
holy King of Heaven, began at once to build that Ark,  
the mighty sea-chest; he told his kinsmen that there  
was a horrible thing impending over the people, dire  
1320 punishment: but they heeded this not at all. Then,  
after several winters, the Changeless Lord saw that the  
vast sea-house, Noe's vessel, towered up in readiness,  
strengthened within and without with the best earth-  
lime, against the waves; it is unique in its kind: the  
1325 harder the fierce waters of the dark billows beat it, the  
stouter does it ever become.

## XVI.

1330 Then our Preserver spoke to Noe: "I give thee my  
pledge for this, O dearest of mankind, that thou mayst  
now take up thy course with the creatures of all kinds  
which thou shalt bear across the deep water for many  
days, in the bosom of thy vessel. Lead on board the  
Ark, as I bid thee, thy sons, the three first-born, and  
1335 your four wives. And do thou take into the sea-house  
seven [members] duly counted of each of the species that  
live to [supply] nourishment for men, and two of each  
of the others: likewise take on the Ark some of all plants  
1340 growing on earth used for food by the people who are  
to sail over the floods with thee. Feed freely the differ-  
ent species of animals, until I shall prepare a place under  
heaven by my Word for those who are saved from this  
1345 watery journey. Depart now with thy household into  
the Ark, with the multitude of dependent things; I know  
thee for a good and true man: thou art worthy of  
safety and mercy, with thy sons. In seven nights now I  
1350 shall let the deadly rain fall from above upon the face  
of the broad earth. For forty days will I set my ven-  
geance against mankind, and with a deluge blot out all  
the possessions and possessors that are beyond the sides

1355 of the Ark, when the black storm begins to descend."

1360 Then Noe left him, as our Preserver commanded, in  
order to lead his children on board the Ark, men and their  
wives together on the great ship; and all that God Al-  
mighty wished to preserve for perpetuating their spe-  
cies, went on board to their food-giver, as the Almighty  
1365 Lord of Hosts bade them through his word. With his  
own hands, the Guardian of Heaven, Wielder of Victory,  
locked the entrance of the sea-house behind them, and  
our Saviour blessed [all] within the Ark with his own  
grace. Noe, the son of Lamech, had 600 winters when  
1370 he embarked with his sons, at God's command,—that  
wise man, with the young people, his dear kinsfolk.

1375 The Lord sent rain from heaven, and likewise let  
the springs from every source rush upon the world far  
and wide, [let] the dark ocean-streams burst forth in  
tumult: the seas rose up over the boundaries of the  
shore. Strong and stern was He who ruled the waters,  
for he covered and shrouded with wan waters the accursed  
1380 wickedness of the sons of the earth and devastated the  
land and homes of men: the Lord wreaked [his fury]  
upon men for their offences. The sea cruelly gripped  
the wretched folk for forty days, and nights as many  
bitter was the suffering then, cruelly fateful to men.  
1385 The waves of the King of Glory drove the souls of the  
vicious ones forth from their bodies. The flood covered  
everything; turbid under the sky [it covered] the high  
mountains over the broad earth, and on its crest raised  
the Ark aloft from the ground, and its noble crew with it,  
1390 [the Ark] which the Lord Himself, our Creator, blessed,  
when he locked the ship. Thereafter this best of ships  
rode widely under the skies over the circle of the sea,  
1395 fared [forth] with its freight: the terrors of the flood  
would have seized them with violence in the sea-traver-  
sing vessel, but the Holy God led and preserved them.  
Fifteen ells deep, by man's measure, stood the deluge  
1400 over the hills. That is a memorable occurrence: there  
was nothing at hand for [the Ark] but destruction,  
except that it was raised aloft into the upper air when  
the inundation killed all creatures upon earth other than  
those whom the Lord of Heaven saved on board the Ark,  
1405 when the Holy God everlasting, the steadfast King, let  
[the flood] rise up with ever-increasing<sup>[18]</sup> stream.

## XVII.

1410 Then God, Wielder of Victory, was mindful of those  
floating on the deep, the son of Lamech and all his  
family, whom the Source of Light and Life had locked  
up against the water in the bosom of the ship. The  
Lord of mankind led the heroes by his Word over far  
lands. Soon the flood began to abate; the deluge ebbed,  
1415 dark under the sky: the true God had turned back again  
the foaming waves, for his children; the Glorious One  
[had] stilled the cataracts of rain. For 150 nights under  
the skies the foamy ship floated, from the time when  
the well-nailed sides of this best of boats first arose  
1420 upon the flood until this number of days of dire time



1425 had passed. Then the Ark of Noe, greatest of ocean-  
homes, settled on high with its burden on the hills which  
are called Armenia: there the pious son of Lamech  
1430 awaited the sure promises for a long time, when the  
Keeper of Life, the Almighty King, gave him relief from  
the perilous chances which he had long undergone,  
when the dark waves bore him abroad on the deep over  
far countries.

The flood was sinking; the sea-farers, the heroes and  
their wives, longed [for the time] when they might  
1435 venture to step out of their straitened quarters over the  
well-nailed side out on the bank, and take their goods  
out of their crowded home. So the guardian of the ship  
tried to find out whether the waters were still sinking  
under the clouds: accordingly, after many days from the  
1440 time the high mountain-sides received the possessions  
and persons of the races of earth, the son of Lamech  
let a black raven fly out of the Ark over the high flood.  
1445 Noe believed that if it found no land in its flight, it  
would zealously seek him again on the ship over the wide  
water. But this hope failed him; for the evil [bird]  
alighted upon a floating corpse: the dark-feathered fowl  
would not seek [further]. Then again after a week he sent  
1450 from the Ark a purple dove to fly over the high water  
after the dark raven, for the purpose of finding out  
whether the foamy sea, the ocean, had given up any  
1455 portion of the green earth, as yet. Widely she sought  
her desired object, and flew afar: nowhere did she find  
a resting-place, since she could not settle on land on foot  
because of the flood, nor alight on a leaf of a tree  
1460 because of the waves; for the steep mountain-sides were  
hidden by the waters. The wild bird set out in the  
evening to seek the Ark over the dusky flood, and sank  
weary and famished in the hands of the pious hero.  
1465 Then after a week the wild-dove was again sent out  
from the Ark: she flew far, until greatly rejoicing she  
found a fair place for rest and settled with her feet on  
a tree; she exulted glad at heart, because exceedingly  
1470 weary [as she was] she could sit in the bright branches  
of a tree: she shook out her wings and started to fly  
back again with her gift, [for she] brought in her flight  
an olive twig, green leaves, into the hands of one [on  
1475 board]. Then quickly the leader of the voyagers per-  
ceived that solace had come, relief from their perilous  
experience. So again after a third week the happy  
man sent out a wild dove; it did not come flying back  
1480 to the ship, for it found land, green groves: the glad  
creature did not wish to show itself ever again under the  
pitch-smearred roof on the Ark, when there was no need.

## XVIII.

Then to Noe spoke our Preserver, Ruler of Heaven,  
with holy voice:

1485 "For you is a dwelling-place again appointed, fair  
on the dry land, joys on earth and rest after your voyage.  
Depart in peace out of the Ark, and lead forth upon the  
bosom of the earth out of this lofty structure your com-

1490 panions and all the creatures which I mercifully preserved  
from the peril of the flood, while the deluge held sway  
[and] covered your home with its abundance.<sup>[19]</sup>"

1495 He did so, and obeyed the Lord, stood forth upon the  
strand, as the Voice bade him, and with great joy led  
out of the ship the survivors of these perils.

Page 163

1500 Then Noe began to institute a sacrifice to our Preserver,  
and immediately took a part of all his possessions which  
the Lord had given to him for his comfort, and then,  
zealous for the offering, even to God Himself, King of  
the Angels, the clear-souled man proffered the sacrifice.  
1505 Certainly our Saviour let it be known, when he blessed  
Noe and his sons too, that [the patriarch] had given Him  
this offering acceptably and in his youth had merited  
by his good deeds that Almighty God, Glorious in  
1510 Splendor, should be gracious to him with all blessings.  
Then again the Lord, Ruler of Glory, spoke a word to  
Noe:

"Increase now and multiply, enjoy your honor, with  
the gladness of peace: fill the earth, make all things teem.  
1515 Into your possession is given a noble heritage, the produce  
of the sea, the fowls of heaven, and the wild beasts,—  
the verdant earth and every treasure. You shall  
1520 never dishonorably procure your food through bloodshed,  
sinfully stricken in its life-blood. Each one first of all  
injures himself in the riches of the spirit, who with the  
edge of the sword takes the life of another: nor shall  
he dare to rejoice in thought over the spoils, for I will  
1525 avenge a man's death all the more severely upon the  
slayer and upon the fratricide, in proportion as blood-  
shed, the slaughter of a man with weapons, or murder by  
[violent] hands, seems to succeed. Man was first created  
1530 in the likeness of God: every man has the form of the  
Lord and of the Angels, whose virtues follow my holy  
will. Increase and multiply, enjoy riches and honor on  
earth. Fill the countries of the world with people, your  
1535 offspring, sons and daughters. I will set up for you this  
my pledge, that I will never again let loose the floods  
upon the earth, the waters over the broad lands: you  
1540 may see this witness frequently upon the clouds, when  
I show my rainbow, [as proof] that I will certainly keep  
this bond with men, while the world lasts."

