

GENESIS

(BERE'SHEET)¹

CHAPTER 1:1 At *the* first² of ELOHIM³ creating the skies and the land—**2** and the land was⁴ desolation and emptiness; and darkness *was* over *the* face^p of *the* deep, and the spirit⁵ of ELOHIM was hovering⁶ over the face^p of the waters—**3** and ELOHIM said, “Let there be light”; and it was light. **4** And ELOHIM saw the light, that *it was* good; and ELOHIM separated between the light and between the darkness.⁷ **5** And ELOHIM called to the light “day,”⁸ and to the darkness he called “night.” And it was evening and it was morning—day one.⁹

6 And ELOHIM said, “Let there be an expanse in the middle of the waters, and let there be a separating between waters to waters.” **7** And ELOHIM made¹⁰ the expanse, and he separated between the waters that *were* from under the expanse, and between the waters that *were*

¹ The books of the Hebrew Bible are named from their opening words: here *Bere'sheet*, meaning “At *the* first of . . .”

² Lit “At *the* head of,” Heb *Bere'sheet* in this grammatical construction is a temporal phrase meaning, “When at first . . .,” see Jer 26:1 where the same form occurs. It presents the “state of things” when the creative activity begins.

³ ELOHIM is a plural noun, but often functions as a collective singular, taking a singular verb. It is related to the Hebrew terms: *'eloah* and *'el*, meaning God, god, power, or mighty one, and can refer to judges and leaders, heavenly beings, the gods of the nations, or the one God of Israel.

⁴ Or “became.”

⁵ Heb *ruach*, lit “wind,” see Gen 7:1.

⁶ I.e., “fluttering,” or “shaking,” see Deut 32:11; Jer 23:9, the only two other places this verb is used, always in an intensive form.

⁷ I.e., separated the light from the darkness.

⁸ DSS “daytime.”

⁹ These paragraph breaks, as well as the smaller “white space” divisions (see Gen 3:16-17), are taken from the Hebrew text and are reproduced precisely throughout this translation, as explained in the Introduction.

¹⁰ Or “did.”

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from upon the expanse. And it was thus. **8** And ELOHIM called to the expanse “skies.” And it was evening and it was morning, a second day.

9 And ELOHIM said, “Let the waters under the skies be gathered to one place,¹ and let the dry *land* be seen.” And it was thus. **10** And ELOHIM called to the dry *land* “land,” and to the gathering of the waters he called “seas.” And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **11** And ELOHIM said, “Let the land sprout *the* sprout, a plant seeding seed, a fruit tree making² fruit, according to its type, its seed, within it, upon the land.” And it was thus. **12** And the land caused *the* sprout to go out, a plant seeding seed according to its type, and a tree making³ fruit, its seed, within it, according to its type. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **13** And it was evening and it was morning, a third day.

14 And ELOHIM said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the skies, to separate between the day and between the night; and they will be⁴ for signs, and for set times,⁵ and for days and years,⁶ **15** and they will be for lights in the expanse of the skies, to give light upon the land.” And it was thus. **16** And ELOHIM made⁷ the two large lights—the large light for rule of the day, and the small light for rule of the night—and the stars. **17** And ELOHIM gave them in the expanse of the skies, to give light upon the land, **18** and to rule in the day and in the night, and to separate between the light and between the darkness. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **19** And it was evening and it was morning, a fourth day.

¹ DSS “one gathering,” producing alliteration with the verb “gathered.”

² Or “doing.”

³ Or “doing.”

⁴ DSS “and they were”; this reading seems to support the possibility of the direct quotation ending after “. . . between the night,” as some translators have suggested.

⁵ Heb *mo'adim*, “appointed times,” whether astronomical, divine, or human.

⁶ DSS “for years.”

⁷ Or “did.”

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20 And ELOHIM said, “Let the waters swarm a swarm of living life-breathers^s,¹ and let *the* flyer fly upon the land, upon the face^p of the expanse of the skies.” **21** And ELOHIM created the great sea creatures, and every living^d life-breather that moves about, *with* which the waters swarm, according to their type, and every winged flyer, according to its type. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **22** And ELOHIM blessed them saying, “Bear fruit and be many and fill the waters in the seas, and let the flyer² be many in the land.” **23** And it was evening and it was morning, a fifth day.

