

(ibid. v. 30); "Hear now, you rebels [Israel]" (ibid. 20:10); and [Moses said to the children of Gad and the children of Reuben . . .] "You have risen up in your father's stead, a brood of sinful men" (ibid. 32:14) (*Yalkut Shimoni, Va'eschanan* 821).

□ At first the Divine communication was to have come to him alone, but because he said, "Send, please, by the hand of the one whom You will send" (*Exodus* 4:13), he was told, "Is there not Aaron your brother, the Levite? . . ." (ibid. v. 14) (*Shemos Rabbah* 7:1).

□ "By the Name Hashem I did not make Myself known to them (*Exodus* 6:3). [The Patriarchs] did not criticize My dealings with man, nor did they ask Me what My Name is, as you asked. You, however, asked what My Name is at the outset of My mission, and in the end you said, 'Since I came to Pharaoh . . . You have not delivered Your people'" (ibid. 5:23) (*Shemos Rabbah* 6:4).

□ Three [prophets] denied their [own] prophecies in order to strengthen faith in God: Moses, Elijah, and Micah. Moses said, "If these men die a common death . . . Hashem has not sent me" (*Numbers* 16:29) (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:1; *P'nei Moshe*).

□ "You shall speak to the rock" (*Numbers* 20:8). The *Shechinah* was present on that rock, for [when] the Holy One, Blessed is He, wishes to perform a miracle, the *Shechinah* precedes Him to the site. [Moses] should not have hit the rock, for [doing so] was disrespectful [toward the *Shechinah*] (*Tikkunei Zohar* 21:44a).

□ As soon as Moses struck the rock, blood trickled from it (*Shocheh Tov* 78:2).

□ "Because Moses said, 'Hear now, you rebels' [referring to Israel] (*Numbers* 20:10), I decreed that he would not enter the Land [of Israel]" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Iyov* 908).

□ It was to Moses' benefit that indulgence [i.e., special respect and favor] was not shown him in this world [for such indulgence causes a diminishing of one's merits (*Torah Temimah, Numbers* 20:12)] (*Yoma* 87a).

□ From the beginning, Moses was destined to be punished on account of water, as it is written, *They*

came to *Ein Mishpat* [lit., *Spring of Judgment*] which is *Kadesh* (*Genesis* 14:7) [i.e., already in Abraham's time, the place was named in anticipation of the fact that Moses would be judged for his sin at that spring] (*Tanchuma Chukas* 11).

□ Then Israel sang . . . (*Numbers* 21:17). Why was Moses not mentioned [as having sung the Song of the Well]? Because he was [to be] punished on account of water (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:26).

□ Hashem said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe in Me . . ." (*Numbers* 20:12). Had [Moses] not [done] something worse than this? He had said, "If flocks and herds be slaughtered for them [Israel], will they suffice them?" (ibid. 11:22). The Holy One, Blessed is He, told him, "The first thing you did was between Me and you. [The sin of the water, however,] was in public, [so] it is impossible [to be lenient]" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:10).

□ Even Moses and Aaron died prematurely, for it is written, "Because you did not sanctify Me (*Deuteronomy* 32:51); if you had sanctified Me, the time for your death would not have come yet" (*Sifri Pinchas* 137).

□ It is to the discredit of Moses and the sixty myriads [of Israel] that they did not say, "Blessed is Hashem [for having saved us from Egypt]" until Jethro came and said it [in *Exodus* 18:10] (*Sanhedrin* 94a; *Maharsha*).

□ [God said to Moses,] "You did not acknowledge your homeland. When Jethro's daughters said, 'An Egyptian man saved us' (*Exodus* 2:19), you heard and were silent [i.e., you did not protest being called an Egyptian]. Therefore, you will not be buried in your land" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Va'eschanan* 814).

□ [Although his motivation was to find a merit for Israel,] Moses spoke rebelliously in front of God [when] he said, "It was the gold and silver that You lavished upon them until they said 'Enough!' that caused them to make the Golden Calf" (*Berachos* 32a).

□ Moses was prosecuting Israel [when he said], "This people has committed a great sin" (*Exodus* 32:31) (*Shemos Rabbah* 47:9).

□ On three occasions he became angry, and as a result he erred (*Sifri Matos* 157).

□ *Moses was wroth with them* (Exodus 16:20) [for saving the manna, whereupon] he forgot to tell them that on Friday each was to gather two omers [of manna]. When they went out on Friday and found double [portions], the princes came and told Moses. He said to them, "That is what Hashem has already spoken" (ibid. v. 23), for he [had been told and] had forgotten. Regarding this [God said to Moses], "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments?" (ibid. v. 28). He included Moses [in the rebuke] (*Shemos Rabbah* 25:10).

□ "The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me" (Deuteronomy 1:17). Moses was punished for [saying] this, as it is written, *Moses brought their case before Hashem* (Numbers 27:5) [because it was too hard for him] (*Sanhedrin* 8a).

□ "Master of the World," said Moses, "if I commit a sin, record it [in the Torah], so that people will not say, 'It seems that Moses forged the Torah or wrote something that he was not commanded'" (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 26).

DEATH

□ Moses and Aaron fulfilled the entire Torah, yet they died [as a result of their sins] (*Shabbos* 55b).

□ In a single year, three righteous people died: Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (*Sifri Nitzavim* 305).

□ All that Moses requested [to see before his death] the Holy One, Blessed is He, showed him (*Mechilta Beshalach* 5:2).

□ "You have enough (רַב לְךָ)" (Deuteronomy 3:26). "Moses," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "there is much [waiting] for you in the World to Come" (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 29).

□ "You have enough (רַב לְךָ)" Deuteronomy 3:26. [Moses had] informed others [i.e., the followers of Korah] with [the word] רַב, enough [an expression indicating the abundance of good which the wicked enjoy in this world, and the good awaiting the righteous in the World to Come (Maharsha)]: "You have enough (רַב לְכֶם), sons of Levi" (Numbers 16:7), and [therefore] he was informed with [the

same expression that his time in this world had come to an end]. According to a different interpretation, רַב לְךָ [means] you have a leader – Joshua [i.e., now is the time for Joshua's rule to begin]. According to another interpretation, רַב לְךָ [means] "It is enough!" God was asking Moses to stop entreating Him] so that people would not say, "How hard [and unbending is the Teacher, how entreating the disciple!]" (*Sotah* 13b, *Rashi*).

□ "רַב לְךָ, It is a great thing for you" (Deuteronomy 3:26). You will serve as an example for the judges. They will say, 'Moses, who was a great sage, was shown no favoritism; how much more so those who pervert justice!' " (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 29).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Moses, "I have written that you are wise, yet you stand and speak lengthily. You are not wise; speak no more to Me . . ." (Deuteronomy 3:26) (*Koheles Rabbah* 10:14).

□ "Behold (הִנֵּה), your days approach that you must die" (Deuteronomy 31:14). Said Moses, "With [the very expression] הִנֵּה, behold, that I used to praise You [ibid. 10:14], You decree my death?" Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "A bad neighbor counts the income but not the expenditures. Do you not recall that you said, 'Behold (הִנֵּה), they will not believe me?'" (Exodus 4:1) (*Yalkut Shimoni, Vayeilech* 941).

□ There are ten references to Moses' death [in the Torah]: "Behold, your days approach that you must die" (Deuteronomy 31:14); "And die on the mountain" (ibid. 32:50), etc. This teaches that ten times [God] decreed that [Moses] would not enter the Land of Israel, but the severe decree was not sealed until the Great Court appeared to him. "It is a decree from before Me," said [God. Yet] Moses took it lightly, for he [reasoned], "The people of Israel have sinned several times, yet as soon as I prayed for mercy on their behalf, He accepted [my prayers]. I have never sinned since my youth; surely if I pray for myself, He will accept [my prayer]!" Thereupon [God] immediately swore by His Great Name that [Moses] would not enter the Land of Israel. Upon seeing that the decree was sealed, Moses undertook a fast. He made a small

circle, clothed himself in sackcloth, and rolled in the dust. He said, "I shall not move from here until You cancel that decree." [This continued] until heaven and earth and the orders of Creation were shaken. Thereupon the Holy One, Blessed is He, proclaimed in every gate of heaven that Moses' prayer was not to be admitted, but his prayer was like a sword that tears and cuts [through] and cannot be held back. Of that time it is written, "I heard behind me the sound of a great noise, רעש גדול" (Ezekiel 3:12), [homiletically translated] *the noise of a great man* – Moses. He prayed 515 times, the numerical value of וַאֲתַחֲנֶנּוּ, "I supplicated" (Devarim Rabbah 11:10).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "If you remain alive, they will err and worship you as a deity." "Master of the World," he said, "You tested me in the making of the [Golden] Calf, and I [have already shown that I could] nullify [Your decree]; and now shall I die?" "Whose son are you?" asked the Holy One, Blessed is He. "Amram's," he replied. "And whose son was Amram?" "Izhar's." "And whose son was Izhar?" "Kehath's." [Thus it went on, all the way back to Adam.] "Has one of them remained alive?" "They have all died." The Holy One, Blessed is He, asked him, "And you wish to live?" (Beis HaMidrash 1:118).

□ Moses died after five days [of illness] (Yalkut Shimoni, Vayeilech 941).

□ [How did Moses know where to go to die, when it is written, *No man knows of his sepulcher* (Deuteronomy 34:6)?] The voice of the Holy One, Blessed is He, became a messenger to Moses when He told him, "Go up to this mountain" (Numbers 27:12) [i.e., Moses simply followed the voice] (Bereishis Rabbah 5:4).

□ "What is the reason for all this anger toward me?" asked [Moses]. "Because you did not sanctify Me," (Deuteronomy 32:51) replied [God]. "With all men You deal through the Attribute of Mercy two or three times," said [Moses]. "Israel has sinned before You many times, and [when] I prayed for mercy on their behalf, You forgave them. For sixty myriads You heeded [my prayer], and for myself You do not?" "Moses," said [God], "a

decree against the community is not like a decree against an individual." "Master of the World," said [Moses], "arise from the seat of Justice and sit on the seat of Mercy for me, that I may not die. Let my sins be atoned through physical suffering, and I will tell Your praises to all mortals."

He went to the sea and said, "Pray for me!" [The sea] replied, "Are you not the son of Amram who came to me with your staff and split me into twelve paths, and I could not stand before you? What has befallen you today?" As soon as the sea reminded him of what he had done in his former years, he wept and cried out, "O, that I were as in the months of old! (Job 29:2). When I crossed you I was a king, but now I prostrate myself and no heed is taken of me."

He went to the Minister of the Inner Chamber and said, "Pray for me so that I will not die." "Moses my teacher," he said, "why [go to such] trouble? I have heard from behind the Partition that your prayer concerning this matter will not be heard."

Moses placed his hands on his head and cried out and wept. Thereupon the Holy One, Blessed is He, was filled with anger at him until Moses began the verse, "Hashem passed by before him and proclaimed: Hashem, Hashem God, merciful and gracious" (Exodus 34:6). The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Moses, "I made two oaths: one that you die, and one that Israel not perish. To nullify both of them is impossible. Do you wish to live and make Israel perish?" "My Master," said [Moses], "let Moses and a thousand like him die, and let not one of Israel perish." The Holy One, Blessed is He, asked him, "Why are you so distressed?" [Moses] replied, "I fear the sword of the Angel of Death." "I will not deliver you into his hand," said [God]. "[However,] the time has come for your disciple Joshua to serve." "My Master," said [Moses], "if it is because of Joshua that I must die, I will go and become his disciple."

Moses rose early and went to Joshua's door. Joshua was sitting and expounding, and Moses stood bent over, [so that] Joshua would not notice him. [The people] asked Joshua, "What has come into your head to have our teacher Moses standing [like a disciple] while you sit [like a teacher]?"

Upon raising his eyes and seeing him, [Joshua] rent his garments, cried out, and wept. A Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "Learn from Joshua." Joshua sat at the head, with Moses at his right and Aaron's sons at his left. The traditions of wisdom were taken away from Moses and given to Joshua, and Moses did not know what Joshua was expounding. Our teacher Moses stumbled and fell. At that moment Moses said, "Master of the Universe, heretofore I requested life. Now my soul is given to You" (*Tanchuma Va'eschanan* 6).

LONGING FOR THE LAND OF ISRAEL

- As long as [the generation of the exodus] lived in the desert, Moses would enter before the Holy One, Blessed is He, with forceful [prayer, requesting the needs of the people]. After [that generation] died in the desert, he began to plead for entry into Israel (*Devarim Rabbah* 2:4).
- As soon as the Holy One, Blessed is He, told him, "Joshua's time [to lead] has come," [Moses] began to pray [for permission] to enter the Land (*ibid.* 2:5).
- Why did our teacher Moses yearn to enter the Land of Israel? Moses said, "The people of Israel have been given many precepts that can be fulfilled only in the Land of Israel. Let me enter the Land so that I can fulfill all of them" (*Sotah* 14a).
- *It came to pass (vayehi) when Pharaoh had let the people go . . . (Exodus 13:17).* Who said "Vay, alas"? Moses cried out, "I toiled to take Israel out of Egypt, yet I am not to enter the Land with them!" (*Shemos Rabbah* 20:8).
- At the sea Moses foresaw that he would not enter the Land of Israel. [The Song of the Sea] does not read *You shall bring us and plant us*, but *You shall bring them and plant them* (*Exodus 15:17*) (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 15:34).
- The Holy One, Blessed is He, gave Moses a hint [when Israel first left Egypt], but he did not take it. [God] told him, "Place it in the ears of Joshua" (*Exodus 17:14*), [which hints]: "You will die, and Joshua will bring Israel into the Land." [But Moses thought that Joshua would become Israel's leader after Moses would already have led them into Israel], and in the end [after forty years when he became aware that he would not bring Israel into the Land], he entreated (*Tanchuma Beshalach* 28).
- "We are traveling to the place . . ." (*Numbers 10:29*). Why did Moses include himself? [His fate] was concealed from him; he thought he would enter the Land of Israel with them. R' Shimon bar Yochai said: He included himself, lest the people of Israel say, "If he who took us out of Egypt does not enter, neither will we" (*Sifri Beha'aloscha* 78).
- "You shall surely give them possession of an inheritance" (*Numbers 27:7*). Upon hearing this, our teacher Moses thought that the Holy One, Blessed is He, had pardoned him. "Now I will be the one to give the people of Israel their inheritance," he said. [Thereupon] the Holy One, Blessed is He, told him, "My decree still stands. Go up to the mountain of Abarim . . ." (*ibid.* v. 12) (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 21:14).
- "I entreated Hashem at that time, saying (לאמר)" (*Deuteronomy 3:23*). What is meant by לאמר, lit., to say? [Moses said:] "Tell me whether or not I shall enter the Land" (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 26).
- [Moses said,] "You began . . ." (*Deuteronomy 3:24*). Master of the World," he said, "why am I not to enter the Land? Is it because I said, 'Hear now, you rebels' (*Numbers 20:10*)? It was You who said it first: 'For a token against the rebellious children' " (*ibid.* 17:25) (*Devarim Rabbah* 2:8).
- "Let me go over, please, and see" (*Deuteronomy 3:25*). Is it possible that Moses was asking the Omnipresent [for permission] to enter the Land when he had already been told, "You will not bring this assembly into the Land" (*Numbers 20:12*)? Rather, Moses cherished the word of the Omnipresent, and therefore pleaded with Him [to show that he took to heart the punishment that God had decreed] (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 28).
- "Master of the World," he said, "did You not tell me that [even] if a person has no merit, וְחַנּוּתִי, 'I will give him an unearned gift' (חָנֵם) (*Exodus 33:19*)? Now I have not claimed that You owe me anything; rather, [grant my request] as a free gift (חָנֵם)." [This is the meaning of] וְאֶתְחַנֶּן, "I entreated"

(Deuteronomy 3:23) [cognate with וְחַתְּנִי and חָתָם] (Devarim Rabbah 2:1).

□ "You began to show Your servant . . . (Deuteronomy 3:24). You opened the door when I entered the territory of the children of Gad and of Reuben [which is an extension of the Land of Israel. Since a vow which has been partially nullified becomes completely nullified], let me go over . . ." (ibid. v. 25) (Sifri Pinchas 134).

□ "Master of the World," he said, "I am separated from the Land of Israel only by this Jordan, which has a width of fifty cubits." The Holy One, Blessed is He, told him, "Behold with your eyes, for you will not go over" (Deuteronomy 3:27) (Sifri Va'eschanan 29).

□ For [the first] seven days of Adar, Moses prayed and entreated [for permission] to enter the Land of Israel. On the seventh [of Adar] he was told, "You will not go over" (Deuteronomy 3:27) (Vayikra Rabbah 11:6).

□ Moses fell at the feet of Eleazar and said, "Eleazar, my son, pray that I [be allowed to] enter the Land of Israel, just as I [once] prayed for your father Aaron" (Midrash HaGadol, Devarim 31:14).

□ When [the people of Israel] were about to cross the Jordan, he reminded them of all [the instances when] he had defended them [before God], for he thought they would pray that he [be permitted to] enter with them. Moses threw himself at their feet and said to them, "You are to pass over the Jordan (Deuteronomy 9:1); I am not." He hinted that they should pray for him, but they did not take the hint (Devarim Rabbah 3:11).

□ When he was about to die and [the people of Israel] did not pray that he [be permitted to] enter the Land, he assembled them and began to rebuke them: "One man saved sixty myriads at the Golden Calf, and sixty myriads are unable to save one man?" (ibid. 7:10).

□ "Master of the World," he said, "now that it has been decreed that I shall enter [the Land] neither as a king nor as a commoner, let me enter through the cave of Caesarion, which is below Banias." [God] replied, "You shall not go over

there" (Deuteronomy 34:4). "Master of the World," he asked, "let my bones cross." [God] replied, "For you shall not go over" (ibid. 3:27) (Yalkut Shimoni, Va'eschanan 820).

□ "Master of the World," he said, "is it acceptable to You that I enter the Land, spend two or three years there, and then die?" [God] replied, "You shall not come there" (Deuteronomy 32:52) (Yalkut Shimoni, Va'eschanan 821).

□ "Master of the Universe," said Moses, "let me be like a bird flying in the air, or make me like a fish and my two arms like two fins, and I will jump over the Jordan and see the land." The Holy One, Blessed is He, replied, "If I do so, I would be violating the oath." [Moses] said, "Place me on the wings of the clouds three parasangs above the Jordan." [God] replied, "This would be considered like a violation of My oath" (Beis HaMidrash 1:124).

□ "Master of the World," said Moses, "record in Your Torah why I am not entering the Land so that the people of Israel will not say, 'It seems that Moses falsified the Torah or said something that he was not commanded'" (Vayikra Rabbah 31:4).

□ "Go up to the top of the summit" (Deuteronomy 3:27). The Omnipresent showed Moses far and near, hidden and revealed alike — everything that is called the Land of Israel (Sifri Pinchas 135).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, gave Moses' eyes the ability to see the borders of the Land of Israel and the border of each Tribe (Midrash HaGadol, Devarim 32:49).

□ Moses saw with his eyes more [of the Land] than Joshua walked with his feet (Sifri Pinchas 136).

□ In the future, the Holy One, Blessed is He, will make a feast for the righteous. He will tell Moses, "Take [the cup of benediction] and lead the Grace after Meals." [Moses] will say to them, "I shall not lead the blessings, for I did not merit to enter the Land of Israel [and thus it is not fitting for me to say, 'And for the Land . . .'] found in the Grace after Meals" (Maharsha)] (Pesachim 119b).

SUCCESSOR

- Of three righteous men, the expression *קרִיבָה*, *drawing near*, is used in connection with their deaths, because they did not attain the life spans of their fathers; and each of these appointed a leader during his lifetime. [These three were] the Patriarch Jacob, King David, and the prophet Moses (*Targum Yonasan, Devarim 31:14*).
- Moses was sad that neither of his sons would rise to greatness after him. The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "Are not the sons of your brother Aaron considered as your own? And even the one whom I will appoint as [Israel's] leader [i.e., Joshua] will go and stand in the doorway of [the high priest] Eleazar [Aaron's son]" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Pinchas 777*).
- In his dying hour, Moses asked the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Please appoint over them a leader who will bear them, each according to his temperament." The Holy One, Blessed is He, replied, "Before you instruct Me concerning them, instruct them to be careful with My honor" (*Bamidbar Rabbah 21:2*).
- "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp" (*Numbers 11:27*). What were they prophesying? "Moses will die and Joshua will bring Israel into the Land" (*Sanhedrin 17a*).
- Why didn't Moses pray, "Let Joshua son of Nun take my place"? Because he feared he would be punished. Moses said, "My brother Aaron went in my place [i.e., Moses had asked that Aaron be sent to speak to Pharaoh] and the Omnipresent punished me" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Pinchas 776*).
- "God of the spirits of all flesh" (*Numbers 27:16*). Said [Moses], "Let the man whom You appoint over them contain the spirit of sixty myriads so that he may speak to each one according to [the individual's] understanding." The Holy One, Blessed is He, replied, "I will show you all the judges and all the prophets whom I will appoint over My children from now until the dead are resurrected. But what you have requested – one spirit that bears all the spirits – is the Messiah" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Pinchas 776*).
- For seven days the the Holy One, Blessed is He, had [attempted to] persuade Moses to go on His mission [to redeem Israel from Egypt], and [Moses] had replied, "Send by the hand of the one whom You will send" (*Exodus 4:13*), [until] the Holy One, Blessed is He, convinced him and [Moses] went on [God's] mission; and [God] performed all the miracles through him. In the end [God] told him, "You will not bring [them into the Land of Israel]" (*Numbers 20:12*). "Master of the World," said Moses, "I did not seek to go [on Your mission]. But now that [it is done and] this decree was issued against me, do not do to [my successor] as You did to me. Set a man over the congregation who will go out before them and who will come in before them" (*ibid. 27:16,17*) (*Bamidbar Rabbah 21:15*).
- "Who will go out before them (*Numbers 27:17*); that is, let him not do as other [commanders] do. Other [commanders] send their troops out, while they themselves sit at home" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Pinchas 776*).
- "Take unto you Joshua son of Nun" (*Numbers 27:18*). [Moses] picked [Joshua] up and seated him on his lap [as a sign of affection]. Then Moses and the Israelites lifted their heads to hear Joshua's words (*Yalkut Shimoni, Pinchas 776*).
- "Lay your hand upon him" (*Numbers 27:18*). [God] told [Moses], "Give Joshua a *turgeman* [one who repeats and explains the speaker's words to the public] and let him expound and rule in halachic matters during your lifetime, so that when you depart this world, the people of Israel will not say, 'During his teacher's lifetime he did not qualify to render halachic decisions, and now he does!' " Immediately Moses lifted [Joshua] up from the ground [i.e., Joshua would no longer sit on the floor at his teacher's feet in the manner of a disciple] and seated him beside himself on the bench. And [Moses] silenced the *turgeman* until [Joshua] was seated in his place (*Sifri Pinchas 140*).
- That Sabbath [i.e., the one on which Moses died] was a Sabbath of two [leaders: Moses at the beginning of the day, Joshua at its conclusion]. Power [to bring the Divine Presence] was taken

away from [Moses] and given to [Joshua] (*Sotah* 13b, *Rashi*; *Eitz Yosef*).

□ Moses was as happy that he was bequeathing his honor to Joshua as a person who bequeathes his honor to his sons (*Yalkut Shimoni, Pinchas* 777).

□ Moses said to Joshua, "You shall go with this people into the Land (*Deuteronomy* 31:7); [i.e.,] you, together with the elders of the generation." [But] the Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Joshua, "You will bring. . . (*ibid.* v. 23) [i.e., you alone will lead the nation into the Land]. Take a stick and hit them over the head. A generation has one leader, not two" (*Sanhedrin* 8a).

□ Moses called to Joshua and said to him (*Deuteronomy* 31:7), "Behold, the people that I am entrusting to you are still children. Do not be strict with them, for even their Master was not strict with them" (*Sifri Nitzavim* 305).

□ Early in the morning Moses went to Joshua's door. Joshua was sitting and expounding. Moses bent down and placed his hand on [Joshua's] mouth, and Joshua did not notice him (*Yalkut Shimoni, Va'eschanan* 821).

□ At that time, Moses accorded Joshua great honor and glory before Israel. He proclaimed, "Come hear the words of the new prophet who will begin to rule over us today." Then Moses ordered a golden throne, a royal crown, and a purple garment brought. He arranged the benches of the Sanhedrin, priests, and heads of legions. [Then] he clothed Joshua, placed the crown on his head, seated him on the throne, and appointed Caleb son of Jephuneh as his *turgeman*. Joshua expounded before them (*ibid.* 1:122).

□ Moses attended Joshua. He arose at midnight and went to Joshua's door. . . . When Joshua discerned him, he [Joshua] was embarrassed (*ibid.* 1:123).

LEAVE-TAKING

□ Throughout Moses' lifetime, he sought to bless Israel, but the Angel of Death would not allow it. What did Moses do? He took [the Angel of Death], bent him over beneath his feet, and blessed them in his presence (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 32:57).

□ He blessed all of Israel together, then individually, and then included them all in one blessing (*ibid.*).

□ It would have been fitting for the rebukes to have been uttered by Balaam, and the blessings by Moses. But if Balaam had rebuked them, Israel would have said, "An enemy is rebuking us." And if Moses had blessed them, the nations of the world would have said, "The one that loved them blessed them." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He: "Let Moses, who loves them, rebuke them; and let Balaam, who hates them, bless them" (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:4).

□ He did not rebuke them until he was about to die so that he would not have to repeat the rebuke (*Sifri Devarim* 2).

□ Moses did not want to rebuke them [in the *Book of Deuteronomy*] for what they had done. Said Moses, "For saying to them, 'Hear now, you rebels' (*Numbers* 2:10), I was punished; shall I now rebuke them?" The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Moses, "Fear not. Since they have accepted your rebukes, you must now bless them." Thereupon he blessed them (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:8).

□ The people of Israel murmured, "He is not of sound mind." [Therefore] he said, "In the wilderness, in the waste, opposite Suph" (*Deuteronomy* 1:1). As soon as they heard him specify these things clearly, they said, "Tell us whatever you wish, for your words are acceptable" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Devarim* 793).

□ These are the words which Moses spoke . . . (*Deuteronomy* 1:1). Israel said to Moses, "Before you said, 'I am not a man of words' (*Exodus* 4:10); and now you speak so much!" (*Tanchuma Devarim* 2).

□ "May Hashem add to you a thousand times" (*Deuteronomy* 1:11). He blessed them with the expression *add* because the addition of the Holy One, Blessed is He, is even greater than the principal [i.e., his blessings are unlimited] (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:13).

DAY OF DEATH

□ When the time came for our teacher Moses to be gathered from this world, he thought, "I will appoint

[for Israel] witnesses [to testify to Israel's acceptance of the Torah] which do not taste death in this world [i.e., heaven and earth]" (*Targum Yonasan, Devarim 32:1*).

□ At the time Moses said, "Incline your ear, O heaven" (*Deuteronomy 32:1*), the heavens became silent, and when he said, "Hear, O earth" (*ibid.*), the earth and everything on it became silent (*Sifri Ha'azinu 306*).

□ They asked Moses, "Why are you commanding heaven and earth?" He replied, "I am about to die, and I do not know whether my soul will go to heaven or to earth." "By your life," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "no creature will have power over your soul. It will be set beneath the Throne of Glory in heaven" (*Devarim Rabbah 10:4*).

□ When the prophet Moses began these rebukes [against Israel], heaven and earth were agitated. The Patriarchs cried out from their graves, "Woe is to our children when they sin!" A Heavenly Voice replied, "The merit of the Patriarchs will never cease to protect them" (*Targum Yonasan, Devarim 28:15*).

□ When he said, "Incline your ear, O heaven, and I will speak" (*Deuteronomy 32:1*), the universe was agitated. A Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "Moses, you are born of woman; why are you agitating the whole world?" When he said, "For it is Hashem's Name that I proclaim" (*ibid. v. 3*), they fell silent and listened to his words (*Zohar 3:287b*).

□ Why did [Moses] not bless the tribe of Simeon? Because he harbored [displeasure] toward them for the [sin] in Shittim. Nevertheless, he included them with Judah, as it is written, "Hear (*shema*), Hashem, the voice of Judah" (*Deuteronomy 33:7*). *Shema*, "hear," refers to Simeon (Shimon) [who was so called because his mother had said], "Hashem has heard (*shama*) that I am unloved" (*Genesis 29:33*) (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 31:34*).

□ Moses drew near those who were far: [in *Exodus*,] Bithiah [who merited a share in the World to Come by raising him], and [in *Deuteronomy 33:6*] "Let Reuben live" [i.e., Moses prayed on his behalf, and the prayer was accepted] (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 31:26*).

□ [When] he was told, "The time has come for you

to depart this world," he said to Israel, "I have caused you much distress over the Torah and precepts; now forgive me." "Our teacher, our master," they said, "you are forgiven." Israel, too, stood and said to him, "Our teacher Moses, we have angered you and troubled you much; forgive us." He replied, "You are forgiven. And please, when you enter the Land, remember me and my bones and say, 'Woe is to the son of Amram, who ran before us like a horse and whose bones fell in the desert'" (*Tanchuma Va'eschanan 6*).

□ Moses died on the seventh of Adar (*Megillah 13b*).

□ Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo (*Deuteronomy 34:1*). Twelve levels were there, and Moses climbed them with one step (*Sotah 13b*).

□ "I can no longer go out and come in" (*Deuteronomy 31:2*), for the gates of wisdom were blocked for him (*Sotah 13b*).

□ Upon learning that he was to die that day, Moses wrote thirteen Torah scrolls – twelve for the Twelve Tribes, and one which he placed in the Ark to prevent any falsifications. Said Moses, "Since I am occupied with the Torah, which is life, the day will end [without my death], and [thus] the decree will be canceled." The Holy One, Blessed is He, signaled the sun, which became hard toward him and said, "I will not set while Moses lives in this world." Moses asked Joshua, "What did the Divine communication tell you?" Joshua said, "When the Divine communication came to you, did I know what it said to you?" Thereupon Moses cried out, "A hundred deaths, but not one [bit of] jealousy! Jealousy is as hard as the grave" (*Song of Songs 8:6*). As soon as he agreed to die, The Holy One, Blessed is He, began to appease him, saying, "In this world you led My children; by your life, even in times to come I will lead them through you" (*Devarim Rabbah, end of 9:9*).

□ A Heavenly Voice rang out and said, "You have only five hours left to live." Forthwith Moses said to Joshua, "Sit like a king before the people," and both of them expounded before all of Israel. A verse that Moses read, Joshua explained. And

they did not disagree with one another; their words corresponded. While they were still sitting, a Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "You have only four hours left to live." An hour passed and a Heavenly Voice rang out and said, "You have only three hours left to live. . . you have only two hours left to live." [Meanwhile] the wicked Samael was sitting and waiting to receive [Moses'] soul. An hour passed, and a Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "You have only one hour left to live" (*Beis HaMidrash* 1:124, 125).

□ At that time Moses said, "The Rock, His work is perfect" (*Deuteronomy* 32:4). Moses took the scroll and wrote the Ineffable Name on it. Before he finished writing the portion of *Ha'azinu*, the time came for him to die (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:9).

□ The wicked Samael was waiting to take Moses' soul. "When will Michael weep," he said, "and I laugh!" (*ibid.*).

□ At that time the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Gabriel, "Go and bring Moses' soul." "Master of the World," said [the angel], "how can I see the death of one who is equal to sixty myriads, and how can I do him harm?" Thereafter [God] told Michael, "Go out and bring Me Moses' soul." "Master of the World," said [Michael], "I was his teacher, and he my disciple. I cannot [bear to] see his death." [Then] the Holy One, Blessed is He, told the wicked Samael, "Go out and bring Me Moses' soul." Thereupon [Samael] clothed himself in wrath, fastened his sword, wrapped himself in cruelty, and went toward Moses. Before Samael showed himself, Moses knew he had come. Upon seeing [Moses] sitting and writing the Ineffable Name, his face radiant as the sun, Samael was frightened. "Angels cannot take Moses' soul," he said. "What are you doing here?" Moses asked Samael. "I have come to take your soul," he replied. "You are not taking my soul," said [Moses]. "The souls of all men are in my hand," said [Samael]. "I have more power than all people," said [Moses]. "What is your power?" asked [Samael]. "I am the son of Amram . . . Go, wicked one, flee from my presence!" Samael returned and reported to the Holy One, Blessed is He, [Who then] told him, "Bring Moses' soul." Forthwith [Samael] drew his sword from its scabbard and stood over Moses. Moses became wroth. He took

his staff on which the Ineffable Name was inscribed, struck him, and blinded his eyes. [Samael] fled. A moment later a Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "Your time on earth is up." "Master of the World," said Moses, "please do not deliver me into the hands of the Angel of Death." "Fear not," said [God]. "I Myself will attend to you and your burial" (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:9).

□ Said God, "All men descend to the grave after their eyes have dimmed, but your eye was not dim (*Deuteronomy* 34:7). [Your] coffin, bier, and shrouds are made by heaven; and I and My host will attend to you" (*Devarim Rabbah* 9:5).

□ Moses, the servant of Hashem, died there (*Deuteronomy* 34:5). Up to [this verse] the Holy One, Blessed is He, dictated, and Moses repeated and wrote. The following verses the Holy One, Blessed is He, dictated and Moses wrote with tears. [According to another opinion they were written by Joshua] (*Bava Basra* 15a).

EXPIRATION

□ Moses longed for a death like Aaron's (*Sifri Pinchas* 136).

□ They came and told him, "The moment has come for you to depart this world." He said, "Blessed is the Name of the Eternal One" (*Tanchuma Va'eschanan* 6).

□ Moses arose and sanctified himself like the *seraphim*, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, descended from the uppermost heavens to take Moses' soul. With Him were three ministering angels: Michael, Gabriel, and Zagagel. Michael arranged Moses' bier, [while] Gabriel spread a linen garment at his head and Zagagel at his feet. Michael [stood] at one side, Gabriel at the other. The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Moses, "Close your eyes," and he closed them. "Place your hands on your chest," and he did. "Place your legs together," and he did (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:9).

□ They came and told him, "You have half a minute left." He took both his hands, placed them over his heart, and said to Israel, "See the end of flesh and blood!" (*Tanchuma Va'eschanan* 6).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, called to the soul

within his body and said to it, "My daughter, for 120 years you were in Moses' body; now the time has come for you to leave. Come out, do not tarry." "Master of the World," it said, "is there a body in the world purer than Moses'? I love it and do not want to leave it." "Leave, and do not tarry," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "and I will bring you to the uppermost heavens beneath My Throne of Glory." "Master of the World," said [the soul], "please leave me in Moses' body" (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:8).