Page 164

1545 Thus was the prudent son of Lamech, the keeper of  
the heritage, disembarked from his ship after the flood  
with his three sons; and their four wives were named  
Percoba, Olla, Olliva, and Ollivani,<sup>[20]</sup> saved from the  
1550 waters by the true God. The stout-minded heroes,  
the sons of Noe, were called Sem and Cham, and the third  
Iafeth: from these warriors the nations sprang and all  
this earth was filled with the children of men.

## XIX.

1555 Then for the second time Noe began to establish his  
home, with his kinsfolk, and to till the earth for food;  
he struggled and toiled, planted a vineyard, sowed many  
1560 seeds and tended them carefully, so that the green

[ToC](#)

earth, with its fertile boon, brought him fair harvests.

1565 Then it befell once that the blessed man was in his  
dwelling, drunken with wine; weary of feasting he slept,  
and thrust the robe from his body, as was not fitting, and  
lay there with naked limbs: little he noticed that it went  
1570 so ill with him in his hall, when intoxication in his breast  
gripped his heart in the holy house. In this torpor his  
intelligence was cruelly crippled, so that he could not  
call to mind [the necessity for] covering himself with his  
clothing and concealing his nakedness, as was ordained  
1575 for men and women, ever since the minister of Glory  
locked the native abode of life behind our [first father]  
and mother, with a fiery sword. Now Cam, the son  
of Noe, chanced to come in where his father lay bereft  
1580 of consciousness: thereupon would he dutifully no honor  
show to his own father nor at least conceal the dis-  
grace from his kinsmen; but laughing aloud he told  
his brothers how the patriarch rested in the house.  
1585 They repaired thither speedily, their faces carefully  
veiled under cloaks, so that they bore aid to the dear  
man: they were both good men, Sem and Iafeth.

Page 165

1590 Then the son of Lamech awoke from his sleep and  
soon perceived that Cham would not show him, the nobly  
born, any affection and duty, when honor was due him.  
That was bitter to the heart of the holy man, and he  
began to curse his son with [harsh] words: he said that  
1595 Ham should be humbled under the heavens, the servant  
of his kinsfolk on earth: on him and his race those  
baneful words have fallen heavily, ever since. Then  
Noe enjoyed his broad heritage with his sons, free men,  
1600 for 350 winters of this life after the flood: then he passed  
away.

1605 After that his sons dispensed the treasures: they  
begot children: great was their wealth. Thus to Iafeth  
was progeny born, a pleasing family of promising young  
ones, sons and daughters. He was a good man [and]  
ever prosperously held his patrimony, [sharing his]  
abundance with his children, until the treasure of his  
1610 breast, his spirit longing for release, was summoned to  
the judgment of God: thereupon Geomor, Iafeth's son,  
shared his father's property with his friends, dear ones,  
and relatives; with his descendants was filled by genera-  
tion no small portion of the earth.—

1615 Sons of Cham were born, likewise, heirs for the pa-  
trimony: the eldest were called Chus and Cham, very  
noble of soul, the first-born of Cham. Chus was the  
1620 chief of the leaders, dispenser of treasure and worldly  
riches to his brothers, the private property of his father,  
after Cham fared forth from the body when death fell  
1625 to his lot. This leader of the people delivered judgments  
for his race until the number of his days had run: then  
the hero yielded up this world's goods and sought another  
life. After that, the son of Chus, first-born of the  
1630 brothers, ruled the paternal<sup>[21]</sup> heritage, a widely known  
man. So the Scriptures tell us, that he had the greatest  
might and strength of all mankind, in those days: he  
was a prince of the Babylonian Empire, and first of the

Page 166

1635 nobles raised, spread, and exalted its fame. At that  
time one tongue was still common to all dwellers on  
earth.

## XX.

Likewise from Cam's stock sprang many descendants,  
and to these numerous people great families were born.—

[ToC](#)

1640 Furthermore many sons and daughters were born into  
the world to Sem, noble folk, before the ruler of men  
took to his death-bed, in the course of years. In this  
1645 family were good men, of whom one was called Eber, a  
son of Sem: from this chief sprang a multitude of people,  
whom all nations and earth-dwellers now call Hebrews.

They set out then to take their possessions from the  
1650 eastward, live-stock and treasure; the people were un-  
animous: the vigorous heroes sought a less crowded land,  
until the migrating folk in great multitudes came where  
1655 their noble leaders firmly took possession. The rulers  
of the people settled with their dear followers in Sennar,  
ample and broad; in the years of their life the fields  
were ever verdant and the earth fair for the people at  
1661 that time, with increasing abundance of each [kind of]  
treasure.

Then many a man argued with his dear friend, one  
1665 resolute hero with another, that for their greater glory,  
before the masses of the people should scatter again over  
the earth, numbers of the nation in search of land, they  
should build a city and raise up a tower to the stars of  
heaven as a sign that they had sought Sennar fields because  
1670 the mighty fore-fathers of the race, the patriarchs, long  
lived there with pleasure: with craft the people wrought,  
in labor and industry, until in arrogance and rashness they  
1675 showed their skill, built a fortress and raised aloft scaling-  
ladders towards heaven, mightily erected a solid stone wall  
beyond man's measure, eager for glory:—[all this did] the  
heroes with their hands. Then Holy God came to inspect  
1680 the work of the race of men, the fortress of the warriors,  
and that beacon-tower likewise which the sons of Adam  
began to rear up to the skies; and the steadfast King  
achieved the prevention of this evil design, when in  
1685 wrath he distributed different languages among the  
inhabitants of earth, so that they no longer had control  
of their speech. They found then multitudes at the  
tower with victorious strength, leaders of work in vast  
1690 battalions: but not one of the tribes understood what  
another was saying. It could not be, that they should  
build up the stone wall further; but they wretchedly  
parted in bands separated by their speech: one had  
1695 become to another a strange race, after the Lord by the  
fullness of his might had confused the speech of men.  
The disunited sons of the patriarchs then parted in  
1700 four directions to seek land: behind them, both the  
mighty tower of stone and the lofty city stood on Sennar  
[plain] together, half-finished.

Page 167

Then the race of Sem increased and multiplied under  
the clouds, until a man arose in the number of that

1705 kingly people, a sagacious man, prudent in habit. To  
this nobleman sons were born, two free children were  
born in Babylon, and these chieftains, strong-minded  
1710 heroes, were called Abraham and Aaron. The Sovereign  
of the Angels was friend and guide to both these leaders.  
Then to Aaron was born a son, upright in life, whose  
name was Loth. Thereafter the righteous heroes,  
1715 Abraham and Loth, throve nobly in the Lord's sight, as  
the inheritance in the kingdom came to them from their  
parents; therefore they widely glorified the sons of men  
with gifts.

Page 168

## XXI.

1720 Now the period of time had come when Abraham  
brought a wife, a fair and free-born bride to his house,  
where he possessed a dwelling: the woman was named  
Sarra, as the books tell us. They enjoyed life thus for  
1725 many winters, held the property together in peace for  
many years. But it was not vouchsafed to Abraham  
as yet that his bright-faced bride should bring into the  
world a guardian for his heritage, that Sarra [should  
bear] sons and daughters to Abraham.

[ToC](#)

1730 Then Abraham's father set out with his family and  
[all] his substance to pass through the Caldean country:  
he wisely wished to seek the land of Canan, with his  
household. The cousins chosen by the Lord, Abraham  
1735 and Loth, went with him out of their heritage. Then  
the nobly-born sons of the patriarchs took up their  
dwelling in Carran, the men with their wives. In his  
1740 home here Abraham's father departed this life, the  
steadfast worthy: he had told 205 winters, in all, when  
he fared forth ripe in years to meet his fate.

1745 Then the holy Guardian of the heavenly kingdom, the  
Eternal Lord, spoke to Abraham:

"Set forth now, and take thy movable possessions and  
fertile herds with thee. Give up Carran, thy father's  
dwelling-place. Depart, as I bid thee, O dearest of  
1750 men, and heed well my instructions, and seek the land  
which I shall show thee, a broad verdant country. Thou  
shalt live blessed under my protection: if any of the  
1755 dwellers on earth greet thee with evil, I will set upon  
them my curse and my hatred, long-lasting affliction;  
and I shall give favors, abundance of blessings, to those  
who treat thee well. Through thee shall all earth-  
1760 dwellers, sons of man, receive peace and friendship,  
my grace and blessing, in this world. Far spreading  
under the sun shall be the number of thy race by [the  
1765 birth of] sons and daughters, until many a region of the  
earth shall be filled with thy progeny."

Page 169

Then Abraham, preëminently upright, rich, and blessed  
with gold and silver, set out to take his flocks and  
1770 possessions from Carran into the country of Egipt, as  
the Warder of Victory, our Ruler, bade him through his  
Word: they sought the land and nation of Canan. Thus  
1775 the man dear to God came to lead his wife, his dear bed-  
fellow, and his nephew's wife, into this inheritance, into

happiness. He had [numbered] 75 winters when he had to fare forth, to give up Carran and his kinsfolk.  
1780 So Abraham set out, mindful of the instructions of the Father Almighty, to look for the broad land beyond these nations, at his Lord's command, until prospering in his journey the courageous man came to Siem, of the Cananite race. Then the Lord and King of the Angels,  
1785 Sovereign of men, manifested himself to Abraham and said:

1790 "This is the country, verdant and bright and adorned with fruits, that I intend to give into the power of thy descendants, an ample kingdom!"