24 And ELOHIM said, “Let the land cause to go out a living life-breather according to its type: animal, and moving thing, and living thing of land according to its type.” And it was thus. **25** And ELOHIM made³ the living thing of the land, according to its type, and the animal according to its type, and every moving thing of the soil according to its type. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **26** And ELOHIM said, “Let us make⁴ *soil-man*⁵ in our image, according to our likeness, and let them govern in⁶ the fish of the sea, and with the flyer of the skies, and in the animals^s, and in all the land,⁷ and in every moving thing that moves about upon the land.” **27** And ELOHIM created the *soil-man* in his image: in the image of ELOHIM he created him, a male and a female he created them. **28** And ELOHIM blessed them and ELOHIM said to them, “Bear fruit and be many and fill the land; and subdue, and govern in the fish of the sea, and in the flyer of the skies, and in every living thing that moves about upon the land.” **29** And ELOHIM said, “Look!—I have given to you^p every plant seeding seed that *is* upon the face^p of all

¹ Heb *nephesh chayyah*, refers to breathing life of all types; the same term is used in 1:24 for land animals and in 2:7 for humans.

² DSS “the flying thing will be many.”

³ Or “did.”

⁴ Or “do.”

⁵ Heb *'adam*, from *'adamah*, “soil,” or “red soil.”

⁶ I.e., in regard to, here and v. 28.

⁷ Syriac “over all the animals of the land.”

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the land, and every tree^d, in which *there is* fruit of a tree, seeding seed; to you^p it will be for eating. **30** And to every living thing of the land, and to every flyer of the skies, and to every moving about thing on the land, that in it *is* living life-breath¹—every green plant *is* for eating.” And it was thus. **31** And ELOHIM saw all that he had made,² and look!—*it was* exceedingly good. And it was evening and it was morning, the sixth day.

CHAPTER 2:1 And the skies and the land and all their company³ were finished. **2** And ELOHIM finished on the seventh day his work that he did, and he ceased⁴ on the seventh day⁵ from all his work that he did. **3** And ELOHIM blessed the seventh day, and he separated it, because on it he ceased from all his work that ELOHIM created to do.

4 *These are the bringings-forth of the skies and the land*⁶ in their being created. In *the* day of the making⁷ of YHVH⁸ ELOHIM, land and skies, **5** and no shrub of the field was before that on the land, and no plant of the field had before that sprouted—for YHVH ELOHIM had not caused it to rain on the land, and there *was* no *soil-man* to service the soil; **6** and a flow⁹ would go up from the land, and it caused to drink all the face^p of the soil—**7** and YHVH ELOHIM shaped the *soil-man*—dust from the soil,¹⁰ and he blew into his two nostrils breath¹¹ of life^p; and the *soil-man*

¹ Heb *nephesh chayyah*, used of humans in Gen 2:7.

² Or “done.”

³ Or “army,” Heb *tzava*, refers to a gathering or mustering.

⁴ Heb *shavat*, or “rested,” in the sense of halting.

⁵ Greek (LXX), Syriac, and Samaritan read “sixth day” here.

⁶ Genesis has ten divisions, each beginning with the phrase “*These are the bringings-forth of . . .*” and these are indicated in this translation by **bold type**.

⁷ Lit “doing.”

⁸ Name of the God of Israel יהוה (Tetragrammaton), traditionally Yahweh, or Yehovah; translated LORD in most English versions but here left as four letters without vowels.

⁹ Or “mist,” meaning uncertain, used only here and Job 36:27.

¹⁰ Heb *'adamah*, from which the term “*soil-man*” (*'adam*) is derived.

¹¹ Heb *nishamah*, cf. Gen 7:15,22 where a different term is used.