□ Moses' soul was loath to leave. "My soul," said Moses, "did the Angel of Death wish to rule over you?" "No," it replied. "Did they wish to push you to Gehinnom?" "No." "And where are you to go?" "I shall walk before Hashem in the lands of the living" (*Psalms* 116:9). Upon hearing this, Moses gave it permission: "Return to your rest, my soul" (*ibid.* v. 7) (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:5).

□ The Angel of Death had no power over six people: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. [They died through a kiss of the Divine Presence (*Rashi*)] (*Bava Basra* 17a).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, . . . took away his soul with a kiss of the mouth (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:8).

□ He smelled an apple, and his soul went out with a good scent (*Batei Midrashos* 1:287).

□ When Moses died, the sun darkened at noon and the Written Law was sealed (*Zohar* 2:156a).

□ Gabriel descended, took the Torah from Moses' hand, and brought it up to the Great Court of Heaven, [where] the souls of the righteous read it on Mondays, Thursdays, and holidays (*Beis HaMidrash* 1:122).

□ Moses departed this world at the time of *minchah* [the afternoon prayer] on the Sabbath, a time of favor . . . (*Zohar* 2:156a).

□ For twelve parasangs by twelve parasangs, the area of the camp of Israel, a Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "Moses, the great teacher of Israel, has died" (*Sotah* 13b).

□ Moses died in the territory of Reuben and was buried in the territory of Gad, four mils away. Who transported him? Moses was carried by the wings of the *Shechinah* (*ibid.*).

□ As soon as he died, the earthly beings, the heavenly beings, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, eulogized him (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:5).

□ At the time that Moses was carried by the wings of the *Shechinah*, the ministering angels said, "He executed the righteousness of Hashem, and His ordinances with Israel" (*Deuteronomy* 33:21), and the Holy One, Blessed is He, said, "Who will rise up for Me against evildoers [to reprove them for My sake (*Rashi*)]?" (*Psalms* 94:16) (*Sotah* 13b).

□ The Spirit of Holiness said, "There has not since arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses" (*Deuteronomy* 34:10). Heaven and earth wept (*Devarim Rabbah* 11:8).

□ Joshua wept, cried out, and mourned for [Moses] for many days, until the Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "How long will you go on mourning? Was it your loss alone? It is also My loss; from the day he died, there is mourning before Me. Moreover, he is sure [to merit] the World to Come" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Vayeilech*, end of 940).

□ [According to one opinion] Moses did not die [as a spiritual entity (see *Maharsha, Ta'anis* 5b)]; he is standing and serving [as he did during his forty days and nights in heaven] (*Sotah* 13b).

BURIAL

□ Moses is buried in the territory of Gad (*ibid.*).

□ None other than the Omnipresent took care of [his burial] (*ibid.* 9b).

□ He buried him in the valley . . . opposite Beth-peor (*Deuteronomy* 34:6). Despite this double clue, no man knows of his sepulcher (*ibid.*). The wicked kingdom [i.e., Rome] sent to the ruler of Beth-peor: "Show us where Moses is buried." When they stood above, he seemed to be below; [when they stood] below, he seemed to be above. Even our teacher Moses himself did not know where he was buried [for even his body had become only a spiritual entity (*Maharsha*)] (*ibid.*).

□ Why was Moses buried near Peor? In order to atone for the sin of Peor (*ibid.*).

□ Whenever Israel sins, [the evil angel created by the sin of] Peor arises and opens (*poer*) its mouth to

destroy Israel with its breath. Moses used to pronounce the Divine Name over it and bring it down [underground]. When Moses died, his grave was placed opposite it, [so that Peor] sees his grave and retreats (*Yalkut Shimoni, Zos Haberachah* 965).

□ Ten things were created on the eve of the Sabbath [of Creation] at twilight . . . Moses' sepulcher, the cave in which Moses and Elijah stood . . . (*Pesachim* 54a).

□ Because he shrank back [in the episode of Zimri], no man knows of his sepulcher (*Deuteronomy* 34:6) (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 20:24).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Moses, "Joseph, as a son, was obligated to bury his father [Jacob]. You, being neither [Joseph's] son nor his grandson, were not obligated to tend to his burial, yet you did. Likewise, I, Who am not obligated to anyone, will attend to your burial" (*Shemos Rabbah* 20:19).

□ He buried him in the valley (*Deuteronomy* 34:6). He [Moses] buried himself (*Sifri Naso* 32).

□ A tunnel cave connected Moses' grave with the graves of the Patriarchs (*Sifri Berachah* 34:51).

□ As soon as Moses died, the well, the Clouds of Glory, and the manna ceased (*Bereishis Rabah* 62:4).

□ Seventeen hundred [laws] were forgotten during the period of mourning for Moses. Othniel son of Kenaz retrieved them through his exegesis (*Temurah* 16a).

□ At the time that our teacher Moses departed to the Garden of Eden, Joshua forgot three hundred laws and was uncertain of seven hundred. All of Israel rose up to kill him . . . (*ibid.*).

□ Worms had no power over [the bodies of] seven people [since they died by the kiss of the Divine Presence (*Rashi*): Moses, Aaron, and Miriam . . . (*Bava Basra* 17a).

□ Moses and Zipporah were buried in the Cave of Machpelah (*Sefer HaTemunah* 3:200).

AFTERLIFE

□ "I have seen God-like beings ascending" (*I Samuel* 28:13). Samuel brought Moses with him. "If,

Heaven forbid, I am being summoned to judgment," [said Samuel to Moses,] "stand by my side, for there is nothing you wrote in the Torah that I did not fulfill" (*Chagigah* 4b).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Jeremiah, "Go call Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses from their graves, for they know how to weep [over the Destruction]." Forthwith, Jeremiah went to the bank of the Jordan and called, "Son of Amram, son of Amram, rise, for you are sought by the Holy One, Blessed is He." "Why is today different from other days?" asked [Moses]. "I do not know," said Jeremiah.

Moses went to the ministering angels and asked, "Do you know why I am wanted by the Holy One, Blessed is He?" "Son of Amram," they replied, "do you know that the Temple has been destroyed and Israel exiled?" "Master of the World," said Moses, "was I not a faithful shepherd over Israel? I ran before them like a horse in the desert, and when the time came for them to enter the Land, you decreed that my bones would fall in the desert. Now that they have been exiled, you sent for me to mourn and weep over them? When things go well with the master, the servant does not share in his fortune; but when things go badly, he does."

At that time Moses said to Jeremiah, "Go before me; I will go and bring them, and I will see who is laying his hand on them." Moses went, with Jeremiah before him, until they reached the rivers of Babylon. Upon seeing Moses, [the exiles] said to one another, "The son of Amram has come from his grave to redeem us!" A Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "It [the exile] is a decree before Me." "My children," said Moses, "to bring you back [immediately] is impossible, because the decree has already been issued; but may the Omnipresent bring you back soon." Then he left them and went to the Patriarchs. "What have the enemies done to our children?" they asked. "Some were slain," [they answered,] "some were bound in iron chains, some died on the road." They all began to weep and lament.

Said Moses, "Cursed is the sun that did not darken when idols were brought into the Temple." "By your life, Moses, faithful shepherd," said the

sun, "how could I darken when they did not let me, but whipped me [instead] with sixty whips of fire so that I would go forth and illuminate?" Moses wept, saying, "Alas for the radiance of the Temple, which has darkened." Moses said to the captors: "Do not subject them to cruel deaths, or slay a son before his father, and do not annihilate my children, for the time will surely come when you will have to account [for your deeds]" (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 24).

מֶשֶׁחַךְ — Meshech

[Son of Japheth] (Genesis 10:2)

□ [The name of the country of] Meshech is Mysia [a district in Asia Minor] (*Yoma* 10a, *Maharsha*).

מֶשֻׁלָּם — Meshulam

(*Nechemiah* 8:4)

□ Zechariah is called Meshulam [from מְשֻׁלָּם, perfect] because his deeds were perfect (*Megillah* 23a).

מֵתוּשֶׁלַח — Methuselah

[Grandfather of Noah] (Genesis 5:21)

□ The seven shepherds (*Micah* 5:4) were as follows: David in the center with Adam, Seth, and Methuselah on his right, and Abraham, Jacob, and Moses on his left (*Sukkah* 52b).

□ There were seven men whose lives spanned the entire history of man: Methuselah saw Adam; Shem saw Methuselah; Jacob saw Shem; Amram saw Jacob; Ahijah the Shilonite saw Amram; Elijah saw Ahijah; and Elijah is still alive (*Bava Basra* 121b).

□ Methuselah attended to Adam for 243 years, and Shem attended to Methuselah for ninety-eight years (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 1).

□ Methuselah was perfectly righteous. Whatever came out of his mouth ended with the praise of the Holy One, Blessed is He. He studied nine hundred orders of Mishnah (*Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis* 42).

□ *God made for Adam . . . garments of hides* (Genesis 3:21). When Adam [was about to] die, he entrusted [these garments] to Seth, who [in turn] gave them to Methuselah. When Methuselah [was about to] die, he gave them to Noah (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 4:8).

□ Methuselah, who was a great scholar, warned [Noah's] father not to call [Noah] by his [correct]

name, lest the people of the generation of the Flood kill him with sorcery [which is effective only if the correct name is used]. When he was born, [Methuselah] named him Noah, but to [the child's] father he said, "Call him Menahem [publicly]" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis* 42).

□ As long as Methuselah lived, the Flood did not come upon the world [in his merit]. And when Methuselah died, it was withheld for another seven days after his death [during which time he was mourned] (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 32:1).

□ *It came to pass after seven days that the waters of the Flood were upon the earth* (Genesis 7:10). These were the days of mourning for Methuselah (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ As soon as he died, they heard a great noise in heaven, for [the angels] were eulogizing him. Tears flowed from the eyes of the *chayos* onto the place of his death. Seeing that, [mankind] eulogized him on earth, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, delayed the punishment of the generation of the Flood for seven days in reward for eulogizing him (*Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis* 42).

□ During the seven days of mourning over the righteous Methuselah, the Holy One, Blessed is He, gave them abundant light [as a reward for eulogizing him] (*Eitz Yosef*) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 3:6).

מַתַּנְיָה — Mattaniah

[King of Judah (Zedekiah)] (*II Kings* 24:17)

□ Shalum is Zedekiah. His real name was Mattaniah (*Horios* 11b).

□ At the time that Nebuchadnezzar came to exile them, he asked them, "Is there one of the seed of Josiah whom I may appoint as your king?" Mattaniah son of Josiah was present. "What is your name?" asked Nebuchadnezzar. Mattaniah thought, "I will say that my name is Zedekiah [from צַדִּיק, righteous] so that righteous descendants will issue from me." He did not know, [however, that this name would actually have a completely different significance, namely] that in his days, the Holy One, Blessed is He, would vindicate the principle of Justice (מִצְדִּיק) when the Temple was burned (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:22).



נְבוּזַרְאֲדָן – Nebuzaradan

[Chief executioner for Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylonia] (II Kings 25:8)

□ How much was left of the camp of Assyria [that was stricken at the gates of Jerusalem]? Five: Sennacherib and his two sons, Nebuchadnezzar, and Nebuzaradan (*Sanhedrin* 95b).

□ *Her adversaries have become her master* (*Lamentations* 1:5) refers to Nebuchadnezzar; *her enemies are at ease* (ibid.) refers to Nebuzaradan (*Eichah Rabbasi* 1:31).

□ When the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Nebuchadnezzar, "Go up and destroy the Temple," he thought, "He only wants to destroy me; he will do to me as he did to my grandfather [Sennacherib]." What did [Nebuchadnezzar] do? He came and stayed in Daphne near Antioch, and dispatched Nebuzaradan to destroy Jerusalem (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 30).

□ Nebuchadnezzar instructed Nebuzaradan, saying: "The God of these [people] accepts penitents. When you capture them, do not allow them to pray, lest they repent. [Then] their God will have mercy on them, and [I] will return with a black face. Show them no mercy." After [Nebuzaradan] captured them, whenever one of them would stand still, [Nebuzaradan] would cut up his limbs and throw them before [the captives] (*Eichah Rabbasi* 5:5).

□ Nebuzaradan is called Arioch because he roared like a lion (*ari*) at the captives until they reached the Euphrates. Then he told his soldiers, "Let them rest, for henceforth their God will not return to them" (ibid.).

□ Nebuzaradan instructed his armies, saying: "The God of these [people] detests licentiousness. Take heed not to touch a married woman" (ibid. 5:11).

□ Nebuzaradan besieged Jerusalem from the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign until the eleventh year, but he could not capture it because the decree [of destruction] had not yet been sealed (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:55).

□ Every day he surrounded Jerusalem but could not capture it. He wished to turn back, [but] the Holy One, Blessed is He, inspired him to measure the wall. [He found that] it was sinking two and a half handbreadths daily, until it sank entirely (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 30).

□ Nebuchadnezzar sent Nebuzaradan three hundred mules laden with iron hammers, all of which broke against one of the gates of Jerusalem's wall. He wanted to turn back. "I am afraid," he said, "that they will do to me as they did to Sennacherib." A Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "Nebuzaradan, jump, for the time has come for the Temple to be laid waste and the Sanctuary to burn." He had a single hammer left. He struck the gate with the back of the hammer, and it opened. He entered [and marched through the city], slaughtering [its inhabitants] as he went. Upon reaching the Temple, he lit a fire on it. The Sanctuary rose up [into the air], but from heaven it was thrown down. Nebuzaradan became haughty, [whereupon] a Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "You have slain a dead people, burned a burnt Temple." He saw the blood of Zechariah seething. "What is this?" he asked. "It is the blood of sacrifices which spilled," [the Jews] replied. He said to them, "I will bring some and see if it is the same." He brought some, but it was not the same. "Reveal to me what this is," he said, "or else I will comb your flesh with iron." They told him, "We had a priest and prophet who prophesied about the Destruction, and we killed him." "I shall appease him," he said. He brought sages and slew them there, but the blood

did not rest. He brought young priests and slew them, but it did not rest. [This went on] until he had killed ninety-four myriads, but it did not rest. Then he approached and said, "Zechariah, Zechariah, I have destroyed the best of them. Do you want me to kill them all?" Immediately it rested. [Thereupon Nebuzaradan] had thoughts of repentance. "If they, who killed only one person, [suffered such a fate,] what will happen to [me]?" He fled, sent a will to his family, and converted. Nebuzaradan was a righteous proselyte (*Sanhedrin* 96b).

□ The image of Nebuchadnezzar was engraved on Nebuzaradan's carriage, and [Nebuzaradan] feared [Nebuchadnezzar] greatly, as if he were standing before him (*ibid.*).

□ In this valley, Nebuzaradan the chief executioner slew 211 myriads (*Gittin* 57b).

□ Zedekiah fled through a tunnel leading to Jericho. Nebuzaradan caught him and his ten sons, and sent them to Nebuchadnezzar (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:68).

□ Nebuchadnezzar gave Nebuzaradan three orders concerning Jeremiah: "Take him and set your eyes on him — on him, not on his people; and do him no harm — but with his people do as you please; and do to him as he shall say to you (*Jeremiah* 39:12) — but not to his people." Seeing a group of youths under a collar [in chains], Jeremiah put his head [in] with them, and Nebuzaradan came and took him away. Seeing a group of old men in chains, [Jeremiah] placed his neck upon them, and Nebuzaradan came and took him away. Nebuzaradan said to Jeremiah, "You are either a false prophet, or a person who scoffs at suffering, or else a murderer. All these years you have been prophesying that this city will be destroyed — and now that it has been destroyed, you are aggrieved? I do not wish to harm you, but you wish to harm yourself, as if suffering is insignificant in your eyes. Or else you are a murderer, for if the king hears that you have been harmed, he will execute me." Nebuzaradan the chief executioner sent Jeremiah . . . (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 34).

נְבוּכַדְנֶצַר — Nebuchadnezzar

[King of Babylon]

(*II Kings* 25:22)

DATES/ PERSONALITY/ TYRANT/ DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM/ ZEDEKIAH/ DANIEL AND THE DREAM/ THE IMAGE AND THE FIERY FURNACE/ GOOD DEEDS/ BANISHMENT AND DEATH

DATES

□ Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-five years. The first year he captured Nineveh, the second, Jehoiakim. The exile of Jehoiachin took place in the seventh year from the conquest of Jehoiakim, which was Nebuchadnezzar's eighth. Zedekiah's exile took place in the eighteenth year from the conquest of Jehoiakim, which was Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth (*Megillah* 11b).

□ In the second year of his reign, [Nebuchadnezzar] had his dream (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 28).

□ The day that Nebuchadnezzar entered the Temple in the days of Jehoiachin, his archenemy Darius [king of Persia] was born (*ibid.*).

□ On the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, Nebuchadnezzar died and was buried; and on the twenty-sixth, Evil-merodach exhumed [his body] and dragged it around [to convince the people that he had, in fact, died (*Vilna Gaon*)] (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 28).

□ Whenever Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned in *Jeremiah*, he was alive (*Yerushalmi Megillah* 3:7).

PERSONALITY

□ King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all her desire that she requested (*I Kings* 10:13). He consorted with her and she bore a daughter, from whom issued Nebuchadnezzar, destroyer of the Temple (*Midrash Shalshelas HaKabbalah*, p. 44).

□ Merodach [king of Babylonia]'s reward for according honor to our Father in Heaven was that Nebuchadnezzar descended from him (*Yalkut Shimoni, Beshalach* 268).

□ The angel of Hashem . . . smote in the camp of the Assyrians (*II Kings* 19:35). How many of them survived? Five: Sennacherib and his two sons, Nebuchadnezzar, and Nebuzaradan (*Sanhedrin* 95b).

□ When Jeremiah was a boy, he and Nebuchadnezzar were strolling together. At that time Nebuchadnezzar was not yet king; he was poor and lowly. "Would that I were king over the whole world!" he said, "I would attack Jerusalem and burn the Temple." "Will you give me Jerusalem?" asked Jeremiah. [Nebuchadnezzar] replied, "Whatever you can take out of the city from noon until evening" (*Otzar HaMidrashim* 247).

□ After Hezekiah was healed of his illness, Merodach-baladan sent him a letter [that began]: "Peace to King Hezekiah, peace to the city of Jerusalem, peace to your great God." Nebuchadnezzar, who was Baladan's scribe, was not present at the time. When he came, he asked, "How did you write the letter?" "Thus and so have we written," they replied. He said to them, "You have called Him 'the great God,' yet you mention Him last? Thus you must write: 'Peace to the great God, peace to the city of Jerusalem, peace to King Hezekiah.'" They told him, "Let the one who gives the order carry it out." He began to run after the courier. When he had taken only four steps, Gabriel came and stopped him. Said R' Yochanan: Had Gabriel not come and stopped him, there would have been no remedy for Israel [for Nebuchadnezzar would have had this additional merit (*Rashi*)] (*Sanhedrin* 96a).

□ Nebuchadnezzar was haughty and short. When he went from province to province and from city to city, the populace would turn out to greet him. They would laugh and say, "Does this one rule from one end of the earth to the other?" (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* 31).

□ On three occasions, the Holy One, Blessed is He, complained about the wicked Nebuchadnezzar: "See what this midget from Babylon has done to Me!" (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 13:42).

□ "How can we sing the song of Hashem on alien soil?" (*Psalms* 137:4). They said, "It is [bad] enough that we have destroyed [i.e., caused the destruction of] our Temple; but now we must play music before this midget and before this idolatry!" (*Shocher Tov* 137:4).

□ [Babylon is called] *Shinar* (שִׁנְעָר) (*Genesis* 14:1), for it produced an enemy and hater (שׂוֹנֵא וְעַר) of

The Holy One, Blessed is He — namely, the wicked Nebuchadnezzar (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 4:1).

□ *Appoint a tifsar* (טִפְסָר) *against her* (*Jeremiah* 51:27). Nebuchadnezzar is [called] *tifsar* [for he was] a fool (*tipesh*) in wisdom, but a prince (*sar*) in years [i.e., old but foolish] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 90:3).

□ He worshiped the sun (*Shemos Rabbah* 15:6).

□ He cast lots among heads of state to determine whose turn it was to be his partner in sodomy that day. When that wicked one sought to do so with Zedekiah . . . [a miracle deformed Nebuchadnezzar's organ so that he was humiliated in the presence of all the kings who sat before him,] as it is written, *You are filled with shame instead of glory . . .* (*Habakkuk* 2:16) (*Shabbos* 149b).

□ Four deemed themselves god-like, yet were [forced to remain] passive when having relations, like a woman [as a demonstration that they had no real power over others but rather were controlled by the One Above (*Eitz Yosef*): Pharaoh, Hiram, Joash, and Nebuchadnezzar (*Tanchuma Va'eira* 9).

□ He rode a male lion [which was his astrological sign] and tied a serpent about its head [symbolic of the serpent which had caused Adam and Eve to sin, and which was the astrological sign of Esau, whose descendant destroyed the Second Temple (*Maharsha*)] (*Shabbos* 150a).

□ Nebuchadnezzar owned a serpent that would devour anything that was cast before it [and Nebuchadnezzar believed it had god-like powers (*Eitz Yosef*)]. Daniel said, "If you give me permission, I will weaken it." Permission was given. [Daniel] took straw, concealed nails in it, and threw it before [the serpent]. The nails pierced its innards (*Bereishis Rabbah* 68:13).

□ *As a roaring lion . . . is a wicked ruler over a poor people* (*Proverbs* 28:15). The roaring lion is the wicked Nebuchadnezzar (*Megillah* 11a).

□ As long as that wicked one [Nebuchadnezzar] lived, no one laughed. It is forbidden to stand in the house of that wicked one, for it is written, *Satyrs shall dance there* (*Isaiah* 13:21) [and if men enter, the satyrs will depart and the Divine decree of the verse will be unfulfilled (*Rashi*)] (*Shabbos* 149b).

- Upon hearing [of] the wisdom of Ber... invited him to be adviser to the king (*A d'Ben Sira, Otzar HaMidrashim* 45).
- The name of Nebuchadnezzar's wife was... rah, Shmirmaveth, or Shmiram (*Vayikra* 19:6).
- The wicked Vashti was Nebuchadnezzar's granddaughter (*Megillah* 10b).
- The Holy One, Blessed is He, sought... some of the descendants of the wicked [Nebuchadnezzar] under the wings of the *Shechinah*... they had some thoughts of repentance... (*sha*). "Master of the World," said the messengers, "will You bring under the wings of the *Shechinah* he who destroyed Your Holy Temple, who burned Your Temple?" (*Sanhedrin* 96b).
- Hiram was the husband of Nebuchadnezzar's mother (*Vayikra Rabbah* 18:2).

TYRANT

- Three ruled over the entire world: Darius, Ahasuerus, and Nebuchadnezzar (*Megillah* 10b).
- "You gave Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar power over Your world in order to subjugate the nations" (*Shocheh Tov* 17:11).
- Had anyone else [other than Nebuchadnezzar] said [in praising God], "All the inhabitants of the earth are reckoned for nothing" (*Daniel* 4:37), people would say, "He never ruled over the world in his life, yet he says [this]!" But it is for the sake of Nebuchadnezzar, of whom it is written [Hashem] *has made you ruler over them* (*Devarim* 2:38) to say it (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:5).
- A stormy wind was coming from the north (*Ezekiel* 1:4). And where did it go? To come over the entire world before the wicked Nebuchadnezzar, so that the nations of the world would be subjugated. "The Holy One, Blessed is He, delivers the children of Israel into the hands of lowly people" (*Chagigah* 13b) that Nebuchadnezzar was made king of the world's greatest empire, it was not such a punishment (*Chagigah* 13b).
- *I shall put a deer in the land of life* (*Ezekiel* 47:9) – a king who is swift as a deer [Nebuchadnezzar] (*Kesubos* 111a).

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

□ For eighteen years, a Heavenly Voice called into the house of Nebuchadnezzar, "Bad servant, go up and destroy your Master's House!" But he was afraid to go up [because] he did not believe that the Holy One, Blessed is He, would destroy Jerusalem. What did he do? He practiced divination to find out whether to go up or not. He shot an arrow for Antioch, or Tyre, or Laodicea, and the arrow broke. But when he shot an arrow for Jerusalem, it did not break. Thus he knew that Jerusalem would be laid waste by him (*Shocher Tov* 79:2).

□ Jerusalem would have been destroyed [even] if Nebuchadnezzar had not arisen (*Semachos* 8).

□ The people of Israel said, "Nebuchadnezzar has gathered all the money of the world; does he need ours?" "By your lives," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "I will make your money as precious to him as spices" (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 5).

□ Nebuchadnezzar went up to Jerusalem three times (*Shocher Tov* 118:12).

□ The first [year of his reign] he exiled Jehoiakim [king of Judah]; the second, Jehoiachin [king of Judah]. He had [Jehoiachin] ride in his [Nebuchadnezzar's] carriage because of [Jehoiachin's] prominence. And he exiled Zedekiah, making three exiles in all (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 23:14).

□ When Nebuchadnezzar went up to capture Jehoiakim, he stayed in Daphne near Antioch. The Great Sanhedrin went down to greet him. "Has the time come for this House to be destroyed?" they asked [knowing from the prophets that it would be destroyed]. "No," he replied. "Jehoiakim king of Judah has rebelled against me. Deliver him to me and I will go away." They went and told Jehoiakim, "Nebuchadnezzar demands you from us." He said to them, "Is one life pushed aside for the sake of another? Is it not written, *You shall not deliver a servant to his master*" (*Deuteronomy* 23:16) [which shows that even if Nebuchadnezzar would not kill him but only enslave him, he should not be handed over]? They replied, "Did your forebear [David] not do so to Sheba son of Bichri?" [See *II Samuel* 20:21,22.] Since he did not listen to them,

they took him and chained him (*Bereishis Rabbah* 94:9).

□ What did Nebuchadnezzar do to [Jehoiakim]? R' Yehudah said: He ripped a donkey open and put [Jehoiakim's body] inside. R' Nechemiah said: He cut up his body into olive-size pieces and threw it to the dogs, and he crowned his son Jeconiah in his place. Then he [Nebuchadnezzar] went down to Babylon, [where] all the people of Babylon turned out to hail him. "What have you done?" they asked. "Jehoiakim rebelled against me," he replied. "I killed him and crowned his son Jeconiah in his place." They said, "The saying goes: Do not rear the good puppy of a bad dog. How much more so the bad puppy of a bad dog!" He listened to them and went up and stayed at Daphne near Antioch [to capture Jeconiah] (*Vayikra Rabbah* 19:6).

□ The Great Sanhedrin went down to greet him and asked, "Has the time come for this House to be destroyed?" He replied, "Give me the one whom I appointed as your king, and I will go away." They came and told Jehoiachin king of Judah, "Nebuchadnezzar seeks you." Thereupon he took the keys of the Temple and went up on the roof of the Sanctuary. "Master of the World," he said, "in the past we were faithful to You, and Your keys were entrusted to our care. Now that we are not faithful, Your keys are [returned] to You" (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 6:2).

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□ When Nebuchadnezzar came to cause the first exile, i.e., the exile of Jeconiah, his compassion was aroused and he said, "Is there a descendant of Josiah among you whom I may appoint as your king?" Josiah's son Mattaniah was there, and Nebuchadnezzar made him king over Jerusalem (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:22).

□ Nebuchadnezzar [besieged Jerusalem] for three and a half years (*Eichah Rabbasi* 1:40).

- At the time that the wicked Nebuchadnezzar exiled Israel, there were young men among them whose beauty outshone the sun. The Babylonian women saw them and lusted for them. By order of the king, they [the young men of Israel] were trampled (*Sanhedrin* 92b).
- He took away the throne that Solomon, in his wisdom, had made (*Yalkut Shimoni, Esther* 1045).
- "How can we sing the song of Hashem on alien soil?" (*Psalms* 137:4). When Nebuchadnezzar found out [that the Levites had cut off their fingers so that they could not play their harps], he [slew multitudes of Jews and] piled their corpses in mounds (*Shocheh Tov* 137:5).
- There were no millstones in Babylon. When Nebuchadnezzar went up [to Jerusalem], he loaded [the Jewish captives] with millstones and brought them down [to Babylon] (*Eichah Rabbasi* 5:14).
- There were no cedars in Babylon. When Nebuchadnezzar came up [to the Land of Israel], he uprooted cedars from [there] and replanted them in Babylon (*ibid.* 1:30).
- Nebuchadnezzar gathered his camps and went forth against Jerusalem. Upon reaching Riblathah, he stayed there, for he feared that [God] would do to him as He had done to Sennacherib [namely, destroy his camp]. At that time he summoned Nebuzaradan, appointed him head of all the armies, and told him, "Go conquer Jerusalem" (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:54).
- *Her adversaries have become* (chief) (*Lamentations* 1:5) refers to Nebuchadnezzar (*Eichah Rabbasi* 1:31).
- Nebuchadnezzar gave Nebuzaradan three orders concerning Jeremiah: "Take him and set your eyes on him (*Jeremiah* 39:12) — but not on his people; and do him no harm (*ibid.*) — but with his people do as you please; do to him as he shall say to you (*ibid.*) — but not to his people" (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 34).
- Nebuchadnezzar sent Nebuzaradan three hundred mules laden with iron hammers [with which to break the walls of Jerusalem] (*Sanhedrin* 96b).

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□ The name of Nebuchadnezzar's wife was Shmirah, Shmirmaveth, or Shmiram (*Vayikra Rabbah* 19:6).

□ The wicked Vashti was Nebuchadnezzar's granddaughter (*Megillah* 10b).

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TYRANT

□ Three ruled over the entire world: Ahab, Ahasuerus, and Nebuchadnezzar (*Megillah* 11a).

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□ Had anyone else [other than Nebuchadnezzar] said [in praising God], "All the inhabitants of the earth are reckoned for nothing" (*Daniel* 4:32), people would say, "He never ruled over two flies in his life, yet he says [this]!" But it is fitting for Nebuchadnezzar, of whom it is written, *He [Hashem] has made you ruler over them all* (ibid. 2:38) to say it (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:5).

□ A stormy wind was coming from the north (*Ezekiel* 1:4). And where did it go? To conquer the entire world before the wicked Nebuchadnezzar, so that the nations of the world would not say, "The Holy One, Blessed is He, delivered His children into the hands of lowly people" [but now that Nebuchadnezzar was made king over the world's greatest empire, it was not such a disgrace] (*Chagigah* 13b).

□ I shall put a deer in the land of life (*Ezekiel* 26:20) — a king who is swift as a deer [Nebuchadnezzar] (*Kesubos* 111a).

□ Nebuchadnezzar came and mixed Israel with the nations of the world (*Bereishis Rabbah* 83:2).

□ [The town of] Luz was neither mixed [with other peoples] by Sennacherib nor laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar (ibid. 69:8).

□ Like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire (*Jeremiah* 29:22). He made them like parched grains. . . They had gone to Nebuchadnezzar's daughter. . . [See **Ahab son of Kolaiah**.] "Who permitted you to do this?" Nebuchadnezzar asked them. "The Holy One, Blessed is He," they replied. "I will test you," he said, "as I tested Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah." He cast them into the fiery furnace, and they were burned (*Sanhedrin* 93a).

□ Nebuzaradan the chief executioner stood before the king of Babylon in Jerusalem (*Jeremiah* 52:12). Was the king of Babylon in Jerusalem? [Rather,] his image was engraved on [Nebuzaradan's] carriage; [alternatively, Nebuzaradan] feared him as if he were standing before him (*Sanhedrin* 96b).

□ At the time that [Nebuchadnezzar] said, "I will ascend above the high clouds" (*Isaiah* 14:14), a Heavenly Voice proclaimed, "Wicked one, son of a wicked one, descendant of the wicked Nimrod, the [average] life span of man is [but] seventy years, from the earth to the firmament is a five-hundred-year journey, and the depth of the firmament is a five-hundred-year journey. . . Only to the nether world shall you be brought" (ibid. v. 15) (*Pesachim* 94b).

□ He who sees [the remains of] the house of Nebuchadnezzar should say, "Blessed be He Who destroyed the house of the wicked Nebuchadnezzar" (*Berachos* 57b).

□ Terrible and dreadful is he (*Habakkuk* 1:7). This refers to Nebuchadnezzar (*Vayikra Rabbah* 18:2).

□ Nebuchadnezzar had vessels made out of the bones that were in the Dura Valley, and he drank from them. When Ezekiel resurrected these bones, the vessels hit Nebuchadnezzar on his mouth. Then the bones drew together, came to life, and stood on their feet (*Tosafos, Targum Beshalach, Machzor Vitry* 405).

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

□ For eighteen years, a Heavenly Voice called into the house of Nebuchadnezzar, "Bad servant, go up and destroy your Master's House!" But he was afraid to go up [because] he did not believe that the Holy One, Blessed is He, would destroy Jerusalem. What did he do? He practiced divination to find out whether to go up or not. He shot an arrow for Antioch, or Tyre, or Laodicea, and the arrow broke. But when he shot an arrow for Jerusalem, it did not break. Thus he knew that Jerusalem would be laid waste by him (*Shocher Tov* 79:2).

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□ The first [year of his reign] he exiled Jehoiakim [king of Judah]; the second, Jehoiachin [king of Judah]. He had [Jehoiachin] ride in his [Nebuchadnezzar's] carriage because of [Jehoiachin's] prominence. And he exiled Zedekiah, making three exiles in all (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 23:14).