1795 Then the good man built an altar and offered sacrifice to the Ruler of Life and Source of Light, the Protector of souls. Thereupon Abraham traveled still further from the east in order to search with his eyes for the choicest of lands (he remembered the favors, God's promises, which the King of Victory Himself truthfully declared to him through his holy word), until the people came with their possessions to the place where the town is called  
1800 Bethlem: the glad-hearted chieftain and his brother's son, pious men, went forward over the storied land from the east, with their possessions, over the precipitous mountain-sides, and chose a dwelling-place for themselves where the fields seemed bright and fair to them.  
1805

Page 170

## XXII.

1810 There Abraham for the second time built an altar: there he called upon God with noble words, and offered sacrifice to the Lord of his life. Not at all sparingly did God, through His own hand, give him reward for this,—rich bounty, in the very place of sacrifice.

1815 There for a while the wise leader dwelt in his home and enjoyed happiness, the hero with his bride, until a frightful calamity began to press upon the Cananite race, cruel hunger, deadly to home-staying men. Then the wise Abraham, chosen by the Lord, went into Egypt to seek sustenance; the sage fled before evil: the plague  
1820 was too strong. Abraham spoke,—for he saw the white pinnacled halls of Egypt and the tall cities shining brightly,—and then the ruler, the sagacious man, began to instruct his wife, in these words:

1825 "When many haughty Egyptians shall gaze with their eyes upon thy countenance, then should the nobly-born chieftains suppose, O woman fair as a goddess, that thou art my bright bed-fellow whom some one of the warriors will wish to have for himself, then I may well  
1830 fear for myself lest some one of my foes may deprive me of life with the edge of his sword by reason of his amorous desire. Say then, Sarra, that thou art my sister, my blood-relation, when the strange men ask thee what degree of familiarity may exist between us  
1835 two foreigners, who come from so far away: hold fast true speech from them, and thus thou shalt preserve my life,—if the Lord of Peace, our Almighty Ruler,  
1840 grant me longer life in this world, as he did before, who

[ToC](#)

ordained these travels for us in order that we might seek aid and secure sustenance for ourselves in Egypt."

1845 Thereupon Abraham, the vigorous leader, proceeded  
with his possessions into Egypt, where the people were  
strange to him, and friends unknown. Many haughty  
men spoke of the beauty of his wife in their remarks,  
1850 men distinguished by their wealth: to many high-spirited  
men, vassals of the king, his wife seemed noble in counte-  
nance. They brought the news to their liege-lord, and<sup>[22]</sup>  
few women did they repute fairer before the king, but  
1855 they lauded exceedingly Sarra's countenance for its  
great beauty, until he bade them bring the lovely woman  
to his own hall. The ruler of the people and chief of  
the nobles bade them enrich Abraham with treasures.  
1860 But the Lord God became aggrieved and incensed against  
Farao for his love of the woman: the joy of his house-  
hold<sup>[23]</sup> bore this wrath hardly with his intimates. How-  
ever, the ruler of the people perceived what the Lord  
was sending upon him for punishment: urged on by  
fear, the king of Egypt called Abraham to him and gave  
him his bride, [returned] his wife into his keeping, bade  
him seek friends elsewhere, noblemen of another race.  
1870 Then the ruler of the country ordered his vassals and  
ministers to escort him out of their land again, honor-  
ably, uninjured in any respect, so that he might be in  
peace.

1875 Then Abraham took [all his] possessions out of the  
country of Egypt: these worthy heroes took their wives,  
both brides and rings, while they brought their flocks  
to Bethlem, a familiar dwelling-place, [brought] their  
1880 womenfolk and treasures and their worldly goods.  
Then they began to build there, and to erect their city  
and settle their homes, and renew their prosperity.  
The men built an altar in the meadows near the one that  
Abraham had formerly reared to his Lord, when he  
1885 came to this western land: there the fortunate man  
exalted the Name of the Eternal Lord once more; the  
high-minded ruler offered sacrifice to the King of the  
Angels, thanked exceedingly the Source of Light and  
Life for his happiness and honor.

### XXIII.

1890 Abraham and Loth lived in these dwellings and had  
abundance of prosperity, ruled over their heritage, until  
they could not enjoy plenty together any longer in that  
land and keep the possessions of both there, but the  
1895 worthy warriors had to seek broader seats elsewhere.  
There were often dissensions among the followers of the  
steadfast heroes, quarrels among the herdsmen. Then  
the blessed Abraham, mindful of their honor, began to  
1900 speak fairly to Loth:

"I am thy father's born brother, thou art my nephew;  
quarrels shall not wax great between us, nor anger  
grow: may God forbid that! But we are blood-re-  
1905 lations: between us shall nothing be except, most fit-  
tingly, long-enduring love. Now bethink thee, Loth,



1910 that about our borders dwell mighty men, powerful  
peoples with lords and vassals, the Cananite and Feretite  
nations, with energetic warriors: their landed property  
will not make any more room for us. Therefore shall  
we remove our differences from this place and seek  
broader dwelling-places for ourselves: I speak what is  
1915 best for us both, son of Aron, a true saying. I leave  
the choice to thee, dear friend. Ponder with thyself  
and consider in thy heart in which direction thou wilt  
take thy departure, go forth with thy herds: now I have  
yielded thee the choice!"

1920 Then Loth left him to seek land by the Iordan, fertile  
country: it was refreshed with waters and enriched with  
fruits, bright with rivers, and like to the earthly par-  
1925 adise of God, until God the Saviour because of men's  
sins gave Sodoma and Gomorra to destruction, to the  
dark flames. So the son of Aron chose his dwelling-  
place there, a settlement in the city of Sodoma, and  
1930 brought<sup>[24]</sup> thither all his possessions, rings and private  
property from Bethlem, goods, and wrought gold. For  
many years thereafter he dwelt by the Iordan: fair  
dwelling-places were there, but vicious men also, hateful  
1935 to the Lord. The people of Sodoma were bold in sin,  
shameful in their deeds: they brought upon themselves  
eternal woe. Loth would never adopt the customs of  
the country, but he always eschewed the habits of this  
1940 people, [their] evil and sin, even though he had to live  
in their land, and kept himself pure, virtuous, and pa-  
tient, even in this nation, just as if—mindful of [his  
Lord's] teaching—he did not know what these people  
were doing.

1945 Abraham dwelt by the habitations of the Cananites:  
the King of the Angels, Lord of mankind, held him under  
his protection, with abundance of good things and  
1950 worldly treasures, love and joy; therefore the races of  
men, children of baptism, sing his praise widely under  
the clouds. Pious and prudent, he freely obeyed the  
Lord in his land as long as he enjoyed the heritage:  
never need a defenceless human being ever become in  
1955 any way a terrified and fearful man before the Lord,  
if he will always, until his departure from life, thank  
Him heedfully in speech and in heart, by word and deed,  
with wise mind after every favor.<sup>[25]</sup>

#### XXIV.

1960 Then I found that the king of the Elamites, Orlahomar,  
a pious leader, made an expedition: in aid of him Am-  
brafel set forth from Sennar with a great multitude.  
1965 Four kings then set out with mighty power to seek  
Sodoma and Gomorra, southward from there. Then was  
the country of the men by Iordan widely besieged by  
warriors, the land [was surrounded] by foes. Many  
1970 a terrified pale-cheeked maiden would have to go trem-  
bling to the embrace of a stranger: the defenders of  
the brides and rings would fall, weak with wounds.  
1975 Against them with warlike zeal five kings came forth  
from the south, with their armies, who wished to rid

1980 the city of Sodoma of its foes: for twelve winters before  
of necessity they had had to yield tribute and pay  
indemnity to the men of the north, until the people  
no longer would enrich the king of the Elamites with  
their own treasures, but revolted from him.

1985 In rage the slaughter-hordes came together: the jav-  
elins were loud; the dark fowl sang among the flying  
weapons, the dewy-feathered [raven] looked for the slain.  
The warriors rushed on in cohorts with unfaltering cour-  
age, until the nations' armies had come together widely,  
1990 from south and north, protected by their helmets. There  
was bitter struggle, exchanges of deadly spears, great  
tumult of war, loud din of conflict. The heroes drew  
from the sheath with their hands the ring-mailed sword,  
keen of edge. Then was booty easy to find for the  
1995 chieftain who before this was not readily sated with  
battle! The northern men were fatal to the southern  
men: the men of Sodoma and Gomorra, dispensers of  
gold, were bereft of their dear allies at the shield-clash-  
2000 ing. They went forth from their homesteads to save  
themselves by flight; behind them the youths of the race  
fell, slain by the sword, [and] their allies [were] cleft with  
2005 the edge. The leader of the army of the Elamites had  
victory in battle, was master of the battlefield. The  
survivors of the weapons fled to seek fastnesses. The  
enemy seized upon gold, robbed with devastation the  
treasure-cities of the people, Sodoma and Gomorra. Then  
2010 misery requited the great strongholds; the maidens,  
wives, and widows, deprived of friends, departed from  
their homesteads. The enemy led out with them from  
the city of Sodoma, with their spoils, the kinsman of  
Abraham.

