

THE EREZ SERIES

RABBI ADIN
EVEN-ISRAEL
STEINSALTZ

A CONCISE
GUIDE TO THE
TORAH

A STUDY EDITION OF THE TORAH

A Concise Guide to the Torah

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The Erez Series

Dedicated in loving memory of

Joseph "Erez" Tenenbaum

Whose love of learning, endless curiosity and zest for life
Survived the Destruction
And found full expression in his ultimate return to Zion.

By his son Zisman Tuvia



סדרת ארז

מוקדש לעלוי נשמת

יוסף צבי בן טוביה זיסמן טננבואם

(המכונה ארז)

"אוד מוצל מאש"

שלא נכבה בו אהבת לימוד, סקרנות אין-סופית, ושמחת חיים

ע"י בנו זיסמן טוביה

Contents

Genesis

Parashat Bereshit	3
Parashat Noah	14
Parashat Lekh Lekha	25
Parashat Vayera	36
Parashat Hayei Sarah	49
Parashat Toldot	58
Parashat Vayetze	67
Parashat Vayishlah	79
Parashat Vayeshev	91
Parashat Miketz	101
Parashat Vayigash	114
Parashat Vayhi	123

Exodus

Parashat Shemot	135
Parashat Va'era	145
Parashat Bo	156
Parashat Beshalah	167
Parashat Yitro	178
Parashat Mishpatim	185
Parashat Teruma	196
Parashat Tetzaveh	205
Parashat Ki Tisa	215
Parashat Vayak'hel	226
Parashat Pekudei	236

Leviticus

Parashat Vayikra	247
Parashat Tzav	259
Parashat Shemini	268

Parashat Tazria	277
Parashat Metzora	284
Parashat Aharei Mot	293
Parashat Kedoshim	302
Parashat Emor	309
Parashat Behar	322
Parashat Behukotai	329

Numbers

Parashat Bemidbar	339
Parashat Naso	350
Parashat Behaalotekha	362
Parashat Shelah	372
Parashat Korah	380
Parashat Hukat	388
Parashat Balak	396
Parashat Pinhas	405
Parashat Matot	416
Parashat Masei	424

Deuteronomy

Parashat Devarim	435
Parashat Va'ethanan	444
Parashat Ekev	454
Parashat Re'eh	463
Parashat Shofetim	473
Parashat Ki Tetze	482
Parashat Ki Tavo	491
Parashat Nitzavim	500
Parashat Vayelekh	504
Parashat Haazinu	508
Parashat Vezot HaBerakha	513
Illustrations	521
Glossary	535

Foreword

The Bible, also called the five books of Moses, is the foundation of all Jewish culture. Our ancestors throughout the generations studied this book and taught it to their children. This book includes the stories of the origin of the entire world and of our ancestors, from the Garden of Eden to the exodus from Egypt, the giving of the Torah at Sinai, and the subsequent sojourn in the desert. It contains the laws which are the basis for Judaism. It is not a book of history nor a book that is meant to be read casually, but rather a holy book. Therefore, it is fitting that one not merely peruse it, but rather read with the intention of seeking guidance for one's life and one's path therein.

Each of the five books of Moses has a unique nature: Genesis is the book that tells of the creation of the world and its aftermath, and in doing so addresses some of the most fundamental topics that humankind has thought about. Nevertheless, it is mostly narrative, with the stories of Adam and Eve, the flood and Noah, and the accounts of the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The second book of Moses, Exodus, is the book of redemption and revelation. It contains the description of Israel's enslavement in Egypt and of the miracles through which our ancestors were redeemed and escaped Egypt. It tells of the great revelation at Sinai and of the subsequent sins of Israel. It concludes with an elaborate description of the construction of the Tabernacle.

The book of Leviticus has been referred to as the *Torat Kohanim*, the priests' law. It mostly is concerned with the service in the Tabernacle and the priestly rites, but also with the obligations of all of Israel to live a life of holiness and purity.

The book of Numbers relates the story of our ancestors' sojourn in the desert for forty years, the difficulties they encountered, and their ultimate arrival at the banks of the Jordan, preparing to enter the land.