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- He took away the throne that Solomon, in his wisdom, had made (*Yalkut Shimoni, Esther* 1045).
- “How can we sing the song of Hashem on alien soil?” (*Psalms* 137:4). When Nebuchadnezzar found out [that the Levites had cut off their fingers so that they could not play their harps], he [slew multitudes of Jews and] piled their corpses in mounds (*Shocheh Tov* 137:5).
- There were no millstones in Babylon. When Nebuchadnezzar went up [to Jerusalem], he loaded [the Jewish captives] with millstones and brought them down [to Babylon] (*Eichah Rabbasi* 5:14).
- There were no cedars in Babylon. When Nebuchadnezzar came up [to the Land of Israel], he uprooted cedars from [there] and replanted them in Babylon (*ibid.* 1:30).
- Nebuchadnezzar gathered his camps and went forth against Jerusalem. Upon reaching Riblathah, he stayed there, for he feared that [God] would do to him as He had done to Sennacherib [namely, destroy his camp]. At that time he summoned Nebuzaradan, appointed him head of all the armies, and told him, “Go conquer Jerusalem” (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:54).
- Her adversaries have become (chief) (*Lamentations* 1:5) refers to Nebuchadnezzar (*Eichah Rabbasi* 1:31).
- Nebuchadnezzar gave Nebuzaradan three orders concerning Jeremiah: “Take him and set your eyes on him (*Jeremiah* 39:12) — but not on his people; and do him no harm (*ibid.*) — but with his people do as you please; do to him as he shall say to you (*ibid.*) — but not to his people” (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 34).
- Nebuchadnezzar sent Nebuzaradan three hundred mules laden with iron hammers [with which to break the walls of Jerusalem] (*Sanhedrin* 96b).
- Nebuchadnezzar instructed Nebuzaradan: “Their God accepts penitents. When you conquer them, do not allow them to pray, lest they repent. Show them no mercy” (*Eichah Rabbasi* 5:5).
- He instructed the wicked Nebuzaradan: “Take heed, if you conquer them, not to let them sigh [as a prayer]; pursue them like a lion” (*Ginzei Shechter* 1:273).
- When Nebuchadnezzar took the Jews captive, he did not make stops anywhere in the Land of Israel but pressed them on [relentlessly], for [the Chaldeans] feared for their lives. “Perhaps they will repent,” thought [the Chaldeans], “and [God] will do to us as He did to Sennacherib.” When they came to the rivers of Babylon, and [the Chaldeans] saw that [the Jews] were in their hands on [Chaldean] soil, they immediately made a stop. [The victors] turned to eat and drink, [the captives] to weep and mourn (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 31:35).
- Why did the people of Israel weep at the rivers of Babylon? R’ Yochanan said: The Euphrates killed more Jews than the wicked Nebuchadnezzar. In the Land [of Israel], the Jews drank only rainwater. When they were exiled to Babylon, they drank the [polluted] waters of the Euphrates and many of them died. Moreover, Nebuchadnezzar and all his officers sat in a boat [where] various musical instruments [were played for their enjoyment], while all the kings of Judah, in iron chains, walked naked on the banks of the river. The wicked Nebuchadnezzar raised his eyes and saw them. “Why are they walking erect, without a burden?” he asked his servants. “Have you no load to place on their necks?” (*Shocheh Tov* 137:3).
- Nebuchadnezzar ordered that Torah scrolls be sewn into sacks, filled with sand from the banks of the Euphrates river, and loaded on their necks to bend their backs (*Targum Eichah* 4:5).
- The inhabitants of Be’eri and of other provinces went out to greet [the captives]. Upon seeing that the captives were naked, they removed the clothing of their manservants and maidservants, whom they then presented as a tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, saying, “Perhaps you are a king who loves the naked.” [Thereupon] Nebuchadnezzar told them,

"Go and clothe the Children of Israel" (*Shocheh Tov* 137:3).

□ The ruler of Meishan, Nebuchadnezzar's son-in-law, sent to him: "From all of those captives that you brought, you have not sent us any captives to stand before us." [Nebuchadnezzar] wanted to send him some of the Jews; [but] Paltiel son of Benaiah said to him, "We, who are important, will stand before you; our servants will go to him." [He thus saved Israel from being the servants of servants (*Rashi*)] (*Kiddushin* 72b).

□ When Nebuchadnezzar descended from Jerusalem to Babylon with the people of Zedekiah's exile, the people of Jeconiah's exile went out to greet him. They were covered in garments [of mourning] underneath and dressed in white garments [in honor of Nebuchadnezzar] on top. They made motions of praising him with one hand and of mourning with the other (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 23).

ZEDEKIAH

□ When Jeconiah was exiled, King Nebuchadnezzar appointed [Zedekiah] over the kings of Edom, Moab, Amon, Tyre, and Zidon (*Eichah Rabbasi* 2:14).

□ Nebuchadnezzar crowned [Zedekiah] king of Jerusalem and said, "Swear to me that you will not rebel against me." Zedekiah replied, "I swear with my soul." Said Nebuchadnezzar, "I will accept an oath only on the Torah that was given on Mount Sinai." Nebuchadnezzar brought a Torah scroll and placed it next to Zedekiah's knees, and made him swear that he would not rebel. Yet before Nebuchadnezzar was back in his land, Zedekiah rebelled against him (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:23).

□ Zedekiah encountered Nebuchadnezzar when the latter was eating a live rabbit. "Swear to me," said Nebuchadnezzar, "that you will not reveal this matter and bring scorn upon me." [Zedekiah] swore. Eventually [Zedekiah] regretted [his oath] and asked a sage to annul it. It was annulled, and the matter became known. Nebuchadnezzar heard, and sent for the Sanhedrin and Zedekiah. "See what Zedekiah has done!" he said. "Did he

not swear in the Name of Heaven that he would not reveal it?" They replied, "He asked [for an annulment] of his oath." "Is it possible to ask and have an oath annulled?" asked [Nebuchadnezzar]. "Yes," they replied. "In the presence [of the one to whom he swore] or not?" asked [Nebuchadnezzar]. "In his presence," they replied. "What have you done?" he [demanded]. "Why did you not say so to Zedekiah [when he asked to have his oath to me annulled]?" *The elders of the daughter of Zion sat on the ground in silence (Lamentations 2:10) (Nedarim 65a).*

□ Zedekiah went to bring up a tribute. Nebuchadnezzar said to him, "Eat with me at noon." A meal was prepared, the likes of which was not eaten in the Land of Israel. Lightly roasted [almost raw] meat was brought before him. [Zedekiah] saw Nebuchadnezzar eating, his spittle dripping on his beard. Zedekiah looked at him in wonder and thought, "To this one the whole world is subjugated!" After eating, Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah swear that he would not leave him and go back to his land. [However,] he departed and came to the Land of Israel, scorning [Nebuchadnezzar] and ignoring the oath (*Tanchuma*, ed. Buber, *Va'eira* 18).

□ [Nebuchadnezzar] had Zedekiah swear by the corners of the inner altar [that he would not rebel]. What did that wicked one do to him [when he broke his promise]? He fed him hot barley bread and gave him wine to drink from his wine press so that his bowels would be loose [in order to disgrace him] (*Esther Rabbah* 3:1).

□ He [Nebuchadnezzar] wished to sit on the throne made by Solomon and to judge Zedekiah at Riblah, but a lion [from the throne] struck him and he fell. He then brought [the throne] to Babylon (*Aggadas Esther* 1:2).

□ That wicked one [Nebuchadnezzar] wished to use Zedekiah for sodomy, [whereupon] his uncircumcised organ was extended [to cause him public humiliation] (*Shabbos* 149b).

□ Nebuchadnezzar died during Zedekiah's lifetime (*Moed Katan* 28b).

DANIEL AND THE DREAM

□ Concerning Nebuchadnezzar it is written, *And his spirit was greatly disturbed* (Daniel 2:1). [The word ותתפעם indicates that] he both forgot his dream and [did not know] its interpretation. Others say he had a double dream. Nebuchadnezzar told [the astrologers], "I know that if I tell you the dream, you will make up something and say, 'This is [the] interpretation.' Therefore, tell me the dream" (ibid. v. 7). They answered him and said, "Tell us the dream" (ibid.). He said to them, "I say to you, 'Tell me,' and you say, 'Tell us.' Do you think you will converse with me until noon?" They said, "The king's request is difficult. This requires prophecy, but there is no longer the *Urim VeTumim*" [used by the high priest to receive messages from God]. "If the Temple was so wonderful," he demanded, "why did you advise me to destroy it?" Thereupon he became angry... (*Tanchuma Mikeitz 2*).

□ [Daniel] replied, "My lord, let the dream be upon your foes, and its interpretation on your enemies!" (Daniel 4:16). Who is Nebuchadnezzar's enemy [if not] Israel? Rather, Daniel looked heavenward and said, "My Lord and Sovereign, let the dream and its interpretation be fulfilled in Nebuchadnezzar, Your foe and enemy." Upon [hearing] the dream and its interpretation, Nebuchadnezzar asked, "Daniel, what do you advise me?" He replied, "Redeem your error with charity" (ibid. v. 24). Would it enter your mind that the righteous Daniel would give such advice to Nebuchadnezzar, the enemy of the Omnipresent? Rather, since he saw that the Jews in exile were suffering hunger, he gave this advice out of compassion for them. [Moreover,] he knew that eventually [Nebuchadnezzar] would get angry and change his mind. Forthwith, that wicked one opened up his treasuries and distributed [charity] to [the poor] for twelve months. After twelve months that wicked one forgot the dream. He was walking atop his palace [when] he heard the sound of a mob and the cries of the poor before his treasuries. "What is this turmoil that I hear?" he asked his servants. They replied, "The poor whom you exiled are asking for their stipends." Thereupon stinginess entered him. He said, "If not

for my treasures, how would I have built this whole state?" He immediately commanded [that the distribution to the poor] be stopped (*Tanchuma Mishpatim 4*).

□ As long as he was gracious to the poor, that dream was not fulfilled. As soon as he became stingy toward them, his appearance changed and he was driven from mankind (*Zohar 1:13b*).

□ Three were in the same counsel [to keep Daniel away when Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were thrown into the flaming kiln]: The Holy One, Blessed is He, Daniel, and Nebuchadnezzar... Nebuchadnezzar said, "Let Daniel go from here so that it will not be said, '[Nebuchadnezzar] burned his god [i.e., Daniel],' " for [Nebuchadnezzar] worshiped [Daniel] (*Sanhedrin 93a*).

THE IMAGE AND THE FIERY FURNACE

□ King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, its height sixty cubits, its width six cubits (Daniel 3:1). Since the width was not a third of the height, it could not stand. They kept putting it up and it kept falling until they brought all the silver and gold that they had taken out of Jerusalem and poured a base for its feet (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi 23*).

□ Nebuchadnezzar selected three from each nation [to bow down to the image]. From Israel [the] three [were] Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah 7:9*). Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Have you come to make my idols null and void? Does idolatry not come mainly from you? Is it not written... whose idols were from Jerusalem and from Samaria?" (*Isaiah 10:10*).

□ [Nebuchadnezzar said to them,] "Did Jeremiah not say: 'The nation and the kingdom that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I visit, said Hashem, with the sword, and with famine, and with pestilence' (Jeremiah 27:8)? Either you fulfill the beginning of the verse, or else I will fulfill the end." [Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah] answered the king: "O Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3:16), in taxes you are king over us, but in this thing that you order

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us to do [namely, to worship this idol], you are [just] *nebuchadnezzar* [a homiletical breakdown of his name to three words, *nevu, cad, netzar*: You] bark (*noveach*) like a dog, are bloated like a jug (*cad*), and chirp like a cricket (*tzartzur*)" (*Vayikra Rabbah* 33:6).

□ Then *Nebuchadnezzar* was filled with fury (*Daniel* 3:19). He said, "If the kiln is usually heated with one bundle, let it now be lit with seven; if it is usually lit with seven, let it now be lit with forty-nine" (*Shocheh Tov* 28:2).

□ Six miracles were wrought that day: the furnace rose [above the ground for all to see (*Rashi*)]; [parts of the furnace wall] broke [so all could see into it (*Rashi*)]; its plaster melted [and flowed out]; four kings and their men [who assisted *Nebuchadnezzar* in throwing *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah* into the furnace (*Rashi*)] were burnt; the image fell on its face; and *Ezekiel* resurrected the dead in the plain of *Dura* (*Sanhedrin* 92b).

□ When *Nebuchadnezzar* threw *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah* into the flaming kiln, the angel *Jurkami*, who is the heavenly prince of hail, stood before the Holy One, Blessed is He, and said, "Master of the World, I will descend and cool the furnace and save these righteous men." *Gabriel* said to him, "The might of the Holy One, Blessed is He, is not [best displayed] in this [manner], because you are the heavenly prince of hail, and everyone knows that water extinguishes fire. Rather, I, the heavenly prince of fire, will descend and cool [the furnace] within while heating it without. [Thus] I will perform a miracle within a miracle." The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "Descend!" (*Pesachim* 118a).

□ When *Nebuchadnezzar* saw *Gabriel* in the flaming kiln, all his limbs trembled. He said, "This is the angel whom I saw in the war of *Sennacherib*, [the angel] who burned his entire camp" (*Yalkut Shimon*, *Daniel* 1062).

□ At the time that *Nebuchadnezzar* cast *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah* into the fiery furnace, the Holy One, Blessed is He, said to *Ezekiel*, "Go resurrect the dead in the *Dura Valley* [those whom *Nebuchadnezzar* had ordered to be killed]." As

soon as he had resurrected them, the bones came and slapped that wicked one [*Nebuchadnezzar*] on his face. "What is the nature of these?" he asked. The reply came: "Their friend is resurrecting the dead in the *Dura Valley*. . ." (*Sanhedrin* 92b).

□ Let *Nebuchadnezzar* come and testify that *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah* did not bow down to an image (*Avodah Zarah* 3a).

□ *Hallel* was said by *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah* when they were attacked by the wicked *Nebuchadnezzar* (*Pesachim* 117a).

□ *Nebuchadnezzar* said: "The form of the fourth [image in the burning furnace] is like that of a son of God" (*Daniel* 3:25) [a reference to the angel *Gabriel*]. At that moment, an angel descended and slapped that wicked one [*Nebuchadnezzar*] on his mouth. "Correct your words," he said. "Does He have a son?" [Thereupon *Nebuchadnezzar*] said, "Blessed is the God of [*Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah*]" (*ibid.* v. 28) (*Yerushalmi Shabbos* 6:9).

□ *Nebuchadnezzar* tried to convince *Daniel* [to bow down to the image]. "Come and see what it is able to do," he said, "and you will bow down before it willingly." The wicked [*Nebuchadnezzar*] placed the high priest's frontlet (צִיץ) in the mouth [of the image]. Then he assembled all the musicians to sing praises before it, [following which the image] said, "I am Hashem your God." *Daniel* asked, "Will you not permit me to go up and kiss this image on its mouth?" "Why on its mouth?" asked [*Nebuchadnezzar*]. "Because it speaks well," answered [*Daniel*]. Permission was granted. [*Daniel*] climbed up and said to the frontlet, "I am a human being, a messenger of the Holy One, Blessed is He. Take heed that the Name of Heaven be not desecrated through you." Then he kissed [the image] and took the [frontlet] from its mouth. After [*Daniel*] had descended, all the musicians again assembled and sang praises before [the image]. This time, however, [the image] did nothing. At that moment, the wind overturned the image. Upon seeing this, the nations of the world smashed their idols and made them into bells, which they hung about the necks of their dogs and donkeys (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 7:9).

GOOD DEEDS

- When King Nebuchadnezzar witnessed the miraculous salvation of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah from the fiery inferno, he was so impressed that he was prepared to recite before God songs and praises of more grandeur and beauty than those found in the entire *Book of Psalms*. But an angel descended and struck him on the mouth (*Sanhedrin* 92b, *Rashi*).
- All that David expressed in the *Book of Psalms*, that wicked one included in a single verse: *I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and glorify the King of Heaven, all of Whose works are truth; His path is justice, and those who walk proudly He is able to humble* (*Daniel* 4:34) (*Shocheh Tov* 5:10).
- He opened his treasuries and supported [the poor of] Israel for twelve months (*Shemos Rabbah* 30:24).

BANISHMENT AND DEATH

- Said Nebuchadnezzar, "The people of the world are not worthy of having me dwell among them. *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High*" (*Isaiah* 14:14). The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "You are not worthy of dwelling among them. *You will be driven from mankind*" (*Daniel* 4:29) (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 9:24).
- What did the Holy One, Blessed is He, do to him? He banished him to the desert while he was still king, and fed him grass like the cattle (*Shemos Rabbah* 8:2).
- Throughout the seven years of Nebuchadnezzar's [madness], Evil-merodach served as king in his place. When [Nebuchadnezzar] returned, [Evil-merodach] was put in jail — and whoever was put in jail in [Nebuchadnezzar's] days never left. After [Nebuchadnezzar] died, the [people] wished to crown Evil-merodach [as permanent king]. "I will not listen to you" he said. "The first time I listened to you, [Nebuchadnezzar] put me in jail. [This time] he will kill me." [Evil-merodach] did not believe them [that Nebuchadnezzar had died] until they dragged [Nebuchadnezzar's body] and threw it

before him, and each of [Nebuchadnezzar's] enemies came and pierced it with a sword (*Vayikra Rabbah* 18:2).

□ Nebuchadnezzar gathered all the wealth of the world, and he did not want another to enjoy his wealth. When he was about to die, he said, "Shall I leave all this money to [my son] Evil?" He ordered big copper boats built, filled them with money, buried them [in the earth], and diverted the Euphrates so that it covered them. The day Cyrus decreed that the Temple be rebuilt, the Holy One, Blessed is He, revealed them [to him] (*Esther Rabbah* 2:1).

□ When that wicked one descended to *Gehinnom*, all those who had [already] descended to *Gehinnom* were agitated, [for they] said, "Perhaps he has come to rule over us!" (*Shabbos* 149b).

□ See also **Daniel; Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; Evil-merodach**

נְבוֹת — Naboth (*I Kings* 21:1)

- All the names [of lordship] mentioned in connection with Naboth are sacred (*Shavuot* 35b).
- "Behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, having gone there to inherit it" (*I Kings* 21:18). [Since Naboth] was [Ahab's] cousin, [Ahab] was the rightful heir [to Naboth's vineyard after] he had killed [Naboth] and his sons (*Sanhedrin* 48b).
- Naboth had a beautiful voice. He would go up to Jerusalem [for the festival pilgrimages], and all of Israel would assemble to hear his voice. Once [when] he did not go, unscrupulous people testified against him [that he cursed the king], and he perished. What brought it upon him? That he did not make the festival pilgrimage to Jerusalem to honor the Holy One, Blessed is He (*Yalkut Shimoni, Melachim* 221).
- *The spirit went forth. . . and said, "I will entice him"* (*I Kings* 22:21). This was the spirit of Naboth [which caused the entrapment and death of Ahab, in retaliation for the latter having killed Naboth] (*Shabbos* 149b).

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NOBAH / נֹבַח

נֹבַח – Nobah

(Numbers 32:42)

□ Nobah was one of those born in Egypt. He died after the death of our teacher Moses (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 9).

□ When he captured Kenath, he renamed it Nobah so that his name would be remembered, for he had no children (*Midrash Aggadah, Bamidbar* 32:38).

□ He called it [the city of Kenath] Nobah (Numbers 32:42). That name did not endure (*Ruth Rabbah* 5:5).

נֶבֶט – Nebat

[Father of Jeroboam, who rebelled against Solomon] (*I Kings* 11:26)

□ Nebat, Michah, and Sheba son of Bichri are the same person. [He was called] Nebat because he envisioned (נִבֵּט) but did not see [he did not interpret his vision properly; see below], Micah (מִיכָה) because he had been crushed (נִתְמַכֵּךְ) by a building [see **Micah**]. His [real] name was Sheba son of Bichri (*Sanhedrin* 101b).

□ Nebat saw fire emerging from his body. He thought [it was a sign] that he would become king. It was not so. Rather, Jeroboam, who issued from him [became king] (*ibid.*).

נָבָל – Nabal

[First husband of Abigail] (*I Samuel* (25:3)

□ Hashem smote Nabal so that he died (*ibid.* v. 38). What brought it upon him? That he was wanting in good deeds. Nabal is Laban (לָבָן) – the letters [of both names] are the same [they both shared the same deceitful traits]. He even denied the Holy One, Blessed is He, as it is written, *Nabal said in his heart, "There is no God!"* (*Psalms* 14:1). He had forbidden relations and entertained thoughts of idolatry (*Shocheh Tov* 53:1).

□ He sought power and respected no one but himself (*Otzar HaMidrashim* 247).

□ Nabal was of the family of Caleb. Said Nabal, "There is no one in Israel of such a distinguished family as I" (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:3).

□ It came to pass about ten days after, that Hashem smote Nabal (*I Samuel* 25:38). Those ten days

corresponded to the meal that Nabal had given to David's ten men (*Rosh Hashanah* 18a).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, suspended his punishment for ten days, like the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, so that he would repent. But he did not (*Yerushalmi Bikkurim* 2:1; see also *Rosh Hashanah* 18a).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, suspended his punishment during the seven days of mourning for Samuel, so that the mourning for [Nabal] would not be mixed with the mourning for the righteous [Samuel]. He lived another three days and then died in a plague (*Yerushalmi Bikkurim* 2:1).

נָדָב וַאֲבִיהוּ – Nadab and Abihu

[Sons of Aaron]

(*Exodus* 6:23)

□ Nadab and Abihu were handsome youths (*Targum Yonasan, Shemos* 24:11).

□ They did not have wives [because] they were arrogant. Many women remained unmarried, waiting for them, [but] they said, "Our father's brother [Moses] is king, our mother's brother [Nahshon] is prince [of his Tribe], our father [Aaron] is high priest, and we are assistant high priests. What women are suitable for us?" (*Vayikra Rabbah* 20:10).

□ They raised a disturbance between the congregation of Israel and the Holy One, Blessed is He, (*Zohar* 3:38b).

□ Moses and Aaron were going their way, and Nadab and Abihu were walking behind them. Said Nadab to Abihu, "When will these two old men die, and you and I lead the generation?" The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to them, "Let us see who will bury whom" (*Sanhedrin* 52a).

□ At Mount Sinai they had already received their death warrant. *They beheld God, and they ate and drank* (*Exodus* 24:11); they feasted their eyes on the *Shechinah* like a person who looks at his friend while eating and drinking. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "If I kill them now, I will be disturbing the joy of My children" (*Vayikra Rabbah* 20:10).

□ Upon the nobles of the children of Israel He did not set forth His hand (*Exodus* 24:11). Instead, He

waited for them until the eighth day [of the dedication of the Tabernacle] (*Targum Yonasan*).

□ They [Nadab and Abihu] had no transgression other than this. Wherever their death is mentioned, their sin is mentioned, so that people should not say, "They had hidden misdeeds for which they died" (*Vayikra Rabbah* 20:8).

□ When the sons of Aaron saw that all the sacrifices had been offered and everything had been done, yet the *Shechinah* still did not descend to Israel, Nadab said to Abihu, "Does anyone cook without fire?" Thereupon they brought an alien fire (*Leviticus* 10:1) from the stove (*Sifra Shemini* 1).

□ Aaron's sons did not die until they had rendered a halachic decision in the presence of their teacher Moses [concerning the use of a man-made fire on the altar] (*Eiruvim* 63a).

□ Aaron's sons died because of four things: entering the Holy of Holies, offering a sacrifice that they had not been commanded [to offer], bringing an alien fire, and failing to consult each other (*Vayikra Rabbah* 20:8).

□ Two threads of fire emerged from the Holy of Holies and split into four. Two entered the nostrils of this one [Nadab] and two entered the nostrils of that one [Abihu and] burned the soul, [killing them] while leaving the body intact (*Sanhedrin* 52a).

□ [Their cousins] caught their garments with iron hooks, took them out [of the Holy of Holies], and buried them outside the camp (*Targum Yonasan*, *Vayikra* 10:5).

□ "[The Tabernacle] will be sanctified by My glory" (*Exodus* 29:43). The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Moses this, but he did not understand until Aaron's sons died, [whereupon] he said, "Aaron my brother, your sons died only to sanctify the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He" (*Zevachim* 115b).

□ The deaths of Nadab and Abihu were recorded in a few places [in the Torah] to teach that there was sadness in the presence of Hashem about them, for Aaron's sons were beloved [by God] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 2:23).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Moses, "Tell your brother Aaron: 'I did a great kindness for you

and accorded you great honor when your sons were burned. I placed them within all the partitions, even within [that] of Moses your brother [for if they had remained alive, they would have been punished with leprosy and would have been required to live outside the camp of Israel]'" (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 48:2).

נוֹעֲדִיָּה – Noadiah (*Nehemiah* 6:14)

□ Shemaiah son of Daliah advised Nehemiah to sleep in the Temple. His name was therefore changed to Noadiah, as in *Who congregate (noadim) against Hashem (Numbers 16:11:)* (*Aggadas Esther* 5:29).

נֹחַ – Noah (*Genesis* 5:29)

PERSONALITY / RIGHTEOUSNESS / THE ARK / AFTER THE FLOOD / SACRIFICES / INTOXICATION

PERSONALITY

□ There were ten generations from Adam to Noah (*Avos* 5:2).

□ Methuselah, who was a great scholar, warned [Noah's] father not to call [Noah] by his [correct] name, lest the people of the Flood kill him through sorcery [which is effective only if the correct name is used]. When he was born, [Methuselah] named him Noah, but to [the child's] father [Lamech] he said, "Call him Menahem [publicly], meaning *this one will comfort us*" (*Genesis* 5:29) (*Yalkut Shimon, Bereishis* 42).

□ After Adam sinned, [everything in the world] rebelled against him; the cow and the furrow did not obey the plow. When Noah arose, they "rested" [from their rebellion] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 25:2).

□ Until Noah appeared, the water rose and flooded the generation of Enosh in their graves. When Noah arose, it rested (*ibid.*).

□ Before Noah was born, they did not reap what they had sown; they would sow wheat and reap thorns and thistles. When Noah was born, the world returned to a state of natural functioning, and they reaped what they had sown. Moreover, until Noah was born, they had labored by hand. When

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Noah was born, he fashioned tools for plowing and working (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 11).

□ All his contemporaries begot at the age of fifty, sixty, or seventy, but he [begot] at the age of five hundred. The Holy One, Blessed is He, withheld children from him so that he would not have a son one hundred years old [the age at which one was liable to Divine punishment] at the [time] of the Flood and who would perish with the rest of the generation, and so that he would not beget abundant offspring who would perish [in] the Flood (*Shochoer Tov* 1:12).

□ He was a scholar who understood the languages of all creatures (*Zohar Chadash* 22b).

□ Noah compiled a book of cures that he had heard from the angel Raphael (*Beis HaMidrash* 3:156).

□ He said to [the people of his generation], "Fools! You forsake Him whose voice breaks cedars, and then you bow down to dry wood" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 31:3).

□ The deeds of Noah's wife were equal to Noah's (*Mishlei Rabbasi* 30).

□ Noah was lacking in [complete] faith. If the water had not reached his ankles, he would not have entered the Ark (*Bereishis Rabbah* 32:6).

□ Noah survived not because he was worthy, but because the Holy One, Blessed is He, foresaw that Moses would eventually issue from him (*ibid.* 26:6).

□ Although Noah was righteous, he was not worthy of having the Holy One, Blessed is He, protect the world in his merit (*Zohar* 1:68a).

□ Noah was afraid that he would die with the wicked (*ibid.*).

□ Come and see the difference between Moses and others: When the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Moses, "Now let Me alone. . . that I may consume them, and I will make of you a great nation" (*Exodus* 32:10), Moses said, "Shall I abandon Israel's cause for my personal benefit?" Moses besought Hashem (*ibid.* v. 11). But when the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Noah that He would save him in the Ark, [Noah] did not pray for the [people of the] world, and they perished (*Zohar* 1:67b).

□ Noah lived ten years after the Dispersion (*הפלגה*) (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 1).

RIGHTEOUSNESS

□ Three righteous men were the foundation of the world: Adam, Noah, and Abraham (*Shochoer Tov* 34:1).

□ Noah was a righteous man, perfect in his generations (*Genesis* 6:9). In his generations [he was considered righteous], but he would not [have been considered righteous] in other generations. Reish Lakish said: In his generations [he was righteous], and surely [he would have been] in other generations (*Sanhedrin* 108a).

□ These are the offspring of Noah (*Genesis* 6:9). [His contemporaries] did not want to produce offspring, but he did (*Bereishis Rabbah* 30:2).

□ [From the beginning] Noah was designated for a miracle (*ibid.* 30:8).

□ The righteous Noah rebuked [the generation of the Flood with] harsh words, but they scoffed at him (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ Noah was born circumcised (*Shochoer Tov* 9:7).

□ Praiseworthy is the man . . . (*Psalms* 1:1) refers to Noah. He walked not in the counsel of the wicked (*ibid.*) for three generations: [those] of Enosh, the Flood, and the Dispersion (*הפלגה*). But his desire is in the Torah of Hashem (*ibid.* v. 2) refers to the seven [Noahide] precepts. And in His Torah he meditates (*ibid.*) [means that] he deduced one thing from another (*Shochoer Tov* 1:12).

□ [Noah did mighty acts of kindness, for he] supported and sustained his father and his father's father, and all his forefathers who were alive at that time (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* 16).

□ Noah saw that the deeds of mankind were corrupt, [so] he hid himself in order not to be caught up in their ways, and he engaged in the service of God. He studied the books of Adam and Enoch, from which he learned how to serve God. How else could Noah have known to offer a sacrifice to his Creator? (*Zohar* 1:58).

□ Noah was commanded [not to eat] a limb from a living animal (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 12:6).

□ Noah fulfilled what is written in the Torah: *Noah built an altar to Hashem and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings* (*Genesis* 8:20) (*Vayikra Rabbah* 2:10).

THE ARK

□ During the 120 years [preceding the Flood], Noah planted cedars and cut them down. "What is this for?" he was asked. "The Sovereign of the Universe has said that He will bring a flood upon the world," he replied. "If He brings a flood," they said, "He will bring it only on your house." When Methuselah [Noah's grandfather] died, they said to him, "See, the deluge has come only on your house." They mocked him, calling him "despised old man" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 30:7).

□ "This is how you should make [the Ark]" (*Genesis* 6:15). The Holy One, Blessed is He, showed Noah [so to speak] with his finger: "Thus and so shall you make it" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Noach* 53).

□ Noah spent fifty years building the Ark. A great secret was revealed to him so that he knew which trees needed to be in the earth 120 years, and these he planted at the beginning of the 120 years; which cedar attains a height of fifty cubits... (*Batei Midrashos* 2:92).

□ In the upper story Noah made a window through which one could see from one end of the world to the other (*Yelamdeinu; Batei Midrashos* 1:149).

□ "Go to Pishon and take from there precious pearls, and put them in the Ark for illumination" (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 6:15).

□ He took precious stones and pearls into the Ark. When they were dim he knew it was day, and when they shone he knew it was night (*Yerushalmi Pesachim* 1:1).

□ Marital relations were forbidden in the Ark (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ Noah saw the Angel of Death approaching him, so he entered the Ark to hide (*Zohar* 1:68b).

□ "Of every clean animal take unto you seven pairs" (*Genesis* 7:2) — from those with which no sin had been committed [i.e., they had not mated with a different species (*Rashi*)]. He had them pass before the Ark. Those that the Ark accepted he knew were untainted (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ He took in pressed figs, vines for the elephants, cistus shrubs for the deer, glass beads for the ostriches, and shoots for future planting (*Bereishis Rabbah* 31:13).

□ From all that lives (*Genesis* 6:19). Even spirits entered the Ark with Noah (*Bereishis Rabbah* 31:13).

□ Hashem shut [the Ark] on his behalf (*Genesis* 7:16). [The people] sought to overturn the Ark, and [God] surrounded it with lions so that they would not be able to touch it (*Bereishis Rabbah* 32:8).

□ Throughout those twelve months, Noah and his sons did not sleep, for they had to feed the cattle, beasts, and birds. Some animals eat at two hours into the night, some at three. Once Noah was late feeding the lion. It struck him, and he came away limping (*Tanchuma Noach* 9).

□ Throughout those twelve months, Noah trod on snakes and scorpions, but they did not harm him (*Shochoer Tov* 91:8).

□ The mouse emerged from [its] hole, went to Noah, and said to him, "Do a kindness for me and sew my cheek, for my enemy the cat ripped it." He brought hair from a pig's tail and sewed it up (*Aleph Beis d'Ben Sira; Otzar HaMidrashim* 48).

□ Noah did not know what the chameleon eats. Once [when] he was sitting and cutting pomegranates, a worm fell out and [the chameleon] ate it. From then on he would gather thistles, and when they became wormy, [the chameleon] would eat them (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ Once Noah found a bird called Urshina asleep in the hold of the Ark. "Do you not need food?" he asked it. "I saw you were busy," it replied, "and I thought I would not trouble you." Said Noah, "May it be His will that you should never die" (*ibid.*).

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- For twelve months the Ark was in the water like a ship in the sea (*Shocher Tov* 1:12).
- *Only Noah survived* (*Genesis* 7:23). Even he coughed up blood because of the cold (*Bereishis Rabbah* 32:11).
- [Everyone perished] except for Og king of Bashan, who sat on a plank beneath the ladder of the Ark and swore to Noah and his sons that he would be their slave forever. Noah made an aperture in the Ark, [through which] he would put out food daily. In this way [Og] survived (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 23).

AFTER THE FLOOD

- As long as the world was being judged, [God's] name is not mentioned. As soon as the judgment was over, it is written, *God remembered Noah* (*Genesis* 8:1) (*Zohar* 1:69b).
- When Noah was in the Ark, he prayed, "Release my soul from confinement" (*Psalms* 142:8). "Noah," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "it has been decreed that you will not go forth from this confinement until twelve months have passed" (*Yelamdeinu; Yalkut HaMechiri, Yeshayahu* 49:9).
- *He sent out a raven* (*Genesis* 8:7). "Master of the World," said Noah, "I know that You are merciful, but You did not have mercy on Your children, [like the raven], who is cruel to its young." He sent out the raven as a hint (*Zohar Chadash* 22b).
- *He sent out a raven* (*Genesis* 8:7). The raven gave Noah a devastating retort: "Your Master [God] hates me and you hate me. Your Master hated me, for from the clean creatures He took seven [of each species into the Ark], but from the unclean, [of which I am included, only] two. You hate me, for you leave the species of seven and take a species of two [i.e., you are sending me out of the Ark, when I am one of only two]. Should the angel of heat or cold attack me, will the world not be short of one species? Or perhaps you desire my mate!" "Wicked one!" said [Noah. "Even my wife,] who is [ordinarily] permitted to me, is [now] forbidden to me [for marital relations were forbidden in the Ark]. How much more so [your mate], which is [always] forbidden to me!" (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ *He sent out a dove from him* (*Genesis* 8:8). The clean birds lived together with the righteous [i.e., in the same part of the Ark as Noah and his family] (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ He [Noah] was not willing to go forth from the Ark, saying, "Shall I go out and procreate to see my seed perish?" until the Holy One, Blessed is He, swore to him that he would not bring [another] flood to the world (*Yalkut Shimoni, Noach* 59).

□ When he left the Ark and saw the world desolate, he began to weep. "Master of the World," he said, "You are called All Merciful; You should have shown compassion towards Your handiwork." "Foolish shepherd!" replied the Holy One, Blessed is He. "Now you say this? Why did you not say it when I told you, 'I am about to bring the floodwaters' (*Genesis* 6:17)? I told you, so that you would pray for mercy for the world. But as soon as you heard that you would be spared, you were complacent. And now you open your mouth?" When he heard this, Noah offered sacrifices (*Zohar* 1:254b).