2015 We may now relate this true history further, as to  
what was the fate of the war-wolves after the battle,  
who carried off Loth and the goods of the people, the  
treasures of the southlanders, [and] exulted in victory.

2020 A warrior, a survivor of the sword who was spared  
in battle, escaped from them suddenly, to seek Abraham:  
he reported to the Ebrew chieftain the outcome of the  
fray,—the people of Sodoma sorely stricken, the nation's  
wealth, and Loth's situation. Thereupon Abraham re-  
2025 ported the evil tidings to his friends; the steadfast hero  
requested aid of his favorite companions, Aner, Mamre,  
and thirdly Escol, saying that it would be gall to his  
2030 heart and bitterest grief if his nephew should have to  
suffer slavery: bade the warriors famed in battle think of  
some plan so that his dear kinsman might be freed, the  
hero with his bride. In reply the three brothers, famed  
2035 in war, with great readiness assuaged his grief by their  
hardy words, and pledged their troth to Abraham that  
they would avenge his injury upon his foes, with him,  
or else fall in battle.

2040 Then the holy man bade his companions take their  
weapons: he found there 318 spear-bearing warriors,  
loyal to their ruler, of whom he knew that every one  
2045 could well support the tawny linden-shield in an onset.  
So Abraham set out with the three chieftains who had

just pledged their troth to him, and the band of their  
 followers. He wished to rescue his kinsman at least,  
 Loth, from suffering.<sup>[26]</sup> These warriors were famous:  
 2050 they bore their shields forth boldly on the march. The  
 war-wolves, [meanwhile], had nearly reached their  
 camping-place: then the prudent man, the son of Thare,  
 spoke to his war-leaders in these words, (great was his  
 2055 need!), that they<sup>[27]</sup> should advance on the enemy in two  
 divisions with grim conflict and hard swordplay: said,  
 [further], that the Holy Lord Everlasting might easily  
 give him success in the spear-fight.

2060 Then I heard how under the cover of night the heroes  
 ventured on into battle: the din of shields and shafts  
 arose in their sleeping-quarters, the slaughter of archers  
 and impact of battle-arrows; sharp swords smote hate-  
 2065 fully under the breast of men, and the bodies of foes  
 fell thickly, where the exulting heroes and comrades  
 were bringing together the spoil. Victory, men's glory  
 in war, turned aside again from the battle of the north-  
 2070 men. Abraham gave armed conflict and not in any  
 wise wrought gold, as ransom for his nephew; he slew  
 and felled the enemy in fair fight: to aid him, the Guard-  
 ian of the heavenly kingdom took [a part in the fray].  
 The four armies were put to flight, [with] the kings and  
 2075 leaders of the people: behind them pressed the joyful  
 band and [there] the heroes were slain; the others were  
 given over to flight,—those who had stolen the gold of  
 2080 Sodom and Gomorra, and robbed the stewards: fiercely did  
 the uncle of Loth requite them for it. The noble leaders  
 of the Elamites were fleeing, bereft of power, until they  
 2085 were not far from Domascus. Then Abraham set out on  
 the war-track to see the retreat of the wicked men. Lot  
 was freed, the chieftain with his possessions, [while] the  
 women [and] wives were restored to joy. Far and wide  
 2090 they saw the birds of prey rending the murderers of free-  
 men in sword-slaughter. Abraham brought back again  
 the treasure and brides of the southlanders, the children  
 of the nobles nearer their homes, the maidens to their  
 families. Of all men living here [on earth], no one ever  
 2095 achieved a more worthy military expedition with a  
 small force which was attacking so great a multitude.

## XXV.

Then the people of Sodoma was southward from  
 there, to bear the news as to what rout of their fierce  
 foes had occurred. Forthwith the king of the people,  
 bereft of his nobles and stripped of friends, went out to  
 2100 meet Abraham; he brought with him the master of the  
 treasure of Solomia: that was the great Melchisedec,  
 bishop of the people. He came with gifts to greet fairly  
 2105 the prince of the warriors, [to approach] Abraham honor-  
 ably, and he pronounced upon him the blessing of God  
 and spoke thus:

"Highly wert thou exalted among the number of heroes  
 before the eyes of Him who gave thee the glory of the ash-  
 spear in battle: that is God himself, who mightily de-  
 2110 stroyed the forces of the hostile armies and let thee with

thy weapons hew out bloody paths broadly [through the foe], regain the booty, and fell the warriors. They were encamped by the way: nor could the withdrawing army prevail in hand-to-hand conflict, but God put it to flight, who with His own hands preserved thee with thy warriors in the fight, against the terror of superior numbers, and [so likewise] the sacred pledge [preserved thee] which thou rightfully holdest with the Keeper of the skies."

2120 With his own hand the hero gave him a return for this blessing, and Abraham bestowed upon the bishop of God the value of every tenth part of the army's booty. Then spoke the war-king, ruler of Sodoma, bereft of his people, 2125 to Abraham, (to him mercy was needful):

"Give me back the maidens of my people, whom thou by the might of thy army hast snatched from the deadly bonds of the foe. Keep thou the wrought gold which 2130 formerly was the property of our people, [keep] the herds and the treasure. Only let me lead back again in freedom, to their hearths and desolated homes, the children of the people, the wives and boys and wretched 2135 widows. The young men, my companions, who should have held the borders with me, are dead, [all] but a very few."

Page 178

Then Abraham answered him straightway, in the presence of the chieftains exalted in valor, power, and victory, and nobly said:

2140 "Ruler of the people, I pledge to thee this my word, before the Holy One who is sole Master of heaven and this earth: there is no worldly treasure that I will take for my own, neither riches nor money of thine which I have rescued from the [hostile] bowmen, O great king, 2145 protector of thy nobles, lest thou oft hereafter say that I became rich on earth through the treasure and former wealth of the kingdom of Sodom;<sup>[28]</sup> but thou shalt 2150 take hence the booty which I regained for thee in battle, all except the shares of these noble warriors, Aner, and Mamre, and Escol. I am unwilling to deprive these warriors of their rights: for they stood by me in the 2155 combat, and fought in your behalf. Go now and take home the wrought gold and the beloved maidens, the womenfolk of thy people. Thou needst not fear for a while the attack of the hostile warriors, the battle of the northmen, for the birds of prey sit all smeared 2160 with blood, among the fastnesses of the mountains, well gorged with the slaughter of the armies."

So the king set out on his return home with the spoils which the pious lord of the Hebrews, regardful of honor, gave up to him.

2165 Then again to Abraham the High-King of Heaven showed himself, with holy speech comforted the wise-hearted man, and spoke to him thus:

"Great are thy rewards. Let not now thy heart grow idle, thou steadfast [doer] of my will. Nor needst thou fear anyone, while thou heedest my commandment, 2170 for with my own hands will I shelter and shield thee during thy life-time here against every woe: thou

Page 179

## XXVI.

Then Abraham, famed for his deeds, answered his Lord and asked Him, in the fullness of his days:

2175 "O Ruler of spirits, what dost thou give me for free-  
men's solace, now that I am thus solitary? I have no  
need to found an ancestral seat for any sons of mine, but  
after me shall my distant kinsmen dispose of my goods;  
2180 thou hast not given me a son, and therefore sorrows  
weigh upon me very heavily in my heart; I myself can  
not devise any counsel. My steward goes rejoicing in  
his sons, and is firmly persuaded in his thoughts that  
after me his sons shall be the keepers of the heritage:  
they see that no children are born to me of my bride."

2185 To him then at once God answered:

"Never shall thy steward possess the heritage of thy  
sons: but thine own children shall hold the treasure,  
when thy flesh lies [in the grave]. Behold the sky. Count  
2190 those jewels, the stars of heaven, which now freely scatter  
their glorious radiance far and wide to shine brilliantly  
over the broad surface of the sea. Such shall be the  
multitude of thy descendants, rich in progeny. Let not  
2195 thy heart be bound by sorrow. A son shall yet be born  
to thee, a child born of thy wife by ordinary birth, who  
after thee shall be the keeper of the inheritance, rich in  
property. Grieve no more: I am the Lord, who many  
2200 winters ago led thee out of the stronghold of Caldea  
with but few followers, and promised thee a broad  
dwelling-place for thy possession: I give thee now my  
pledge, man of the Hebrews, that many a broad land  
2205 on this earth shall be peopled with thy progeny, regions  
of the world as far as Euphrates even from the borders  
of Egypt, as many men and as wide a kingdom as the  
Nile cuts off and the sea bounds: all this shall thy sons  
2210 own, each of the countries, as these three waters sur-  
round with their streams the lofty cities of stone, the  
foamy floods [surround] the refuge of the people."

