

In the beginning was God, Jehovah there by His side,
They reformed the earth, for man to abide,
From earth they made man, called Adam his name,
Took bone of his rib, to make woman the same.

The woman came from man, Eve she'll be named,
They were innocently naked, and totally unashamed,
They were given dominion, over all Gods' creatures,
Grass eating tame, and with friendly features.

A garden of Eden, God planted so that,
This human creation had a beautiful habitat,
With fruit trees all kinds, tasty and nice,
Surroundings all lush, in this Paradise.

Gods' presence was there, His truth He taught,
But their will to obey, with danger was fraught,
I have given you a tree, that promises life,
Eat freely of it, to keep from all strife.

But the tree of good and evil, with fruit you espy,
Don't eat of this one, or you will surely die,
The serpent more subtle, than Adam and Eve,
Said Gods' told you wrongly, you He wants to deceive.

Do eat of that fruit, tree of evil and good,
He'd turn them from God, this he understood,
They sinned in the taking, of the fruit so appealing,
The shame of their nakedness, then so revealing.

Out of the garden, God cast the pair,
Reentry was barred, in case they should dare,
Driven away from their Eden, leaves now their covering,
Aware they were naked, they were now discovering.

To multiply they went, bearing Abel and Cain,
Cain killing brother Abel, with Godly disdain,
Cain fled to Nod, God gave him a mark,
Branded for life, and now in the dark.

Seed Seth was now born, replacing his brother,
Soothing the sorrow, of father and mother,
Wickedness grew, in the human race,
God saw only one man, full of justice and grace.

Noah was the name, of this man so fine,
Pure in generations, God said he'll be Mine,
A project He gave him, to build an ark,
And warn those about him, to come out of the dark.

His pleas went unheeded, for many long days,
As he built up this boat, saving earth from mans' ways,
It carried the pairs, some creatures seven,
Floating up so high, close to our heaven.

The rain came in torrents, forty long days,
Flooding the earth, killing for days,
Noah and wife, sons and their wives too,
Came forth to populate, human life to renew.

A rainbow quite lovely, then graced the sky,
 No more floods would God bring, to make all men die,
 Now ministration of death, requiring blood for taking life,
 Gods' control of violence, preventing living in strife.

Shem Ham and Japheth, gave colour of skin,
 Separating the nations, to all that would live within,
 With one language of speech, and a great high tower,
 Salvation they desired, with plenty of power.

God saw their plans, their speech He divided,
 To scatter them far, their goals He derided,
 From Shem came Eber, down to offspring Terah,
 From whom came Abram, today his seed we are.

He came from Ur, in the land of Chaldee,
 God said away, to a land where you'll serve Me,
 Leave Ur and set forth, taking Sarai and Lot,
 Through Canaan to Egypt, and back choosing their spot.

Herdsmen were squabbling, so to end their debate,
 Said Abram to Lot, we had better separate,
 Lot went to Jordan, settling down on the plain,
 So Abram said this Canaan, is where I'll remain.

God said to him look, north south east and west,
 I'll bless you forever, you'll have the best,
 The kings' of near lands, so powerful grew,
 Conquering Sodom and Lot, Gomorrah too.

Abram pursued them, and overcame all,
 Taking home Lot's family, and the rest of the haul,
 Melchisedek met them, brought forth bread and wine,
 High Priest of Salem, inviting Abram to dine.

Then Abram gave tithes, a tenth to the King,
 Of yours King of Sodom, I'll not take a thing,
 Look up toward heaven, the stars you will see,
 If you're able to number them, so shall your seed be.

Said God with you, I'll covenant this day,
 So take of the animals, then you will slay,
 Cut them down the middle, so as to divide,
 Then lay them on the ground, flat and side by side.

Birds lay one each side, don't cut them at all,
 Lay one on each side, because they are only small,
 When the sun was going down, Abram fell into sleep,
 And lo a horror of darkness, very great and deep.

Behold a smoking furnace, and a fiery light,
 Passed between the pieces, during that night,
 Your seed will be strangers, in a land not theirs,
 Serving in affliction, for four hundred years.

The nation they serve, will be judged by Me,
 And with substance they'll come out, to be set free,
 I can't give you children, there's no hope I will bear,
 Said Sarah take Hagar, she'll give you an heir.