□ It was proper for [Pharaoh] to tell [Moses], "Show a wonder" (*Exodus* 7:9), for Noah did likewise. After the Holy One, Blessed is He, had wrought all the miracles for him in the Ark and taken him out of it and told him, "Never again shall there be a flood" (*Genesis* 9:11), Noah asked for a sign. Then the Holy One, Blessed is He, told him, "I have set My bow in the cloud" (*ibid.* v. 13) (*Shemos Rabbah* 9:1).

□ After the Flood, he procreated and populated the whole world (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 5:32).

SACRIFICES

□ Adam was the world's firstborn. When he offered his sacrifice, he wore the garments of the high priesthood, and [thereafter] the firstborn used them [in the service of God]. When Adam died, they passed to Seth. From Seth they passed to Methuselah, and from Methuselah to Noah, [who] offered a sacrifice. When Noah died, they passed to Shem (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 4:8).

□ When Noah went out of the Ark, a lion hit him, injuring him so that he was not fit to offer sacrifices.

His son Shem sacrificed in his place (*Bereishis Rabbah* 30:6).

□ He offered burnt offerings on the altar (*Genesis* 8:20), [for] he thought, "Perhaps all my merits have been used up in my being saved [from the Flood] and I have none left." Forthwith, Noah built an altar (*ibid.*). That was the altar on which Adam had sacrificed. The wicked had destroyed it, and Noah now rebuilt it (*Zohar* 1:70a).

□ He offered burnt offerings on the altar (*Genesis* 8:20) — on the great altar in Jerusalem (*Bereishis Rabbah* 34:9).

□ Noah offered those sacrifices to atone for the curse of the earth (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 14:12).

□ The ox offered by Adam, the bullock offered by Noah, and the ram [offered by] Abraham all had their horns before their hooves [i.e., they were created fully grown on the twilight of the eve of the Sabbath and their heads were created before their legs, so that they had horns before hooves (*Binyan Yehoshua*)] (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 1:8).

INTOXICATION

□ Noah, man of the earth (*Genesis* 9:20). He devoted himself heart and soul to redeeming it from the curse (*Zohar Chadash* 22b).

□ Noah was not careful to serve the Holy One, Blessed is He. Instead, he planted a vineyard (*Shocheh Tov* 118:11).

□ He planted a vineyard (*Genesis* 9:20). Whence did he get it? He had taken vines and young shoots into the Ark with him (*Bereishis Rabbah* 36:2).

□ He found a vine that the river had brought from the Garden of Eden, and he planted it. It flourished in a day; its grapes ripened and he pressed them (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 9:20).

□ What did the Satan do? He slaughtered a sheep, a lion, a pig, and a monkey beneath the vine, and the vineyard was watered by their blood. [This was meant as a sign that before drinking wine, man is tame as a sheep; once drunk he becomes like a monkey] (*Tanchuma Noah* 13).

□ "Noah," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "should you not have learned from Adam, whose

[downfall] was caused by wine?" [For] the tree of which Adam ate was a vine (*Sanhedrin* 70a).

□ Canaan entered and saw Noah's nakedness. He castrated him, and then he went out and told his brethren. Ham entered and saw and did not take heed of the precept of honoring [one's father]. He told his two brothers outside to deride his father, [for which they] rebuked him (*Yalkut Shimoni, Noah* 61).

□ What his small son had done to him (*Genesis* 9:24). Rav and Shmuel [commented on this verse]. One said he castrated him; the other said he indulged his perverted lust on him (*Sanhedrin* 70a).

□ Noah was distressed in the Ark because he did not have a young son to attend to him. "When I go out," he said, "I will beget a young son who will attend to me." When Ham did that deed to him, [Noah] said, "Because you prevented me from begetting a young son to serve me [thereby forcing your brothers to serve me], you will be a slave to your brothers [i.e., a slave to slaves]" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 36:7).

נְחֻם — Nahum

[Prophet]

(*Nahum* 1:1)

□ Joel, Nahum, and Habakkuk prophesied in the days of Manasseh. But because Manasseh was not righteous, their names were not linked with his [i.e., Scripture does not state that they prophesied during his time] (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 20).

נְחֹר — Nahor

[Brother of Abraham]

(*Genesis* 11:27)

□ Abraham was a year older than Nahor, who in turn was a year older than Haran (*Sanhedrin* 69b).

□ Nahor died when Isaac was forty years old (*Sefer HaYashar, Chayei Sarah*).

נְחֵמְיָהוּ — Nehemiah

[Prophet]

(*Nehemiah* 1:1)

□ [From] Scripture [one sees] that he was considered as important as the Messiah (*Midrash HaGadol, Leviticus* 320).

□ He served the king [Artaxerxes] his drinks, because he was of royal descent and comely

appearance (*Midrash Aseres Melachim, Beis Eiked HaAggados* 1:4).

□ Why was he called *Hatirshasa* (התרשתא) (*Ezra* 2:63, *Nehemiah* 8:9)? Because [the Sages] permitted him to drink (התיר שתו) the wine [that he served to the king. Although the Sages prohibited the drinking of such wine, they removed this restriction in the case of Nehemiah, whose office as royal butler to Darius required that he taste the wine prior to placing it before the king] (*Yerushalmi Kiddushin* 4:1).

□ [He was called] Zerubabel (זרובבל) because he was conceived in Babylon (נזרע בבבל). His [real] name was Nehemiah son of Hachaliah (*Sanhedrin* 38a).

□ He spent twelve years in the Land of Israel fixing the walls [of Jerusalem] and returning the people of Israel, each one to his city and to his inheritance (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 30).

□ All of *Ezra* was composed by Nehemiah son of Hachaliah. Why, then, does the Book not carry his name? Because he sought credit for himself, saying, "Remember to me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people" (*Nehemiah* 5:19). R' Yosef said: Because he recounted the misdeeds of those who preceded him (*ibid.* v. 15) [which included] Daniel, who was greater than he (*Sanhedrin* 93b).

□ Ezra wrote the genealogy of *Chronicles* until [he reached] himself. Who completed it? Nehemiah son of Hachaliah (*Bava Basra* 15a).

□ What Hanani told Nehemiah in [the month of] Kislev, Nehemiah told the king in Nissan (*Rosh Hashanah* 3b).

□ *From the wicked their light is withheld* (*Job* 38:15). Why is the [letter] ע of רשעים, wicked, suspended [i.e., written above the line? To teach] that when a person becomes disliked (רש) on the earth [due to his wickedness], he becomes disliked in heaven [as well and loses the "light" awaiting him in the World to Come (*Maharsha*)]. If so, why is [the letter ע] written at all? Out of respect for Nehemiah son of Hachaliah [who made many enemies among the gentiles and their Jewish allies

because he built the Temple, but who was righteous; therefore this rule did not apply to him] (*Sanhedrin* 103b).

□ In the days of Nehemiah son of Hachaliah this Mishnah [concerning *muktzah* on the Sabbath] was [first] taught [for some people at that time were acting improperly on the Sabbath (*Rashi*)] (*Shabbos* 123b).

□ Nehemiah son of Hachaliah died on the tenth of Teves (end of *Megillas Ta'anis*).

נחש אבי אביגיל – Nahash father of Abigail
(*II Samuel* 17:25)

□ See Jesse

נחש מלך עמון – Nahash king of Amon
(*I Samuel* 11:1)

□ "On this condition will I make [a treaty] with you: that all your right eyes be put out" (*ibid.* v. 2). He said to [the people of Jabesh-gilead], "Bring me the Torah scroll, and I will erase from it [the verse] *An Amonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of Hashem* (*Deuteronomy* 23:4). On this condition will I make a treaty with you" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shmuel* 111).

□ When David was fleeing from Saul, he brought his father, mother, and brothers to the king of Moab, whom he trusted. But the king of Moab slew them, and none of [the family] escaped except for one of David's brothers, who fled to Nahash king of Amon. The king of Moab sent for him, but [Nahash] did not agree to hand him over. That is the kindness that Nahash showed David (see *II Samuel* 10:2) (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 14:1).

נחשון – Nahshon son of Aminadab
(*Exodus* 6:23)

□ Nahshon was [considered] a king [since he was head of the Tribe of Judah] (*Sifri Naso* 47).

□ He loved peace and pursued it (*Midrash HaGadol, Shemos* 6:23).

□ Nahshon son of Aminadab was the first to go down into the Sea [of Reeds] (*Sotah* 37a).

□ Why was he called Nahshon? Because he was the first to go down into the surf (נחשול) [of the Red

Sea]. The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Moses, "He who sanctified My Name in the sea will be the first to bring his offering [in the dedication of the altar]" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:7).

□ This was the offering of Nahshon son of Aminadab (*Numbers* 7:17). He brought it from his personal wealth; he did not elicit donations for [the offering] from his Tribe (*Sifri Naso* 48).

□ In connection with all the [other] princes, the word *prince* (נָשִׂיא) is written (*Numbers* 7). [Only] Nahshon, who sacrificed first, is not called a prince, so that if he would act haughtily over the other princes and say, "I am their king for I have brought my offering first," they could retort, "You are only a commoner, for everyone else is called *prince*, but you are not" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:17).

□ Elimelech, Salmon, Ploni Almoni, and Naomi's father were all descendants of Nahshon son of Aminadab (*Bava Basra* 91a).

□ He died in the second year from the exodus [from Egypt] (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 12).

נְהֻשְׁתָּא בַת אֵלְנָתָן – Nehushta daughter of Elnathan

[Mother of Jehoiachin, king of Judah]

(*II Kings* 24:8)

□ The doors of Nehushta daughter of Elnathan were open wide (*Yalkut Shimoni, Koheles* 989).

נִמְרֹד – Nimrod

[Great-grandson of Noah] (*Genesis* 10:8)

□ He had three names – Cush, Nimrod, and Amraphel: Cush, for he was surely a Cushite [i.e., a son of Cush, as *Genesis* 10:8 states (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 42:4).

□ Nimrod recognized his Master and willfully rebelled (*מרד*) against him (*Sifra Bechukosai* 2).

□ He was called Nimrod for he stirred up the whole world to rebel (*המרוד*) against [God's] sovereignty; Amraphel, for he ordered that the Patriarch Abraham be cast (*אמר והפילו*) into the fiery furnace (*Eiruvin* 53a).

□ He was one of the ten kings who ruled over the entire world (*Targum Sheini* 1).

□ He set himself up as a deity and designated a place for his worship (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 11:28).

□ The wicked one does work in vain (*Proverbs* 11:18) refers to Nimrod (*Bereishis Rabbah* 44:2).

□ "I gave given greatness to Nimrod, yet he said, 'Let us build us a city and a tower with its top in the heavens'" (*Genesis* 11:4) (*Chullin* 89a).

□ Terah took Abram and handed him over to Nimrod. Nimrod said to Abram, "Let us bow down to fire." "If so," said Abram, "shall we bow down to water, which extinguishes fire?" "Let us bow down to water," Nimrod responded. "If so," said Abram, "shall we bow down to the clouds, which carry water?" "Let us bow down to the clouds," Nimrod responded. "If so," said Abram, "shall we bow down to the wind, which scatters the clouds?" "Let us bow down to the wind," responded Nimrod. "And shall we bow down to man, who contains the wind?" asked Abram. Said Nimrod, "Why do you speak so much? I bow down only to fire. Now I shall throw you into it, and let the God to whom you bow come and save you." Abraham descended into the fiery furnace and was saved (*Bereishis Rabbah* 38:13).

□ Let Nimrod come and testify that Abraham did not worship idols (*Avodah Zarah* 3a).

□ Og [son of Nimrod] is Eliezer. Nimrod gave him to Abraham (*Sofrim* 21:9).

□ The garment that the Holy One, Blessed is He, made for Adam and his wife was inherited by Nimrod. When he wore it, all the cattle, beasts, and birds would come and crouch before him. Thinking it was because of his strength, the people proclaimed him their king (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 24).

□ Esau's coveted garments (*Genesis* 27:15) [were those] which he had coveted from Nimrod. He had slain [Nimrod] and taken them (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65:16).

□ Esau slew Nimrod and his son Enoch (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 25:27).

□ Pharaoh was Nimrod's son (*ibid.* 16:15).

נַעֲמָה – Naamah

(Genesis 4:22)

□ Naamah was Noah's wife. She was called Naamah [lit., *pleasant*] because her deeds were pleasant. [Others] said: [The Naamah of Genesis 4:22] is a different Naamah, who was so called because she sang to the accompaniment of the timbrel in honor of idols (*Bereishis Rabbah* 23:3).

□ She was a righteous woman whose deeds were pleasant and who understood the working of iron, like her brother Tubal-cain. She was called [Naamah, meaning *lovely*] because of her beauty. From her issued *the daughters of man who were good* (Genesis 6:2), i.e., good-looking (*Zohar Chadash* 19b).

□ She was the originator of songs and music (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 4:22).

□ Because of her beauty, *the sons of the rulers* (Genesis 6:2), Uzza and Azazel, went astray after her. She bore them children, from whom demons and spirits proliferated in the world (*Zohar* 1:19b).

□ The mother of Ashmedai, king of the demons, was named Naamah (*Zohar Chadash* 19b).

נַעֲמָה הָעֲמֹנִית – Naamah the Amonitess

[Mother of Rehoboam, king of Judah]

(*I Kings* 14:21)

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Abraham, "I have two good shoots to engraft in you: Ruth the Moabitess and Naamah the Amonitess [for from them will issue kings and prophets]" (*Rashi*) (*Yevamos* 63a).

□ For the sake of two fine individuals – Ruth the Moabitess and Naamah the Amonitess – the Holy One, Blessed is He, spared two large nations [Moab and Amon] (*Bava Kamma* 38b).

□ *An Amonite and a Moabite shall not enter the congregation of Hashem* (*Deuteronomy* 23:4) – an Amonite but not an Amonitess, a Moabite but not a Moabitess. David said before the Holy One, Blessed is He, "You have released my bonds" (*Psalms* 116:16). You have removed the two prohibitions that restricted me [because of two women in my family]: Ruth the Moabitess and Naamah the Amonitess" (*Yevamos* 77a).

נַעֲמִי – Naomi

[Wife of Elimelech; mother-in-law of Ruth]

(*Ruth* 1:2)

□ The beauty of her face put gold to shame (*Midrash Ruth*, ed. Buber, 49).

□ Ploni Almoni and Naomi's father were all the descendants of Nahshon son of Aminadab (*Bava Basra* 91a).

□ *Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law: "Go return"* (*Ruth* 1:8). Why did she send them away? So that she would not be embarrassed [by returning to the Land of Israel with Moabite daughters-in-law] because the Israelites did not mix with the Moabites, and they were distinguished by their clothing (*Yalkut Shimoni, Ruth* 601).

□ *Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave"* (*Ruth* 1:16). In any case I intend to convert, but it is better for my conversion to be at your hand than at another's." When Naomi heard this, she began to teach her the laws of proselytes. "My daughter," she said, "the daughters of Israel do not go to theaters." [Ruth] replied, "Wherever you go, I will go" (*ibid.*). [Naomi] said to her, "The Jews do not dwell in homes without *mezuzos*." [Ruth] replied, "Wherever you dwell, I will dwell" (*ibid.*). In addition, she said "Your nation is my nation" (*ibid.*), which refers to the [acceptance of] punishments and prohibitions; "Your God is my God" (*ibid.*), which refers to the [acceptance of] other precepts (*Ruth Rabbah* 2:22).

□ "Could this be Naomi?" (*Ruth* 1:19). They said, "Have you seen what happened to Naomi, who went out of the Land [of Israel]?" (*Bava Basra* 91a).

□ "Could this be Naomi?" (*Ruth* 1:19). In the past she traveled in covered carriages; now she walks barefoot. In the past she was clothed in garments of silk; now she is clad in rags. In the past her face was ruddy from food and drink; now it is sallow from hunger" (*Ruth Rabbah* 3:6).

□ "I was full when I went away" (*Ruth* 1:21). I was pregnant" (*Ruth Rabbah* 3:7).

□ Boaz was eighty years old and had not been granted children. As soon as that righteous woman

[Naomi] prayed for him, he was granted a child (ibid. 6:2).

□ "A son is born to Naomi" (Ruth 4:17). Ruth bore him, but since Naomi raised him he was called her son (*Sanhedrin* 19b).

נַעֲמָן בֶּן בְּנִימִין – Naaman son of Benjamin
(Genesis 46:21)

□ He was named Naaman [meaning "pleasant"] after [Joseph], who was exceedingly pleasant (*Sotah* 36b).

נַעֲמָן שֶׁר צָבָא מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם – Naaman, general of the king of Aram
(II Kings 5:2)

□ Naaman was a *ger toshav* [a gentile who has accepted the seven Noahide precepts] (*Gittin* 57b).

□ Naaman's arrow pierced Ahab's armor and killed him (*Shocher Tov* 78:11).

נַעֲרָה – Naarah (I Chronicles 4:5)

□ Ashhur [Caleb]... had two wives, Helah and Naarah (ibid.). Miriam [his only wife] was like two women: at first she was Helah [meaning sick]; and eventually [she was healed] and became Naarah [meaning a young girl] (*Sotah* 12a).

□ See **Miriam**

נַפְתָּלִי – Naphtali
[Son of Jacob and Bilhah] (Genesis 30:8)

□ He was born on the fifth of Tishrei, and he died at the age of 133 (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos* 162).

□ He was swift as a hind (*Sotah* 13a).

□ He honored his father exceedingly. His father would dispatch him wherever he wished, and he was quick to fulfill his mission so that [his father] was pleased with him. [Moreover,] Naphtali's speech was pleasant to [his father], and therefore his father blessed him [as he did in *Genesis* 49:2] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 14:11).

□ He went as a messenger anywhere the Tribes wished, and he would carry out their missions immediately (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 49:21).

□ When [the brothers] wanted to kill Joseph, Naphtali went and told Judah, who came and rescued him (*Midrash Aggadah, Bereishis* 49:21).

□ When Judah became angry [during the encounter with Joseph described in the portion of *Vayigash*], he told Naphtali, "Go see how many markets there are in Egypt." Naphtali leaped forward, returned, and told him, "Twelve"... (*Bereishis Rabbah* 93:8).

□ He was a herald of good tidings. He brought the news *Joseph is still alive* (*Genesis* 45:26); and he hastened to Egypt and brought the deed of title for the Cave of Machpelah to prove that Esau had no share in it (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 49:21).

□ He was buried in Kedesh Naphtali, which was given to his sons as an inheritance (*Sefer HaYashar, end of Yehoshua*).

נֵר – Ner
[Father of Abner, David's general]
(I Samuel 14:50)

□ His name was Abiel, but because he lit candles for the public, he merited the name Ner [lit., candle] (*Vayikra Rabbah* 9:2).

נֵרִיָּה – Neriah (Jeremiah 32:12)

□ Eight prophets who were priests were descendants of Rahab the innkeeper: Neriah... (*Megillah* 14b).

נָתָן – Nathan (II Samuel 7:2)

□ The early prophets were Gad and Nathan (*Yerushalmi Sotah* 9:13).

□ "You, Hashem, are a shield – for my honor (*Psalms* 3:4) through Hushai the Arkite, and to raise up my head (ibid.) through Nathan the prophet" (*Shocher Tov* 3:6).

□ Samuel wrote his Book [*Samuel*], and Gad the seer and Nathan the prophet finished it (*Bava Basra* 15a).

□ Gad the seer and Nathan the prophet planned the construction of the Temple with David (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 20).

□ Nathan the prophet told [David], "If the thought that you should build Him a House had not arisen in the mind of the Holy One, Blessed is He, it would not have arisen in your mind either" (*Shocheh Tov* 62:4).

□ David sent messengers after [Nathan] to find out whether he was publicizing the matter [of Bath-sheba]. Had he publicized it, [David] would have killed him (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Tehillim* 51:19).

□ An armchair stood on each side of [Solomon's] throne, one for Gad the seer, and one for Nathan the prophet (*Midrash Abba Gurion* 1).

□ When Solomon intercalated the year, he would have seven sages brought before him. Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer were present also, making ten in all [with Solomon included] (*Shemos Rabbah* 15:20).

נְתַנְאֵל בֶּן צוּעַר – Nethanel son of Zuar

[Prince of the Tribe of Issachar]

(*Numbers* 1:8)

□ He was a king of Torah [i.e., a great scholar] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:17).

□ There was none like him in his Tribe (*Midrash Aggadah, Bamidbar* 7:18).



סִיחֹן – Sihon, king of the Emorites

(*Numbers* 21:21)

□ Sihon, Arad, and Canaan are the same [person] (*Rosh Hashanah* 3a).

□ He was a mighty man who dwelt in a fortified city (*Tanchuma Chukas* 23).

□ Sihon's thigh-bones were eighteen cubits long (*Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Devarim Hosafah* 7).

□ Sihon was as solid as a wall and stronger than any living thing. He was taller than any tower. Thus [when he sat] on a tower, his feet reached the earth. No one could withstand him. He was stronger than Pharaoh and his armies. What did the Holy One, Blessed is He, do? [First,] He bound his [Sihon's] protecting angel; [then] He cast him [Sihon] down from his place and delivered him to Israel (*Shocheh Tov* 136:11).

□ Sihon and Og were brothers, the sons of Ahijah son of Shemhazai [one of the angels who descended during the generation of Enosh (*Rashi*)] (*Niddah* 61a).

□ Sihon and Og were haughty and mighty. Only a day's journey separated them, yet neither came to the aid of the other (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 4:8).

□ Sihon received payment from all the kings of the land of Canaan. They brought him taxes, and he would keep them in power. Israel said, "Let us pass through your land (*Numbers* 21:22) to conquer the kingdoms [of Canaan]." He replied, "I am here to protect them from you." And Sihon did not allow Israel to pass through his border, and Sihon gathered all his people together (*ibid.* v. 23). The Holy One, Blessed is He, arranged matters thus [i.e., having them all gathered together] in order to deliver [all of] them into the hands of [Israel] without trouble (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:30).

□ For Heshbon was the city of Sihon (*Numbers* 21:26). Sihon had wrested [Heshbon] from Moab, and Israel took it from Sihon. Thus the prohibition [forbidding Israel from distressing Moab] was annulled [from the Moabite city of Heshbon] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:29).

□ The battle with Sihon was fought in Elul, the festival [of Sukkos] was celebrated in Tishrei, and

after the festival the battle of Og [was fought] (*Yalkut Shimoni, Chukas 765*).

- When Aaron died, Sihon was still alive (*Rosh Hashanah 2b*).
- Sihon was killed in the battle of the Emorites against the Children of Israel (*Kadmonios HaYehudim 1:180*).

סִיסְרָא – Sisera, captain of the army of Canaan (*Judges 4:2*)

- There was no one as mighty as he was. At the age of thirty he conquered the world. At the sound of his voice, walls of cities fell and beasts of the field froze. It was said that he once went down to the Kishon River to drink water and caught fish with his beard. When he went to war, nine hundred horses drew his chariot. Yet in the end he was delivered into the hands of a woman (*Midrash Abba Gurion 3*).
- Some of Sisera's descendants studied Torah in Jerusalem (*Sanhedrin 96b*).
- *He oppressed . . . Israel* (*Judges 4:3*). Because he [Sisera] shamed them as he oppressed them, he died a shameful death: he was delivered into the hands of a woman, who killed him with a tent pin (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Mishlei 23:26*).
- Sisera attacked [the people of Israel] with 40,000 captains, 50,000 swordsmen, 60,000 spear-bearing soldiers, 70,000 shield-bearing soldiers, 80,000 archers, aside from 900 iron chariots with their riders, and the thousands who were with him (*Targum Shoftim 5:8*).
- *Hallel* was said by Deborah and Barak when they were attacked by Sisera [and saved] (*Pesachim 117a*).
- *From heaven the stars fought with Sisera* (*Judges 5:20*). The stars of heaven descended toward them and scorched them and their iron spears. They went down to cool off in the Kishon brook, which then swept them into the sea (*Pesachim 118b*).
- There were thirty-one kings in Sisera's time [who were killed along with him, who] said to Sisera, "We ask nothing of you [in return]; we will

accompany you without payment, for we desire to fill our stomachs with the water of that land" (*Bamidbar Rabbah 23:7*).

□ Sisera was proud before God in that he had with him many volunteer legions [from other lands] (*ibid. 9:24*).

□ Jethro took into his home a redeemer [Moses] who was fleeing from an enemy [Pharaoh. As a result,] from his family came [Jael,] who took into her home an enemy [Sisera] who was fleeing from the redeemer [Barak,] and she slew him (*Tanchuma Shemos 16*).

□ *She gave him drink* (*Judges 4:19*) in order to determine whether his mind was clear. He drank, became intoxicated, and asked her to sin with him (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 23:1*).

□ That wicked one consorted with her seven times that day (*Yevamos 103a*).

□ *Through the window Sisera's mother looked* (*Judges 5:28*). [The window refers to] astrology (*Zohar 1:140b*).

□ "Why does his chariot tarry (בַּשֶּׁשׁ) in coming?" (*Judges 5:28*). Every day his carriage would come three or four hours into the day. Now six hours passed (בָּא שֶׁשׁ) and he has not come yet!" (*Bereishis Rabbah 18:6*).

סִנְאָה – Sena'ah (*Ezra 2:35*)

□ On the tenth of Av, the children of Sena'ah, a descendant of Benjamin, [brought the wood offering to the Second Temple] (*Ta'anis 26a*).

סִנְחַרִּיב – Sennacherib

[King of Assyria] (*II Kings 18:13*)

PERSONALITY / ATTACKS JERUSALEM / DOWNFALL

PERSONALITY

□ Sennacherib had eight names – Tiglath Pileser, Palneser, Shalmanasar, Pul, Sargon, Osnapar, Raba ["the great"] and Yakira ["the venerated." He was called] Sennacherib because he spoke belligerently (סִיחַתוּ רִיב), or because he spoke and snorted (סַח וְנָחַר) against Heaven. Rabbi Yochanan said: Why did he merit to be called Osnapar, Raba, and

Yakira? Because he did not speak (לא סיפר) with derision against the Land of Israel [which is great and venerated], as it is written, "Until I shall come and transport you [the Jewish people] to a land such as yours" (II Kings 18:32) (*Sanhedrin* 94a).

□ Rav and Shmuel [commented]: One said he was a clever king [for not telling them he was taking them to a land better than their own], the other said he was a foolish king [for why would they want to leave their land if not for a land better than their own] (*ibid.*).

□ Some of Sennacherib's descendants taught Torah to the public. These were Shemaiah and Avtalion (*Gittin* 57b).

□ Sennacherib made himself a palace facing Lebanon, cleverly engineered, at a high altitude between two tall mountains. Fountains gushed out of the mountains, and his palace was suspended over [the water] (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 7).

□ He sat on his throne, and beneath him stones were scattered about. He would shake, [whereupon] the stones would split and water would gush forth (*Otzar HaMidrashim* 69).

□ Sennacherib boasted before the Omnipresent only through a messenger, [as it is written], *By your messengers you blasphemed the Lord* (II Kings 19:23). The Holy One, Blessed is He, also punished him through a messenger, [as it is written], *The angel of Hashem went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians* (*ibid.* v. 35) (*Tosefta Sotah* 3:5).

□ Sennacherib king of Assyria came up and mixed up all the nations [i.e., shifted the populations] (*Berachos* 28a).

□ Luz was not mixed up by Sennacherib [i.e., its population was not changed] (*Sotah* 46b).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, sought to make Hezekiah the Messiah and [to make] Sennacherib [the archenemies] Gog and Magog (*Sanhedrin* 94a).

□ *Shishak king of Egypt . . . took the treasures of the House of Hashem and the treasures of the king's house* (I Kings 14:25,26). Zerah king of Cush took it [all] away from Shishak . . . Jehosaphat came and

took it [back]. It remained [in Judah] until [the days of] Ahaz. Sennacherib came and took it away from Ahaz. Hezekiah came and took it away from Sennacherib (*Pesachim* 94b).

ATTACKS JERUSALEM

□ That wicked one [Sennacherib] said, "At first I will destroy the house below [i.e., the Temple], and then I will destroy the house above" (*Sanhedrin* 94b).

□ Sennacherib inflicted four exiles [on Israel]: (1) The first time he went up and exiled the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh to Halah and Habor, and he took away the golden calf that Jeroboam son of Nebat had made. (2) Hosea son of Elah slew Pekah son of Remaliah and served Sennacherib seven years, [following which] Sennacherib came up a second time and exiled the Tribes of Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali and took away the second calf, which was in Beth-el. (3) In the fourth year of Hezekiah's reign, [Sennacherib] exiled the Tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who dwelt in Samaria. This was the third exile. (4) Sennacherib waited eight years. Then he attacked Jerusalem and took from the land of Judah 150 cities in which dwelt the Tribes of Judah and Simeon, whom the Holy One, Blessed is He, hid in the mountains of darkness. The fifth time he came up, the Holy One, Blessed is He, vanquished him (*Midrash Eser Galuyos; Greenhut Likkutim* 3).

□ Sennacherib came up [to the Land of Israel] in the eleventh year of the jubilee [cycle], on the fourth day of the week, in the midst of Passover (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 23).

□ His host numbered 2,649,999 (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu* 7).

□ The wicked Sennacherib attacked them with 45,000 of kings, seated in golden chariots with [their] mistresses and harlots, 80,000 warriors clad in scaly coats of mail, and 60,000 swordsmen running before him. The rest were horsemen (*Sanhedrin* 95b).

□ When Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem, Shebna wrote the following note, which he shot with an

arrow [into Sennacherib's camp]: "Shebna and his followers surrender; Hezekiah and his followers do not" (ibid. 26a).

□ *Hallel* was said by Hezekiah and his party when they were attacked by Sennacherib [and saved] (*Pesachim* 117a).

DOWNFALL

□ Said the Holy One, Blessed is He: "Let Sennacherib and his people come and become a manger for Hezekiah and his people" (*Sanhedrin* 94b).

□ *The Lord will bring upon them the waters of the river, mighty and many – the king of Assyria and all his glory* (*Isaiah* 8:7). If [God had already ordained that Sennacherib was to attack Israel (*Rashi*)], why was Sennacherib punished? The prophet had prophesied about the Ten Tribes, whereas [Sennacherib] turned his attention to Jerusalem (*Sanhedrin* 94b).

□ The wicked [Sennacherib] made ten journeys that day, as it is written, *He came to Aiath, he passed through Migron, at Michmas he laid his baggage . . .* (*Isaiah* 10:28-31) (*Sanhedrin* 94b).

□ *That very day shall [Sennacherib] stand over Jerusalem because of Nob* (*Isaiah* 10:32). That day [alone] was left [of the time allotted for the Jews to be punished] for the sin of [having slaughtered] the priestly city of Nob [in Saul's time]. The stargazers said to Sennacherib, "If you go now, you will conquer [Jerusalem]; otherwise, you will not." In one day he covered a distance that should have taken ten days. When he arrived in Jerusalem, he went up and sat on the wall and saw all of Jerusalem. Then he said, "Is this the city of Jerusalem for which I agitated all my armies, and for whose sake I conquered all the surrounding provinces? Lo, it is smaller and weaker than all the cities of the nations that I conquered." He shook his head and waved his arms over the Temple. "Shall we lay hands on it today?" they asked. He replied, "You are weary [from the journey]. Tomorrow, each one of you will bring me one piece of the wall" (*Sanhedrin* 95a).

□ Rabshakeh peered over the wall [into Jerusalem] and heard them reading the *Hallel*. He told

Sennacherib, "Turn back, for miracles have been wrought for them on this night." Sennacherib scoffed (*Yalkut Shimoni, Melachim* 241).

□ *And it came to pass that night that the angel of Hashem went forth and smote the camp of the Assyrians a hundred eighty-five thousand* (*II Kings* 19:35) (*Sanhedrin* 95a).

□ *You shall have a song as in the night that the feast is hallowed* (*Isaiah* 30:29). The night of Passover is mentioned to teach about the downfall of Sennacherib [that both are times when the recital of *Hallel* is required] (*Yerushalmi Pesachim* 9:3).

□ When Sennacherib attacked Jerusalem, Isaiah and Hezekiah were sitting in the house of study. Fire went forth from between them and burned him [Sennacherib and his hosts] (*Shocheh Tov* 22:2).

□ Sennacherib's downfall took place on the third day of Hezekiah's illness (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 23).

□ Pharaoh king of Egypt and Tirhakah king of Cush were part of the same miracle [that was made for Hezekiah]; they had come to Hezekiah's aid and were discovered by Sennacherib, who bound them that evening. At midnight the angel went forth and smote Sennacherib's hosts. When Hezekiah awoke in the morning and found them bound, he freed them, and they went and recounted the wonders of the Holy One, Blessed is He (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 4:8).

□ Sennacherib behaved disrespectfully toward the One Who spoke for the world to come into being. The Holy One, Blessed is He, [therefore] punished him through an angel; his head and beard were shorn, and he returned in shame to his land (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 27:2).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, appeared to Sennacherib in the guise of an old man and asked him, "When you come before the kings of east and west whose sons you took and killed, what will you tell them?" "Indeed, I am afraid of that," said Sennacherib. "What shall I do?" "Go change your appearance [so that they will not recognize you (*Rashi*)]," said the Holy One, Blessed is He. "How

shall I change my appearance?" he asked. "Go fetch Me a pair of scissors, and I will cut your hair," said [the "old man"]. "From where shall I fetch it?" asked [Sennacherib]. "From that house," replied [the "old man." Sennacherib] went in. Ministering angels in the guise of men were [there] grinding date pits. [Sennacherib] said to them, "Give me a pair of scissors." "Grind a barrel of pits for us," they said, "and we will give it to you." He ground [the pits] for them, and they gave him the scissors. By the time he returned it was dark. Said [the "old man"], "Go bring me fire." [Sennacherib] went and brought fire, but when he was fanning it, his beard caught fire. He went and shaved his head

and beard. [Thus was the prophecy of *Isaiah* 7:20 fulfilled.] He went and found a board from Noah's ark. [He decided to worship the board, for] he thought, "[This board] is the great God who saved Noah from the Flood. If I prosper, I will sacrifice my two sons before it." [Upon] hearing that, his sons slew him [see *II Kings* 19:37] (*Sanhedrin* 95b, 96a).

סָף – Saph

(*II Samuel* 21:18)

□ Saph was Orpah's son (*Sotah* 42b).

סֶרַח – Serah

□ See Serah (שרה)



עִבְדֵי־אֲדָם – Obed-edom (*II Samuel* 6:10)

□ Obed-edom the Gittite was a Levite. He was called Obed [lit., serves] because he served Hashem properly; [he was called] Edom [lit., red] because he caused David's face to turn red [from embarrassment. David] had been afraid that the Ark might kill him but [Obed] was not afraid and served before it, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, blessed him. [And he was called] "the Gittite" because he was from Gath (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 4:20).