The book of Deuteronomy is called *Mishneh Torah*, the review of the Torah. Nearly all of it consists of long speeches made by Moses to Israel at the end of the forty years in the desert. He tells the children of the generation that left Egypt of the great events that their parents experienced, reminds them of a selection of the mitzvot, most of which were previously recounted, and concludes with a poem and a blessing. The final passage relates the death of Moses.

The five books of Moses are accessible to all. The Torah can be read by small children who are just learning to read and is also the object of deep scrutiny by the greatest of scholars. It was originally written in biblical Hebrew and contains a wide range of content – everything from stories to practical instructions. It is fitting that every person has this book in his or her possession so that he or she can read from it whenever the opportunity arises, either for the purpose of study or even simply to take pleasure in reading it.

In order to make the text more accessible, we have added, beyond the traditional divisions into *parashot*, topical sub-headings, each followed by a few sentences of explanation. At the beginning of each *parasha* we have inserted a brief summary of its contents.

The primary goal of this edition of the five books of Moses is that the book be available in every Jewish home so that everyone, man or woman, boy or girl, can take advantage of it. Anyone who takes the time to study it will gain wisdom and, from time to time, may also have an original insight. At the beginning of the volume we have added a detailed table of contents. At the end we have added an appendix containing maps and charts, which are not meant to be merely decorative but to aid in making the Torah accessible to all.

Rabbi Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz

Introducing the Erez Concise Guides

A Jewish home, at any time or place, cannot be maintained based on the mere identity of its residents as Jews. Whether they conceive of themselves as religious, traditional, or secular, people need to have access to written expression of their tradition through which they can come to know, understand, and “enter” their tradition.

“To enter the tradition” can mean something different for each person. Some are simply curious, others have a particular interest, and there are undoubtedly many Jews who just do not want the worlds of the Jewish spirit to be closed to them. People therefore require bridges and gates to gain access. There is no obligation to use these, but their existence makes it possible for anyone – when that person so desires, to enter, or even to glance within – the way is clear and he or she can do so.

We have thus produced the Erez series which provides different gates by which one can enter the Jewish tradition. Just as it is told about Abraham’s tent that it was open from all four directions in order to welcome guests from everywhere, these books allow anyone, whenever he or she feels like it or finds something interesting, to enter into the tradition.

There are thousands of books that cover, in various ways and at different levels, the materials presented here. However, most of them require prior knowledge and no small amount of effort to be understood. In these volumes, we have striven to give anyone who seeks it a paved road into the riches of the Jewish world. More than merely a gate, we hope that these books can be said to offer their readers a “ride” into the tradition. Each person can get off whenever he or she desires and continue traveling when their interest is reawakened.

These volumes contain some of the fundamentals of Judaism. In each of them there are elements that can be considered hors d’oeuvres that can be snacked upon and others that are more comparable to entrees, that require more time for digestion. In either case, the invitation offered by *A Concise Guide to the Sages* in Proverbs (9:5) is relevant: “Come, partake of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mixed.” The books were deliberately designed to be accessible to everyone, whether he or she is highly educated or someone whose source of intellectual stimulation consists in occasionally reading the newspaper. Anyone can enjoy something, whether by means of an occasional taste, or by sitting down to a hearty meal. The way is open and anyone can find the gate appropriate for him or her, without effort.

We have aimed to keep the translation as true to the original Hebrew and Aramaic as possible. As some of these texts are not easy to understand, we have added clarifying comments in square brackets where appropriate. Further explication is appended in notes at the end of certain passages. When we have felt it appropriate to use a transliteration, the term transliterated is first explained and then followed by the transliteration in square brackets. At the end of each book we have provided a glossary of Hebrew terms mentioned in the series. Some of the terms found there may not be found in this book, as we have used the same glossary for all the volumes of the Erez series. *The Reference Guide to the Talmud* has a far more extensive glossary as is necessary for that work.

Given the antiquity of the texts collected here, there are many occasions where it was impossible to avoid gendered usage and we have followed the texts themselves in using the male gender as the default.

Each of the volumes in this series stands alone, with only occasional citations connecting them. The first volume, *A Concise Guide to the Torah*, contains the translation of the Torah taken from the *Steinsaltz Humash*; we have abridged the commentary that can be found there. One can take this volume to the synagogue but also peruse it in the comforts of one's home.