Ishmael was born, he and Dad circumcised,
 With men of the household, was this organised,
 Abraham was ninety, years old plus nine,
 When circumcised with Ishmael, thirteen at the time.

Meanwhile in Sodom, lived this man who was chaste,
 Lot vexed with man's conduct, he viewed with distaste,
 Said the angel to Lot, we'll burn here and Gomorrah,
 Take your daughters and flee, don't be part of this horror.

Fire and brimstone, came raining and burning,
 God said don't look back, you are not returning,
 Lot's wife disobeyed, her biggest fault,
 To long for past life, so turned a pillar of salt.

Conspiring together, Lot's daughters were sly,
 Saying there's no man to take us, with father we'll lie,
 Moab was born first, of that family seed sown,
 Benoni came next, as Ammon he's now known.

Said God I will give you, a son in old age,
 Your firstborn of promise, set time I will gauge,
 With him I will covenant, and his progeny,
 The family of God, if you'll be faithful to Me.

The promise of God, was sure and steadfast,
 The son of old age, was born at long last,
 A miracle given, thus the family grew,
 The covenant with Isaac, God said I'll renew.

Send Hagar away, said Sarah forlorn,
 She mocks we'll not have, her son as firstborn,
 Going with them God said, he'll become a nation great,
 This archer in Paran, who will have an Egyptian mate.

Abraham was tested, told to go to Moriah,
 Take Isaac and climb, the mountain up higher,
 A burnt offering to God, Isaac lay on the wood,
 On the altar they'd built, the lad understood.

Taking the knife, Abraham raised his arm,
Don't do it said God, do the lad no harm,
I'll provide the offering, understanding will dawn,
There's a ram in the thicket, held fast by the horn.

Abraham now mourned, the death of his wife,
One hundred twenty seven, the years of her life,
In a cave before Mamre, out in the field,
Possession of Abraham, was Sarah's grave now sealed.

To the land of Nahor, was the servant despatched,
To find Isaac a wife, with whom he'd be matched,
Rebekah was chosen, from Abrahams kin,
She said I'll go with you, new life to begin.

Isaac was comforted, after his mother died,
Abraham was helped, taking another bride,
Keturah now gave him, sons six more,
Sending concubines away, so Isaac they wouldn't lure.

Back in Beersheba, Isaac and Rebekah married,
Rebekah conceiving, twins she knew she carried,
Why is this happening, she despairingly cried,
Two manner of peoples, were struggling inside.

The first with the birthright, came out hairy and red,
Esau they called him, on venison he fed,
Jacob the younger, liked to dwell in a tent,
And cooking up pottage, making Esau dement.

For his hunger was weakening, give me of that stew,
If you'll feed me your pottage, birthright I'll give you,
The pact then established, Esau's hunger assuaged,
He'd been tricked he realized, totally enraged.

Esau wed Judith, a Hittite life to share,
Making his parents, upset with despair,
Yet Isaac loved Esau, his cooking he knew,
The flavour quite lovely, his venison stew.

Rebekah loved Jacob, and devised a scheme,
To steal Esau's blessing, for Jacob was her dream,
She made of the mixture, Isaac delighted to taste,
Dressing up Jacob, now his father he faced.

Give me the blessing, father please do,
I'll give to you, some of your favourite stew,
You sound like your brother, but your feel is right,
I'll give you your blessing this very night.

Now father was dead, Esau said I will slay,
The brother who robbed me, and got in my way,
So Jacob departed, to make safe he'd be sure,
Also going to family, he'd keep blood line pure.

Travelling to Haran, he slept and dreamed,
A ladder stretched up, to heaven it seemed,
A stone for a pillow, with oil he did douse,
Surely this is the gate, to God's heavenly house.

If You will protect Me,he said as he bowed,
I'll give you a tenth,as he bargained and vowed,
On to the east,he met Rachel the daughter,
By the well with the sheep,giving them water.

The romance duly started, but marriage delayed,
Marry Leah the elder, Laban tried to persuade,
It's Rachel I love,and desire to marry,
I'll work for you here, seven years I will tarry.

Wedding day came, they feasted and drank,
Finally retiring, into deep sleep they sank,
With shock Jacob saw,in the morning arising,
He'd married the sister,all Laban's devising.