2215 Then Sarra was grieved at heart that no son had come  
to Abraham through their wedlock, a free-born heir for  
their solace; so the sorrowful one began to speak to her  
husband in these words:

2220 "The Ruler of heaven has denied me this, that I  
might augment the number of thy family under the  
skies with sons of thine own. Now I am hopeless that  
an heir will ever be given us together: I am too old, in  
2225 my misery. My lord, do as I bid thee. Here is a  
woman, a fair damsel, an Egyptian maid in our possession:  
bid her now repair to thy bed forthwith, and see if  
2230 the Lord will allow any heir for thy goods to come into  
the world through this woman!"

2235 Then the holy man yielded to the advice of his wife,  
and bade the handmaiden go to his couch as a bride.<sup>[29]</sup>  
Her spirit exalted itself, when she had become pregnant  
with a man-child by Abraham; stiff-necked in scorn she

2240 began to despise her mistress, showed insolence, was  
overweening, and was unwilling to endure servitude but  
boldly began to resist Sarra strongly.

Then I heard how the wife spoke to her husband in the  
sorrow of her heart, with these words; sad in mind she  
spoke, and said bitterly:

2245 "Thou dost not deal properly and rightfully with me.  
Thou hast hitherto allowed it to happen that my hand-  
maiden afflict me every day by deed and word, ever  
since Agar entered thy bed in place of thy wife, as was  
2250 my entreaty: she shall pay for this mercilessly, if I  
may still control mine own before thee, dear Abraham;  
of this may the Almighty Lord of Lords be judge  
between us two!"

Page 181

2255 The wise-minded man then answered her at once in  
these words:

"Never shall I leave thee without honor, while we  
both live; but thou must manage thine own maid as  
pleases thy heart!"

## XXVII.

2260 Then Abraham's queen became unkind, wrathful in  
heart towards her serving-maid, hard and cruel, spoke  
bitter insults to the woman. Thereupon the latter fled  
from threat and thralldom: she would not endure evil  
2265 and retribution for what she had formerly done to Sarra,  
but went forth on a journey to go into the wilderness.  
There a servant of glory, an angel of the Lord, found her  
sorrowing; he eagerly asked her:

[ToC](#)

2270 "Whither do you intend to push your journey, my  
poor woman? Sarre owns thy service!"

She answered him at once:

"Deprived of every pleasure, jeered out of the house  
by the hatred of my mistress, I have fled from woes,  
afflictions, and injuries. Now with tear-stained cheek  
2275 must I await my fate<sup>[30]</sup> in the wilderness, [the time]  
when hunger or a wolf removes life and sorrow together  
from my heart."

Then the angel answered her:

2280 "Seek not thou in flight far hence to avoid thy con-  
cubinage, but return again, earn honor for thyself, begin  
submissively to cultivate dutifulness, become dear to  
thy master. Thou shalt, Agar, bring a son into the world  
2285 to Abraham: with my word I tell thee now that this  
man-child shall be called Ismahel, among men. He  
shall be rough, warlike, hostile to the races of men and  
to his own kinsfolk: many a one shall struggle against  
2290 him in wrath, with assault of arms. From this prince  
nations shall spring, numberless peoples. Depart now  
to seek thy master again: live with those who own thee!"

Page 182

2295 In accordance with the angel's command, she at once  
returned to her lord, as the holy spirit-messenger of God  
bade her, in sapient speech. Thus was Ismael born to

2300 Abraham, even when he had [lived] 86 winters in the world. The son grew and flourished, as the angel, the true minister of peace, had promised to the woman by his own word.

About thirteen years after that, the Lord and Everlasting King spoke with Abraham:

2305 "Dear man, as I command thee, so do thou keep well our covenant: I will to all time exalt thee in blessings. Be thou zealously observant of my will in thy deeds: I will still further confirm with truth the pledge which I gave to thee as earnest of comfort, when thy spirit  
2310 grieved. Thou shalt hallow thy household: set a true sign of victory on each one of the male sex, if thou wilt have in me a Master or dear Friend of thy race. I shall  
2315 [always] be keeper and sustainer of this people, if thou dost obey me in thy innermost thoughts and art willing to fulfil my commands. In his infancy shall every individual of the male sex in this race, about seven nights  
2320 after he comes into the world, be marked for me with the sign of victory, or from the face of the earth be driven far through my hostility, thrust out from his possessions. Do as I bid: I will be true to you all, if  
2325 ye bear that sign with true faith. Thou shalt possess a son, a child by thy wife, whom men shall all call Isaac. Nor needst thou be ashamed of this son: but I will give to this man-child my divine gifts, by the might of the  
2330 spirit, abundance of friends, with prosperity. He shall receive my grace and blessing, love and favor. From this prince shall come broad nations, shall arise many  
2335 famous warriors, keepers of kingdoms, world-kings widely renowned."

Page 183

## XXVIII.

2340 Then Abraham in haste laid his cheek on the earth, and with scorn turned over these words in his mind, the thoughts of his heart: at that period of time he himself did not believe that Sarra, his grey-haired bride, could bring a son into the world to him; he knew well that his wife had already numbered at least one hundred winters,  
2345 by actual reckoning. So then, wise in years, he spoke thus to the Lord:

2350 "May Ismael live according to Thy commandments, Lord, and give thee thanks with wise and steady mind and stout heart, doing Thy will day and night in word and deed!"

Then the Almighty King and Everlasting Lord answered him fairly:

2355 "Though much worn in years, Sarra shall bring a son into the world to thee; the future shall truly proceed in accordance with these words here pronounced. I will now bless with my grace Ismael, as thou art petitioner, for thy first born, so that he may dwell many days in the  
2360 kingdom of this world with spreading progeny; be thou sure of that! But Isaac thy son, the young child who has not yet come into the world, I will distinguish exceedingly with abundance of joys and every kind of

[ToC](#)



2365 riches, in his days, and certainly leave in his heart my  
pledge and holy faith, and be kind to him."

2370 Abraham did as the Eternal bade him, set the sign  
of peace on his son, by the Lord's command, and bade  
every one of his household of the male sex bear that  
high sign,—wise in heart, and mindful of the pledge  
2375 which God had given him as assurance of good faith,—  
and then himself received the exalted sign. The Lord  
and Just King continually advanced his glory in the  
kingdom of this world, with blessings: He wrought this  
for him as soon as he might first perform the will of his  
Master in [every] expedition....<sup>[31]</sup>

Page 184

2380 Then the woman laughed at the Lord of Mankind not  
at all mirthfully, but full of years she laid away this  
promise in her mind with much scorn: she did not  
believe it true that the fulfilment of this promise was to  
2385 follow. But when the Ruler of Heaven heard that the  
wife of Abraham had given way to hopeless laughter,  
in her bower, then the Holy God said:

"Sarra will not believe in the truth of my word:  
2390 nevertheless this decree shall be fulfilled, as I promised  
thee at first. I tell thee truth, at this very season a son  
shall be born of thy wife: when I return to this same  
dwelling another time, then shall my promise of increase  
2395 be fulfilled: thou shalt look upon a son, thine own child,  
dear Abraham!"

## XXIX.

2400 Then at once, after this speech, they departed with  
speed, eager to be gone; from the place of the confer-  
ence, the holy spirits made their way (the power<sup>[32]</sup> of  
light itself was in their midst!) until they could look  
upon Sodom, the lofty city: they saw palaces tower up  
above treasures, halls above red gold. Then the right-  
2405 eous Ruler of the skies began to speak with Abraham,  
gave him no little information.

[ToC](#)

"In this city I hear tumult, the din of sinners ex-  
ceedingly loud, the vain-glory of those drunk with ale;  
2410 evil speech have the people, behind their walls: for the  
sins of the race, of the treacherous apostates, are heavy.  
I will now find out what the men are doing, O man of  
the Hebrews, [to see] whether they [actually] commit  
sins so grossly in their habits and thoughts as they  
2415 perversely speak of crimes and vices: sulphur and black  
flame, sorely and grimly, hotly and vehemently, shall  
avenge this on the heathenish people."

Page 185

## XXX.

2420 The men with their wives were approaching their  
punishment, sufferings within their walls: arrogant in  
riches, they requited the Lord for their prosperity with  
insult, until the Protector of spirits, the Source of Light  
and Life, would tolerate their offence no longer: but to  
them the steadfast King sent two strong messengers  
2425 of his, who arrived at eventide at the fortress of Sodoma,

[ToC](#)

in their traveling. At the city-gate they found the warrior, the son of Aron, sitting by himself, so that they appeared before the eyes of the wise man as young men.

2430 Then the servant of the Lord arose before the spirits, went forward to greet the strangers civilly, thought their demeanor very proper and agreeable, and invited the men to be his guests for the night. The noble messengers of our Preserver answered him thus:

2435 "For the courtesy which you have extended to us, accept our thanks. In this street we expect quietly to wait for the time when the Lord shall let the sun [go] forth again for the morning."