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became a living life-breather.¹ **8** And YHVH ELOHIM planted a garden in Eden,² at the east; and there he placed the *soil*-man whom he shaped. **9** And YHVH ELOHIM caused to sprout from the soil every tree pleasant for sight and good for eating; and the tree of life^p in the middle of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and bad. **10** And a river goes out from Eden to cause the garden to drink, and from there it is separated and it becomes four heads. **11** The name of the one *is* Pishon;³ it winds around all the land of the Havilah, where there *is* gold^d, **12** and the gold of that land *is* good; there *are* bdellium and the onyx stone. **13** And the name of the second river *is* Gihon;⁴ it winds around all the land of Cush.⁵ **14** And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel;⁶ it *is* the one walking east of Assyria. And the fourth river—it *is* Euphrates.⁷ **15** And YHVH ELOHIM took the *soil*-man and caused him to rest in the garden of Eden, to service it and to guard it. **16** And YHVH ELOHIM *laid* charge upon the *soil*-man, saying, “From every tree of the garden, eating—you will *surely* eat!”⁸ **17** And from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad, you will not eat from it; for on *the* day you eat from it, dying—you will *surely* die!”⁹ **18** And YHVH ELOHIM said, “Not good—the *soil*-man being by himself, I will make¹⁰ for him a helper, as his opposite.”¹¹ **19** And YHVH ELOHIM shaped from the soil every living thing of the field, and every flyer of the skies, and he caused to come to the *soil*-man to see what he would call to it; and whatever the *soil*-man would call to it—*each* living life-

¹ Heb *nephesh chayyah*, same term as in 1:20,21,24, refers to breathing life of all type, whether animal or human. The standard English translation of “soul” is accordingly misleading.

² Name of a place or region, meaning “pleasure” or “bliss.”

³ Possibly from verb *push*, “to leap,” “spread about.”

⁴ Meaning, “to gush forth.”

⁵ Uncertain, perhaps the lands of the southern Nile.

⁶ Meaning uncertain; Greek (LXX) reads Tigris.

⁷ Heb *Pherat*, “fruitfulness.”

⁸ Double use of the verb indicates emphasis.

⁹ Double use of the verb indicates emphasis.

¹⁰ Or “do.”

¹¹ I.e., as his corresponding counterpart.

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breather—that *was* its name. **20** And the *soil*-man called names to every animal, and to the flyer of the skies, and to every living thing of the field; and to Adam¹ he did not find a helper, as his opposite. **21** And YHVH ELOHIM caused a deep sleep to fall upon the *soil*-man, and he slept; and he took one from his sides, and he closed flesh under it. **22** And YHVH ELOHIM built the side that he took from the *soil*-man into a woman, and he caused her to come to the *soil*-man. **23** And the *soil*-man said, “This one this time—bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh! To this one will be called “woman,”² because from a man³ this one was taken.” **24** Therefore a man⁴ will leave his father and his mother, and join⁵ with his woman, and they become one flesh. **25** And the *two* of them were nude,⁶—the *soil*-man and his woman—and they were not ashamed. **CHAPTER 3:1** And the Nachash⁷ was shrewd⁸—more than any⁹ living thing of the field that YHVH ELOHIM made.¹⁰ And he said to the woman, “Did ELOHIM indeed say, ‘You^p may not eat from any tree of the garden?’” **2** And the woman said to the Nachash, “From the fruit of the trees^s of the garden we may eat; **3** and from the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, ELOHIM said, ‘You^p will not eat from it, and you will not touch it, lest you die.’” **4** And the Nachash said to the woman, “Dying—you^p will not *surely* die!¹¹ **5** For ELOHIM knows that in *the* day you^p eat from it that your eyes will be opened and you^p will be as ELOHIM knowing^p good and

¹ Heb *'adam*, “*soil*-man,” without the article, probably the proper name.

² Heb *'ishah*.

³ Heb *'ish*.

⁴ Heb *'ish*.

⁵ I.e., to stick to, as in soldering.

⁶ Heb *'arumim*, word play with “shrewd” in the following verse.

⁷ Heb *nachash*, usually a snake, but it can also refer to a sea creature (Amos 9:3; Isa 27:1), the root meaning “shine” (like brass) or “hiss” as in enchantment.

⁸ Heb *'arum*, see previous verse; “nude” comes from the same root, meaning “smooth” or “slick.”

⁹ Lit “from every.”

¹⁰ Or “did.”

¹¹ Double use of the verb indicates emphasis.