You've beguiled me cried Jacob,why do this to me,
Firstborn in this land,goes to matrimony,
Said Laban work more,so he waited and toiled,
Determined he'd not have,his next marriage foiled.

Second wedding day at last,seven years they had waited,
The marriage they desired,now could be consumated,
I'm now hated cried Leah,what will I do?
I'll bear him more family, then he'll love me too..

Rueben and Levi,Judah and Simeon,
Four sons now will surely,change his opinion,
Leah left off bearing,Rachel said now I'll try,
I must bear you children,or Jacob I'll die.

She gave him maid Bildah,two sons bye and bye,
One she called Dan,his brother Napthali,
Then Leah's maid Zilpah,produced the next lad,
A troop is coming,means his name will be Gad.

Asher the next,said Leah now I'm blessed,
Though now my closed womb,must be addressed,
Rueben came from reaping,with mandrakes for mum,
Rachel desired them,saying give to me some.

You've stolen my husband,you want mandrakes too,
Alright then said Rachel,go lie with him do,
God has given me my hire,Issachar a fifth son,
The sixth came soon after,he was called Zebulun.

To Leah's surprise,after six sons came Dinah,
That's judgement from God,nothing could be finer,
God remembered Rachel,and removed her reproach,
Her produce of childrennow He would broach.

Adding to their family,Joseph delighted his mother,
Reproach now all gone,she said I'll have another,
Meanwhile Jacob was scheming,building up his flock,
Manouvering the breeding,of Laban's stock.

Take out all the cattle,speckled and spotted,
The goats I'll have too,the same way all dotted,
All the brown sheep,will belong to me,
Our family is going,desiring to be free.

6
Animals robust and strong, along in procession,
Accompanied the family, now in possession,
Laban had gone shearing, unaware they had fled,
They hastened on camels, being chased now their dread.

Father being mean, Rachel stole his teraphim,
Some possessions from home, hidden for fear of him,
Seven days journey, was distance between,
To the area of Gilead, where Laban made a scene.

His anger now growing, he searched with suspicion,
Jacob not knowing, said abandon this mission,
Rachel was guilty, her father forbidden,
To search all her tent, where his idols were hidden.

Finding none guilty, Laban's anger abated,
A covenant between them, was then promulgated,
To ne'er harm one another, they solemnly agreed,
Building a heap of stones, witness there at Galeed.

Now on to **land Seir**, the country of Edom,
Jacob devised a plan, to meet Esau with stratagem,
For he was afraid, and greatly distressed when,
He heard of brothers' approach, with four hundred men.

Deliver me I pray, from my brothers' hand,
For You promised to go with me, back to fathers' land,
Wrestling all night, with the One Who'd bestow,
A blessing on him, if he would not let go.

Came dawn of the day, Jacob would prevail,
Was now blessed and name changed, to that of Israel,
Now dividing his family, the handmaids to the fore,
With gifts to give Esau, pleased with all that store.

They wept and embraced, Esau's anger reversed,
Promising safe passage, through his land they traversed,
Jacob settled in Shechem, where Hittites resided,
Dinah went with their daughters, their Prince then confided.

I'm smitten with her, and totally beguiled,
He took her to lie with, now she was defiled,
His intentions were honourable, but her brothers' enraged,
Planning revenge, were deceitfully engaged.

If you want our sister, circumcised you must be,
Or else we will take her, from you she'll be free,
Pleased with their answer, they succumbed to the knife,
Not knowing these two brothers, were bringing them strife.

Taking total advantage, these men with no pity,
Slaughtered all before taking, captives in that city,
You've made me to stink, we'll depart taking Dinah,
Said Jacob go to Bethel, where our reputation is finer.

First bury your idols, here under this oak tree,
Then build an altar in Bethel, where we will be,
On way through Ephrath, Rachel's labour commenced,
But on birth of Benoni, it seemed a curse was dispensed.

7.
For with the baby's arrival, this new life she gave,
But gave up her own, in Bethelhem is her grave,
Jacob called his son Benjamin, of him he was fond,
As he was of brother Joseph, 'tween three was a bond.

Reuben unstable, father's bed he defiled,
Laying with his concubine, making Jacob riled,
Now on with the journey, arriving in Hebron,
Their travelling all told, a taxing marathon.