2440 Then humbly Loth<sup>[33]</sup> bowed at the feet of the strangers and eagerly offered them the repose and refreshments and shelter and service of his dwelling. They accepted thankfully the benevolence of the good man, and followed him forthwith inside his walls, as the Hebrew chieftain  
2445 invited them. There in his hall the generous wise-souled man gave them fair hospitality, until twilight departed: then came night, after the close of day, and  
2450 veiled with darkness the lake-streams, seas, and broad land, and [all] the pomp of this life. Then the men of Sodoma came, young and old, hateful to God, to demand  
2455 the strangers, with a great throng so that they surrounded Loth and his guests by the multitude of their force; they bade [him] lead out of the lofty hall the holy messengers [and put] the men in their power; they said  
2460 openly in words that they would have intercourse with the men shamefully, and had no regard for decency. Then Loth, who often knew what was best, quickly arose in his house, and went out at once; and the son of Aron, mindful of his cunning, spoke thus over all the mass of people:

2465 "Here are within two spotless [maidens], my daughters: neither of these damsels knows intercourse as yet through sleeping with a man: do then as I bid you, and cease from this sin. I give them both to you, before you  
2470 commit this vileness against nature, heinous evil against the sons of men. Receive these maidens and let my guests go free, since I will defend them against you as well as I can, before God!"

2475 Thereupon the crowd, the shameless race, answered him through common consent:

"It seems very right and fitting that thou shouldst depart out of this neighborhood, thou who bereft of friends and with the step of an exile soughtest this people  
2480 from afar, in thy need: wilt thou, if thou mayst, be our ruler here, the teacher of the people?"

Then I heard of Loth how the heathen masses gripped him with their hands, with hostile grasp: his guests  
2485 aided him well and the righteous strangers drew him out of the clutches of the enemy back within the walls, and then speedily closed fast the eyesight of every one  
2490 of the people of Sodoma standing around: the whole crowd of citizens forthwith became blind; nor could they, in their evil rage, break into the house after the guests, as they intended, but the messengers of God

2495 were [too] active for them; the stranger had power, irre-  
 sistible vigor, and was very severe upon the people in  
 [inflicting] punishment. Then the dear ministers of  
 peace spoke fairly to Loth, in these words:

2500 "If thou hast a son, or dear relative, or any friend  
 among these people besides these maidens whom we see  
 here, lead out of this city those who are dear to thee, with  
 great haste, and save thine own life, lest thou perish  
 with these law-breakers. For the Lord has commanded  
 2505 us, because of the people's sins, to give over Sodoma and  
 Gomorra to black flame and fire, and to slay these people,  
 [striking] the race in their cities with deadly horrors,  
 and so wreak His wrath [upon them]. It has nearly  
 reached the appointed time. Set out on thy way, to  
 2510 save thy life: the Lord is merciful to thee...."<sup>[34]</sup>

Loth then hastily answered them:

"I cannot, with these womenfolk, seek my safety  
 so far from here in a journey on foot. You manifest  
 2515 to me kindness and fair friendship, you grant me grace  
 and good-will. I know a lofty town near here, a little  
 fortress: leave me there, in honor and peace, so that we  
 2520 may seek safety above, in Sigor. If you will protect that  
 lofty fastness from the fire, we can abide in that place  
 unharmed, in safety, and so preserve our lives."

2525 Then the righteous angels answered him benevol-  
 ently:

"Thou shalt be successful in this petition, now thou  
 speakest about that city: withdraw immediately to that  
 fastness. We shall keep thee in peace and safety. We  
 2530 must not wreak the wrath of God upon these law-  
 breakers and destroy the sinful race, before thou hast  
 led thy children and wife likewise into Sægor."

Then the kinsman of Abraham set out for the fastness:  
 2535 the chieftain did not spare the pace for his womenfolk,  
 but he pushed his steps most hastily until he had brought  
 his wife and children to the citadel of Sægor. When the  
 sun rose, [when] the peaceful luminary of the nations  
 2540 went forth, then, I have heard, the Master of Glory sent  
 sulphur out of heaven, and swart flame for the punish-  
 ment of men, swelling fire, since they had offended the  
 Lord for a long period in former days: thus the Ruler of  
 2545 spirits gave them retribution. Utmost terror seized upon  
 the heathen race: tumult arose in the city, the outcry  
 of the accursed race over shameful death, just beginning.  
 The flame seized upon all that it found green, in the rich  
 2550 city, just as around outside no small portion of the broad  
 earth was filled with conflagration and terror: trees  
 and earth's harvests turned to ashes and embers, even  
 2555 as far as the avenging curse direly extended over the  
 broad country of the people. The devastating fire  
 rushing on in tumult devoured all things together, far  
 and wide, that men had owned in the cities of Sodoma  
 2560 and Gomorra: all this, together with the people, God  
 the Lord destroyed.

When Loth's wife, his bride in the city, heard the din

of fire, the death of the people, then she looked back-  
ward [to see] this devastation. The Scriptures tell us  
that she immediately turned into the likeness of a pillar  
2565 of salt: ever since then this statue has stood there  
motion less (this is a strange story), where she incurred  
this severe penalty because she would not obey the  
2570 ministers of glory in their commands: now, stiff and  
erect, she will have to await her doom in that place, at  
the Lord's Judgment Day, when the world has com-  
pleted its [allotted] number of years. This is one of  
the miracles which the King of Glory has wrought.

### XXXI.

2575 Then Abraham went forth alone, at dawn, so that he  
again stood in the place where the pious leader had  
formerly spoken with his Lord in words. He saw the  
reek of death and destruction ascending widely from  
the earth. Riches and feasting preoccupied [the people]  
2580 to such an extent that they had become bold in wicked  
deeds, eager for sin: they forgot the Truth and God's  
commandments, and who had given them prosperity  
and wealth in their cities; therefore the King of the  
2585 Angels sent his fervid fire to punish them. Our faithful  
Lord then remembered Abraham mercifully, the dear  
man, as he often had done, and saved his kinsman, Loth,  
when the multitude perished. The [latter] hero, famed  
2590 for his deeds, did not dare to tarry longer in the strong-  
hold for fear of the Lord, but Loth departed from the  
city with his children to seek a dwelling-place far from  
the place of slaughter, until they found a cave in the  
2595 side of a high dune: there the pious Loth, dear to his  
Lord, dwelt in righteousness for a great number of days,  
with his two daughters....<sup>[35]</sup>

2600 They did thus with the drunken man: ... the elder  
of the two went first to her father's bed. Nor did the  
venerable man know when the two maidens ... were  
2605 with him in the manner of a bride, fast bound [as he  
was] in heart, mind, and memory, drunken with wine,  
so that he could not escape the enterprise of the maidens.  
The young women became pregnant, and the devoted  
sisters brought men-children into the world, sons to  
2610 their old father. One of these noble children was called  
Moab by his mother, that daughter of Loth who was the  
elder in years of life; the Scriptures tell us, the sacred  
Books, that the younger called her son Ammon. From  
2615 these princes sprang numberless people, the glories of  
two nations: one of these nations all earth-dwellers call  
Moabites, a widely famed race; the other, men and  
sons of heroes call Ammonites.

### XXXII.

2620 Then the brother of Aron set out with his wife to take  
his possessions and his household to Abimelech. Abra-  
ham told all men that Sarra was his sister, [and] thus  
2625 preserved his life by his words: he knew very well that  
he had few relatives and friends among that people.  
Then the king sent his ministers and bade them bring

2630 to him [the wife of Abraham].<sup>[36]</sup> Thus for the second  
time in a foreign land, the wife of Abraham was taken  
from her husband to the embrace of a stranger. Then  
the eternal Lord assisted him, as he had often done:  
our Preserver came himself by night to where the king  
2635 lay drunken with wine. Thereupon the Lord of Truth  
began to speak to the king through a dream, and threat-  
ened him in wrath:

"Thou hast taken Abraham's wife, his bride from the  
hero; for that deed death shall tear thy soul from thy  
breast!"

2640 To him thus the sinner, gorged with feasting, replied  
in his sleep:

2645 "What! Wilt Thou ever, High King of the Angels,  
through thy wrath let him be deprived of life who lives  
here in righteous habits, [who] in his counsel is upright  
in mind, and who asks mercy of Thyself? In her own  
2650 words, unasked, this woman told me first that she was  
Abraham's sister. I have not sinned against her, nor  
wrought any evil at all, up to this time!"

Then again the Eternal Lord and True God spoke to  
him straightway through that dream:

2655 "Give back this woman to Abraham, his wife, into  
his possession, if thou wishest for life any longer in this  
world, as protector of the nobles. He is good and wise,  
and may himself speak with [God] and see the King of  
Glory. Thou shalt die, with thy flocks and thy sub-  
2660 stance, if thou deniest his wife to the warrior: if he will  
at once honestly and patiently prefer to me thy earnest  
wishes, he may obtain his request that I yet allow thee  
living to enjoy pleasures and prosperity in thy days,  
2665 [allow thee] in sound health [to enjoy thy] riches."

Then the keeper of the people broke forth from sleep,  
bade his councillors come to him; shaken with terror,  
Abimeleh quickly told the nobles the word of the Master.  
2670 The men dreaded [as retribution] for this deed, blows  
from the hand of the Lord in accordance with the dream.  
The king himself bade them bring Abraham before him,  
in great haste. Then the ruler of the kingdom spoke:

2675 "Man of the Ebrews! this wilt thou now tell me in  
words: what have I done that, since thou broughtest  
thy possessions into this country among us, Abraham,  
thou hast thus bitterly contrived a plot against me?  
2680 Thou, a foreigner, wouldst deceive us in this country  
with evil and pollute us with sin: thou saidest in plain  
words that Sarra was thy sister, thy blood relation;  
through that woman thou wouldst have foully put upon  
2685 me sin, measureless evil! We received thee honorably,  
and in friendship gave thee a dwelling-place among this  
people, land at thy pleasure: now thou makest return  
and thankest us [most] ungratefully for our favors!"