The second volume, *A Concise Guide to the Sages*, is an anthology of rabbinic literature, organized by topics. One part includes rabbinic thinking associated with the Torah, while other topics are also addressed: the cycle of the Jewish year, the cycle of life in rabbinic eyes, as well as other topics where a person can find something that fits his or her needs.

The third volume, *A Concise Guide to Mahshava*, addresses spiritual matters. It contains an anthology of non-halakhic literature from the Jewish spiritual tradition: kabbala, Jewish philosophy, the Musar tradition, and hasidic writings. Here too, the texts are presented in a manner that is accessible to all, in clear English. This volume addresses a broad array of topics: Besides comments and explanations on the Torah, there are sections devoted to the cycle of the Jewish year, the life cycle, and fundamental questions of human life such as parenthood, marriage, and death. There are many other topics addressed in this volume and one can open it at random and find wisdom that touches the soul.

The fourth volume, *A Concise Guide to Halakha*, is a survey of practical *halakha*. It does not delve into the sources of *halakha* and provide an opportunity for intensive study but serves rather as a guidebook to what the *halakha* instructs one to do in various situations. In this way the book offers

a summary of the *halakhot* of Shabbat and the holidays, of life cycle events, and of those mitzvot that any Jew is likely to encounter. If one wishes to act in accordance with the *halakha*, he or she will know what to do with the help of this volume. It is written in clear English with a minimum of technical language so that it is accessible to anyone, man, woman, or child. And if he or she decides to act accordingly, may he or she be blessed.

The fifth volume, *Reference Guide to the Talmud* is a reprint of the work that was issued as a companion to the *Koren Talmud Bavli*. It is an indispensable resource for students of all levels. This fully revised, English-language edition of the *Reference Guide* clearly and concisely explains the Talmud's fundamental structure, concepts, terminology, assumptions, and inner logic; it provides essential historical and biographical information; it includes appendixes, a key to abbreviations, and a comprehensive index.

For improved usability, this completely updated volume has a number of new features: topical organization instead of by Hebrew alphabet, re-edited and revised text to coordinate with the language used in the *Koren Talmud Bavli*, and an index of Hebrew terms to enable one seeking a Hebrew term to locate the relevant entry.

These books are certainly not the entire Torah, but they are beneficial for any Jew to have in his or her home. If one finds something interesting, or is curious about something, these books offer a resource to investigate that topic. Even if one opens one of these volumes by chance, he or she will gain from reading them, both intellectually and spiritually. In short, these are books that it is convenient to have in one's home.

Our thanks are extended to all the people who participated in the project of writing these books, editing them, and finding the sources therein. We likewise would like to thank the publisher, and those first readers who offered helpful criticism and advice, and finally to those good people whose donations made it possible to create these books.

The Editors

Genesis

Parashat Bereshit

Parashat Bereshit – and therefore the entire Torah – opens with a description of the creation of the world. It first offers a brief description of the hierarchical order of creation – the heavens and the earth, the sea and the land, and the plants, animals, and humanity. This is followed by a more specific account of the process.

Adam is placed in the garden of Eden and commanded not to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but the snake seduces his wife into disregarding the commandment; they are punished and banished from the garden. They have two children, Cain and Abel, and Cain's jealousy of Abel gives rise to the first murder in human history.

Human beings, the children of Adam, begin to proliferate and develop a culture and civilization, but "the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and...every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time" (6:5), causing humanity to become corrupt. The *parasha* concludes with the Creator's decision to wipe the human race off the face of the earth, with the exception of Noah, who "found favor in the eyes of the Lord" (6:8).

Light and Dark

The initial account of Creation is quite general, and is divided into discrete units of time – days. In addition to describing each act of creation, the narrative also introduces an evaluative element, establishing that Creation was a positive act.

- 1** ¹**In the beginning, God created *ex nihilo* the heavens and the earth.**
²**The earth was initially unformed and empty. And darkness was upon the face of the deep,** referring to deep waters, or to the unstructured universe. **And the spirit of God hovered over the surface of the water.** ³**God said: Let there be light, and there was light.** ⁴**God saw the light, that it was good. And God divided between the light and the darkness.** ⁵**God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. It was evening and it was morning, concluding one day.**



Further reading: Why does the Torah open with the letter *bet*? See *A Concise Guide to the Sages*, p. 3. For more on the age of the universe and its manner of creation, see *A Concise Guide to Mahshava*, p. 291.