With Isaac they settled, in Mamre of Arbah,
Before Isaac departed, one eighty the years of his life are,
At this ripe old age, buried by Jacob and Esau,
Where father and mother, had been buried before.

Jacob loved Joseph, much more than the others,
Causing jealousy and envy, in the eleven brothers,
To make matters worse, Jacob made him a coat,
With many bright colours, and on him he would dote.

Dreams came to Joseph, one a sheaf stood upright,
The boys' sheaves bowed down, in everyones sight,
Sun moon and stars, also made obeisance to me,
What this dream said Jacob, I hear that's given to thee.

Let's be rid of this dreamer, said brothers him we'll slay,
Put him in a pit, beasts killed him we'll say,
Look here comes some Ishmaelites, with them he'll be shipped,
His coat they took, with blood it was dipped.

These travelling men, on way to sell their wares,
Egypt their destiny, taking Joseph who despairs,
Twenty pieces of silver, were paid in this deal,
The brothers' now homebound, their evil deed to conceal.

Brothers' showed to Jacob, the coat bloodied by a beast,
Saying an animal took him, he is now deceased,
He refused to be comforted, mourning death of his son,
Though the brothers' tried hard, he spurned everyone.

As Joseph arrived with those Midianites bold,
To Pharaoh's executioner, he was then promptly sold,
Brother Judah left home, found a lass called Shuah,
Deciding he liked her, he went to her,
She bore him a son, the name Er preferred,
Onan came next, Shelah the third.

Er married Tamar, his life sad to relate,
For wickedness God slew him, a terrible fate,
Onan refused to marry, and give Tamar seed,
He too was killed, for God he would not heed.

Counselled Judah with Tamar, you'll just have to wait,
Remain with your father, in this unmarried state,
Till Shelah is grown, and him you can marry,
The name of this family, you'll continue to carry.

Time for sheep shearing, Judah departed for Timnath,
Tamar determined to trick him, sat down in his path,
With veil on her face, and different attire,
She enticed him with guile, her services to hire.

What will you give me, that you come in to me,
A kid of the flock, Judah said innocently,
Your signets and bracelets, and staff you carry,
This pledge I require, then with me you can tarry.

To have these returned, he sent to this harlot,
The kid he had promised, to the lady of scarlet,
She cannot be found, said all that were asked,
For Tamar unknown, was now unmasked.

When Judah was told, of the babe that would be,
Said to have her burned, she's defiled our family,
Giving back his belongings, her identity shown,
She's more righteous than I, he conceded with a groan.

Twin boys to be born, this birth a breach,
One they called Zarah, put his hand out to reach,
Midwife took hold, scarlet thread she tied,
Before he drew back, taking all inside.

Now Pharez the breach, born first instead,
Of the one who was tied, with the scarlet thread,
Meanwhile in Egypt, God made Joseph to prosper,
In the house of his master, officer Potipher.

This was God's doing, to all made evident,
Whatever Joseph did, and wherever he went,
Overseer he was made, all Pharaoh's house was blessed,
But then came his wife, who with Joseph was possessed.

She enticingly pleaded, come lie with me,
There's no one around, from work you are free,
He fled from her presence, vacating the scene,
Leaving his coat, used as evidence he'd been.

She raised her complaint, to all and sundry,
Her husband his master, his countenance thundery,
Said away to the prison, bind up this Hebrew,
He'll pay for this insult, with days not a few.

But God in His mercy, before keeper he gave favour,
Prospering his doings, and all of his labour,
In prison with Joseph, two officers were cast,
Pharaoh's chief men, he was told keep them fast.

Both in one night, were caused to dream,
Tell me said Joseph, I'll see how bad they seem,
One says three days, you'll be out you'll see,
At that time please remember, to ask I be set free

The bakers head will be-lopped, and hang on a tree,
In three days time, then deceased he will be,
The butler forgot to give Joseph a mention,
Tho' thankful to him, and with good intention.

After two full years, Pharaoh had a dream,
Seeing seven fat cows, devoured by seven who were lean,
Next it was corn, seven stalks lean and thin,
Eating seven others, full and fat within.

Magicians were called, all to no avail,
God is showing you what, He will do without fail,
Said Joseph you'll have seven years, of plenty with mammon,
Followed by seven of want, and devastating famine.