□ Hashem blessed Obed-edom (*II Samuel* 6:11). This refers to his wife and her eight daughters-in-law, who [all] gave birth to sextuplets (*Berachos* 63b).

□ He had eight sons and eight daughters-in-law. Each [daughter-in-law] bore two [children] a month. How? She was unclean for seven days and clean for seven days. Then she gave birth [after which she was again unclean for seven days and clean for seven days. Then she again gave birth] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 4:20).

עִבְדֵי־מֶלֶךְ הַכּוּשִׁי – Ebed-melech the Cushite

[Prophet]

(*Jeremiah* 38:7)

□ Ebed-melech the Cushite was Baruch son of Neriah. Just as the Cushite is distinguished by his [black] skin, so was Baruch son of Neriah distinguished from other people by his good deeds (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 53).

□ He was distinguished in Zedekiah's palace by his good deeds. He came to Zedekiah and said, "Know that if Jeremiah dies in the pit, the city will be given over to the Chaldeans." Zedekiah [then] told him, "Take three men with you and take him out." Ebed-melech entered the king's house to fetch rags. Then he went and stood beside the pit and called, "My lord Jeremiah, my lord Jeremiah!" But there was no response. He rent his garments and wept. Jeremiah had heard but [had kept silent, for] fear that it was the wicked Jonathan the scribe. Upon hearing someone weeping, he asked, "Who calls me and weeps?" The reply came: "It is Ebed-melech the Cushite. Are you alive? I thought you were dead. Here is the rope." [Jeremiah]

placed it under his elbows, and they drew him up (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:49).

□ Nine entered the Garden of Eden during their lifetimes: . . . Hiram king of Tyre, Ebed-melech the Cushite . . . (*Derech Eretz Zuta* 1).

□ See also **Baruch son of Neriah**

עֲבֵד נְגוּ — **Abed-nego** (*Daniel* 1:7)

□ See **Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah**

עֵבֶר — **Eber**

[Great-great-grandson of Noah]
(*Genesis* 10:21)

□ Eber was a great prophet; he named [his son] for a [future] event, [as it is written], *The name of the first was Peleg* [lit., "division"], *for in his days the earth was divided* (*Genesis* 10:25) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 37:7).

□ Eber died two years after the Patriarch Jacob went down to Aram Naharaim (*Megillah* 17a).

□ Eber lived until 139 years of Isaac's life had passed (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 11:16).

□ Four righteous people lived in the generation of the dispersion: Shem and Eber, Noah and Abraham. Shem and Eber kept themselves hidden and refrained from rebuking the people of their generation . . . (*Yelamdeinu, Batei Midrashos* 149).

□ When the nations of the world sought to go astray from the ways of the Holy One, Blessed is He, He gave them two great men — Shem and Eber — to warn them (*Bereishis Rabbah* 52:11).

□ Shem and Eber walked before [Abraham's] bier. Seeing an empty space beside Sarah, they buried him beside his spouse in the place that was ready and waiting for him (*ibid.* 52:3).

□ Jacob hid in Eber's house for fourteen years (*Megillah* 17a).

□ Jacob was not punished for all the years he spent in Eber's house [where he studied Torah; however, for the other years that he was away from home, he was punished for failing to honor his parents (*Rashi*)] (*Megillah* 16b).

עִגְלָה — **Eglah**

[Wife of David] (*II Samuel* 3:5)

□ Eglah is Michal. Why was she called Eglah [lit., "calf"]? Because she was as dear to [David] as a calf (*Sanhedrin* 21a).

עִגְלוֹן — **Eglon**

[King of Moab] (*Judges* 3:12)

□ Eglon was Balak's grandson (*Yalkut Shimoni, Balak* 765).

□ *He arose out of the throne* (*Judges* 3:20). The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "You arose out of your throne to honor Me; by your life, I will raise up from you a descendant who will sit on the throne of Hashem [i.e., David]" (*Ruth Rabbah* 2:9).

□ Ruth was the granddaughter of Eglon king of Moab (*Nazir* 23b).

עֲדָה — **Adah**

[Wife of Lamech] (*Genesis* 4:19)

□ Adah [was so named] because [Lamech] luxuriated (*התעורר*) in her; Zillah [was so named] because he dwelt in the shadow (*צל*) of [her] children (*Yerushalmi Yevamos* 6:5).

□ Lamech slew Cain and his [Lamech's] child. Upon coming home, Lamech told his wives, "Come to bed." They said, "You killed our grandfather Cain and our son Tubal-cain. We will not come!" He said to them, "Cain [an intentional murderer] received his punishment after seven generations; I [who killed accidentally, will receive my punishment in] seventy-seven." "We will not obey you," they said. "Shall we bear children who are doomed?" "Let us go to court," he said. They went to Adam. Adah and Zillah said, "Our master, our husband Lamech killed our ancestor." Adam told [the women], "Since your grandfather was killed accidentally, go obey your husband." They replied, "Perfect yourself first! You have already separated from your [wife] for one hundred thirty years; and you are teaching us!" What is written thereafter? *When Adam had lived one hundred thirty years, he begot in his likeness* (*Genesis* 5:3) (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 11).

□ See also **Lamech, Zillah**

עִדוֹ – Ido

[Grandfather of Zechariah] (Zechariah 1:1)

□ Behold, a man of God came from Judah . . . and he said, "Altar, altar!" (I Kings 13:12). [The man] was Ido the prophet. Altar, altar refers to the altar in Beth-el and the altar in Dan (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 2:85).

□ Ido was a prophet who transgressed his own words [and was put to death for doing so], as it is written, *When he went, a lion met him by the way and slew him* (I Kings 13:24) [see *ibid.* v. 16-24] (*Sanhedrin* 89b).

□ Elisha went to Shunem, [where] he was received by a great woman (II Kings 4:8) with great honor. She was the sister of Abishag the Shunamite and the wife of Ido the prophet (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 33).

עֲדִין – Adin

(Ezra 2:15)

□ The children of Adin (*ibid.*), a descendant of Judah, are the same as the children of David, a descendant of Judah, according to R' Yehudah. R' Yosi said: They are the same as the children of Joab the son of Zeruah (*Ta'anis* 28a).

□ On the twentieth of Elul the children of Adin, a descendant of Judah, [brought the wood offering] (*Ta'anis* 26a).

עֲדְרִיאל – Adriel

(I Samuel 18:19)

□ The betrothal of Merab to Adriel was a transgression [for she was already betrothed to David] (*Sanhedrin* 19b).

עֹבֵד – Obed

[Son of Naomi; grandfather of David]

(Ruth 4:17)

□ Our Sages say that Boaz, Obed, and Jesse together lived more than four hundred years (*Yalkut Shimoni, Vayigash* 156).

□ Obed was perfected, for he had issued from a bad field and bad wells [i.e., ancestors who were not righteous], and Jesse came and fixed and hoed [through his son David] (*Zohar* 2:103b).

□ There was one great and lofty place in the world, and its trunk and root were true. This was Obed the father of Jesse father of David, for he was perfected

spiritually and was therefore called Obed [from עבד, worked] (*ibid.*).

עֹבַדְיָה – Obadiah

[Prophet]

(Obadiah 1:1)

PERSONALITY / SUSTAINS THE PROPHETS /
MIRACLE OF THE OIL

PERSONALITY

□ Elijah had four disciples: Micah, Jonah, Obadiah, and Elisha (*Pirkei d'Rabbeinu HaKadosh; Greenhut, Likkutim* 3).

□ He was a proselyte, the lowest of the prophets (*Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu* 385).

□ He was an Edomite convert (*Sanhedrin* 39b).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Eliphaz, "You rebuked My servant Job with visions (חזון) [see *Job* 4:13]. I will [therefore] bring forth from [your descendants] a prophet who will announce the punishment of your father's house with visions," as it is written: *The vision (חזון) of Obadiah. Thus said Hashem God concerning Edom . . .* (Obadiah 1:1) (*Yalkut Shimoni, Iyov* 897).

□ Since Obadiah was from Edom, his entire prophecy concerned only Edom (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 25:28).

□ None of the prophets could foresee what the Holy One, Blessed is He, would ultimately do to Esau, except for Obadiah the prophet, a proselyte who descended from Esau. [Obadiah] foresaw clearly what would befall [Esau] (*Zohar* 1:171a).

□ Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Let Obadiah, who dwelt among the wicked people [Ahab and Jezebel] but did not learn from their bad deeds, come and prophesy about Esau, who dwelt among two righteous people [Isaac and Rebecca] but did not learn from their [good] deeds" (*Sanhedrin* 39b).

□ What is written [explicitly in Scripture] of Obadiah is greater than what is written of Abraham. Regarding Abraham, Scripture does not use the expression *greatly* [in describing his fear of God], whereas regarding Obadiah, it is written [that he] *feared Hashem greatly* (I Kings 18:3) (*Sanhedrin* 39b).

- Obadiah merited prophecy because he hid one hundred prophets in a cave (ibid.).
- Had the Sanhedrin withdrawn from him, he would not have had permission to prophesy. Therefore, he prophesied with [the word] חזון, *vision*, which has a numerical value (*gematriya*) of seventy-one [alluding to the seventy-one members of the Sanhedrin] (*Beis HaMidrash* 4:23).
- Obadiah was Ahab's administrator (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:4).
- *Ahab called Obadiah (I Kings 18:3) [and] said to him, "Of Joseph it is written, Hashem blessed the Egyptian's house on Joseph's account (Genesis 39:5). This house is not blessed – perhaps you are not God-fearing." A Heavenly Voice called out, Obadiah feared Hashem greatly (I Kings 18:3) (Sanhedrin 39b).*
- No two prophets prophesy in identical styles. Obadiah said, "*The pride of your heart had beguiled you*" (*Obadiah* 1:3), [whereas] Jeremiah said, "*Your terribleness has beguiled you, the pride of your heart*" (*Jeremiah* 49:16) (*Sanhedrin* 89a).

SUSTAINS THE PROPHETS

- Obadiah, who was exceedingly rich, spent all his money on charity and fed the prophets. When [famine] came, he borrowed an amount sufficient for the prophets at interest from Ahab's son Jehoram. [The prohibition against borrowing at interest was suspended in this case by the precept of saving lives] (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:4).
- [Although Obadiah was the administrator of Ahab's house,] he did not feed [the prophets] from Ahab's wealth, because he had acquired his estate through thievery (*Targum Melachim* 2:4:1).
- "*I sustained them with bread and water*" (*I Kings* 18:13). The water was even more difficult for him to bring than the bread (*Yerushalmi Pe'ah* 1:1).

MIRACLE OF THE OIL

- *A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband has died . . ." (II Kings 4:1); i.e., "Your servant Obadiah, my husband, has died" (Targum Melachim 2:4:1).*

- Obadiah's wife saved her sons from worshipping idols with Ahab (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Mishlei* 31:27).

□ At the same time that Ahab died, Obadiah died. King Jehoram came to take [Obadiah's] two sons. What did [Obadiah's wife] do? She went weeping to the cemetery, stood beside Obadiah's grave, and cried, "God-fearing one! [See what] they are doing to your orphans!" Obadiah was told, "Your wife is crying out and weeping at your grave." He went to the Patriarchs, and they said to him, "We have heard her cries. Go to the prophet Elisha." Meanwhile she had returned and was crying at his grave. He said to her, "If you wish to be answered, go to Elisha" (*Zohar Chadash, Ruth* 82b).

□ Obadiah said [to his wife], "When I hid the hundred prophets and sustained them with bread and water in the cave, the oil lamp never ceased [burning] for them by day or night. Let the prophet mention these things to the Holy One, Blessed is He, and He will repay you for what I lent Him" (*Radak, II Kings* 4:1, citing *Targum Tosefta*).

□ "*Your handmaid has nothing in the house save a small container of oil*" (*II Kings* 4:2). Why oil rather than anything else? Because she would anoint her sons' heads so that [when] they would go out in the street, onlookers would not say, "Because Obadiah robbed Ahab, God punished him [by making] his house bare." Therefore she stinted on everything [else] and bought oil so her children would not go out with dry and crusty heads (*Ginzei Shechter* 302).

□ The last miracle was greater than the first. When all the barrels were used up and the oil had no place to descend into, it stood like a pillar inside the house, as it is written, *The oil stood (II Kings 4:6) (Ginzei Shechter 93).*

□ *The oil stood (II Kings 4:6).* She told her son, "Bring me more broken pottery, and the One Who commanded the empty vessels to fill up will command the broken vessels to be mended." The son collected broken vessels and placed them one on top of the other, and they became joined by the word of God. The pillar of oil flowed into them until all the broken vessels were filled. [When] the sons said, "There are no more vessels," the pillar of oil

heard and stopped [flowing]. The woman asked the prophet of God, "Am I to separate tithes from this oil?" He told her, "Your husband sustained the prophets with things that do not need to be tithed. Likewise, you are not required to give tithes from this oil, for it came through a miracle [and not from olives]" (*Radak, II Kings 4:6,7, citing Targum Tosefta*).

□ "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt, and you and your sons live off the rest (*II Kings 4:17*). The Zarephathite woman did not benefit [others from the oil that was given to her miraculously]. You [Obadiah's wife], however, will share [your oil] with others" (*Ginzei Shechter 304*).

עוג – Og

[King of Bashan]

(*Numbers 21:33*)

PERSONALITY/ IN ABRAHAM'S TIME/ IN MOSES' TIME

PERSONALITY

□ Sihon and Og were brothers, the sons of Ahijah son of Shemhazai [one of the angels who descended during the generation of Enosh (*Rashi*)] (*Niddah 61a*).

□ *There came the fugitive and told Abraham...* (*Genesis 14:13*). [The fugitive] is Og, who escaped from the Flood (*Niddah 61a*).

□ He sat down on a plank at the top of the Ark and swore to Noah and his sons that he would be their slave forever [if they would let him stay]. Noah bored an aperture in the Ark, through which he put out [Og's] food daily (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer 23*).

□ Og is Abraham's servant Eliezer. His feet were four parasangs long, yet the Patriarch Abraham kept him in the palm of his hand. Once [Abraham] rebuked him, and [Og] was so frightened that his tooth fell out. Abraham made it into a bed, in which he slept. Some say he made it into a chair, in which he sat all his life. Who had given [Og] to Abraham? Nimrod (*Sofrim 21:9*).

□ *There came the fugitive (palit)* (*Genesis 14:13*). His name was Palit. Then why was he called Og? Because he came and found Abraham occupied with *ugos*, unleavened cakes [for Passover] (*Shocheh Tov 136:12*).

□ *There came the fugitive and told Abraham* [that Lot had been captured] (*Genesis 14:13*). The Holy One, Blessed is He, told him, "You will be rewarded for your steps with a long life" (*Bereishis Rabbah 42:8*).

□ None mightier than he ever arose. He [alone] was left of the giants that Amraphel and his colleagues had slain [see *Deuteronomy 3:11; Genesis 14:5*] (*Bamidbar Rabbah 19:32*).

□ Og was the least of all the Rephaim, a race of giants [see *Deuteronomy 3:11*] who lived in his time (*Midrash Aggadah, Devarim 3:11*).

□ He was an ugly person [for his body was out of proportion]: his height was nine cubits, his width four – which is almost half his height (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Amos 2:9*).

□ Og built sixty cities, of which the smallest [had walls] sixty mils high. His consumption of food was a thousand oxen, his drinking was of a thousand measures (*Sofrim 21:9*).

□ Abba Shaul said: Once I was running after a deer and entered the [hollow] thighbone of a corpse, and I ran after [the deer] three parasangs [within the bone]. They said: That [bone] belonged to Og king of Bashan (*Niddah 24b*).

□ He had a son who was [even] stronger than he (*Bamidbar Rabbah 19:32*).

□ Sihon and Og were haughty and mighty. Only a day's journey separated them, yet neither came to the aid of the other (*Shir HaShirim 4:8*).

IN ABRAHAM'S TIME

□ *All the people of [Abraham's] house... were circumcised with him* (*Genesis 17:27*). This refers to Og, who was circumcised (*Zohar 3:184*).

□ Og said, "This Abraham is a zealot. Now I will tell him that his nephew has been captured, and he will wage war [to free him. Abraham] will be slain [in battle] and I will take his wife Sarah." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Because you thought to kill the righteous [Abraham], by your life, you will see myriads upon myriads of his descendants" (*Bereishis Rabbah 42:8*).

□ *There came the fugitive and told Abraham . . .* (Genesis 14:13). He did not come for the sake of Heaven, but for the sake of Sarah's beauty (*Devarim Rabbah*, end of ch. 1).

□ When [Abraham's servant Eliezer] did an act of kindness for Isaac, Abraham freed him. The Holy One, Blessed is He, then gave [Eliezer] his reward in This World so that he would have no reward in the World to Come. He made him king: he was Og king of Bashan (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 16).

□ When Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, he made a feast, [to which he] invited all the kings of Canaan. Og, too, was present on that occasion. They said to Og, "Did you not say, 'Abraham is a sterile mule who will not beget offspring?'" Upon seeing Isaac, [Og] said, "That is nothing. With my finger I [can] kill him." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Is that how you speak? You will yet see thousands and myriads issuing from him, and you will fall by their hands" (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:25).

□ When Jacob came before Pharaoh to bless him, Og was present. Said Pharaoh to Og, "Did you not say, 'Abraham is a sterile mule who will not beget offspring? [Yet] here is his grandson with seventy descendants.'" Og began to cast an evil eye upon them. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "May the eye of that wicked one melt . . ." (*ibid.*).

□ Og said to Pharaoh, "That is Abraham himself!" [for Jacob's] face resembled [Abraham's. Pharaoh then] asked [Jacob], "How many years have you lived?" (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 47:8).

IN MOSES' TIME

□ Sihon and Og were stronger than Pharaoh and his armies, and [Israel] should have sung a song at the downfall of Sihon and Og. It was David, however, who composed a song about them: *To Him Who smote great kings . . . Sihon king of the Emorites . . . and Og king of Bashan* (*Psalms* 136:17-20) (*Shocheh Tov* 136:11).

□ "Fear him not" (*Deuteronomy* 3:2). Why was [Moses] afraid of Og but not of Sihon? [Moses] thought, "Perhaps the merit of the Patriarch Abra-

ham will protect [Og," for Og had informed him of Lot's capture] (*Niddah* 61a).

□ Moses said, "I am 120 years old; he is over 500. If he had no merit, he would not have lived so many years" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:32).

□ Upon seeing Israel approaching, Og said, "Surely the merit [of my circumcision] will supersede their merit." At that moment Moses was gripped by fear. How could he destroy the sign [of the covenant] that Abraham had imprinted? The Holy One, Blessed is He, told him, "Fear him not" (*Deuteronomy* 3:2). Do not fear his sign, for he has blemished it, and whoever blemishes his sign deserves to be destroyed" (*Zohar* 3:184a).

□ Moses and Israel came to the border of Edrei. "Let us encamp here," said Moses, "and we will enter in the morning." When they were about to enter Edrei, there was still not enough light to see [clearly]. Moses raised his eyes and saw Og sitting on the wall, with his feet reaching the ground. "I do not know what I am seeing," said Moses. "Have they built another wall overnight?" "What you see," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "is Og." Og uprooted a mountain and hurled it at Israel. Moses took a pebble, pronounced the Ineffable Name over it, and stemmed [the mountain's] fall (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:24).

□ Og said, "The camp of Israel occupies a space of three parasangs. I will uproot a mountain of three parasangs and throw it on them and kill them." He went and uprooted such a mountain and brought it over his head [in preparation for throwing it at Israel]. The Holy One, Blessed is He, sent worms which bored into [the mountain], and it descended on his neck. He sought to remove it, [but] his teeth grew on both sides and [he became caught in it]. Moses was ten cubits tall. He took a stick ten cubits long, jumped ten cubits high, struck him on his ankle, and killed him (*Berachos* 54b).

□ They waged war against Sihon in [the month of] Elul, celebrated the [Sukkos] festival in Tishrei, and after the festival waged war against Og (*Yalkut Shimoni, Chukas* 765).

□ See also **Eliezer**

UZZAH / עֶזָּה

עֶזָּה – Uzzah

(II Samuel 6:6)

- Uzzah was punished for holding onto the Ark [and not realizing that it needed no support. Others say he was punished] for relieving himself in the presence [of the Ark] (*Sotah* 35a).
- Uzzah entered the World to Come (*ibid.*).

עֶזוּבָה – Azubah

(I Chronicles 2:18)

- Azubah is Miriam. She was called Azubah [lit., "forsaken"] because at first everyone forsook her [when she became a leper]. Her face was [white] as a sheet (*Sotah* 12).
- She fell ill and was treated as if dead. Caleb, too, left her. After she was healed, he remarried her and seated her in a palanquin [for the wedding procession] in his great rejoicing over her. Then the Holy One, Blessed is He, restored her youth (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:17).

- Her face was like a rose (*Sotah* 12a).

עֶזִיאֵל – Uzziel

[Son of Kehath; grandson of Levi]

(Exodus 6:22)

- Uzziel pursued peace among the people of Israel (*Sifra Shemini* 1).

עֶזִיָּהוּ – Uzziah

[King of Judah]

(II Kings 15:30)

- He reigned during the lifetime of his fathers (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 19).
- Uzziah buried [i.e., outlived] Jeroboam and another three kings after him (*Tosefta Sotah* 12:4).
- Three people had a passion for agriculture, and no good was found in them: Cain, Noah, and Uzziah [see *II Chronicles* 26:10] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 36:3).
- All the curses that David pronounced against Joab were fulfilled in David's offspring: leper (*II Samuel* 3:29) [was fulfilled in] Uzziah, [who] was a leper for twenty-six years (*Sanhedrin* 48b; *Lekach Tov, Vayikra* 14:8).
- Uzziah and Haman set their sights on what was not for them. What they sought was not given to them, and what they possessed was taken away from them [for Uzziah attempted to act as

high priest and burn incense on the altar] (*Sotah* 9b).

- Leprosy broke out on his forehead (*II Chronicles* 26:19). At that moment the Temple was split asunder twelve mils by twelve mils. The priests hastened to leave, and [Uzziah], too, hastened to leave (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 9).

- What caused this to befall him? He was lax in Torah study and abandoned himself to agriculture (*Tanchuma Noach* 13).

- Uzziah begot Jotham during the period of his declared leprosy (*Moed Katan* 7b).

- He sat in the house of freedom (*II Kings* 15:5). He built himself a house in the cemetery (*Rashi, ibid.*, citing *Yerushalmi*).

עֶזְרָא – Ezra

(Nehemiah 8:4)

PERSONALITY / SCRIBE / GOES UP TO THE
HOLY LAND / ENACTMENTS

PERSONALITY

- Malachi is Ezra (*Megillah* 15a).
- Ezra was worthy of [bringing] the Torah to Israel, had Moses not preceded him (*Sanhedrin* 21b).
- If Aaron had been alive, Ezra would have been greater than he in his [Ezra's] time (*Koheles Rabbah* 1:4).
- When Torah was forgotten by Israel, Ezra came up from Babylon and reestablished it (*Sukkah* 20a).
- Ezra blessed Hashem, the great God (*Nehemiah* 8:6). He praised [Hashem by pronouncing] the Ineffable Name [based on a decision applicable to a specific time and not to be taken as a permanent ruling] (*Yoma* 69b).
- Since the days of Joshua (ישוע) son of Nun (*Nehemiah* 8:17). Scripture diminished the honor of the righteous [Joshua] in his grave [by omitting the letter ה from his name, thereby making it ישוע rather than יהושע] because of the honor of the righteous [Ezra] in his [Ezra's] time [for Ezra had prayed that the inclination to worship idols be abolished while Joshua had not done so] (*Yerushalmi Shevi'is* 6:1).
- Ezra the Scribe died on the tenth of Teves (end of *Megillas Ta'anis*).

SCRIBE

□ Just as he was a scribe [i.e., master scholar] in the words of Torah, so too was he a scribe [master scholar] in the words of the Sages (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 5:1).

□ All the words of [the *Book of Ezra*] were composed by Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. Why, then, does the Book not bear his name? Because he said, "Remember me, O my God, for good" (*Nehemiah* 13:31) and because he recounted the misdeeds of his predecessors [which included] Daniel, who was greater than he [see *ibid.* 5:15] (*Sanhedrin* 93b).

□ Ezra did not ascend from Babylon until he had recorded his genealogy. He wrote his Book and the genealogy of *Chronicles* until [he reached the genealogy of] himself. Who finished it? Nehemiah son of Hacaliah (*Bava Basra* 15a).

GOES UP TO THE HOLY LAND

□ *The third day of the month of Adar during the sixth year of the reign of King Darius* (*Ezra* 6:15). The following year at that time, Ezra went up from Babylon with his fellow exiles (*Rosh Hashanah* 3b).

□ Ezra and his party did not go up at the time [of Cyrus' announcement] because he needed to clarify his learning [under the tutelage of] Baruch son of Neriah . . . (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:5; *Eitz Yosef*).

□ As long as Baruch son of Neriah was alive, Ezra [his devoted disciple] did not leave him to go up [to the Land of Israel] (*Megillah* 16b).

□ Ezra did not go up from Babylon until he had made [the Jews of Babylon] like the purest sifted flour [by taking with him all those whose lineage was blemished. Ezra feared that in Babylon they would mix with the other families. In the Holy Land, however, he would prevent them from mixing] (*Kiddushin* 69b, *Rashi*).

□ The people of Israel were worthy of having a miracle made for them [i.e., an independent state] in the days of Ezra as in the days of Joshua son of Nun, but their sins prevented it [and they remained under the rule of the Persian kings] (*Berachos* 4a, *Rashi*).

□ When Ezra took them up, not all went along [but

rather, the majority remained in Babylon (*Rashi*)] (*Kesubos* 25a).

□ Ezra passed through all the cities and called, "Come and let us go to the Temple [site] and rebuild it!" But the Children of Israel did not go, for they thought Ezra was lying; they [even] sought to kill him. Ezra found out, and he prayed. God heard [his prayer] and hid him (*Ma'aseh Daniel, Beis HaMidrash* 5:121).

ENACTMENTS

□ Ezra instituted ten ordinances: [the Torah] is read during the Sabbath *minchah* service; [the Torah] is read on Mondays and Thursdays; [the judges] judge on Mondays and Thursdays [when people are gathered to hear the Torah reading]; clothing is laundered on Thursday [in preparation for the Sabbath], and garlic is eaten on the eve of the Sabbath [to increase fertility]; women bake [bread early so that it will be available for the poor who come to the door]; women must wear undergarments; women must wash their hair prior to immersion in a *mikveh*; peddlers circulate through the towns [to sell cosmetics]; and men who experience a nocturnal emission immerse [in a *mikveh*] (*Bava Kamma* 82a, *Rashi*).

□ Ezra ordained that the curses in *Leviticus* be read [publicly] before Shavuot, and those in *Deuteronomy* before Rosh Hashanah (*Megillah* 31b).

□ The first holiness [i.e., the sanctification of the Land accomplished by Joshua] sanctified it for that time [when Israel was sovereign over the Land of Israel] and for all time. Ezra was merely making a [ceremonial] remembrance when he [sanctified it. According to a different opinion,] the first holiness sanctified it only for that time but did not sanctify it for all time. Ezra sanctified it [for all time] (*Shevuot* 16a).

□ Ezra, Zerubabel, and Joshua [son of Jehozadak] gathered the entire congregation to God's Temple. They brought three hundred priests, three hundred *shofars*, three hundred Torah scrolls, and three hundred children . . . and they excommunicated the Cuthites with the secret of the Ineffable Name (*Tanchuma Vayeishev* 2).

- The first red heifer was prepared by Moses, the second by Ezra; and there were five thereafter (*Mishnah Parah* 3:5).
- The Gibeonites were distanced even by Ezra (*Shocher Tov* 1:10).
- Since Ezra's time, we have not found an Elul of thirty days (*Beitzah* 6a).

עֶזְרִיָּה – Azariah (*Daniel* 1:6)

- See **Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah**

עֶזְרִיָּה – Azariah
[High priest] (*I Chronicles* 5:36)

- *Who served as priest in the House that Solomon built* (ibid.). Was he the only one who served as high priest? Did not others precede him, and did not any serve after him? Rather, through him the precept of the high priesthood was upheld [for it was he who banished King Uzziah from the Temple when the king sought to minister as high priest] (*Midrash HaGadol, Bamidbar* 18:17).

עֶזְרִיָּה בֶן אֲמַצְיָה – Azariah son of Amaziah

[King of Judah; Azariah is another name for King Uzziah] (*II Kings* 14:21)

- See **Uzziah**

עֶטְרָה – Atarah (*I Chronicles* 2:26)

- *Jerahmeel had another wife whose name was Atarah* (עטרה) (ibid.). He took a gentile wife in order to glorify himself (להתעטר) through her, and she brought mourning (אנינה) into his house [she was the mother of Onam (אונם) (ibid.)] (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:3).

עִירָא הַיְאִירִי – Ira the Jairite

[Advisor and teacher to David] (*II Samuel* 20:26)

- Ira the Jairite is Hushai the Arkite (*Yichusei Tan-naim v'Amoraim* 103).
- *Ira ... was David's priest* (*II Samuel* 20:26). David would send him his gifts [i.e., the gifts due priests]. The very next verse states: *There was a famine in David's time* (ibid. 21:1), for whoever

gives all his gifts to a single priest brings famine to the world (*Eirubin* 63a).

- David was chosen [by God], but [after he sinned] he was rejected, as it is written, *The king went forth, and all the people after him, and they stood in the house of distancing* (*II Samuel* 15:17). They excommunicated [David], and he accepted the ban. Under the influence of his teacher Ira the Jairite, David was drawn near [once again] (*Bamid-bar Rabbah* 3:2).

- His teacher Ira the Jairite sat on pillows and blankets while teaching his disciples. After his teacher died, David taught the disciples while sitting on the ground (*Moed Katan* 16b).

- As long as Ira the Jairite, David's teacher, was alive, *"In my heart I [David] treasured Your word"* (*Psalms* 119:11) [and he did not teach a Torah lesson or issue a halachic decision, for this would have been disrespectful to his teacher]. After [Ira] died, *"With my lips I recounted all the judgments of Your mouth"* (ibid. v. 13) [and he began to teach Torah to the multitudes] (*Eirubin* 63a).

עֶכָן – Achan (*Joshua* 7:1)

- None in the Tribe of Judah was richer than he (*Tanchuma*, ed. *Buber, Masei* 4).

- Heman is Achan (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 6:3).

- His name was Achan. Why then was he called Zimri [*I Chronicles* 2:6]? Because he did the deeds of Zimri [of *Numbers* 25:14; namely, having relations with a betrothed maiden, or causing punishment to be placed on Israel for his sins (*Rashi*)]. Another said: Zimri was his name. Why, then, was he called Achan? Because he caused (עיכו) Israel to be punished for its sins (*Sanhedrin* 44b).

- Achan transgressed the [majority of the (*Mahar-sha*)] Five Books of the Torah; he disguised his circumcision; he consorted with a betrothed girl (*Sanhedrin* 44a).

- Achan slaughtered his evil inclination by confessing [and repenting], and he [thereby] showed the way to penitents (*Vayikra Rabbah* 9:1).

□ His confession atoned for him. [Hence,] “*This day (Joshua 7:25) you are troubled, but you will not be troubled in the World to Come*” (*Sanhedrin* 43b).

□ Achan violated three bans in Moses’ time and one in Joshua’s time. Why was [Israel] not punished [for the first three?] Because [God] did not punish [the people of Israel] for covert [transgressions] until they crossed the Jordan [and heard and accepted the blessings and curses at the Mountains of Grizim and Ebal, thereby becoming responsible for each other’s actions] (*Sanhedrin* 43b).

□ He violated the bans [on the spoils] of the Canaanite king of Arad, of Sihon and Og, of Midian, and of Jericho (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 6:3).

□ When the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Joshua, “*Israel has sinned*” (*Joshua* 7:11), he said, “*Master of the World, who sinned?*” [God] replied, “*Am I an informer? Go cast lots!*” [Joshua] cast lots, and the lot fell on Achan. Achan said to Joshua, “*You wish to judge me through a lottery? You and Eleazar the priest are the greatest men of the generation. If I were to cast lots between you, [the lot] would [have to] fall on one of you.*” Joshua said, “*Please do not cast aspersion on the lottery, for the Land of Israel is to be divided by means of a lottery . . . confess to Him*” (*ibid.* v. 19). [Joshua] won [Achan] over with words [Achan understood Joshua to mean]: “*We ask only for a confession. Confess and you will go free.*” Immediately *Achan answered . . . “In truth, I have sinned . . .”* (*ibid.* v. 20) (*Sanhedrin* 43b).

□ When Joshua told Achan, “*Give, I pray you, honor to Hashem, God of Israel*” (*Joshua* 7:19), [Achan] said to Joshua, “*You tell me what you have done.*” Thereupon a conflict broke out among the Israelites. [Achan’s] Tribe of Judah arose and slew groups of Israelites. Upon seeing this, Achan thought, “*I am sinning and causing others to sin. It is better for me to confess than for a [civil war] to come about through me.*” He made his voice heard, and the entire congregation fell silent. He said, “*I looked into the verse in the Torah You shall eat the spoils of your enemy (Deuteronomy 20:14) and I took them.*” Immediately Joshua sent [for

the stolen spoils before] the Tribe of Judah [could] steal them and continue the dissension (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 23:6).

□ *They spread them [the spoils] out before Hashem (Joshua 7:23).* He threw them down before God and said, “*Master of the Universe, should [Jair the son of Manasseh, who was equal in wisdom to] the majority of the Sanhedrin, be killed for these?*” (*Sanhedrin* 44a).

□ “*I have sinned (Joshua 7:20) – I [alone], not my family*” (*Semachos* 2:9).

□ His wife and children knew about it (*Sanhedrin* 44a).

□ Achan wept greatly and said, “*Woe is to me! Even the banned [spoils] that my colleagues took from the Midianites and gave to Moses, I did not give him. That is why great shame has come upon me*” (*Tanna d’Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* 18).

□ Achan confessed that he had stolen [the banned articles] on the Sabbath, taken them out of Jericho, and concealed them in his tent. He was [therefore] stoned for desecrating the Sabbath and burned for violating the ban (*Tanchuma*, ed. *Buber, Masei* 4).

□ *Joshua took . . . his [Achan’s] sons and his daughters (Joshua 7:24).* Why were they put to death? Because they knew about the matter but did not tell. They were sentenced to stoning and to burning; to stoning because they knew and did not tell, to burning because thirty-six righteous men died on his account (*Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer* 38).