The Heavens

The water mentioned earlier constitutes the fundamental material of Creation. It must be divided before Creation can progress.

⁶God said: Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water. And let it divide between water and water. ⁷God made the firmament and divided between the water that was under the firmament and the water that was above the firmament; and it was so. ⁸God called the firmament heavens. It was evening and it was morning, a second day.

Land and Vegetation

The water is collected in specific areas, exposing the land underneath and enabling the creation of grass, trees, and other vegetation.

⁹God said: Let the water under the heavens be gathered to one place, and let the dry land appear. And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas. And God saw His creation, that it was good. ¹¹God said: Let the earth sprout grasses: vegetation yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in its kind, in which there is its seed, upon the earth. And it was so. ¹²The earth produced grasses, vegetation yielding seed in its kind, and every tree bearing fruit in which there was its seed, in its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³It was evening and it was morning, a third day.

The Heavenly Bodies

God establishes the orbits of the heavenly bodies, thereby arranging the structure of the universe. These are important to people chiefly for their use in measuring time.

¹⁴God said: Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens, to distinguish between the day and the night. Let them be for causing signs, phenomena in the heavens and on Earth, and for establishing the seasons, and for marking days and years. ¹⁵Let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens, to give light upon the earth. And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights, those greatest as seen from Earth: the greater light, the sun, to rule the day, and the lesser light, the moon, to rule the night, and He also created the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth ¹⁸and to rule during the day and during the night. And these lights also serve to divide between the light and the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹It was evening and it was morning, a fourth day.

Populating the Seas and Skies

The first creatures with a measure of will are created within the water. Since they need to act in order to reproduce, they receive a blessing from above to do so.

²⁰God said: Let the water swarm with swarms of living creatures. And let birds fly above the earth on the face of the firmament of the heavens. ²¹God created the great serpents, unidentified aquatic creatures, and every living creature that crawls, with which the water swarmed in their kinds, and every winged bird in its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying: Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the water in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. In contrast to vegetation, which propagates automatically, animals must actively search for a mate in order to reproduce. Consequently, they required a special blessing that would instill within them the drive to be fruitful and multiply. **²³It was evening and it was morning, a fifth day.**

Land Creatures

The land animals are fashioned from the ground.

²⁴God said: Let the earth produce living creatures in its kind, animals, and crawling creatures, and beasts of the earth in its kind. And it was so. ²⁵God made the beasts of the earth in its kind, and the animals in its kind, and every creature that crawls upon the ground in its kind; and God saw that it was good.

Creation of Man

Human beings are the culmination of the entire process of creation. As they are created in the image of God, they are given free will. They are also given dominion over all other entities.

²⁶God said: Let Us make Man in Our image, in Our likeness; sharing God's essence. And let them dominate over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the animals, and over all the inanimate substances of the earth, and over every crawling creature that crawls upon the earth. ²⁷God created man in His own image, granting him freedom and the capacity to expand and alter his surroundings; in the image of God He created him. The verse notes: **Male and female He created them. ²⁸God blessed them and God also said to them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth; populate it and subdue it. And rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living creature that crawls upon the earth. ²⁹God said to them: Behold,**

I have given you all seed-yielding vegetation that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which there is seed-yielding fruit of a tree; to you it shall be for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that crawls upon the earth, in which there is a living soul, I have given all green vegetation for food. And it was so. ³¹God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good. It was evening and it was morning, the sixth day.

The Seventh Day

The final day is not just the day on which the labor of creation ceases. It has a distinctive character, incorporating blessing, wholeness, and holiness.

- 2 ¹The heavens and the earth and their entire host, everything within them, were completed. ²God completed on the seventh day His works that He had made; He rested on the seventh day from all His works that He had made. ³God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His labor that God had created to act.**

The Second Account of Creation

The second account of Creation comprises a more detailed description of the process of forming the various living creatures. Furthermore, whereas in the first version God is called *Elohim*, expressing His all-encompassing, impersonal essence, here God is called *YHVH Elohim*, the Lord God, adding God's personal name, as it were.