### XXXIII.

2690 Abraham then answered:

"I did that, not for evil nor for hostility nor for any woe that I might bring upon thee. But by this stratagem, O ruler of men, I protected myself against blows of the fierce sword, far from my kinsfolk [as I was]

2695 Since the Holy One<sup>[37]</sup> first led me from the family of  
the prince, my father, I have sought out many peoples,  
strange allies, and this woman with me, destitute of  
2700 friends: I always kept this peril in mind, when some foe  
should deprive me—a stranger—of my life, who wished  
to have this woman for his own. Therefore I have told  
2705 warriors in plain words that Sarra was my sister, wher-  
ever on this earth we have had to contend against  
foreigners in our exile. I did the same thing in this  
country, great king, after I chose thy protection: nor  
2710 was there any knowledge in my heart as to whether  
the fear of God Almighty was in this race, when I first  
came here; therefore I concealed from thy ministers and  
from thyself as well as possible the true statement that  
2715 Sarra was wont to enter my bed with me as my wife."

Then Abimæleh began to enrich Abraham with worldly treasures and returned his wife to him: he gave him to boot, when he received his wife, live stock and bright silver and serving-folk. The protector of the nobles spoke further to Abraham, in these words:

2720 "Dwell with us and choose thee a dwelling-place in  
this land, a noble site where it is most to thy liking: I  
must have thee; be a faithful friend to us; we will give  
2725 thee riches."

Then quickly the dispenser of treasure spoke further to Sarra, in other words:

2730 "Nor need Abraham, thy lord and master, set it in  
reproach against thee that thou hast trodden the ways  
of my dwelling, O woman goddess-fair: for I have richly  
repaired thine offence with him, with white silver. Do  
not trouble yourselves to seek riches and strange friends  
away from this land, but dwell here."

2735 Abraham did as his king bade him, and at the ruler's  
behest accepted friendship, love, and peace. He was  
dear to God: therefore he enjoyed tranquility happily  
2740 and proceeded under the shadow of his Creator, covered  
by His protecting wings, while he lived. But God  
was still angry at Abimeleh for the sin which he had  
committed against Sarra and Abraham, when he separated  
2745 these two loving ones, the wife and the husband.  
He received a severe penalty for this deed: for neither  
free nor slave women could reward<sup>[38]</sup> the men their  
masters with children, for the Lord prevented it, until  
2750 the holy Abraham began to pray Eternal God for grace  
in behalf of his king. The Protector of the Angels granted  
him his prayer, and restored to the king the fertility  
of the free and the enslaved, men and women; again  
2755 the Ruler of the skies allowed the number of their off-  
spring to increase, their prosperity and possessions: the  
Almighty Keeper of Mankind became mild in heart  
towards Abimeleh, as Abraham entreated Him.

2760 Then the Almighty Lord came to Sarra, as He Himself

promised: Our Master, the Ruler of Life, had fulfilled His  
promise to the dear man and woman. A son was be-  
gotten of Abraham upon his wife, whom the Prince of  
2765 the Angels named Isaac even before the mother was great  
with child by the chieftain. Abraham with his own hand  
set the sign upon him, as the Lord glorious in splendor  
2770 bade him, about a week from the time when his mother  
brought him into the world to mankind.

#### XXXIV.

The boy grew and throve, inasmuch as noble [traits]  
were native to him from his ancestors. Abraham had  
[numbered] 100 years when, to his joy, his wife bore him  
2775 a son: he had waited for this for a long time, since the  
Lord first through His own word foretold this day of  
happiness. Now the matter so happened that his wife  
once saw Ismael playing before Abraham where they  
2780 were both seated at a banquet, holy in heart, and all  
their household retainers were drinking and singing.  
Then the noble woman spoke, as wife to husband:

"Forgive me, my dear lord, keeper of the ring! But  
2785 bid Agar depart elsewhere, and take Ismael with her.  
We should no longer be together, for my pleasure, if I  
might have my way. Never shall Ismael share the  
heritage with Isaac, my own son, after thee, when thou  
2790 yieldest up thy spirit from the body."

Then was Abraham heavy at heart, because he must  
drive away his own son into exile; then speedily the  
True God came to his aid, for He knew that the heart  
2795 of the man was in dire straits. The King of the Angels,  
the Eternal Lord, spoke to Abraham:

"Let the sorrow and heart-felt grief slip from thy  
breast, and obey the woman, thy wife. Bid both Agar  
2800 and Ismael to go away, [send] the boy from thy home.  
I will make his race far-spreading and powerful in the  
number of its sons, prosperous in blessings, as I promised  
thee by my word."

Then the man obeyed his Master and drove from his  
2805 home the sad-minded pair, [drove] from his patrimony  
the woman and his own son....<sup>[39]</sup>

"Clear it is and manifest that the True God, the King  
of Glory, is on thy side, since he gives thee the victory,  
2810 with wise power, and strengthens thy heart<sup>[40]</sup> with  
divine gifts. Therefore thou hast succeeded hitherto  
in whatsoever thou hast begun to perform against  
friend or foe, in word or deed. The Lord our Master  
thrusteth forward thy desires with His own hands:  
2815 that is widely known among men. I pray thee now,  
chief of the Ebrews, by my words, to give me a faithful  
assurance of thy pledge that thou wilt be a true friend  
2820 to me, in return for the good things which I have given  
for thy glory, since thou camest solitary from afar into  
this country with the tread of an exile. Requite me  
now with thy favor, so that I may not be sparing of land  
2825 and pleasure to thee. Be propitious now to this people



2830 and city of mine, if Our Almighty Lord who holdeth the  
fates will grant that thou mayst further distribute riches  
and pleasing treasures, and set up thy landmarks, among  
the warriors in this country."

Then Abraham gave pledges to Abimeleh that he would  
[do] thus.

### XXXV.

2835 After this the holy son of Thare, chief of the Ebrews,  
was a dweller in the Filistine nation for a long time,  
alone amid strangers. The Lord of the Angels showed  
him a dwelling-place which the men dwelling in the city  
2840 called the land of Bersaba. There the pious man built  
a high hall, constructed a place of shelter and planted  
a grove, erected an altar and on the sacrificial stone  
made an offering, an oblation, at once, to his Master  
who had given him a prosperous life under the sky.

2845 Then the powerful King began to try this hero,  
tested stringently what the noble one's fortitude was,  
and spoke to him in stern words with his voice:

2850 "Go forth now speedily, Abraham, hasten thy steps,  
and take with thee thine own child. Thou shalt thyself  
offer up Isaac to me, thy son as a sacrifice. After thou  
ascendest on foot the steep dune, the bordering circle of  
2855 that high land which I shall show thee from here, there  
thou shalt prepare a funeral pyre, the death-pile of thy  
son, and then thyself sacrifice thy son with the edge  
of the sword and then burn his dear body with black  
flame, and thus make offering to me."

2860 He did not decline the expedition, but straightway  
began to hasten the procedure: the word of the King  
of Angels was sacred to him, and his Master was beloved.  
Then the pious Abraham forsook his nightly repose,  
with no resistance at all to the command of the Saviour,  
2865 but the holy man girded himself with his grey sword  
and declared that the fear of the Keeper of Spirits  
dwelt in his breast. Worn with age, the dispenser of  
gold began to harness his asses, and bade two young men  
go with him: his own son was the third and he himself  
2870 the fourth. Without delay he then set out to lead Isaac  
from his own home, the ungrown child, as the Lord  
bade him; hastened exceedingly and hurried forth on  
the way, as the Lord showed him the paths over the  
2875 wastes, until the glorious beginning of the third day  
arose across deep water. There the worthy man saw  
a high dune rise, as the King of Glory had foretold to  
him. So Abraham spoke to his servants:

2880 "My men! Remain ye here in this place. We shall  
return, after we have offered to the King of Spirits what  
was entrusted to us both."

2885 The noble man then departed with his own son toward  
the designated spot which the Lord showed him, striding  
through the forest; the son bore the wood, the father  
fire and sword. Then the man young in years began  
to ask Abraham about the affair, in these words:

2890 "We have here fire and sword, my lord: where is the  
noble victim that you expect to bring as a burnt-offering  
to God?"

Abraham replied (he had once for all decided that he  
would do as the Lord directed him):

2895 "That the True King, Guardian of mankind, will  
himself provide, as it seemeth to him meet."

Then with unfaltering purpose he ascended the steep  
dune, with his son, as the Eternal had bidden him, until  
he stood on the crest of the high land, on the [spot]<sup>[41]</sup>  
2900 which the mighty, faithful Lord had shown him in his  
words. Forthwith he began to build the funeral-pyre  
and kindle the fire, and he bound his son hand and foot,  
and then laid young Isaac on the pile, and then straight-  
2905 way grasped the sword by the hilt: he was resolved to  
kill his son with his own hands and allay the flames with  
his child's blood.