9

Jacob was elevated, to second in Egypt's land,
All to bow the knee, to this man in command,
He gathered in corn, as the sand of the sea,
Storing it up, for the time of famine yet to be.

Asernoth his wife, daughter of the priest of On,
Bore him Manasseh, his very first son,
The name meant forgetting, and now came Ephraim,
The second son meant fruitful, for this man of fame.

The time of plenty, fulfilled and no more,
Time to open reserves, and give people the store,
Selling the grain, and buying up land,
Moving farmers to cities, till they could again expand.

Came news to Jacob, of Egypt's salvation,
By this man who had planned, to rescue the nation,
Go down and buy corn, or else we will die,
Ten brothers travelled to Egypt, see what they could buy.

Benjamin stayed home, no risk would Jacob bear,
Of losing next favourite, and expire in despair,
All boys bowed selves down, just as Joseph had dreamed,
He spoke roughly to them, and was strange it seemed.

Where do you come from, he gruffly asked,
You are spies come to see, the state of our grass,
We've travelled from Canaan, my lord to buy corn,
All one man's sons now eleven, tho' twelve were born.

I'll prove you said Joseph, one must stay here with me,
The rest bring me down, the youngest for me to see,
As they anguished and talked, Joseph listened and knew,
Full story of betrayal, making him shed tears not a few.

He loaded their sacks, put their money on top,
They departed for home, money discovered first stop,
Hearts failing and worried, they told Jacob all,
Saying the governor wants Benjamin, next time we call.

This demand from the governor, I cannot deny,
We must have more grain, or else we will die,
I will be surety, said Judah for the lad,
To ensure he comes home, so you won't be made sad.

Take with you money, and gifts our best fruit,
Present them to him, and if you're astute,
He'll know you're not guilty, if only he'll heed,
Then bring home my sons, and the food we need.

Joseph seeing brother Benjamin, could not prevent,
The tears that now flowed, until they were spent,
Make a feast for these men, with whom I will share,
And give five times more, to the one I declare.

Give their asses some food, and wash their feet,
And when they are ready, then I'll go in to meet,
In fear and trepidation, reprisal expected,
They bowed low to the governor, fearing they'd be rejected.

Is the old man you spoke of, alive and well,
And is this your brother, of whom you did tell,
Your servant our father, his health is good,
But Joseph seeing Benjamin, no longer stood

Departing to weep, away from their sight,
Resisting desire to embrace them, with all of his might,
The steward was commanded, to fill the men's sacks,
As much as could be carried, on their asses' backs.

Put in my cup, on 'top of Benjamins' lot,
Then follow soon after, accuse them of this plot,
To steal from the one, who has provided you well,
Whoever has done this, a search will soon tell.

May the guilty servant die, and bondmen we'll be,
No, leave the younger with me, and you can go free,
Judah begged to be surety, to let Benjamin go,
Else our father will suffer, and expire in sorrow.

No longer could Joseph, hold self in disdain,
From revealing his identity, he could not refrain,
I am your brother, God made me lord of this land,
To save you in posterity, He sent me here beforehand.

Embracing and weeping, Joseph said, go father prepare,
To move down to Goshen, where your life that will spare,
On hearing this news, old Israel revived,
Especially on hearing, his son had survived.

Travelling to Beersheba, full of elation,
God told him, of you I'll make a great nation,
Pharaohs' wagons now filled, carried all down to Canaan,
Aware of lives spared, and all they were gaining.

Five years more of famine, with food aplenty,
For animals and their families, the total being seventy,
Said Pharaoh take the best, in the land of Rameses,
Be nourished and cared for, every one of your families.

All the land owned by Pharaoh, no money was left,
Impoverished of possessions, Egypt's people now bereft,
Food most important, they'd been willing to sell,
All they had left, including their land as well.

Servant's we'll be, for this grain seed you've given,
We'll pay a fifth back to Pharaoh, to this we've been driven,
In Goshen of Egypt, Israel multiplied exceedingly,
Blessed by his God, Whom he'd worshipped willingly.

The years of his life, were fulfilled and spent,
Seventeen in this land, with growth he underwent,
But time comes to all, to depart and die,
Bury me with my fathers, where I want to lie.