- Second
aliya* **⁴This is the legacy of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, on the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven. ⁵No shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no vegetation of the field had yet sprouted, because the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground. ⁶A mist would rise from the earth, and water the entire surface of the ground. ⁷The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Man became a living creature, with special vitality and the ability to speak.**

The Garden of Eden

While the Garden of Eden is described as a physical place, various details of the story render it mysterious, suggesting it is a lost world, outside the realm of our current experience.

- ⁸The Lord God planted a garden in the place known as Eden, to the east. He placed there the man whom He had formed. ⁹The Lord God grew from the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for**

food, and the tree of life, in the midst, the center, of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰A river emerged from Eden to water the garden; and from there it, the river, would part, and would become four headwaters. ¹¹The name of the one is Pishon; it is that which encircles the entire land of Havila, where the gold is found. ¹²The gold in the deposits of that land is of particularly good quality; there is also bdellium and the onyx stone. ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; it is that which encircles the entire land of Kush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is Tigris; it is that which goes east of Ashur. And the fourth river is Euphrates. ¹⁵The Lord God took the man, and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to cultivate it and to keep it. ¹⁶The Lord God commanded the man, saying: From every tree of the garden you may eat, ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat of it you shall die.

Creation of Woman

According to the straightforward meaning of the verses, the woman was formed from one of the man's ribs [*tzela*]. But as *tzela* also means side, the Sages interpreted the story as suggesting that before woman was created as a separate being, the first human comprised two sides, male and female. These were separated into a man and a woman, each an independent entity.

¹⁸The Lord God said to Himself: It is not good that the man shall be alone. I will make for him a helper alongside him, a partner who completes him. ¹⁹The Lord God formed from the ground every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man, to see what he would call it. Whatever the man would call every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man called names for every animal, and for the birds of the heavens, and for the beasts of the field; but for Adam, he did not find a helper to be alongside him. This is the first time Adam is used as a name rather than as a word meaning 'the man'. ²¹The Lord God cast a deep sleep upon the man, and he slept; He took out one of his sides, and closed with flesh in its place, where He had removed this side. ²²The Lord God built the side that He took from the man into the form of a woman, and brought her to the man. ²³The man said: This time, this particular entity, is a bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh. This shall be called woman [*isha*], because this was taken from man [*ish*]. ²⁴Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother, and he shall cleave, connect, to his wife, and they shall become

Third
aliya

one flesh. ²⁵They were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed.

Eating from the Tree

The woman heard about the prohibition against eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil only from an intermediary, her husband, rather than directly from God. Therefore it was easier for the primeval serpent, who is described as possessing intelligence, to arouse her curiosity and incite her into transgressing the prohibition.

- 3 ¹The serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman: Did God actually say: You shall not eat of any tree of the garden? ²The woman said to the serpent: From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat. ³But from the fruit of the tree that is in the midst, the middle, of the garden, God said: You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. ⁴The serpent said to the woman: You will not die. Rather, this is the motivation for the divine prohibition: ⁵For God knows that on the day you eat from it, then your eyes shall be opened to understanding, and you shall be as God, knowers of good and evil. ⁶The woman saw that the tree was good for eating, and that it was an enticement to the eyes, and that the tree was attractive to apprehend; it was tempting to acquire understanding from the tree. She took from its fruit and ate; she also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew the significance of the fact that they were naked. Consequently, they sewed fig leaves, and made themselves loincloths.**

The Punishment

Everyone who participated in this sin receives a punishment, which will also apply to all future generations.

⁸They heard the voice of the Lord God as though it were moving in the garden with the day breeze, before evening. The man and his wife hid from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹The Lord God called to the man, and said to him: Where are you? ¹⁰He, the man, said: I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and therefore I hid. ¹¹He, God, said: Who told you that it was wrong that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat? ¹²The man said: The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate. ¹³The Lord God said to the woman: What is this you have done? The woman said:

The serpent enticed me, and I ate. ¹⁴**The Lord God said to the serpent: Because you did this, cursed are you from among all the animals, and from all the beasts of the field; upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life.** ¹⁵**Additionally, I will place enmity between you and the woman, and between your descendants and her descendants. He, her descendant, shall strike, step on, your head, and you shall strike, bite, his heel.** ¹⁶**To the woman He said: I will increase your suffering and the difficulty of your pregnancy; in pain you shall give birth to children. And furthermore, your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.** ¹⁷**And to Adam He said: Because you heeded the voice of your wife and succumbed to temptation, and because you ate from the tree that I commanded you, saying: You shall not eat from it; cursed is the ground on your account. Only in suffering, through toil, shall you eat of it, all the days of your life.** ¹⁸**And thorns and thistles shall it grow for you; and you shall eat the vegetation of the field.** ¹⁹**Only by the sweat of your brow, by exerting great effort, shall you eat bread, until you return to the ground; for from it were you taken. For you are dust, and to dust shall you return at your death.**

²⁰**The man called the name of his wife Eve [Ḥava], because she was the mother of all living [ḥai] beings.** ²¹**The Lord God made for Adam and for his wife hide tunics, and clothed them.**

Expulsion from the Garden of Eden

Having eaten from the tree, man not only comprehends his mortal nature, but his capacity for free will has expanded. He is likely to try various ploys to avoid death, and he must therefore be prevented from doing so.

*Fourth
aliya* ²²**The Lord God said: Behold, the man has become as one of us, like one of the heavenly beings, as he has the capacity to know good and evil. And now steps must be taken lest he put forth his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.** ²³**Therefore, the Lord God sent him out from the Garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.** ²⁴**He, God, banished the man; He stationed the cherubs, a type of angel, east of the Garden of Eden. And He placed the blade of the ever-turning sword to guard the path to the tree of life.**

Cain and Abel

Adam and Eve begin a new life, with all its complexities. Their family must deal with one of the fundamental issues that face humanity: Sibling rivalry.

4 ¹The man had been intimate with Eve his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain and said: I have acquired [*kaniti*], merited, a man with the Lord. ²She gave birth again, to his brother Abel. Abel was a shepherd, and Cain was a cultivator of the ground. ³It happened, after some time; Cain brought from the fruit of the ground an offering, a gift, to the Lord. ⁴And Abel, he too brought an offering to God, from the firstborn of his flock and from the choicest of them; and the Lord turned toward Abel and to his offering. ⁵But toward Cain and to his offering He did not turn. Cain was very incensed, and his face and mood became downcast. ⁶The Lord said to Cain: Why are you incensed, and why did your face become downcast? ⁷Truly, if you do good, you will be elevated. And if you do not do good, remember that sin crouches at the entrance, to entrap you. And its, sin's, desire is for you, but you may rule over it if you so desire.

Cain Kills Abel

Cain's jealousy leads to hatred, which in turn leads to fratricide. God sentences Cain, a farmer, to wander the earth.

⁸Cain said to Abel his brother. It happened when they were in the field that Cain arose against Abel his brother and killed him. ⁹The Lord said to Cain: Where is Abel your brother? He said: I do not know; am I my brother's keeper? ¹⁰He, God, said to Cain: What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. ¹¹Now, cursed are you from the ground that opened its mouth to take your brother's blood from your hand. ¹²When you cultivate the ground, it shall not continue giving its strength to you. The ground is cursed on your account; it shall cease to be a source of life for you. Instead, restless and itinerant shall you be on the earth. ¹³Cain said to the Lord: My punishment [*avoni*] is greater than I can bear. ¹⁴Behold, You have banished me this day from the face of the land, and from Your face shall I be hidden. I shall be restless and itinerant on the earth, and anyone who finds me will kill me. ¹⁵The Lord said to him: Therefore, anyone who kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. The Lord placed a sign for Cain, so that anyone who finds him shall not smite him. ¹⁶Cain departed from the presence of the Lord and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Cain's Descendants

It is Cain and his descendants who express human creativity, both in building cities and in shaping the developing culture.

¹⁷Cain was intimate with his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Hanokh. He, Cain, was the builder of a city, and he called the name of the city after the name of his son Hanokh. ¹⁸Irak was born to Hanokh; and Irak begot Mehuyael; and Mehuyael begot Metushael; and ¹⁹Metushael begot Lemekh. ²⁰Lemekh took for himself two wives. The name of one was Ada, and the name of the other Tzila. ²¹Ada gave birth to Yaval; he was the forerunner of those who dwell in tents, nomads, and who raise livestock. ²²And the name of his brother was Yuval; he was the forerunner of all those who grasp the harp and pipe; the first musician and inventor of musical instruments. ²³And Tzila, she too gave birth, to Tuval Cain, forger of every sharp instrument of bronze and iron, the first metalworker. And the sister of Tuval Cain was Naama.