עֶכְסָה – Achsah

[Daughter of Caleb]

(*Joshua* 15:16)

□ Why was she called Achsah [from כַּעַס, *anger*]? Because whoever saw her would be angry at his wife [i.e., would be angry that his wife was not equally beautiful]. *She fell from the donkey* (*ibid.* v. 18). [After her father gave her in marriage to Othniel the son of Kenaz, a great Torah scholar,] she said [to her father Caleb,] “*Just as the donkey, as soon as he has no food in his manger, immediately cries out, so does a woman who has no grain in her house immediately cry out. Give me a source of livelihood, for you have given me an arid land* (*ibid.* v. 19) – a house bare of all [material] good and a man who has

nothing except for Torah." And [Caleb] gave her the upper springs and the lower springs (ibid.). He told her, "From [a man] who is privy to all the secrets of the upper and lower spheres of Heaven, must one request a livelihood? [I.e., with a man such as your husband, you have all that you need" (Rashi)] (Temurah 16a).

עלי – Eli

[High priest]

(I Samuel 1:3)

□ He was one of the descendants of Ithamar son of Aaron (Yalkut Shimoni, Shoftim 68).

□ He was king [leader of Israel], high priest, and head of the Sanhedrin (Yalkut HaMechiri, Tehillim 75:4).

□ Eli the priest sat upon his seat (I Samuel 1:9). That very day he had been appointed high priest (Midrash Shmuel 1:9).

□ The Book of Tagin was copied by Eli the priest from the twelve rocks that Joshua erected in Gilgal, and [Eli in turn] transmitted it to the prophet Samuel (Otzar HaMidrashim 564).

□ Hannah [who had been praying silently in Eli's presence] answered and said, "No [or not], my master (I Samuel 1:15). You are not a master in this matter, and Divine Inspiration does not rest upon you if you have judged me unfavorably [thinking that I am intoxicated]" (Berachos 31b).

□ Eli perceived that Hashem was calling the child (I Samuel 3:8). How did he perceive it? He [reasoned], "If a person were calling him from without, [the child] would have gone out [in response], and if a person were calling him from within, I would have heard first, for I am closer [to the source] than he. [Hence] it must be the voice of the Holy One, Blessed is He" (Midrash HaGadol, Bamidbar 20:22).

□ They slaughtered the bullock (I Samuel 1:25). Eli told them, "Bring a priest to slaughter it." When Samuel saw them looking for a priest, he said to them, "Why should you [trouble yourselves]? The slaughter [of an animal for sacrifice] may be done by a commoner." They brought the youth before Eli (ibid.), who asked him, "How do you know this?" He replied, "Is it written, The priest shall slaughter? It is written, The priest shall bring it near to the altar

(Leviticus 1:15). The priests are commanded [to perform all the steps involved in sacrificing] from the receiving of [the blood] and onward, but the slaughtering may be performed by a commoner." "That is correct," said Eli, "but he who renders a halachic ruling in the presence of his teacher incurs the death penalty." [Then] Hannah came and cried before [Eli], "I am the woman who stood by you here" (I Samuel 1:26). He said to her, "Let me punish him. Then I will pray [for you], and you will be given a [son] who is greater than [Samuel]." She replied, "For this child I prayed (ibid. v. 27) [and therefore he is more precious to me than a son resulting from your prayers" (Maharsha)] (Berachos 31b).

□ Eli aged [prematurely] because of the troubles he had with his sons (Aggadas Bereishis 41).

□ Before Eli's sun set, the sun of Samuel the Ramathite rose (Kiddushin 72b).

□ Eli died on the tenth of Iyar (end of Megillas Ta'anis).

□ When Eli died, Shiloh was destroyed and [the Sanctuary was relocated] to Nob (Zevachim 118b).

□ The house of Eli has no sages ordained [to render halachic ruling], for [God told Eli,] "There shall be no sage in your house" (I Samuel 2:32) (Sanhedrin 14a).

□ The iniquity of the house of Eli shall not be expiated with sacrifice or offering (I Samuel 3:14). With sacrifice or offering it is not expiated [for their iniquity dealt with the sacrifices (Metzudas Dovid)], but it is expiated with Torah study and with deeds of kindness (Rosh Hashanah 18a).

□ There was one family in Jerusalem whose [members] used to die at the age of eighteen. They were of the house of Eli, [whom God had told,] "All the increase of your house will die young men" (I Samuel 2:33) (Rosh Hashanah 18a).

עמוס – Amos

[Prophet]

(Amos 1)

□ There were four prophets who prophesied during the same period: Hosea, Isaiah, Amos, and Micah (Pesachim 87a).

□ The eight princes among men (Micah 5:4)

□ All the people and had sycamores in the land (38a).

□ They called him "the stutterer" because he stuttered (Vayikra Rabbah 10:2).

□ The prophecies of three prophets were ascribed to the prophets themselves [even though they were the words of God] because they were words of rebuke: The words of Koheleth (Ecclesiastes 1:1); the words of Amos (Amos 1:1); and the words of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:1) (Koheles Rabbah 1:2).

□ Six hundred thirteen precepts were told to Moses at Sinai. Amos came and stressed one: Seek Me and live (Amos 5:4) (Makkos 24a).

□ Moses issued four decrees against Israel, and four prophets came and canceled them. Moses said, "Israel will dwell alone in safety when they are [righteous] like Jacob" (Deuteronomy 33:28), and Amos came and canceled it: "Cease, please! Who can be [righteous] like Jacob? [i.e., let the blessing of safety apply even though Israel is no longer as righteous as Jacob]" (Maharsha) (Amos 7:5) (Makkos 24a).

□ Why did Jeroboam, son of Joash king of Israel, merit to be listed together with the kings of Judah [in Hosea 1:1]? Because he did not accept evil reports about Amos [see Amos 7:10,11] (Pesachim 87b).

עַמְלֵק — Amalek

[Grandson of Esau] (Genesis 36:12)

□ Amalek was raised on Esau's lap (Devarim Rabbah 2:20).

□ [Amalek] asked [his father Eliphaz the Yemenite], "Father, who will inherit This World and the World to Come?" "The Children of Israel," replied [Eliphaz]. "Go out and dig wells for them and fix the lowly among them and you will enter the World to Come." But [Amalek] did not do so. Instead, he set out to destroy the world (Yalkut Shimoni, Beshalach 268).

□ What reason had Amalek to settle on the border on the way of the Israelites' entry into the Land? His

Chukas 764).

□ Whenever the Holy One, Blessed is He, blesses Amalek, He curses him (Shocheh Tov 118:1).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, took an oath by His Throne of Glory not to leave a single descendant of Amalek under heaven [and to remove any trace of them] so that it should not be said, "This tree was Amalek's, this camel was Amalek's, this lamb was Amalek's" [i.e., so that the name of Amalek will not be mentioned]. Neither the Name nor the Throne is complete until the memory of Amalek is eradicated (ibid. 9:10).

עֹמְרִי — Omri

[King of Israel] (I Kings 16:16)

□ Why did Omri merit kingship [for his son and grandson (Maharsha)]? Because he added a city to the Land of Israel, as it is written, He bought the hill of Samaria . . . and he built . . . the city (I Kings 16:24) (Sanhedrin 102b).

□ When Asa king of Judah took the daughter of Omri king of Israel as a wife for his son Jehoshaphat, it was decreed that the kingdom of the House of David would perish together with the house of Ahab. [Hence] the two of them [Ahaziah king of Israel grandson of Omri, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah] fell on the same day (Tosefta Sotah 12:3).

עַמְרָם — Amram

[Father of Moses] (Exodus 6:18)

□ Why was he called Amram [lit., "high people"]? Because from him issued a people high above all who are high (Zohar 2:19a).

□ Amram was one of the great men of his generation (Sotah 12a).

□ Amram was the head of the Sanhedrin (Shemos Rabbah 1:13).

- ... The righteous among you, such as Amram and his court. ... (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 2:8).
- At first the Shechinah dwelt mainly among earthly beings. When Adam sinned, it departed. Amram merited to bring it down from the second [firmament] to the first. Moses merited to bring it down to earth (Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 1:22).
- [The lifetimes of] seven [men] span all of world history: ... Amram saw Jacob, Ahijah the Shilonite saw Amram, Elijah saw Ahijah the Shilonite ... (Bava Basra 121b).
- Amram saw the sons of Rehabiah son of Ger-shom son of Moses (Targum Yonasan, Shemos 6:20).
- Four died because of the counsel of the serpent [i.e., only because of Adam's sin; they themselves never sinned] ... Amram father of Moses ... (Shabbos 55b).
- Seven forefathers rested in great honor, [their bodies] untouched by decay and worms: ... Moses, Aaron, and their father Amram ... (Derech Eretz Zuta 1).
- Amram took his aunt Jochebed to wife (Exodus 6:20); she was his aunt from his father's side [i.e., his father's sister] (Sanhedrin 58b).
- When the wicked Pharaoh decreed, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the Nile" (Exodus 1:22), Amram said, "We labor in vain!" and he rose and divorced his wife. [Following his example,] all [the men of Israel] rose and divorced their wives. "Father," said his daughter, "your decree is harsher than Pharaoh's. Pharaoh's decree is directed only against male [children], whereas yours is directed against the males and females" (Sotah 12a).
- A man of the house of Levi went and took to wife a daughter of Levi (Exodus 2:1). Scripture did not make [his name] known, because he had originally abandoned the decree of the Holy One, Blessed is He, [to beget offspring], and issued a different decree [a writ of divorce for his wife] (Midrash HaCadol, Shemos 2:1).
- He left [his wife] quietly and returned to his wife quietly; [therefore] their names are not mentioned (Zohar 2:19a).
- He divorced his wife during the first three months of pregnancy. Three months later he remarried her (Mechilta d'Rashbi Shemos 6:2).
- She was pregnant with Moses [when he divorced her], but Amram did not know it (Sechel Tov, Shemos 2:2).
- Amram rose and took back his wife. [Following his example,] all [of the men of Israel] rose and took back their wives. He made a new wedding ceremony; he seated her in a palanquin [for the wedding procession]. Aaron and Miriam danced before her, and the ministering angels said, "The mother of the children is glad" (Psalms 113:9) [for she would give birth to Moses while married to Amram and not as a divorcee (Maharsha)] (Sotah 12a).
- When Moses was born, the whole house was filled with light. [Miriam's] father stood and kissed her on the head [for he saw that her prophecy was being fulfilled] (Megillah 14a).

עַמְשָׂא — Amassa

[Nephew of David, captain of David's army] (II Samuel 17:25)

- Abner and Amassa were lions of Torah (Yerushalmi Pe'ah 1:1).
- The king's servants would not put forth their hands to attack the priests of Hashem (I Samuel 22:17). [The king's servants] are Abner and Amassa (Shocher Tov 52:5).
- [When Saul told Abner and Amassa to slay the priests of Nob,] they said to Saul, "What do you hold over us — the weapons and uniforms that you have given us? Here, take them back" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:2).
- Saul disguised himself ... and went, he and men with him ... and he said, "Bring me Abner and Amassa, who neither saw nor [Saul]. Abner and Amassa asked [Saul] 'What did Samuel tell you?' [Saul, knowing that he would become lost and would be killed,] replied, 'He told me, 'Tomorrow go to war and win, and your sons will be a distinction'" (Vayikra Rabbah 26:7).

□ Amassa was not wary of the sword in Joab's hand (II Samuel 20:10), for [he] did not suspect [that Joab would kill him] (Sanhedrin 49a).

□ Joab asked Amassa, "How does a man without hands divorce his wife [i.e., give her the bill of divorce]?" [Amassa] replied, "With his waist. He tips his hips, and she takes away the bill of divorce." "Show me how," requested [Joab]. While [Amassa] demonstrated, [Joab] stabbed him (Midrash HaGadol, Shemos 21:14).

□ Joab killed Amassa out of jealousy because [Amassa] had been appointed captain of [David's] army, a position equal to his. And for the very same reason did Joab kill Abner (Kadmonios HaYehudim 2:162).

□ Joab was brought to justice. They asked him, "Why did you slay Amassa?" [Joab] replied, "He was in rebellion against the king, as it is written, The king said to Amassa, 'Call me the men of Judah together within three days' . . . So Amassa went to call the men of Judah together, but he tarried longer than the set time . . ." (II Samuel 20:4,5). They said to him, "Amassa interpreted the words ארך, but, and רק, only [in the Torah] Israel engrossed in a tractate, and [he therefore did not call them together immediately, for] he said, 'It is written, any man who will rebel against your [i.e., the king's] utterance . . . will be put to death (Joshua 1:18). Can this apply also [if the king's directive is against the Torah? [It is written,] Only (רק) strengthen yourself' " (ibid.). [The word only teaches that if a king's directive interferes with Torah study, he is not to be obeyed (Rashi)] (Sanhedrin 49a).

ענה — Anah

[Father of Oholibamah, who was the wife of Esau] (Genesis 36:2)

□ Anah is Be'eri (Sechel Tov, Bereishis 36:2).

□ Zibeon consorted with his mother, and she bore him Anah (Pesachim 54a).

□ The mule was introduced in Anah's time, as it is written, The same Anah who discovered the mules in the desert (Genesis 36:24). Anah was tainted [for he was born of an incestuous union]; therefore, he

introduced a tainted animal [born of heterogeneous breeding] into the world (Pesachim 54a).

□ Zibeon and Anah [mated] a female donkey [with] a male horse, [thereby producing] a mule (Yerushalmi Berachos 8:5).

ענר — Aner

[Nobleman who made alliance with Abraham] (Genesis 14:13)

□ Kiriath Arba (ibid. 23:2) [lit., City of Four, was so named] because four righteous people dwelt there and were circumcised there: Abraham, Aner, Eshkol, and Mamrei (Bereishis Rabbah 58:4).

□ When the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Abraham to circumcise himself, he consulted his three friends [about when and where to circumcise, for these particulars were not made clear by God (Ba'alei HaTosafos)]. Aner said to him, "You are already a hundred years old, and you are going to inflict pain on yourself?" (Bereishis Rabbah 42:8).

עפרון — Ephron

[Original owner of the Cave of Machpelah] (Genesis 23:8)

□ Had Ephron seen what Abraham saw in the Cave of Machpelah, he would never have sold it. But [Ephron] saw in it nothing but darkness (Zohar 1:127b).

□ That very day [the sons of Heth] had appointed [Ephron] their ruler. "Sell the cave to Abraham," they told him. "I will not sell it to him," replied [Ephron]. "If you do not sell it to him," they said, "we will remove you from your high position and paid him (Shemos Rabbah 31:17).

□ While Abraham was weighing out the silver, Ephron stole [some]; therefore, Ephron is missing a vav [עפרון rather than עפרון] (Midrash Aggadah, Bereishis 23:16)

□ Ephron cast an evil eye on Abraham [Now] he who has an evil eye haser and knows not that want shall be removed (Proverbs 28:22). [Ephron did not know] Torah would remove a vav from his name.

Genesis 23:16. Thus he became wanting] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 58:7).

□ The wicked promise much but perform not even a little. This we learn from Ephron, who spoke of giving Abraham the cave for 400 silver shekels (*Genesis* 23:15), yet concluded by taking 400 centals [each cental is equal to 100 *maneh*, or 5,000 shekels], because there are places where centals are called shekels (*Bava Metzia* 87a).

ער – Er

[Son of Judah] (*Genesis* 38:3)

□ He was born before the sale of Joseph, when Joseph was fifteen years old (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 38:5).

□ At the age of seven, he took a wife (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 2).

□ Er and Onan cohabited [with their wives] in an unnatural manner (*Yevamos* 34b).

□ He cohabited naturally but scattered his semen without (*Bereishis Rabbah* 85:4).

□ Why did Er do so? So that [Tamar's] beauty would not be marred by her pregnancy (*Yevamos* 34b).

עֶרְפָּה – Orpah

[Daughter-in-law of Naomi] (*Ruth* 1:4)

□ Why was she called Orpah? Because she turned her back (עורף) to her mother-in-law and returned to her homeland (*Zohar Chadash, Ruth* 81b).

□ Ruth and Orpah were the daughters of Eglon king of Moab (*Ruth Rabbah* 2:9).

□ Chilion was Orpah's husband (*Tikkunei Zohar* 31:75b).

□ Heaven forbid that [Mahlon and Chilion] married [Ruth and Orpah, respectively,] when the women were still gentiles. Rather, when [the women] married they converted, and they remained with the faith as long as their husbands were alive (*Zohar Chadash, Ruth* 79a).

□ And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law . . . "God should deal kindly with you, as you have dealt kindly with the dead" (*Ruth* 1:8). [Ruth and Orpah] had taken care of their [Mahlon's and Chilion's]

shrouds; "and with me" (*ibid.*) – they had renounced their marriage settlements [they did not insist that Naomi pay them the amount they were entitled to as widows by their marriage contract] (*Ruth Rabbah* 2:8).

□ Orpah kissed her mother-in-law (*Ruth* 1:14). Said the Holy One, Blessed is He: "Let the descendants of [Orpah], who kissed, come and fall before the descendants of [Ruth], who cleaved" [i.e., Goliath in the hands of David, etc. – see *Maharsha*] (*Sotah* 42b).

□ In reward for the four tears that Orpah shed over her mother-in-law, she merited to have four mighty warriors issue from her (*ibid.*).

□ [In reward for] the forty steps that Orpah accompanied her mother-in-law, the punishment of her son [Goliath] was suspended for forty days (*Ruth Rabbah* 2:20).

□ She returned home to the fields of Moab, but because she was wanton they did not accept her. So she went to the land of the Philistines, where she bore six illegitimate sons. All of them fell by the hand of David, who was the [great-]grandson of Ruth (*Zohar Chadash, Ruth* 81b).

□ The night Orpah parted from her mother-in-law, [she consorted with] a hundred gentiles. R' Tan-chuma said: Even with a dog (*Ruth Rabbah* 2:20).

□ When Abishai son of Zeruah came to the land of the Philistines [to rescue David], he encountered [Ishbi's] mother Orpah, who was spinning. Upon seeing him, she stopped spinning and threw the distaff at him in an attempt to kill him. It fell without striking him. "Lad," she said, "bring me the spindle." Abishai threw it at her head and killed her (*Sanhedrin* 95b).

עֶשָׂהֵל – Asahel

[Brother of Joab, David's general]

(*II Samuel* 2:18)

□ Asahel was light of foot (*ibid.*). He ran over the tops of ears of grain without breaking them (*Koheles Rabbah* 9:11).

□ He would hunt deer on foot with great speed (*Yalkut Shimoni, Yirmiyahu* 284).

□ Missing of David's servants were nineteen men and Asahel (II Samuel 2:30). [Asahel is mentioned separately] because [his loss] was the most painful of all (Sifri Eikev 52).

□ Abner smote him in the homesh (II Samuel 2:23) – in the fifth (from *chamesh*, "five") rib, where the liver and the gall bladder are suspended (Sanhedrin 49a).

□ Joab asked Abner, "Why did you kill Asahel?" "Asahel was pursuing [me]," replied [Abner]. "You should have saved yourself [by striking] one of his limbs [without killing him]," said [Joab]. "I was not able to," said [Abner]. "You were able to aim for the fifth rib," said Joab, "yet you could not aim for one of his limbs!" (Sanhedrin 49a).

עֵשָׂו – Esau (Genesis 25:25)

BIRTH / PERSONALITY / WICKEDNESS / FAMILY / HONORS FATHER / GARMENTS / SALE OF THE BIRTHRIGHT / ISAAC'S BLESSINGS / HATRED OF JACOB / RECONCILIATION WITH JACOB / DEATH

BIRTH

□ The children agitated within her (ibid. v. 22). When [Rebecca] stood near synagogues and study halls, Jacob would struggle to come forth; and when she passed by temples of idol worship, Esau would push to come forth (Bereishis Rabbah 63:6).

□ They tossed up and down in her womb like ocean waves, [for] each one said, "I will be born first." Finally Esau said to Jacob, "If you do not let me go out first, I will kill my mother and leave through the stomach wall." Jacob said, "This wicked one is a murderer from his inception," and allowed [Esau] to emerge first (Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 25:22).

□ When he left his mother's womb, he cut it so that she would not bear the twelve tribal ancestors (Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Ki Seitzei 4).

□ Why did Esau issue first? So that he would leave together with his refuse [for with the opening of the womb, the blood and refuse runs, and the first to leave gets dirtied from it (Eitz Yosef)] (Bereishis Rabbah 63:8).

□ He was born completely developed, with

hair, beard, and molars (Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 25:25).

PERSONALITY

□ Both Jacob and Esau went to and from school, and no one distinguished between them for fifteen years. When they grew up, Esau became one who knows hunting (Genesis 25:27) (Tanchuma Ki Seitzei 4).

□ His face resembled that of his father (Shocher Tov 18:32).

□ Esau [means] הָא שׂוֹא – "Behold this waste that I created in My world" (Bereishis Rabbah 63:8).

□ His father called him גִּדְל, big (Genesis 27:1); his mother called him big (ibid. v. 15). The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to them, "If he is big in your eyes, in Mine he is small" (Bereishis Rabbah 65:11).

□ That is Esau, father of Edom (Genesis 36:43). He was red (ibid. 25:25); his food was red (ibid. 28:30); his land was red (ibid. 32:4); his warriors were red (Nahum 2:4); their garments were red (ibid.). He will be punished by the Red One [God] (Song of Songs 5:10) in a red garment (Isaiah 63:2) (Bereishis Rabbah 63:12).

□ One who knows hunting (Genesis 25:27). He entrapped people with his mouth. "Did you not steal? [I know you did, but what I want to know is] who stole with you. Did you not kill? [I know you did, but I want to know] who your accomplice was." [Upon finding that Esau knew of his crime, the villain would confess] (Bereishis Rabbah 63:10).

□ He judged people with cunning (Devarim Rabbah 1:17).

□ He hated peace (Shocher Tov 120:7).

□ He was a hypocrite (ibid. 14:3).

□ The boar of the forest ravages [Israel] (Psalms 80:14). [The boar] is the wicked Esau (Shocher Tov 120:6).

□ All the nations hate Esau (ibid. 9:7).

□ Esau did not rebel during the lifetime of the Patriarch Abraham (Bava Basra 16b).

□ He slew Nimrod and [Nimrod's] son Enoch (Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 25:27).

WICKEDNESS

□ He prevented Rebecca from bearing the Twelve Tribes [see BIRTH], and he prevented her bier from being taken out publicly. [When she died, Abraham was no longer alive, Isaac was blind and stayed home, and Jacob had fled [from Esau]; only Esau was present (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 3:47).

□ He sinned against the Patriarch Abraham. Abraham would have lived longer, but because of Esau his life was cut short [to spare him the pain of seeing Esau embark on a career of wickedness] (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 12:18).

□ During the five years that he caused to be cut from the life of the Patriarch Abraham, Esau committed two severe transgressions: he violated a betrothed maiden and committed murder (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 3:34).

□ *Esau* . . . [was] exhausted (*Genesis* 25:29), [for] that wicked one had committed five crimes that day [of Abraham's funeral]: he violated a betrothed maiden, committed murder, denied God, denied resurrection of the dead, and spurned the birthright (*Bava Basra* 16b).

□ *The degraded man (naval) says in his heart . . .* (*Psalms* 14:1). This refers to the wicked Esau. Why was he called *naval*, "degraded"? Because he filled the world with degradation: he built theaters, circuses, and temples of idolatry. R' Huna said: [The word *naval* comes from *nevelah*, corpse.] He filled the whole land with corpses of the people of Israel (*ibid.* 79:2). R' Abba said: He was *menuval*, degenerate. He placed a statue of himself at the entrance of brothels, toilets, and bathhouses (*Shocheh Tov* 14:3).

□ He lived among two righteous people [Isaac and Rebecca] but did not learn from their [good] deeds (*Yoma* 38b).

□ *Isaac loved Esau, for there was entrapment in his mouth* (*Genesis* 25:28). [Esau] would tell his father that he was praying with his mouth – but he was deceiving him (*Zohar* 1:139a).

□ When Esau came from outside, his father would ask him, "Where were you today?" [Esau] would reply, "In the study hall." Isaac would marvel and

exclaim, "See how careful my son is with the precepts!" (*Yelamdeinu, Batei Midrashos* 155).

□ [Esau] would [guilefully] ask his father, "Must salt be tithed?" (*Tanchuma Toldos* 8).

□ All the crimes that the Holy One, Blessed is He, detests were committed by Esau (*ibid.*).

□ Esau said to Amalek, "How I tried to kill Jacob! But he was not delivered into my hand. Set your mind to exacting my revenge" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Chukas* 764).

FAMILY

□ It had been agreed that Jacob was to marry Leah and Esau to marry Rachel. What saved Rachel from him? Jacob and Leah prayed for her (*Shocheh Tov* 55:4).

□ [Esau] married heathen women, who made smoke rise [by burning incense] before idols. When Isaac smelled it, his eyes dimmed (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 12:17).

□ For forty years, Esau had been capturing and violating other men's wives. Upon reaching the age of forty, he emulated his father and said, "Just as father married at the age of forty, so will I marry at the age of forty" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65:1).

□ He married Judith, Basemath, and Mahalath to increase his wealth (*ibid.* 82:2).

□ *He took Mahalath* (*Genesis* 28:9). R' Yehoshua ben Levi said that *מַחֲלַת* (*ibid.*) is an indication that [when he went to marry her] he resolved to repent, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, [would have been willing] to forgive (*מחל*) him for all his sins. Another of his wives was Basemath (*בַּשְׂמַת*, *ibid.* 36:3), which indicates he was exhilarated (*נִתְבַּסְּמָה דְעֵתוֹ*) with the repentance. Said R' Eliezer: If he had divorced the first [wives, who were wicked], that would have been correct. But he took Mahalath *in addition to his wives* (*ibid.*) – adding grief to grief (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:13).

□ [God said to Jacob,] "[By not giving Esau the opportunity to marry Dinah,] you withheld kindness from your brother [for by marrying Esau, Dinah could have influenced him to repent (*Eitz Yosef*)]. You did not seek to marry off [Dinah] to a

circumcised man [Esau]; she will therefore marry an uncircumcised one [Shechem]. You did not seek to marry her off in a way that is permitted; she will marry in a forbidden way." *Now Dinah . . . went out (Genesis 34:1) (Bereishis Rabbah 80:4).*

□ How many *mamzerim* [children who result from incest or adultery] were begotten by [Esau's descendants, enumerated in the Torah]? Rav said: Three. R' Levi said: Four (ibid. 82:12).

□ As long as Isaac was alive, Esau's descendants fulfilled [the precept of] circumcision. After he died, they stopped (*Yalkut Shimoni, Toldos 116*).

□ The great kingdom of Rome was built by Zepho son of Eliphaz son of Esau. Tirtat of the land of Elisha attacked him and killed him. Upon hearing of his grandson's death, Esau came to comfort [Eliphaz] (*Yelamdeinu, Batei Midrashos 160*).

HONORS FATHER

□ No one in the world honored his father as Esau honored his father — and that caused [Esau] to rule this world (*Zohar 146b*).

□ Because he honored his father, kings and rulers wished to cleave to him [and his descendants] (*Bereishis Rabbah 82:14*).

□ As long as Isaac was alive, [Esau's descendants] practiced circumcision (*Yalkut Shimoni, Beshalach 268*).

□ When [Esau] served his father, he [wore] royal robes (*Pesikta Rabbasi 24:58*).

□ Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: No man ever honored his fathers as I honored my fathers; but I found that Esau honored his father even more than I [honored mine] (*Devarim Rabbah 1:15*).

□ He is still receiving his reward for honoring his father (ibid.).

□ *Jacob said . . . "I fear [Esau] (Genesis 32:10-12), for he has been occupied all this time [of my absence] with honoring his father" (Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 32:12).*

GARMENTS

□ *Her [Rebecca's] older son Esau's coveted garments (Genesis 27:15) — which he had coveted*

from Nimrod. [Esau] had slain [Nimrod] and taken [these garments from him]. In these [garments, Esau] served his father (*Bereishis Rabbah 65:16*).

□ These garments were robes of distinction that belonged to Adam and had come into the possession of Nimrod (*Zohar 1:142b*).

□ When Adam, dressed in [these garments], would go out to the field, all the beasts and fowl of the world would flock to him (*Bereishis Rabbah 63:13*).

□ When Esau wore the garments, he, too, became mighty. Said Jacob, "That wicked one is not worthy of wearing those garments." He dug [a hole] in the earth and buried them (*Yalkut Shimoni, Toldos 115*).

□ *Esau's coveted garments, which were with [Rebecca] in the house (Genesis 27:15). [Although Esau] had several wives, [the garments] were with [Rebecca] in the house, [for Esau] knew [his wives, and did not trust them] (Bereishis Rabbah 65:16).*

SALE OF THE BIRTHRIGHT

□ Just as the [Divine] Name rested upon Jacob, so should it have rested upon Esau. Esau was worthy of producing kings, and Jacob priests. But all of these gifts were taken away from [Esau] when he sold his birthright to Jacob (*Midrash Shir HaShirim, ed. Buber 18*).

□ He sold his birthright of his own accord (*Berachos 7b*).

□ Esau hated the birthright from the beginning, and he asked Jacob to take it from him even without [paying] money (*Zohar 1:139a*).

□ Esau asked Jacob, "What is the nature of this stew?" [Jacob] replied, "It is served because that sage [Abraham] has died" [and lentils were the food customarily given to a mourner upon returning from a burial]. "That sage [although so righteous] was stricken by the Attribute of Justice [without enjoying the pleasures of a long life (*Eitz Yosef*)?]" exclaimed [Esau]. "Yes," replied [Jacob]. "If so," said [Esau], "there is neither reward nor resurrection!" (*Bereishis Rabbah 63:11*).

□ When Esau entered, he found Jacob standing and cooking, his eyes filled with smoke. Said [Esau], "All people eat whatever is available — fish, crawling

things, and the like – and you take pains to cook a plate of lentils!" Jacob replied, "If we do not do so, what will we do on that day when the righteous receive their reward [for we will have eaten forbidden foods]?" Said [Esau], "Is there a world to come? And is there resurrection of the dead?" Answered Jacob, "If there is no world to come and no resurrection of the dead, why do you need this birthright? Sell, as this day, your birthright to me" (Genesis 25:31) (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 25:31*).

□ "Pour into me, now" (Genesis 25:30). That wicked one opened his mouth like a camel and said, "I will open my mouth; you keep pouring [in the food]" (*Bereishis Rabbah 63:12*).

□ "Some of that very red stuff" (Genesis 25:30). In addition to the red dish, [Esau] also asked [Jacob] for gold, which is reddish, in payment for the birthright; for the dish alone he would not have sold it. It is written, *Esau ate and drank* (ibid. v. 34), for after giving him gold in payment for his birthright, [Jacob] also gave him food and drink so that [Esau] would sell him [the birthright] with good will (*Lekach Tov, Bereishis 25:34*).

□ "What use to me (לִי לֵה, *zeh li*) is a birthright?" (Genesis 25:32). With these words, he disgraced and blasphemed God and thus denied אֱלֹהֵי (zeh Eli), *This is my God* (Exodus 15:2) (*Bereishis Rabbah 63:13*).

□ *He ate and drank* (Genesis 25:34). He brought in with him a group of ruffians who said, "Let us eat [Jacob's food] and laugh at him [for having purchased the birthright]!" (*Bereishis Rabbah 63:14*).

□ He assembled crowds and told them, "Do you know what I did to [Jacob]? I ate his lentils and drank his wine, and I made sport of him and sold him the birthright" (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 25:34*).

ISAAC'S BLESSINGS

□ When Isaac sought to bless Esau, he did not know that [Esau] had embarked on a career of wickedness. When [Esau's] deeds were revealed to him, [Isaac] trembled in fear of the Day of Judgment (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 32:68*).

□ *Esau went . . . to hunt game to bring* (Genesis 27:5). [Esau] said, "If I find [game], well and good. If not, I will bring a stolen animal" (*Bereishis Rabbah 65:13*).

□ Throughout that day Esau hunted deer and bound them, and an angel came and released them; he hunted birds and tied them, and an angel came and freed them. Why was all this necessary? So that Jacob would [have enough time to] come and take the blessings (ibid. 67:2).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, withheld from him prey that was clean [and permissible to eat. Esau then] found a dog [that was not permissible to eat] and killed it, and *he, too, made delicacies* [for Isaac to eat] (Genesis 27:31) (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 27:31*).

□ *Jacob had scarcely left* (Genesis 27:30). The doors folded back. Jacob stood behind the door until Esau entered; then he left (*Bereishis Rabbah 66:5*).

□ When Esau entered his father's [room], *Gehinom* entered with him [as a sign to Isaac that the blessings belonged to Jacob and not to Esau] (ibid. 65:22).

□ Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, to Esau: "You said, 'Let my father rise' (Genesis 27:31); that is, let the constellation of your idolatry, which you call 'my father,' rise. By your life, I will punish you with the same expression: *Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered*" (*Psalms 68:2*) (*Bereishis Rabbah 65:18*).

□ Esau said to his father, "The main question is, what did he give you to eat?" "I do not know," replied [Isaac]. "I tasted the flavor of bread, meat, fish, all the delicacies in the world." When [Isaac] mentioned meat, [Esau] wept, saying, "He gave me one plate of lentils and took my birthright. How much more so you, to whom he gave meat [he was able to trick you into giving him your blessing]!" (ibid. 67:2).

□ [And Esau said,] "Is he not rightly called (יעקב) Jacob? For he has circumvented me these two times" (Genesis 27:36). He began to clear his throat in the manner of one who prepares to spit on

another's face [in contempt] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:4).

□ Three argued falsely with [God]: Cain, Esau, and Manasseh [king of Judah]. Esau said, "Have you but one blessing, Father? (*Genesis* 27:38). [It appears that had both Jacob and I been righteous, your God would not have been able to provide blessings for both of us!]" (*Torah Sheleimah, Tanchuma*) (*Sanhedrin* 101b).

□ *Esau raised his voice and wept* (*Genesis* 27:38). These tears caused Israel to descend into exile; and when these tears are [outweighed] by the weeping of Israel, Israel will go out of exile (*Zohar* 2:12b).

□ In reward for those two tears that Esau shed, he was given Mount Seir, where sufficient rain always falls. And in reward for taking his things and going away from his brother Jacob, a hundred provinces were given to him (*Yalkut Shimoni, Lech Lecha* 76).

□ The wicked Esau shed three tears: one [fell] from the right eye, one from the left, and the third was attached to his eye and did not drop (*Tanchuma Kedoshim* 15).