Once more to see father, his son Joseph came,
Bringing his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim,
These two will be mine, and called by my name,
As all twelve sons, they'll be the same.

Steering them close, to be blessed by him,
I see your two boys', though my eyes are so dim,
On right hand the younger, to Israel's left hand,
Manasseh the elder, right hand to stand.

The hand of Israel, unerringly was placed,
On the head of Ephraim, much to Joseph's distaste,
Not so said he, for Manasseh is firstborn,
His is the birthright, said with a touch of scorn.

Then Israel gave him blessing, saying he would be great,
 But truly the younger, nations he will create,
 The time is come, promise you'll take me back,
 Bury me with my fathers, Abraham and Isaac.

God will be with you, taking you back too,
 One portion more than your brethren, I give to you,
 All my sons gather, to hear what will befall,
 Each one of you before, your end of life's call.

Rueben my firstborn, my might but I can tell,
 You're unstable as water, and will not excel,
 My bed you defiled, with your wanton ways,
 Though for length of life, let it be many days.

Simeon and Levi in cruelty, slew a man,
 Hewing oxen in self will, with fierce anger overran,
 Throughout tribes of Israel, these two I will scatter,
 Though divided in Jacob, I will mightily use the latter.

Judah you are he, whom your brethren shall praise,
 The law giving sceptre, you'll constantly raise,
 Till Shiloh shall come, and the people be gathered,
 Young lions' whelp couch down, till old and withered.

Binding his foal, and asses colt to the vine,
 Washed his clothes in grapes blood, and garments in wine,
 Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea,
 For the ships that are sailing, a harbour he'll be.

Issachar a strong ass, between two burdens couch low,
 Bowing shoulder being servant, a tribute he'll bestow,
 As one of the tribes, the judge will be Dan,
 An adder in the path, a serpent will be this man.

The rider affected as serpent, bites heels of the horse,
 Making him fall backward and quite off course,
 Dan has to wait, for salvation from the Lord,
 Not mentioned in sealings, of tribes not a word.

A troop shall overcome, next one who is Gad,
 But he'll overcome at last, so success will be had,
 Out of Asher will come, his bread of the field,
 And of dainties royal, he'll abundantly yield.

Now Naphtali my son, gives words that are good,
 Is like a hind let loose, running free in the wood,
 Joseph is fruitful, a bough by a well,
 Whose branches run over, his power to excel.

He'll be hated by archers, who will grieve him sorely,
 But with strength in his arms, God will help him surely,
 You'll be blessed from the heavens, and blessed from the deep,
 From the womb and the breasts, these blessings to keep.

The blessings of your father, prevailing above the rest,
 On the crown of your head, separate and blessed,
 Brother Benjamin shall ravine, like a wolf in the morning,
 Devouring the prey, in the days' early dawning.

Jacobs' death they bewailed, Joseph kissed fathers' face,
Lamenting their loss, of this old man of grace,
The physicians embalmed him, as Egyptians will,
Then forty days for him, for embalming they fulfil.

The people of Egypt, mourned seventy days,
Said Joseph to Pharoah, let there be no delays,
To bury my father, beyond in land of his fathers,
Taking servants and elders, and all of his brothers.

All house of Jacob, excepting every little one,
Their flocks and herds left, behind in land of Goshen,
They mourned seven days, when to Atad they came,
How greivous said Egyptians, calling it Abelmizraim.

The burial performed, as Jacob prearranged,
The brothers then worried, Joseph with them would be estranged,
He'll hate us we fear, requiting all evil we've done,
They repented once more, said servants we'll become.

Fear not for am I, in the place of God above,
He meant it all unto good, for life and for love,
With comfort Joseph spoke, saying I will nourish,
All of your families, and you will flourish.

Three generations of offspring, of Ephraim his son,
The children of Machir, and from Manasseh every one,
Were brought up to be, on Josephs' knees,
Before the death that would take him, when God would please.

Promise me with an oath, you'll take all my bones,
When God takes you out, at the time He condones,
Carry them with you, to the fathers' land,
Bury me beside them, where I have planned.

He died was embalmed, there in Egypt and thus,
Was laid in a coffin, awaiting Israels' exodus,
He'd be carried and buried, beside Leah his wife,
One hundred and ten years, all the days of his life.