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bad.” **6** And the woman saw that the tree *was* good for eating, and that it *was* a longing to the eyes, and the tree *was* desirable for causing insight, and she took from its fruit and she ate; and she gave also to her man¹ with her, and he ate. **7** And the eyes of the two of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* nude; and they sewed together leaves^s of a fig tree and they made² for themselves loin-cloths. **8** And they heard the voice³ of YHVH ELOHIM walking about⁴ in the garden in the wind⁵ of the day, and the *soil*-man caused *himself* to be hidden—and his woman—from the face^p of YHVH ELOHIM in the middle of the trees^s of the garden. **9** And YHVH ELOHIM called to the *soil*-man, and he said to him, “Where *are* you?” **10** And he said, “Your voice⁶ I heard in the garden, and I was afraid, for I *was* nude; and I was hidden.” **11** And he said, “Who told to you that you *were* nude? From the tree that I charged you ‘not to eat from it,’ have you eaten?” **12** And the *soil*-man said, “The woman, that—you gave her *to be* with me—*she* gave to me from the tree, and I ate.” **13** And YHVH ELOHIM said to the woman, “What *is* this you have done?” And the woman said, “The Nachash, he deceived me, and I ate.” **14** And YHVH ELOHIM said to the Nachash, “Because you have done this, cursed *are* you above every animal, and above every living thing of the field; upon your belly you will walk, and dust you will eat, all the days of your life^p. **15** And hatred I will place between you and between the woman, and between your seed and between her seed;⁷ *he* will strike⁸ you—*on the* head, and *you* will strike him—*on the* heel.” **16** To the woman he said, “Causing

¹ Heb *'ish*.

² Or “did for themselves.”

³ I.e., sound; in Hebrew “voice” is used as a metaphor for all kinds of sounds.

⁴ This form of the verb implies to walk to and fro, thus habitually.

⁵ I.e., breeze.

⁶ I.e., sound, in Hebrew “voice” is used as a metaphor for all kinds of sounds.

⁷ Or “offspring,” Heb *zera* ‘normally refers to male “seed,” but can refer to female reproduction as well (Gen 16:10; Lev 12:2).

⁸ Or “bruise.”

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to be many—I will *surely* cause to be many!¹—your distress² and your pregnancy; in distress you will bring forth sons, and toward your man³ *will be* your craving, and *he* will rule with you.”⁴ **17** And to Adam⁵ he said, “Because you hearkened to⁶ the voice of your woman, and you ate from the tree that I charged you saying, ‘You will not eat from it,’ cursed *is* the soil on account of you. In distress⁷ you will eat it all the days of your life^p; **18** and thorn and thistle it will sprout for you, and you will eat the plant of the field. **19** In the sweat of your two nostrils you will eat bread, until you return to the soil, for from it you were taken; for dust you *are*, and to dust you will return.” **20** And the *soil*-man called the name of his woman Eve,⁸ for *she* was mother of all living. **21** And YHVH ELOHIM made⁹ for Adam¹⁰ and his woman, robes of skin, and he dressed them.

22 And YHVH ELOHIM said, “Look!—the *soil*-man has become like one from us,¹¹ to know good and bad; and now, lest he send forth his hand and take also from the tree of life^p, and eat, and live for an age . . . !”¹²—**23** And YHVH ELOHIM sent¹³ him from the garden of Eden, to service the soil from which he was taken. **24** And he drove the *soil*-man out, and he caused to dwell at the east of the garden of Eden, the cherubim, and the flame of the sword that was revolving, to guard the way of the tree of life^p.

¹ Double use of the verb indicates emphasis.

² Or “sorrow,” same word as v. 17b.

³ Heb *’ish*.

⁴ I.e., with regard to.

⁵ Heb *’adam*, “*soil*-Man,” without the article, probably the proper name.

⁶ Lit “heard to.”

⁷ Or “sorrow,” “hardship,” same word as v. 16.

⁸ Heb *chavah*, meaning “living.”

⁹ Or “did.”

¹⁰ Heb *’adam*, “*soil*-Man,” without the article, probably the proper name.

¹¹ Or “from him,” pronoun can mean “us” or “him” here.

¹² I.e., continually; Hebrew idiom referring to an undetermined time into the future or the past. The sentence is incomplete and breaks off without finishing the thought.

¹³ Intensive form of the verb.