□ Jacob caused Esau to utter one cry, as it is written, *He cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry* (*Genesis* 27:34). He received his retribution [through his descendants] in Shushan the capital, as it is written, *Mordecai . . . cried out with a great and bitter cry* (*Esther* 4:1) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:4).

□ Hashem said to [Moses], "You have gone around this mountain long enough (*Deuteronomy* 2:2,3). If you harm [Esau on Mount Seir], you will be harming yourselves. His father gave [Esau] one blessing, *by your sword you will live* (*Genesis* 27:40), and to Jacob he gave ten blessings. If [Esau's] blessing is nullified, so are your ten" (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:18).

HATRED OF JACOB

□ It is a well-known rule that Esau hates Jacob (*Sifri Beha'aloscha* 69).

□ Said Esau, "Cain was a fool for killing his brother Abel during his father's lifetime; he did not know that his father would procreate and beget Seth. I

will not do thus, but may the days of mourning for my father draw near, then I will kill my brother Jacob (*Genesis* 27:41). [I.e., I will wait till my father dies, then kill Jacob,] and I will inherit his portion" (*Shocher Tov* 2:4).

□ "If I kill [Jacob], Shem and Eber will sit in judgment against me and demand, 'Why did you kill your brother?' Rather, I will go marry [the daughter of] Ishmael, and he will come and quarrel with [Isaac] about the birthright and slay him. Then I, as the blood redeemer, will attack [Ishmael] and slay him, and I will inherit two families." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Do you not know that I examine hearts?" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:8).

□ Esau went to Ishmael and said to him, "Arise and slay your brother [Isaac] and I will slay my brother [Jacob], and we will inherit the whole world." "Rather than telling me to slay your father," said Ishmael, "slay him yourself." Said [Esau], "There is a precedent for killing one's brother — Cain slew Abel — but there is no precedent for killing one's father" (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 28:9).

□ Esau set out in pursuit of Jacob at ten hours [into the day]. The Holy One, Blessed is He, obscured the light and made it night, [thus leaving] Esau in the darkness without knowing where he was going. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Do you think you are mighty?" (*Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Vayeitzei* 3).

□ What did the wicked Esau do to Jacob? He saw him [leave] empty-handed [from his father's house]. Instead of pitying him, he said, "I will precede him on the road. He will be unable to pass, and I will kill him there." Jacob raised his eyes to the Holy One, Blessed is He, Who performed miracles for him: [Jacob] placed his staff in the Jordan River. It split, and he crossed. [Meanwhile,] Esau was waiting on the road. When Esau realized that Jacob had fled across the Jordan, he pursued him and found him in a cave, a place resembling the baths of Tiberias; for Jacob had thought, "I have no bread in hand; I shall [at least] go in and warm myself in the baths." The wicked Esau came and surrounded the bath so that [Jacob] would die in it. "Wickedest one in the world," said the Holy One,

take pains to cook a plate of lentils!" Jacob replied, "If we do not do so, what will we do on that day when the righteous receive their reward [for we will have eaten forbidden foods]?" Said [Esau], "Is there a world to come? And is there resurrection of the dead?" Answered Jacob, "If there is no world to come and no resurrection of the dead, why do you need this birthright? Sell, as this day, your birthright to me" (Genesis 25:31) (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 25:31).

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will not do thus, but may the days of mourning my father draw near, then I will kill my brother Jacob (*Genesis* 27:41). [I.e., I will wait till my father dies, then kill Jacob,] and I will inherit his portion" (*Shochoer Tov* 2:4).

□ "If I kill [Jacob], Shem and Eber will bring judgment against me and demand, 'Why did you kill your brother?' Rather, I will go marry the daughter of [Ishmael], and he will come and quarrel with [Isaac] about the birthright and slay him. I, as the blood redeemer, will attack [Ishmael] and slay him, and I will inherit two families." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Do you not know that I will examine hearts?" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:8).

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□ What did the wicked Esau do to Jacob?
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Blessed is He, "do you [expect to be able to] fight against him [Jacob]?" Immediately He said to Jacob, "Why are you afraid? *Behold, I am with you*" (Genesis 28:15) (*Tanchuma*, ed. *Buber, Vayeitzei* 3).

□ What reason did Amalek have for dwelling in the path of Israel's entrance into the Land? His grandfather Esau had commanded him to encounter them on the way. So he uprooted himself and dwelt on the path (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 16:18).

RECONCILIATION WITH JACOB

□ "Four hundred men are with [Esau]" (Genesis 32:7) – four hundred heads of legions (*Bereishis Rabbah* 75:12).

□ Four thousand myriads of ministering angels in the guise of a king's host were given to Jacob. Some wore iron [armor], some rode horses, and some sat in chariots (ibid. 75:10).

□ The first group encountered [Esau]. They attacked, beat, and crushed him, "Let me go," he said, "for I am a grandson of Abraham." But they continued to beat him. "Let me go," he said, "for I am a son of Isaac." But they continued to beat him. "Let me go," he said, "for I am the brother of Jacob, who has come from Paddan-aram." And he began to plead with them: "My brother Jacob is coming after [an absence of] twenty years, and I wish to see him." They said to him, "Are you the brother of our beloved Jacob? We will let you go, out of respect and love for him. Send him our greetings." The second group encountered him and treated him like the first, and so on it went with the third and the fourth (*Tanchuma Vayishlach* 3).

□ Said Esau, "If the Holy One, Blessed is He, has bestowed such honor upon [Jacob], I will not be able to prevail against him" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 75:10).

□ [Esau] *kissed* [Jacob] (Genesis 33:4). At that moment his compassion was aroused, and he kissed him wholeheartedly (*Bereishis Rabbah* 78:9).

□ [Esau] intended not to *kiss*, לִנְשֹׁק, [Jacob] but לִנְשֹׁךְ, to *bite* him. Jacob's neck became [hard as] marble, and the teeth of that wicked one were blunted. *They wept* (Genesis 33:4). One wept on

account of his neck [which caused him pain (*Sechel Tov*)] and the other wept on account of his teeth (*Bereishis Rabbah* 78:9).

□ Esau asked, "What did you intend by that whole camp that I met?" (Genesis 33:8). "Did they do anything to you?" asked [Jacob]. "I was beaten by them," replied [Esau. Thus Esau said,] "I have plenty (ibid. v. 9) of beatings [i.e., I feel forced to admit that you are entitled to the blessings (*Eitz Yosef*)]" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 78:11).

□ "I have plenty (Genesis 33:9). I have lacked nothing on account of the blessing that you took from me. *My brother, let what you have remain yours* (ibid.) That which you acquired by your toil I will not take from you" (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 33:10).

□ Esau told [Jacob], "I have plenty (Genesis 33:9). Do not [diminish your wealth by giving me gifts" (*Eitz Yosef*).] Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "With this expression [Esau] honored [Jacob; therefore] with this expression I will tell [Jacob's descendants], 'Go away from him. *You have plenty. Go around this mountain*' " (*Deuteronomy* 2:3) (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:17).

□ The blessings were [as yet] shaky in [Jacob's] hands. They were confirmed when [Esau] said, "Let what you have remain yours" (Genesis 33:9) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 78:11).

□ Jacob said "... I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God" (Genesis 33:10). Jacob mentioned to Esau the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He, in order to frighten him (*Bereishis Rabbah* 75:10).

□ [Jacob] *urged* [Esau], and he accepted (Genesis 33:11). [Esau] put on a show of pushing away [Jacob's gift], but his hand was outstretched [to take it] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 78:12).

□ When [Esau] sold [Jacob] the birthright, Jacob said to Esau, "If you wish, you take This World, and I [will take] the World to Come." Esau took This World as his portion, and Jacob took the World to Come. When Jacob came from Laban's house, Esau saw that Jacob had wives and children, male and female servants, animals, silver, and gold. "Jacob

my brother," said Esau, "you told me you would take the World to Come. From whence do you have all [the good of] This World?" Replied Jacob, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant (Genesis 33:5). The Holy One, Blessed is He, has given to me according to my needs in This World." Esau figured, "If the Holy One, Blessed is He, has given all this to Jacob in This World, in which he has no share, how much more so in the World to Come, which is his share!" [So Esau said] to Jacob, "Come, let us make a partnership. You take half of the World to Come and This World, and I will take half." Jacob replied, "My lord knows that the children are tender (ibid. v. 13), and they will not be able to bear the suffering of your children [i.e., take your portion, that of This World, until the coming of the Messiah" (Yeshuos Yaakov)] (Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Zuta 19).

□ He went to a land because of his brother Jacob (Genesis 36:6). [Esau left the Holy Land for two reasons: One,] because of the obligation involved in the decree *Your [Abraham's] offspring shall be aliens . . . and they will oppress them . . . and the fourth generation shall return here* (ibid. 15:13-16) [i.e., Abraham's offspring would have to suffer bondage before taking possession of the Holy Land, and Esau wanted neither the bondage nor the Holy Land. Secondly,] because he was ashamed [of having sold the birthright] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 82:13).

□ When Isaac died, Jacob and Esau came and divided everything (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:17).

□ Esau said to Jacob, "Divide all that Father left into two parts, and I will choose [one], for I am the elder." Said Jacob, "The eye [i.e., greed] of this wicked one is never satisfied." He made all that his father had left one portion, and the Land of Israel with the Cave of Machpelah [the other] portion. Esau went to Ishmael and consulted him [about the choice. Ishmael] said, "The Canaanites dwell in the Land, and Jacob trusts [in God's promise] that he will be able to inherit the Land. You take what your father has left, and Jacob will have nothing [for the Canaanites will stop him]." Esau took all that his father had left, and he gave the Land of Israel and the Cave of Machpelah to Jacob. Then they wrote

[a] peace [treaty]. Said Jacob to Esau, "Go from the Land of my inheritance, the Land of Canaan." [So] he went to a Land because of his brother Jacob (Genesis 36:6) (*Yalkut Shimoni, Vayishlach* 138).

DEATH

□ Joseph went up to bury his father (Genesis 50:7). Upon arriving at the Cave of Machpelah, Esau attempted to prevent them from burying [Jacob], saying, "Mamrei is the city [where] four pairs [are buried. Two graves remained after Isaac was buried. Since [Jacob] buried Leah in his share, the remaining [grave] belongs to me." "Did you not sell it to him?" they said. "Show me the deed of sale," he demanded. "We left the document in the land of Egypt," they replied. Naphtali, who was fleet-footed, went to fetch it. Present also was Hushim son of Dan, who was deaf. "Why are you delaying [the burial]?" he asked. When they told him, he said, "Shall Grandfather be left in disgrace until Naphtali returns?" He took a club and struck Esau on the head [so hard that Esau's] eyes fell out and landed on Jacob's knees. Jacob opened his eyes and smiled (*Sotah* 13a).

□ Esau's head rolled until it reached the Cave of Machpelah, where it rested between [the folds of] his father Isaac's shroud. His body was buried by the children of Esau in the field of Machpelah (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 50:13).

□ They sent his body to Mount Seir (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer*, end of ch. 39).

□ When the Patriarch Isaac died, Esau, Jacob, and all the tribal ancestors went to bury him. [Jacob] sat and wept in the Cave of Machpelah, while the tribal ancestors stood without. Then Esau slipped into the cave, for he thought, "Now that Father is dead, I will slay [Jacob]." When Judah saw that [Esau] had gone in after [Jacob, Judah] entered [the cave] and slew Esau from behind. Why did he not slay him from the front? Because [Esau's] face resembled that of [Jacob] (*Shocheh Tov* 18:32).

□ Isaac cannot save Esau [from Gehinnom] (*Sanhedrin* 104a).

□ In times to come, the Holy One, Blessed is He, will make a feast for the righteous, [after which] He

will tell Isaac, "Take the goblet and lead the Grace [after Meals." Isaac] will reply, "I cannot lead the Grace, for Esau issued from me" (*Pesachim* 119b).

See Jacob

עַתְלִיָּה – Athaliah

[Daughter of Ahab, ruled Judah] (*II Kings* 11:11)

Four women assumed rulership in the world: Jezebel and Athaliah of Israel, Shemirmamith [wife of Nebuchadnezzar] and Vashti of the nations of the world (*Esther Rabbah* 3:2).

Athaliah mother of Ahaziah and her sons tore out the gold nails of the Temple (*Shemos Rabbah* 40:3).

Why was Joash anointed [when he became king]? [As a sign that he was the ruler and not] Athaliah [who had seized power] (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 6:1).

עַתְנִיָּאל – Othniel

[Son-in-law of Caleb] (*Joshua* 15:17)

Othniel [was so named] because עני אל, *God answered him* (*Temurah* 16a).

Othniel is Jabez. What was his [real] name? Judah, the brother of Simeon (*ibid.*).

Othniel son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb (*Judges* 3:9). [Caleb] was the stepson of Kenaz (*Sotah* 11b).

Before Joshua's sun set, the sun of Othniel son of Kenaz arose (*Bereishis Rabbah* 58:2).

Seventeen hundred [laws] were forgotten during the mourning period for Moses. Othniel son of Kenaz retrieved them through his deductive reasoning (*Temurah* 16a).

He judged Israel for forty years, [from which] the eight years of [Israel's] subjugation to Cushan-rishathaim must be deducted (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 12).

Othniel son of Kenaz presented [Israel's] case before the Holy One, Blessed is He. "Master of the World," he said, "You promised Moses that whether or not they do Your will, You will redeem them" (*Shemos Rabbah* 3:2).



פּוֹטִיפָר – Potiel

[Father of the wife of Eleazar (son of Aaron)] (*Exodus* 6:25)

He descended from Jethro, who fattened (פיטם) calves for idolatry; and from Joseph, who conquered (פיטט) his evil inclination (*Sotah* 43a).

פּוֹטִיפָר וְאִשְׁתּוֹ – Potiphar and his wife

(*Genesis* 39:1)

Potiphar purchased him [Joseph] *from the hand of the Ishmaelites* (*ibid.*). [Potiphar] said [to the Midianites (see *ibid.* 37:36)], "Everywhere the whites sell the blacks, and here the blacks are selling the whites! This is not a slave. Bring me guarantees [that he is a slave, and that no one will

come and demand his release" (*Eitz Yosef*)). Therefore, it is written, *from the hand of the Ishmaelites* [i.e., they gave their hand to the guarantee that Joseph had become the property of the Midianites] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 86:3).

Potiphar purchased him (*Genesis* 39:1). Seeing that [Joseph] was handsome, Potiphar bought him for purposes of sodomy but [consequently] became a eunuch (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 39:1).

Gabriel came and castrated him [Potiphar]. At first [Scripture] calls him Potiphar, and in the end Poti-phera [פּרַעַ referring to the removal of the membrum] (*Sotah* 13b).

[He was called] Potiphar because he fattened (פיטם) calves for idolatry; Poti-phera, because he

exposed (פרע) himself and evacuated before the idols [as part of the idolatrous service] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 86:3).

□ He saw Joseph whispering, and asked, "What are you saying?" [Joseph] replied, "I am blessing the Holy One, Blessed is He." "I would like to see Him," said his master. Said Joseph, "You cannot gaze at the sun, which is [only] one of His many servants; how will you gaze upon His Glory?" "By your life," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "for your sake I will appear to him." [Thus] *his master perceived that Hashem was with him* (*Genesis* 39:3) (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 14:3).

□ Dinah was six years old when she bore Asenath to Shechem. [The angel] Michael came and took [Asenath] to the house of Potiphar [where she was brought up and later married Joseph] (*Sofrim* 21:9).

□ Potiphar's wife [was named] Zelichah (*Sefer HaYashar, Vayeishev*).

□ [Potiphar's wife] saw in the stars that she was destined to be the ancestress of children by [Joseph], but she did not know whether she or her daughter [would bear the children] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 85:2).

□ *She called out to the men of her household* (*Genesis* 34:14). She put [Joseph] into everyone's mouth [advising them all that Joseph desires to act immorally with them (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 87:8).

□ *She kept his garment beside her* (*Genesis* 39:16). She hugged it and kissed it (*Bereishis Rabbah* 87:8).

□ "Your slave did things like these to me" (*Genesis* 39:19). This she told [her husband] at the time of conjugal intimacy (*Bereishis Rabbah* 87:9).

□ *She called out to the men of her household* (*Genesis* 39:14). She poured egg white on her bed, then called the members of her household and said, "See the semen that [Joseph] emitted!" [Joseph's] master consulted the priests, who tested it and found that it was egg white. [Therefore] they did not put him to death (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 39:14,20).

□ [Joseph's] master took him (*Genesis* 39:20). He said, "I know that you are not guilty, but I must

imprison you lest a stigma fall on my children [for the people will say she acted the same way with others, and that our children are not mine" (*Yefeh Toar*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 87:9).

□ Potiphar said to Pharaoh, "Why have you crowned my slave [Joseph]? Did I not purchase him for twenty pieces of silver?" Immediately, Joseph replied, "You deserve the death penalty for purchasing me, for slaves are only from Canaanites, whereas I am a descendant of Shem and a son of kings. King Pharaoh made an image of Sarah. Now bring the image. If it does not resemble me, you are right." They did so, and his face resembled Sarah's image (*Midrash Agaddah, Bereishis*).

□ Joseph imprisoned Potiphar for life (*Midrash Shocheh Tov* 105:7).

□ See **Joseph**

פועה – Puah (*Exodus* 1:15)

□ Puah is Miriam (*Sotah* 11b).

□ Shiphrah and Puah were proselytes (*Midrash Tadshe, Beis HaMidrash* 3:191).

□ [She was called] Puah because she poured (נפיעה) the newborns wine and revived (מפיעה) them when they appeared to be dead; she appeared (הופיעה) before Pharaoh, stuck up her nose at him, and said, "Woe to that man [i.e., Pharaoh] when God punishes him!" [Pharaoh] was filled with wrath and would have killed her, but Shiphrah appeased him, saying "Why do you pay attention to her? She is [only] a child; she has no understanding" (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:13).

□ Puah is Miriam, who wept (פיעה) over her brother [Moses when he was placed in the Nile] (*Sifri Bamidbar* 78).

□ *They did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them* (*Exodus* 1:17). He proposed to them a sinful act [i.e., to act immorally with him], and they refused (*Sotah* 11b).

□ *They gave life to the children* (*Exodus* 1:17). They did good deeds for them. They collected water and food from the houses of the rich women and gave it to the poor women, who [thus] sustained their children. [In addition,] they stood and prayed

before the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Master of the World, let the baby emerge unblemished." The Holy One, Blessed is He, heard their voice, and the [babies] emerged unblemished (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:15).

פַּהַת מוֹאָב – Pahath-moab

[Lords of Moab whose descendants returned from Babylon to Jerusalem with Ezra] (*Ezra* 2:6)

□ The children of Pahath-moab, descendant of Judah, are the children of David, [who was] a descendant of Judah. R' Yosi said: They were the children of Joab son of Zeruah (*Ta'anis* 28a).

□ On the twentieth [of Av the wood offering was brought by] the children of Pahath-moab, a descendant of Judah (*Ta'anis* 26a).

פַּלּוּא – Pallu

[Son of Reuben] (*Genesis* 46:9)

□ Even Pallu and Hezron, who were respectively one and two years old [when they went down to Egypt], had wives prepared for them, so that they would not intermarry with the Egyptians (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 46:9).

פַּלְטִי בֶן לַיִשׁ – Palti son of Laish

(*I Samuel* 25:44)

□ [Saul's] betrothal of Michal to Palti was a transgression [for she was already betrothed to David] (*Sanhedrin* 19b).

□ His name was Palti. Why was he called Paltiel [in *II Samuel* 3:15]? Because God rescued him (פלטו אל) from sin. He stuck a sword between him and [Michal] and said, "Whoever engages in this [sin] will be pierced by the sword" (*Sanhedrin* 19b).

□ Said R' Yochanan: Joseph's strength was Boaz's humility; Boaz's strength was the humility of Palti son of Laish [i.e., all three withstood temptation, but Boaz was put to a harder test than Joseph, and Palti was put to a harder test than Boaz]. Palti withstood temptation for many years (*Rashi*) and did not have relations with Michal because of the possibility that David was correct and that she was forbidden to him, even though Saul believed she was permitted to Palti (*Sanhedrin* 19b).

□ Many daughters have acted valiantly (*Proverbs* 31:29) refers to Joseph and Boaz, while *but you are raised above them all* (*ibid.*) refers to Palti the son of Laish. *False is grace* (*ibid.* v. 30) refers to Joseph; *and vain is beauty* (*ibid.*) refers to Boaz; *a God-fearing woman – she should be praised* (*ibid.*) refers to Palti son of Laish (*Sanhedrin* 20a).

□ *He went . . . until Bahurim* (*II Samuel* 3:16). The two of them [Palti and Michal] became like youths (*bahurim*) who had not yet married (*Sanhedrin* 19b).

פַּלְטִיָּהוּ בֶן בְּנֵיָהוּ – Pelatiah son of Benaiah

[Prominent person among the Babylonian exiles] (*Ezekiel* 11:1)

□ *Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. So I threw myself down upon my face and cried in a great voice* (*Ezekiel* 11:13). One Sage said [that Ezekiel's crying over Pelatiah's death] was to [Pelatiah's] credit; another Sage said this was to his discredit. On one hand, it was to his credit: When Nebuchadnezzar wished to send his Israelite captives to [serve] his son-in-law, Pelatiah son of Benaiah said to him, "We, who are distinguished, will stand before you; send our slaves to him." The prophet therefore said, "Shall one who rendered a service to Israel die in the bloom of life?" On the other hand, it was to his discredit: He had been among the twenty-five people of whom it is written, *Their backs to Hashem's Temple* (*Ezekiel* 8:16). They uncovered themselves and evacuated as an insult to God. The prophet therefore said, "Should one who has done such evil in Israel die [peacefully] on his bed?" (*Kiddushin* 72b).

פַּלְנֵי אֶלְמוֹנִי – Ploni Almoni

[Brother of Elimelech, refused to marry Ruth] (*Ruth* 4:1)

□ Ploni Almoni and Naomi's father were both sons of Nahshon son of Aminadab (*Bava Basra* 91a).

□ Ploni Almoni was mute (אלם) in the matters of Torah. He said, "The first [husbands of Ruth and Orpah] died because they took them as wives; shall I then take her? I will not contaminate my seed and I will not cause my children to become disqualified." But he was unaware of the newly

publicized law: An Amonite, not Amonitess; a Moabite, not Moabites [are forbidden to enter the congregation of God] (*Ruth Rabbah* 7:7).

פְּנַחֵס בֶּן אֱלֵעָזָר — Phinehas son of Eleazar
(*Exodus* 6:25)

PERSONALITY / SLAYS ZIMRI / BATTLE WITH
MIDIAN / MISCELLANEOUS

PERSONALITY

- One should always cleave to people of good character, as we see from Aaron, who married Aminadab's daughter and had Phinehas [as his grandson] (*Bava Basra* 109b).
- His mother's father descended from Joseph, his mother's mother from Jethro (*Sotah* 43a).
- Phinehas is Elijah (*Yalkut Shimoni, Torah* 771).
- Four people were of humble lineage [on one side] — Phinehas, Uriah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah — and Scripture found it necessary to trace their genealogies [to the illustrious side of the family] (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 13:113).
- Phinehas was the priest anointed for war (*Sotah* 43a).
- The Tribes scorned him: "Have you seen this one, whose mother's father [Jethro] fattened calves for idolatry!" (*ibid.*).
- Whoever sees Phinehas in a dream will have a miracle wrought for him (*Berachos* 56b).
- An angel of Hashem went up from Gilgal to Bochim (*Judges* 2:1). Was it not Phinehas, rather than an angel? [Yes,] but when Divine Inspiration rested upon him, his face was like a burning torch [thus resembling an angel] (*Vayikra Rabbah* 1:1).
- Hashem sent a man who was a prophet to the Children of Israel (*Judges* 6:8). That was Phinehas (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 20).
- He married a woman in Mount Ephraim. When she died, he inherited her (*Sifri Phinehas* 134).
- Divine Inspiration left Phinehas for two hundred years (*Koheles Rabbah* 10:15).
- Phinehas became an angel who lives forever,

and [he will be] the harbinger of redemption at the End of Days (*Targum Yonasan, Bamidbar* 25:12).

SLAYS ZIMRI

- Phinehas did not become a priest until he had slain Zimri. Rav Ashi says: Until he had made peace among the Tribes [i.e., between the Tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, and the rest of Israel] (see *Joshua* 22) (*Zevachim* 101b).
- He does not bear the disgrace of crimes committed by his close friends (*Psalms* 15:3). This refers to Phinehas, who was of the Tribe of Levi. Zimri was of the [companion] Tribe of Simeon, yet as soon as Zimri committed that [nefarious] act, [Phinehas] slew him, so that Israel would not be disgraced by what he did (*Shocheh Tov* 15:6).
- Had Zimri separated [from Cozbi] at the time that Phinehas slew him, [Phinehas] would have been put to death [for killing him without Zimri having been judged guilty in court]. Had Zimri turned around and slain Phinehas, [Zimri] would not have been put to death [for murder], for [Phinehas] had attacked him (*Sanhedrin* 82a).
- Phinehas said, "There is no one who is ready to risk his life by slaying [Zimri]. Where are the lions? A lion cub is Judah (*Genesis* 49:9); Dan is a cub (*Deuteronomy* 33:22)." When Phinehas saw that no man of Israel was doing anything, immediately he took a spear in his hand (*Numbers* 25:7) (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:2).
- Where was Moses? How could Phinehas speak in Moses' presence? This was to fulfill [the verse]: *There is no sovereignty on the day of death* (*Ecclesiastes* 8:8). The salvation was given into the hands of Phinehas [for the time had come for Moses to hand over his authority to others. Thus God caused Moses to forget the law that Zimri deserved to be killed, but Phinehas remembered (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 96:3).
- Phinehas said to Moses, "Great-uncle, did you not teach us when you came down from Mount Sinai that one who consorts with a gentile woman may be struck down by zealots?" Moses replied, "He who reads the order should carry it out" (*Sanhedrin* 82a).

□ Phinehas expounded, "A horse who goes into war risks his life for his master. How much more so [should] I [risk my life] for the sanctification of the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He!" He began to ponder: "What shall I do? Alone I cannot prevail. Two can overpower one; can one overpower two?" While he was pondering, the epidemic raged [among the Israelites] (*Shemos Rabbah* 33:5).

□ He took a spear in his hand (*Exodus* 25:7). He removed the blade from the handle and concealed it in his clothing. Leaning on the handle as if it were a walking stick, he went [over to] the Tribe of Simeon. [There] he said, "Where have we found the Tribe of Levi to be greater than the Tribe of Simeon? [I.e., why should the Tribe of Levi abstain from the daughters of Moab, when the Tribe of Simeon does not (*Rashi*)?]" They said, "Let him also gratify his desire." He entered [the tent in which Zimri and Cozbi were. Those who were outside said, "Evidently] the Sages have permitted it." [All these things he did to gain entrance safely to the tent of Zimri and Cozbi] (*Sanhedrin* 82a).

□ Phinehas waited until [Zimri's] strength was dissipated. [Then he entered] (*ibid.* 82b).

□ Twelve miracles were made for Phinehas at that moment: the Holy One, Blessed is He, stuck [Cozbi and Zimri] together and they did not separate, which would have prevented Phinehas from being allowed to kill them; they did not scream [for help]; he [plunged] the spear directly into their genitals; the iron did not slip out of the spear; the lintel was raised so that he could take them out [on his spear]; he carried them throughout the camp of Israel without tiring; he lifted them with his right arm for all to see their act, yet they were unable to harm him; the wood did not break under the heavy load; the iron became as long as both of them so that they did not fall from it; an angel came and turned them over so that all would see their shame; they remained alive all the while that he was carrying them so that [Phinehas,] a priest, would not become unclean through contact with a corpse; their blood solidified and did not spill on him (*Targum Yonasan, Bamidbar* 25:8).

□ He came and threw them down before the Omnipresent and said, "Shall 24,000 of Israel die because of these?" (*Sanhedrin* 44a).

□ [When he said this,] the ministering angels sought to knock him down, [but God] told them, "Leave him. He is a zealot descended from a zealot [Levi, who was zealous in the incident of Dinah], an appeaser of [God's] anger descended from an appeaser of [God's] anger [Aaron, who stayed the epidemic that followed Korah's rebellion]" (*Sanhedrin* 82b).

□ The members of the Tribe of Simeon rose to strike him, [whereupon] an angel descended and smote some among them. Seeing that [the angel] sought to annihilate them, *Phinehas arose and prayed* (*Psalms* 106:30) (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 20:25).

□ They sought to excommunicate him [for they thought he was not acting out of true zealousness (*P'nei Moshe*)] until the Spirit of Holiness hurried and said: *It shall be to him and to his seed after him the covenant of everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God and atoned for the Children of Israel* (*Numbers* 25:13) (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 9:7).

BATTLE WITH MIDIAN

□ Not for naught did Phinehas go to war [against the Midianites], but to exact retribution for his ancestor [Joseph], of whom it is written, *The Medanites* [i.e., Midianites] *had sold him to Egypt* (*Genesis* 37:36) (*Sotah* 43a).

□ Said Moses, "He who began the good deed shall finish it. He turned away [God's] wrath and smote the Midianite; he shall finish his good deed" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 22:4).

□ When the wicked Balaam saw Phinehas the priest pursuing him, [Balaam] cast a spell and flew up in the air. Immediately Phinehas pronounced the Great and Holy Name, flew after him, and pulled him down. Balaam began to plead with Phinehas: "If you let me live, I swear to you that for the rest of my life I will not curse your people." Phinehas replied, "Are you not Laban the Aramean who wished to kill the Patriarch Jacob? [Moreover, it was] you [who] went down to Egypt to [incite]

the destruction of his descendants. And when they went forth from Egypt, you incited Amalek against them. It is impossible to let you live." Thereupon [Phinehas] drew his sword and slew him (*Targum Yonasan, Bamidbar* 31:8).

□ When the wicked Balaam saw Phinehas, he made his two arms like two tablets of stone and flew upward. Using the Ineffable Name, Phinehas too made his two arms like two stone tablets and flew after him, until he found him prostrating before the Throne of Glory. Phinehas immediately placed the frontlet of the Holy One, Blessed is He, against him, pulled him down, and brought him before Moses. Then the Sanhedrin tried [Balaam] and executed him (*Yalkut Shimoni, Matos* 785).

□ Moses said to them, "Have you kept all the [Midianite] women alive?" (*Numbers* 31:15). Phinehas replied, "Our teacher, as you commanded us, so have we done" (*Sifri Matos* 157).

MISCELLANEOUS

□ Moses sent (*Numbers* 21:32) Caleb and Phinehas to spy (*Targum Yonasan*).

□ Who could see Eleazar and Phinehas, the two high priests, weeping [over Aaron's death] and not weep? (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 12:5).

□ Three thousand laws were forgotten during the period of mourning for Moses. They said to Phinehas, "Ask [through the *Urim VeTumim*]." He replied "It [the Torah] is not in the heavens [now that the Torah has been given, it is no longer possible to reveal any of its details through prophecy; it must be remembered and reconstituted through expounding the written text in the ordained manner]" (*Deuteronomy* 30:12) (*Temurah* 16a).

□ Joshua dispatched two men – spies – secretly (*חרש*) (*Joshua* 2:1). These were Phinehas and Caleb. They went with unswerving dedication and succeeded in their mission They pretended to be potters [*חרש* means pottery] and called out, "Pots for sale!" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 16:1).

□ Phinehas told [Rahab], "I am a priest, and [since] priests are likened to angels, I do not need to be hidden. Hide my colleague Caleb" (*ibid.*).

□ Jephthah vowed "... Whatever comes forth from the doors of my house to meet me ... I will offer up for a burnt offering." ... And behold, his daughter came out to meet him (*Judges* 11:30,31). Was not Phinehas available to absolve Jephthah of his vow? [He was, but he] said, "It is he who needs me; why should I go to him?" And Jephthah said, "I am the head of the captains of Israel; why should I go to him?" Between the two of them, that girl perished [i.e., she was sent into seclusion and never married. Therefore] both of them were punished ... Divine Inspiration was removed from Phinehas, as it is written, *Phinehas son of Eleazar had been prince over them* [in the past], *for Hashem had been with him* (*I Chronicles* 9:20) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:3).

□ Joshua wrote his Book [*Joshua*], and Phinehas finished it (*Bava Basra* 15a).

פִּנְחָס בֶּן אֱלִי – Phinehas son of Eli

(*I Samuel* 4:19)

□ Phinehas became high priest when his father vacated the office due to old age (*Kadmonios HaYehudim* 2:54).

□ See **Hophni**

פִּנְנָה – Peninah

(Wife of Elkanah) (*I Samuel* 1:2)

□ Peninah [taunted Hannah] for the sake of Heaven (*Bava Basra* 16a).

□ [She did it] so that Hannah would feel sorry for herself and pray. And so it was (*Midrash HaGadol* 22:1).

□ Peninah would arise early and say to Hannah, "Aren't you getting up to wash your children's faces so they can go to the teacher?" And at midday [Peninah] would say, "Aren't you preparing to welcome your children home from school?" When they sat down to eat, [Peninah] would say to Elkanah, "Give this son of mine his portion . . . you have not given that son of mine his portion" (*Pesikta Rabbasi*, end of 43).

□ [After Hannah had prayed for children,] whenever she would give birth to one son, Peninah

would bury two sons. [By the time] Hannah had given birth to four, Peninah had buried eight. [Now] Hannah was expecting the fifth and Peninah feared for her last two remaining sons, so she went to Hannah and said "I know that I have sinned against you. Forgive me, I beg you, so that the two sons I have left will live." Thereupon Hannah prayed before the Holy One, Blessed is He: "Forgive her and let her two sons live." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "By your life, they should have died, but because you prayed for them they will live. I will consider them your sons" (ibid.).

פְּעֻלְתַּי – Peullethai (I Chronicles 26:5)

□ He was called Peullethai because [his father, Obed-edom,] did (פעל) a great deed (פעולה) for the Torah – he would light one candle in the morning and one candle in the evening before the Ark [of the Covenant] (Bamidbar Rabbah 4:20).

פֶּקַח בֶּן רֵמְלִיָּהוּ – Pekah son of Remaliah

[King of Israel] (II Kings 15:25)

□ Hashem's curse is in the house of the wicked (Proverbs 3:33) [so that the wicked person is not satisfied by what he eats (Rashi)]. This refers to Pekah son of Remaliah, who would eat forty se'ah of pigeons for dessert (Sanhedrin 94b).

□ The Land of Israel was not laid waste until seven royal courts had worshiped idols there, among them Pekah son of Remaliah, Menahem son of Gadi . . . (Gittin 88a).