At that moment a minister of God, one of the angels,  
called Abraham from above, with a loud voice. Motion-  
2910 less he answered the angel and awaited the herald's  
speech. To him then forthwith God's glorious spirit-  
messenger spoke from above, out of heaven, in these  
words:

"Beloved Abraham! Do not slay thine own son, but  
2915 take the boy alive from the pile, thy child. The God  
of Glory has spared him. Prince of the Ebrews, through  
the holy hand of the King of Heaven thou shalt thyself  
receive recompense and true rewards of victory, ample  
2920 gifts: the Keeper of Spirits will enrich thee with blessings,  
because his peace and favor were dearer to thee than  
thine own child."

The pyre stood there blazing. The Lord of mankind  
had made joyful the breast of Abraham, kinsman of  
2925 Loth, when he gave him back his son, Isaac, alive. Then  
the holy hero looked about over his shoulder, and there  
not far from him the brother of Aron beheld a ram  
standing alone, caught fast in the thorn-bushes. Abra-  
2930 ham took this and laid it on the pyre with great zeal,  
in place of his own son, brandished the sword, and dec-  
orated the burnt-offering, the smoking altar, with the  
blood of the ram, offered that oblation to God, [and fin-  
ally] gave thanks for these blessings and for all those<sup>[42]</sup>  
3935 mercies which, late and early, the Lord had bestowed  
upon him....<sup>[43]</sup>

---

## NOTES

[1] Thorpe's translation of the *Genesis*, published with his edition, in 1828, was not accessible to the present writer and presumably will not be accessible to the general public, so that on the mere score of availability it seems high time for the appearance of another translation; moreover, in the last eighty-five years critical scholarship has produced a greatly improved text of the poem.

[2] Aside from necessary omissions made for *Genesis B*, the Sections are numbered consecutively in this translation (regardless of vagaries in the original MS. numbering), on the assumption that each illuminated capital in the MS. was intended

to indicate the beginning of a new Section. After the excision of *Genesis B*, the numbering has been resumed with X instead of XV, because the XIII at line 440 in the MS. must really represent VIII.—Cf. Note 8, page 59, inf. (page 199, inf.)

- [3] ll. 39b-41a. *Wræcna*, gen. pl. with *bidan*, = *outcasts*; I take *weardas* as in apposition with it (the acc. being either a scribal error or an anacoluthon), and then translate *wræcna* as an adjective for the sake of idiomatic fluency. For *gasta weardas* as an epithet for angels, though then unfallen, cf. line 12a, sup.—The passage has given scholars much trouble and is unsatisfactory, at best.
- [4] line 63b. I take *æðele* as a form of *æðelu* = *nobilitas, principatus, natales, origo, genus, etc.* Grein's *Sprachschatz*, 1.52.
- [5] line 168a. Three pages seem to be missing in the MS. Doubtless the remaining events of the third day, with those of the fourth, fifth, and perhaps first part of the sixth, days, including the creation of man, (i.e., apparently the contents of Gen. 1.11-2.17, incl.) were retold in these pages.
- [6] line 186b. This line is apparently imperfect, metrically, for the second hemistich seems to be wanting. As the sense is complete, without emendation, I have not followed the various scholars who would insert after "Adam's bride" some such clause as, "Whom God named Eve."
- [7] ll. 221-224a. The text here is corrupt and scholars differ widely in their conjectural emendations and interpretations. Since none of their versions is satisfactory or convincing, I venture upon an independent reading. *Hebeleac*, of course, is the Scriptural Havilah (Gen. 2.11); *Fison* is obviously Pison, and *Geon*, 230b inf., is Gihon.
- [8] ll. 226, 227a. I construe *the best* with *gold and gems*, rather than with *sons of men*, because of Gen. 2.12.
- [9] ll. 235-851. After line 234 there is a break in the MS. Sievers has shown that the following 617 lines, called *Genesis B*, were written and interpolated later, by a different hand, and have Old Saxon affiliations. *Genesis B* describes the Fall of Man and also gives a new version of the revolt and overthrow of Satan. *Genesis A* begins again, at line 852, with the conversation between Adam and Eve and Jehovah (Gen. 3.8 ff.).
- [10] line 872. I follow the divisions of the MS. This line begins with the tenth large decorative initial, the others having occurred at ll. 1, 82, 135, 246, 389, 442, 547, 684, and 821. Where the editors so widely disagree as to the proper subdivisions of the poem, it seems safer to follow the original initializing (but not the marginal numbering of the original MS.: this skips from VII to XIII at line 440—doubtless accidentally substituting X for V—and is otherwise irregular). Cf. footnote, page vi, sup.—For lines 869-70, cf. *Jour. Eng. Germ. Phil.*, 12.257.
- [11] line 1022. A hemistich seems to be missing here, metrically.
- [12] line 1125. A hemistich seems to be missing here, metrically.
- [13] line 1128. I here adopt Grein's emendation, reading *leod* for *leof*.
- [14] line 1137. Cf. Gen. 4.26, with cross-references, alternative translation, etc.
- [15] line 1150. I follow Grein in supplying *wintra* to complete a metrically imperfect line.
- [16] line 1199. A hemistich seems to be missing here, metrically; and surely the sense requires the interpolation of several lines, to record the birth of Methuselah in Enoch's 65th year. Cf. Gen. 5.21.
- [17] line 1211. We may restore the last word of this line, *fan* in the MS., either as tautological *frean*, with Dietrich, or as tautological *feran*, with Grein.
- [18] line 1405. I follow Dietrich in reading *edniowe* = *self-renewing*, for the meaningless *edmonne* in the MS.
- [19] line 1492. This difficult passage may be clarified by reading *ðryðe* = *strength, copious power*, in place of the meaningless *ðridda* = *third*, in the MS., and at the same time making *brymme* the object of *hæfde* (reading *brymmas*, if necessary).
- [20] line 1549. At least one line is missing, in the MS. here. I have healed the breach by altering the case of *wærfæst metod*, in preference to supplying conjectural material.
- [21] line 1628a. The difficulty here may be obviated, with slight emendation, by letting *Fæderne* modify *yrfestole*, and changing *breðer*, as a genitive plural, to *broðra*.
- [22] ll. 1852b-1853. I follow Dietrich, who seems to me to make the best of this bad business.
- [23] line 1862b. *Hægstealdra wyn* refers to Pharaoh, of course.
- [24] line 1929a. A hemistich is missing here, in the MS., and a verb must be supplied; I adopt Grein's suggestion, *lædde*.
- [25] line 1956b. The alliteration is defective, unless a word be supplied; but the sense may be preserved, without emendation, by construing *æfter* with *sped*.
- [26] line 2047a. Metrically, a hemistich seems to be missing.
- [27] line 2055a. Metrically, a word or two seem to be missing.
- [28] line 2148b. Metrically, a hemistich seems to be missing.

- [29] line 2234b. *Larum* here seems to be tautological, perhaps a scribal error. It might be taken with *bryde*, in an absolute construction: *after the example, or in the manner, of a bride*. The reading *lastum* is supported by line 2715a.
- [30] line 2275b. I take *witodes* here as equivalent to *wyrdes*: cf. Sievers' "OE. Grammar," ed. A.S. Cook, 1903, 269, N. 5.
- [31] line 2379. Grein remarks that a page is missing here from the MS.
- [32] line 2400b. I read here *mægn* for *mæg*;—cf. line 2494b. Or, retaining *mæg*, the line might be translated: "The Father of Light Himself was" etc. Cf. Gen. 18.1, 16.
- [33] line 2439b. Defective metre and sense, owing to the loss of a hemistich, but the sense is complete. Grein's suggestion, *feoll on foldan*, adds nothing to the following *hnað*.
- [34] line 2510. A passage is missing here in the MS. Cf. 2568b-2569a; and the XXXVII at 2574, after the XXXV at 2417.
- [35] lines 2597, 2598, 2601b-2602a. There are several lacunae here, in the MS.
- [36] line 2628b. Some words are evidently missing here. In the brackets I give the emendation supported by most scholars.
- [37] line 2695b. I follow most of the editors in taking *hyrde* as *family* and *freaan* as an appositive with *fæder*.
- [38] line 2747b. Whatever the precise form of emendation to be adopted, this is certainly the sense of the word and passage.
- [39] line 2805. A passage is missing here, in the MS.
- [40] line 2810b. A hemistich is missing here, metrically.
- [41] line 2899a. This word (*stowe*) is Dietrich's obviously correct emendation.
- [42] line 2934a. Grein's emendation, *sælda* = *prosperity*, helps the metre but not the sense. I do not adopt it.
- [43] line 2935. In the MS., *Genesis* ends here and *Exodus* follows at once; as 28 Chapters of the Biblical Genesis are passed over, it seems probable that several pages in the MS. of the poem have been lost or were not transcribed.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GENESIS A \*\*\*

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

## START: FULL LICENSE

### THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase "Project Gutenberg"), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at [www.gutenberg.org/license](http://www.gutenberg.org/license).

### **Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be

bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation ("the Foundation" or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase "Project Gutenberg" appears, or with which the phrase "Project Gutenberg" is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase "Project Gutenberg" associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website ([www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)), you must, at no

additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3,



this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

## **Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™**

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

## **Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at [www.gutenberg.org/contact](http://www.gutenberg.org/contact)

## **Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate).

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.



Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate)

## **Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility:  
[www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.