*Fifth
aliya*

Lemekh's Confession

A midrash relates that Lemekh killed Cain unwittingly, and that this poem is his expression of remorse.

²³Lemekh said to his wives: Ada and Tzila, hear my voice; wives of Lemekh, listen to my speech. For have I slain a man for my wound, willfully? No, and I did not purposely kill a child for my injury. ²⁴Therefore, as Cain, who killed intentionally, shall be avenged sevenfold, and accordingly, Lemekh will be avenged seventy-seven-fold.

²⁵Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son, and she called his name Seth [Shet]: As God has provided [*shat*] me with another offspring in place of Abel, as Cain killed him. ²⁶And to Seth too a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then commenced [*huhal*] proclaiming the name of the Lord, in organized prayers and religious rituals.

The Descendants of Adam

This passage presents a brief chronology of the first ten generations of man.

***Sixth* 5 ¹This is the book, the story, of the legacy of Adam. On the day that God *aliya* created man, in the likeness of God He made him. ²Male and female He created them. He blessed them, and He called their name Man [Adam] on the day they were created. ³Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his likeness, after his image. And he called his**

name Seth. ⁴The days of Adam after he begot Seth were eight hundred years, and during this time he begot sons and daughters. ⁵All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

⁶Seth lived one hundred and five years, and he begot Enosh. ⁷Seth lived after he begot Enosh eight hundred and seven years; and he begot sons and daughters. ⁸All the days that Seth lived were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

⁹Enosh lived ninety years, and he begot Kenan. ¹⁰Enosh lived after he begot Kenan eight hundred and fifteen years; and he begot sons and daughters. ¹¹All the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.

¹²Kenan lived seventy years, and he begot Mahalalel. ¹³Kenan lived after he begot Mahalalel eight hundred and forty years; and he begot sons and daughters. ¹⁴All the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

¹⁵Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and he begot Yered. ¹⁶Mahalalel lived after he begot Yered eight hundred and thirty years; and he begot sons and daughters. ¹⁷All the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

¹⁸Yered lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and he begot Hanokh. ¹⁹Yered lived after he begot Hanokh eight hundred years; and he begot sons and daughters. ²⁰All the days of Yered were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

²¹Hanokh lived sixty-five years, and he begot Methuselah. ²²Hanokh walked with God, worshipping Him, after he begot Methuselah, three hundred years; and he begot sons and daughters. ²³All the days of Hanokh were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴Hanokh walked with God and he was not in the world any longer, for God took him into His court.

Seventh ²⁵Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and he begot *aliya* Lemekh. ²⁶Methuselah lived after he begot Lemekh seven hundred and eighty-two years; and he begot sons and daughters. ²⁷All the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.

²⁸Lemekh lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and he begot a son. ²⁹He called his name Noah, saying: This son shall comfort us from the suffering of our work, and from the misery of our hands, from the ground, which the Lord has cursed. ³⁰Lemekh lived after he begot

Noah five hundred and ninety-five years; and he begot sons and daughters. ³¹All the days of Lemekh were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

³²Noah was five hundred years old; and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Yefet.

Humanity Disappoints

As human society expands, it becomes apparent that people's desires and choices are directed primarily to evil.

- 6** ¹It was, when men, the human race, began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them; ²the sons of the great ones, either the upper classes, or angels, saw that the daughters of man were fair, and they took for themselves wives from whomever they chose. ³The Lord said: My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he too is only flesh, like the animals; and his days shall be one hundred and twenty years. ⁴The giants were on the earth in those days, and also thereafter, when the sons of the great ones consorted with the daughters of man, and they bore them children. They, the children, were the mighty who were known from ancient times as the men of renown. ⁵The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. ⁶The Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth. And He was saddened in His heart. ⁷The Lord said: I will obliterate man, whom I have created from the face of the earth; from man to animal, to crawling creatures, to birds of the heavens; for I regret that I made them.
- Maftir* ⁸But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

 **Further reading:** For more on people's inclinations toward good and evil, see *A Concise Guide to Mahshava*, p. 219.