פַּרְעֹה – Pharaoh (Genesis 12:15)

IN ABRAHAM'S TIME / IN JOSEPH'S TIME / IN MOSES' TIME / SUBJUGATES ISRAEL / MOSES STANDS BEFORE HIM / SIGNS AND PLAGUES / THE EXODUS / SPLITTING OF THE SEA / IN HEZEKIAH'S TIME

IN ABRAHAM'S TIME

□ Pharaoh was the son of Nimrod (Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 16:5).

□ Why was he called Pharaoh? Because he exacted payment (פרעון) for burying the dead [and thereby made Egypt wealthy] (Sefer HaYashar, Lech Lecha).

□ Pharaoh hid the grain away during the years of famine [and did not sell it to other nations, causing Abraham and Isaac to feel obliged to go down to Egypt because of the famine (Eitz Yosef)]. So the people cursed him (Bereishis Rabbah 91:5).

□ Pharaoh was smitten with the plague of קִרְאָתוֹ [a debilitating skin disease] which makes cohabitation impossible. Even the walls of his house were stricken [with a plague]. And everyone said, "על דבר שרי, [It is] because of Sarai" (Genesis 15:17). R' Levi said: Throughout that night [that Pharaoh detained Sarah], the angel stood, whip in hand, and said [to Sarah], "If you tell me to strike, I will strike; and if you tell me to leave him, I will leave him." [Here על דבר שרי (ibid.) has been interpreted literally: by the word of Sarai] (Bereishis Rabbah 41:2).

□ Hashem afflicted Pharaoh (Genesis 12:17). These afflictions [were the harbinger that] caused the Egyptians to be smitten at a later date [the time of the Exodus] with great plagues (Zohar 1:82a).

□ Out of love for Sarah, Pharaoh wrote her a marriage contract in which he gave her the land of Goshen. That is why the people of Israel [during the time of Joseph] settled in the land of Goshen. And he gave her Hagar, his daughter by a concubine, as a maidservant (Yalkut Shimoni, Lech Lecha 68).

□ They escorted him and his wife (Genesis 12:20). On account of the four paces that Pharaoh accompanied Abraham, [the Egyptian kings were chosen to be the ones who would] subjugate [Abraham's] descendants for four hundred years (Sotah 46b with Maharsha).

□ See also **Abraham**

IN JOSEPH'S TIME

□ For two years, Pharaoh saw the dream nightly, but he never recalled it until the time came for Joseph to go forth from jail. Then he awoke early [one] morning and recalled it (Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 41:1).

□ No one could interpret them for Pharaoh (Genesis 41:8). They did interpret [the dreams], but the interpretations were not acceptable to Pharaoh (Bereishis Rabbah 89:6).

□ Pharaoh wished to test Joseph, so he changed [some details of] the dream. But Joseph . . . looked at each word and said, "Thus have you seen," exactly as it had to be (*Zohar* 1:196a).

□ When Pharaoh told Joseph, "Without you no man may lift up his hand or foot" (*Genesis* 41:44), Pharaoh's astrologers said, "Will you set over us a slave, whom his master bought for twenty pieces of silver?" [Pharaoh] replied, "I perceive in him the characteristics of royalty [i.e., he is of noble stock and was wrongly sold as a slave]" (*Maharsha*) (*Sotah* 36b).

□ When the famine was severe, the Egyptians gathered before Pharaoh and cried out to him. "Fools!" said [Pharaoh]. "Did Joseph not announce: 'Know that famine is coming'? It is your own fault. Why did you not leave a three- or four-year supply of grain in your houses?" They replied, "All the grain that was in our houses rotted." He told them, "Go to Joseph. Whatever he tells you, do" (*Genesis* 41:55). If he decrees upon the grain [that it rot] and it rots, perhaps he will decree upon us and kill us" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 91:5).

□ The carriages that Pharaoh sent to carry Jacob had idolatrous images engraved on them. Judah arose and burned them (*ibid.* 94:3).

□ Og was sitting before Pharaoh [when Jacob entered]. Said Pharaoh to Og, "Did you not say, 'Abraham is a sterile mule who will not beget offspring'? [Yet] here is his grandson Jacob with seventy descendants!" Said Og, "It is Abraham himself" for [Jacob's] face resembled [Abraham's]. Pharaoh [therefore] began asking [Jacob] questions: "How many years have you lived?" (*Genesis* 47:8) (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 47:8).

□ When Jacob came down to Egypt, a blessing came with him, as it is written, *Jacob blessed Pharaoh* (*Genesis* 47:10) (*Sifri Eikev* 38).

□ [Jacob] said, "May it be His will that the Nile be full and that the famine pass from the world in your day" (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 47:7).

□ In whatever language Pharaoh addressed Joseph, [Joseph] replied. [But when] Joseph began to speak the Holy Tongue, Pharaoh did not understand what

he said. "Teach me [this language]," he asked. [Joseph] taught him, but [Pharaoh] was not able to learn it. "Swear to me," he said to Joseph, "that you will not reveal that you know one language more than me," [for a king was supposed to know all languages. Joseph] swore. Later, when Joseph came and told him, "My father adjured me saying ' . . . in the land of Canaan . . . bury me'" (*Genesis* 50:5), Pharaoh [would have] said, "Ask [a sage to nullify] your oath," [but he knew that Joseph could] reply, "I will ask [a sage to nullify] my oath to you as well." [So Pharaoh] said, "Go up and bury your father as he adjured you" (*ibid.* v. 6) (*Sotah* 36b).

□ See also **Joseph**

IN MOSES' TIME

□ Said Pharaoh, "I dreamt that all of Egypt was on one pan of the balance, and a lamb was on the other, and the pan with the lamb outweighed all of Egypt." At once he sent for all the sorcerers of Egypt and told them his dream. Jeinis and Jimbrei, the chief sorcerers, said to Pharaoh, "A male child will be born in the congregation of Israel, by whose hand the whole land of Egypt will be laid waste" (*Targum Yonasan, Shemos* 1:15).

□ Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son that is born you shall cast into the river" (*Exodus* 1:22). He decreed even upon his own people, [for] the astrologers told him, "Israel's redeemer has been conceived, and we do not know whether he is an Israelite or an Egyptian." [They did not know, because, in fact, Moses was brought up by Pharaoh's daughter, so he could be considered as her child (*Eitz Yosef*).] Thereupon Pharaoh gathered all the Egyptians and said to them, "Give me [all] your sons [born in the next] nine months so that I can throw them into the Nile." But [the Egyptians] did not want to accept [the decree], for they said, "An Egyptian will never redeem them; [their redeemer can come] only from among the Hebrews" (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:18).

□ [Jochebed] brought [Moses] to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son (*Exodus* 2:10). Pharaoh hugged and kissed him, and he took off Pharaoh's crown and placed it on his own head (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:26).

□ Bithiah daughter of Pharaoh [who raised Moses] and Zipporah daughter of Jethro [who married Moses] were twins. Pharaoh and Jethro took them as foundlings from the market because of their beauty and treated them like daughters (*Midrash Talpios, Bithiah*, citing *Zohar*).

□ Pharaoh caught Moses [after he had killed the Egyptian] and sentenced him to decapitation. The sword slid off Moses' neck and broke (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 9:1).

□ The Pharaoh of Moses' time was a cubit tall, in fulfillment of the verse, *The lowest of man He will raise up over* [the kingdom] (*Daniel* 4:14) . . . He was *Magus* [a sorcerer or a blasphemer (*Rashi*)] (*Moed Katan* 18a).

□ Pharaoh was a firstborn. He alone survived of all the firstborn [smitten in the last plague] (*Mechilta Bo* 13).

□ Pharaoh ruled from one end of the world to the other, and he had governors from one end of the earth to the other — for the honor of Israel [that they not be enslaved by a humble ruler] (*Mechilta Beshalach* 14:5).

□ [All the nations] brought him tribute, and [they brought] their gods with them (*Shemos Rabbah* 15:10).

□ Pharaoh was proud of his foolishness. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, to Moses, "There is nothing to be done with this fool except to hit him with a stick." Therefore [Moses] came to him with a staff (*Midrash HaGadol, Shemos* 7:16).

□ Pharaoh knew more than all his sorcerers (*Zohar* 2:28a).

□ Pharaoh built himself a palace in the water, and he dammed the water of the Nile so that [the palace] would not drift into the sea. The water rose, raising the palace high above it. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "You exalted yourself with water; in water you will die" (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 7).

□ Four who deemed themselves god-like were molested like women: Pharaoh, Hiram, Joash, and Nebuchadnezzar (*Tanchuma Vayeira* 9).

□ Pharaoh blasphemed [against God] himself [rather than through a messenger]. The Holy One, Blessed is He, therefore punished him Himself [rather than through a messenger] (*Sanhedrin* 94a).

□ A new king arose (*Exodus* 1:7). Rav and Shmuel [disagreed]. One said: New [is to be taken] literally. The other said: [It was the same king, but] his decrees were new (*Sotah* 11a).

□ The Egyptians said to Pharaoh, "Let us attack this people [Israel]." "You are fools," he replied. "Until now we have been eating on their account, so how can we attack them? If not for Joseph, we would not be alive!" Since he would not listen to them, they deposed him for three months until he said to them, "[In] whatever you wish [to do], I am with you." Then they reinstated him. Therefore it is written, *A new king arose* (*Exodus* 1:7) (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:8).

SUBJUGATES ISRAEL

□ He issued three decrees: At first, "You shall look upon the birthstool: if it is a son, you shall kill him" (*Exodus* 1:16); afterward, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river" (*ibid.* v. 22); and finally [on the day he was told by the astrologers that Israel's redeemer had been born] he even decreed against his own people [that the newborns be killed] (*Sotah* 12a, *Rashi*).

□ Pharaoh said, "Esau was a fool, for he said, 'May the days of mourning for my father draw near; then I will kill my brother Jacob'" (*Genesis* 27:41); he did not know that his brother would beget offspring during his father's lifetime. I will not do so; as soon as they are born, I will annihilate them" (*Shocheh Tov* 2:4).

□ Why did he order them killed by the midwives? So that the Holy One, Blessed is He, would not exact retribution from him, but from [the midwives] (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:14).

□ "Every daughter you shall keep alive (*Exodus* 1:22) and we will take [them] as wives" (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:18).

□ The midwives did not do as the king of Egypt said to them (*Exodus* 1:17). That is to say, he proposed

to them a sinful act [to act immorally with him], and they refused (*Sotah* 11b).

□ *The king of Egypt died* (*Exodus* 2:23). He was stricken with leprosy, and a leper is considered as if dead. The Egyptian sorcerers told him, "The only cure for you is to slaughter the little ones of Israel – 150 every morning and [another] 150 every evening – and to bathe in their blood twice daily." A miracle was made for [Israel]: he was healed of his leprosy (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:34).

□ The removal of Pharaoh's ring [to issue decrees] against Israel in Egypt was better [for them] than the forty years that Moses prophesied to them; for the harsh decrees caused Israel to repent and be redeemed (*Eichah Rabbasi* 4:25).

□ A brick mold hung from Pharaoh's neck. If an Israelite said, "I am too delicate [to make bricks]," [the Egyptians] would retort, "Are you more delicate than Pharaoh" (*Sotah* 11a)?

□ Pharaoh said, "Whoever does not complete his work will be placed inside the structure [instead of the missing bricks]" (*Shocheh Tov* 22:6).

□ From week to week [on the Sabbath], the Israelites would delight in their scrolls, in which it was written that the Holy One, Blessed is He, would redeem them. Because they rested on the Sabbath [when they had the opportunity to read these scrolls], Pharaoh said, "Let heavier work be laid upon the men . . . and let them not delight in lying words" (*Exodus* 5:9). They shall not delight in empty words; they shall not rest on the Sabbath" (*Shemos Rabbah* 5:18, *Eitz Yosef*).

MOSES STANDS BEFORE HIM

□ His palace had four hundred entrances – a hundred on each side – each of which [was guarded by] sixty thousand warriors. [The angel] Gabriel came and brought [Moses and Aaron] in. "Who are they?" asked Pharaoh. Immediately, he had the entrance guards brought. Some he executed, some he whipped, others he replaced. The next day [Moses and Aaron] again came before Pharaoh. He called the guards and demanded, "How did they get in?" "We do not know," they replied. "They must be sorcerers, for they do not

enter through the doors" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos* 175).

□ That day was Pharaoh's birthday, and all the kings came to honor him. They brought him crowns in tribute and crowned him, for it was the anniversary of his inauguration, and they brought their gods with them. When Moses and Aaron entered, he looked at them, expecting them to give him a crown or [at least] documents, but they did not even greet him. "Who are you?" he asked. "We are the messengers of the Holy One, Blessed is He," they replied. "What do you want?" he asked. They replied, "Thus says Hashem: Let my people go . . ." (*Exodus* 5:1). Thereupon he grew angry and said, "Who is Hashem that I should hearken to His voice?" (*ibid.* v. 2). He does not [even] know [enough] to send me a crown; you come to me with [mere] words!" (*Shemos Rabbah* 5:14).

□ At that moment Pharaoh felt the need to relieve himself. He entered the lavatory, where twelve rats came and bit him on every side. He let out a great and bitter cry that was heard by the highest officials. Afterward he returned and sat on his throne, hardened his heart, and said, "I have never known Hashem" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos* 181).

□ Pharaoh tried to relieve himself, but was unable to. He pushed until his intestines came out. Moreover, rats came and bit him. He screamed so loudly that the members of his household came and saw his disgrace (*Midrash HaGadol, Shemos* 8:16).

□ He said, "Wait while I look in my book." He began to read: "The gods of Moab . . . the gods of Sidon . . ." [Then] he said, "I searched for His name in my archives but I did not find it." Thereupon he gathered all the wise men of Egypt and asked, "Have you heard the Name of their God?" They replied, "We have heard that He is the son of the wise . . . the son of ancient kings" (*Isaiah* 19:11) (*Shemos Rabbah* 5:14).

□ Pharaoh told them, "Go [now] and come back tomorrow." They did as the king bade. After they left, Pharaoh sent for Balaam and his sons, the

sorcerers, and told them what [Moses and Aaron] had said. "Those men must be sorcerers like us," said Balaam. "Send for them, and we will test them." And the king did so (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos* 176).

□ *Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers . . . (Exodus 7:11).* Pharaoh began to laugh at them and crow at them like a chicken. "Are these the signs of your God?" he said. [Thinking that Moses's signs were acts of witchcraft, he added,] "Do you not know that all witchcraft is within my power?" At once he sent for schoolchildren, and they, too, did as [Moses and Aaron had done] (*Shemos Rabbah* 9:6).

□ *Hashem said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh" (Exodus 8:16),* because the wicked Pharaoh had said, "Before [Moses and Aaron] come [and warn me concerning the plagues], I will go away from here [so that they will not find me]" (*Shemos Rabbah* 11:1; *Eitz Yosef*).

□ "Behold, he goes out to the water (*Exodus* 7:15). That wicked one boasts that he is a deity and does not have to relieve himself, so he goes out in the morning [to relieve himself secretly]. When he does, grab him" (*Shemos Rabbah* 9:8).

□ Moses grabbed him. "Let me go so I can relieve myself," [pleaded] Pharaoh. "Afterward I will speak with you." Moses replied, "Is there a deity that needs to relieve itself?" (*Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Va'eira* 16).

□ "Behold, he goes out to the water (*Exodus* 7:15). In the morning he goes out to observe the signs on the water like a sorcerer" (*Targum Yonasan*).

□ "You will place yourself to meet him (*Exodus* 7:15). He is a king; be gracious to him." R' Yochanan [interpreted this as]: "He is wicked; defy him" (*Zevachim* 102a).

□ "Lest He strike us with pestilence" (*Exodus* 5:3). [Moses and Aaron] meant [lest He strike] you [i.e., Pharaoh, because he was the king], but said us out of respect for [Pharaoh] (*Shemos Rabbah* 5:15).

□ Pharaoh said to them, "It is customary for men, young and old, to bring sacrifices, [but] not children and babies. Whoever says, [We will go

with our sons and daughters' (*Exodus* 10:9)] intends only to flee, for that is what you desire (*ibid.* v. 11). Therefore I will not listen to you" (*Shemos Rabbah* 13:5).

□ When Moses left, Pharaoh would say, "If he comes to me again, I will kill him! I will burn him!" But when Moses entered, Pharaoh would become like a stick of wood (*ibid.* 9:4).

□ *Moses said, ". . . All these servants of yours will come down to me . . ." (Exodus 11:4-8).* Moses was saying to Pharaoh, "Even if all your servants who are standing before you [to worship you] up on your platform will stand and beg me [to leave], I will not heed them [until you come to me in person]" (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 29:4).

□ [Moses] went forth from Pharaoh in anger (*Exodus* 11:8). He smacked Pharaoh and left (*Zevachim* 102a).

□ *Pharaoh . . . said, "I have sinned against Hashem your God (Exodus 10:16) by not letting Israel go, and against you (ibid.) by banishing you from my presence and by intending to curse you" (Shemos Rabbah 13:6).*

SIGNS AND PLAGUES

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Moses, "Just as the snake is cunning, so is Pharaoh cunning. When he tries his tricks, tell Aaron to wave the staff before him as if to say, 'With this staff you will be punished' " [referring to the ten plagues indicated on the staff (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Shemos Rabbah* 9:3).

□ The Omnipresent brought the punishment of ten plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt only because they did not sanctify His great Name in the world [when they said: "Who is God?" (*Exodus* 5:2)] (*Sifri Devarim* 306).

□ The wicked Pharaoh [himself] was not afflicted by the plague of blood (*Midrash HaGadol, Shemos* 7:29).

□ "Frogs . . . shall go up (וַעֲלוּ) and enter your house" (*Exodus* 7:28). The best (מְעוֹלוֹת) [i.e., the biggest] of them were in Pharaoh's house. [Since Pharaoh had started the sin, the plague began with

him. He was drinking water, and a drop fell on his heart and became a frog, from which many more frogs issued on the spot (*Shemos Rabbah* 10:2,3).

□ [Because Pharaoh had said, "Every daughter you shall keep alive" (*Exodus* 1:22) so that the Egyptians could marry them,] the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Pharaoh, "You sought to mix the seed of My beloved Abraham; I will drive you from the world with a mixture," as it says, *He sent against them a mixture of wild beasts (ערוֹב) which devoured them (Psalms 78:45) (Shocher Tov 78:11).*

□ When the Holy One, Blessed is He, saw that Pharaoh did not repent after the first five plagues, He said, "Henceforth, even if he wants to repent, I will harden his heart so that I can mete out full justice to him" (*Shemos Rabbah* 11:6).

□ When the [plague of] hail was about to come, Moses told Pharaoh, "Now therefore send, hasten [to gather] in your cattle" (*Exodus* 9:19). Pharaoh said, "Shall we now hearken to the words of the son of Amram?" (*Shocher Tov 78:14).*

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, visited plagues upon the Egyptians, but Pharaoh was not touched by them. As soon as a plague affected him personally [namely, the plague of hail], he cried out, "Hashem is righteous!" (*Exodus* 9:27) (*Shemos Rabbah* 15:10).

□ All the firstborn [Egyptians] came before Pharaoh and cried out before him, "We beg you, let this people go, for on their account evil will come upon us and upon you!" Said Pharaoh to his servants, "Go out and beat them" (*Shocher Tov* 136:6).

□ *There was a great cry in Egypt (Exodus 12:30).* They all came to kill Pharaoh. At that moment *the Egyptians were forceful [with Pharaoh] regarding [sending out] the people [of Israel] (ibid. v. 33).* Pharaoh announced to his warriors, "Come, let us call for Moses and Aaron." God said to him, "You will not send forth my children at night; they will go forth with [their] heads high at midday" (*Shemos Rabbah* 18:10).

□ *He called for Moses and Aaron (Exodus 12:31).* The children of the Israelites made sport of him.

"Pharaoh," they said, "where are you going?" "I am seeking Moses," he replied, "Here he lives," they would say, fooling him (*Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Bo 19).*

THE EXODUS

□ Pharaoh knocked at the doors of Moses and Aaron at night and said to them, "Rise up, go forth from among my people" (*Exodus* 12:31). "Fool!" replied [Moses]. "Should we rise at night? Are we thieves that we should go [stealthily] at night? In the morning we will go forth." "All of Egypt is already dying!" [pleaded] Pharaoh. "Do you want to end this plague?" said Moses. "Say: 'You are free; you are not my slaves but the servants of God.'" [Thereupon] Pharaoh cried out, "In the past you were my slaves, but now you are free" (*Shocher Tov* 113:2).

□ Pharaoh's voice became so powerful that it was heard throughout the land of Egypt, a walk of forty days. What did he say? "Rise up, go forth from among my people (*Exodus* 12:31). In the past you were the slaves of Pharaoh; henceforth you are servants of Hashem" (*Yerushalmi Pesachim* 5:5).

□ He went around to all the doors of the Israelites and said, "Go in peace" (*Shemos Rabbah* 20:10).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Pharaoh, "Whose words proved correct, mine or yours?" [At the end] Pharaoh accompanied them [as they left] and asked that they pray for him (*ibid.* 20:3).

□ *When Pharaoh let the people go (בשלח) (Exodus 13:17).* [The verb] שלח denotes escorting. What reward did he receive for [escorting the Israelites? Israel was commanded:] *You should not abhor an Egyptian (Deuteronomy 23:8) (Mechilta Beshalach Pesikta).*

□ [Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron,] "Bless me also" (*Exodus* 12:32). Pharaoh knew that he needed [their] prayer, and that the Holy One, Blessed is He, does not forgive a person [for a sin against his fellow man] until he has appeased him (*Mechilta d'Rashbi, Shemos* 12:32).

□ The high officials said to [Pharaoh] "What have you done? Among [the Israelites that have left]

were rich people, sages, craftsmen . . ." Thereupon Pharaoh began to cry, "Vay, alas!" [This is alluded to in the verse] *It came to pass (Vayehi) when Pharaoh had let the people go . . . (Exodus 13:17) (Shemos Rabbah 20:2).*

□ When did Pharaoh cry out, "Vay, alas"? When he saw them traveling as a great nation. All the while that the people of Israel had been stamping in the mud [making bricks], he had thought nothing of them (*Lekach Tov, Shemos 13:17*).

SPLITTING OF THE SEA

□ Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "You set free the fathers and cast the sons into the Nile. [I will do the opposite;] I will send you into the sea and destroy you, and I will take your daughter [Bithiah] and give her an inheritance in the Garden of Eden" (*Shemos Rabbah 20:4, Eitz Yosef*).

□ Pharaoh king of Egypt showed respect to "He Who spoke and the world came into being" [God]. He went out at the head of his hosts [rather than at the rear, like other kings, for] he said, "Am I going to greet a king of flesh and blood? I am going to greet none other than the King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed is He." Therefore, the Holy One, Blessed is He, showed him respect and punished him personally [rather than through a messenger] (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson 27:1*).

□ When Pharaoh saw that [the idol] Baal-Zephon remained intact, he said, "Baal-Zephon has agreed to my decree. I thought to destroy them with water, and Baal-Zephon agreed [for the Israelites are up against the sea]." He began to offer sacrifices and incense and to bow down to his idol. Therefore it is written, *ויפרעה הקריב, Pharaoh sacrificed (Exodus 14:10) (Mechilta Beshalach 2:2).*

□ When Pharaoh set out in pursuit of the Children of Israel, he said, "Give me a quick male horse to ride." The Holy One, Blessed is He, appeared to him as if He [God, as it were] were riding towards Pharaoh on a male horse. Then Pharaoh said, "Give me a mare that can withstand battle." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "I will appear to him as if I myself am riding towards him on a mare. As a mare in Pharaoh's chariot I revealed that you [Israel] are

My beloved" (Song of Songs 1:9). Pharaoh took arrows and shot them at Israel; the Holy One, Blessed is He, shot arrows of fire at him. When Pharaoh had finished [fighting] every way he knew and he had nothing left, the Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "Wicked one! You were rebelling against Me! Do you [believe] you can do that?" (Shocheh Tov 18:14).

□ His mare was multi-colored, and there was no other like it in the world. Upon seeing it, the male horses ran after it, and all of them entered the sea (*Midrash HaGadol, Shemos 14:23*).

□ *The water . . . covered . . . all the host of Pharaoh (Exodus 14:28)* but not Pharaoh himself. Some say: In the end Pharaoh went down [into the sea] and drowned (*Mechilta Beshalach 2:6*).

□ "I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his host" (*Exodus 14:17*). [Since] the sin began with Pharaoh, the punishment began with him (*Sifri Naso 18*).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, spared [Pharaoh], and he went and ruled in Nineveh. When the Holy One, Blessed is He, sent Jonah to Nineveh to prophesy about it and to destroy it, Pharaoh heard and [immediately] rose from his throne, rent his garments, and dressed in sackcloth and ashes (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos 176*).

□ See also **Moses**

IN HEZEKIAH'S TIME

□ Pharaoh king of Egypt and Tirhakah king of Cush were involved in the miracle [that was made for Hezekiah]: they had come to Hezekiah's aid and were discovered by Sennacherib, who bound them that evening. At midnight the angel went forth and smote Sennacherib's hosts. When Hezekiah arose in the morning and found them bound, he freed them, and they went and recounted the wonders of the Holy One, Blessed is He (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah 4:8*).

פרעה נכה — Pharaoh-necoh

[A king of Egypt]

(*II Kings 23:29*)

□ Pharaoh-necoh carried off Solomon's throne from Jerusalem and brought it to Egypt. He wished

to ascend and sit on it (*Yalkut Shimoni, Esther* 1046).

□ He did not know its functioning, and a [gold] lion [from the throne] struck him and injured him (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 27:6).

□ There was no better [example of a] “sword of peace” than [that of] Pharaoh-necoh. [He and his army were passing through Judah, with whom he was at peace, on the way to fight another country.] Nevertheless, King Josiah met his downfall through it [for trying to stop them without asking the advice of Jeremiah] (*Ta'anis* 22a).

פרעש – Parosh (Ezra 2:3)

□ On the fifth of Av and again on the first of Teves, [the wood offering was brought by] the children of Parosh, a descendant of Judah (*Ta'anis* 26a).

פרץ – Perez

[Son of Judah and Tamar] (*Genesis* 38:29)

□ “With what strength you [Perez] asserted yourself!” (ibid.). Since Solomon, the “firstborn” [i.e., foremost] of the singers [the composer of *Song of Songs*] was to issue from him, [Perez] had to be the firstborn (*Sefer HaBahir* 59).

□ At the age of seven, Perez took a wife (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 2).

□ Whenever the word תולדות, *generations* or *products*, appears in Scripture, its spelling is incomplete [one or two vavs are missing] with two exceptions: *These are the products of heaven and earth* (*Genesis* 2:4) and *These are the generations of Perez* (*Ruth* 4:18). *The products of heaven and earth* is complete because the Holy One, Blessed is He, had [just] created His world, and there was no angel of death in [it]. When Perez arose, his *generations* were complete because from him will issue the Messiah, in whose days the Holy One, Blessed is He, will swallow up death (*Shemos Rabbah* 30:3).

פרשנדתא – Parshandatha

[One of Haman's sons] (*Esther* 9:7)

□ Haman searched for a fifty-cubit beam [on

which to hang Mordecai], but the only one he found was a beam that was [set] in his own house. His son Parshandatha, who was governor of [the Mount Ararat area], had taken it from the remains of] Noah's ark (*Yalkut Shimoni, Beshalach* 256).

פשחור בן אמר – Pashhur son of Immer

[Priest who imprisoned Jeremiah]

(*Jeremiah* 20:1)

□ Four [of the twenty-four] priestly watches came up from the exile: [those of] Jedaiah, Harim, Pashhur, and Immer. Jedaiah took his own [lot] and the lots [of five] of his colleagues [who remained in exile, so that he had] six [lots in all]. Harim, Pashhur, and Immer did likewise (*Ta'anis* 27b).

□ Pashhur son of Immer had four hundred – some say four thousand – slaves, [who passed themselves off as priests by eating the priestly portion,] married the daughters of priests, and became mixed in with the true priests [of Israel] (*Kiddushin* 70b).

פשחור בן מלכיה – Pashhur son of Malchia

(*Jeremiah* 21:1)

□ Zedekiah fattened Pashhur son of Malchia and his colleagues (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:6).

פתואל – Pethuel

[Father of the prophet Joel] (*Joel* 1:1)

□ Why was he called Pethuel? Because he curled his hair (מתפתה) like a maiden [as a Nazarite, he was forbidden to cut his hair]. Another said: Because he [as it were] persuaded God (פתה אל) with his prayer. [He was Samuel the Ramathite] (*Shochoh Tov* 80:1).

□ See also **Samuel**

פתחיה – Pethahiah (Nehemiah 9:5)

□ “Pethahiah was in charge of the collection box for the Temple sacrifices” (*Shekalim* 5:1). This refers to Mordecai, who explained (פתח) words and interpreted them, and who knew seventy languages (*Menachos* 65a).

**צִבְעוֹן – Zibeon**

[Grandfather of Oholibamah, who was a wife of Esau] (Genesis 36:2)

- Zibeon consorted with his mother and begot Anah by her (*Pesachim* 54a).
- Zibeon and Anah mated a female donkey with a male horse, thereby producing a mule (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 8:5).

צְדוֹק – Zadok

[High priest] (*II Samuel* 15:24)

- Had Aaron and his sons been alive, Zadok would have been greater than they in his time (*Koheles Rabbah* 1:4).
- Zadok asked [the *Urim veTumim*] and was answered [and therefore became the high priest] (*Sotah* 48b).

צְדֵקְיָה בֶן כְּנַעֲנָה – Zedekiah son of Chenaanah

[False prophet] (*I Kings* 22:11)

- [An example of] one who prophesies that which he did not hear is Zedekiah son of Chenaanah. What could he have done, since the spirit of Naboth misled him, as it is written, *The spirit ... said ... "I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all [Ahab's] prophets"* (*I Kings* 22:21)? [Zedekiah] should have carefully examined [the words], for no two prophets prophesy with the very same words, but [in this case] all [the false prophets] were using the same words, as it is written, *"Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one mouth"* (*ibid.* v. 13) (*Sanhedrin* 89a, *Rashi*).
- Zedekiah son of Chenaanah was a wicked man. When they went to bury him, they [spied] a [Moabite] band, and in their fright, they threw his

body on the grave of Elisha. When his bones smelled the bones of Elisha, he returned to life. How much more so will the people of Israel, who cleave to the Living God and the Torah, live eternally in the World to Come! (*Yalkut Shimoni, Va'eschanan* 824).

צְדֵקְיָה בֶן מַעֲשִׂיָה – Zedekiah son of Maaseiah (*Jeremiah* 29:21)

- Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah became medical charlatans. They treated the wives of the Chaldeans and consorted with them (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 33).
- They went to Nebuchadnezzar's daughter. Ahab said to her, "Thus said Hashem: 'Submit to Zedekiah.'" And Zedekiah said to her, "Thus said Hashem: 'Submit to Ahab.'" She went and told her father, who said, "Their God hates immorality. When they come to you, send them to me." When they returned to her, she sent them to her father. "Who told you this?" he asked. "The Holy One, Blessed is He," they replied. "I asked Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah," said [Nebuchadnezzar], "and they told me it is forbidden." "We are prophets like them," said [Zedekiah and Ahab]. "To them He did not say it, but to us He did." "If so," said [Nebuchadnezzar], "I will put you to the test, as I did them." "There were three of them," said [Zedekiah and Ahab], "but there are only two of us [hence our merit is less]." Said [Nebuchadnezzar], "Choose whomever you want to be with you." They chose Joshua the high priest, for they thought they would be saved in his merit. [The three] were thrown into the fiery furnace. [Ahab and Zedekiah] were burned [to a crisp]. The garments of Joshua the high priest were singed [but he was otherwise unharmed] (*Sanhedrin* 93a).

צדקיהו בן יאשיהו – Zedekiah son of Josiah
[King of Judah] (Jeremiah 27:12)

CHRONOLOGY / PERSONALITY / KING AND REBEL /
THE TEMPLE / CAPTURED

CHRONOLOGY

- Jehoahaz reigned first, then Jehoiakim, afterward Jehoiachin, and finally Zedekiah (*Horios* 11b).
- Nebuchadnezzar died during [Zedekiah's] lifetime (*Moed Katan* 28b).
- In the fourth year of his [reign], Zedekiah, accompanied by his ministers, went down to greet Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 25).
- On the sixth of Cheshvan, they slaughtered Zedekiah's sons before his eyes and blinded him (end of *Megillas Ta'anis*).
- On the twenty-first of the twelfth month, his adversary Nebuchadnezzar died and was buried. On the twenty-sixth, Evil-merodach exhumed [Nebuchadnezzar's body] and dragged it about in order to nullify his decrees [by showing he was dead]. On the twenty-seventh Jehoiachin was taken out [of jail]. At the same time, Zedekiah died (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 28).

PERSONALITY

- Shalum, Zedekiah, Johanan, and Jehoahaz are the same person (*Horios* 11b).
- [He was called] Zedekiah because he accepted the righteousness of [Divine] Justice (צדק עליו מדת); Shalum, because in his days the reign of the House of David ended (שלמה). His [real] name was Mattaniah (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 6:1).
- Ebed-melech the Cushite (*Jeremiah* 38:7) is Zedekiah. [He is called "the Cushite" because] just as a Cushite is distinguished by his [black] skin, so was Zedekiah distinguished by his [good] deeds (*Moed Katan* 16b).
- Mattaniah thought to himself, "I will say that my name is Zedekiah [from צדיק, righteous] so that righteous descendants will issue from me." He did not know [that actually this name augured] that in his days, the Holy One, Blessed is He, would

"cause the acceptance of judgment (יצדיק)" through the burning of the Temple (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:22).

- Five were created with [some feature that was of] unearthly excellence, and all were smitten in it: Samson in his strength, Saul in his neck, Absalom in his hair, Zedekiah in his eyes, Asa in his feet [for Zedekiah was able to see at night but was blinded by Nebuchadnezzar (*Maharsha*)] (*Sotah* 10a).
- The eight princes among men (*Micah* 5:4) are Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah, Elijah, and the Messiah (*Sukkah* 52b).
- He did that which was evil in the sight of Hashem (*II Chronicles* 36:12): It was within [Zedekiah's] power to protest [the wickedness of his generation] but he did not do so (*Sanhedrin* 103a).
- The Holy One, Blessed is He, wished to return the whole world to [its primordial state of] astonishing emptiness (תהו ובהו) on account of Zedekiah's generation, but He looked at Zedekiah, and the Attribute of Strict Justice was pacified (*ibid.*).
- These Mishnahs [not found in our Mishnah] were written by five very righteous men: Shimur the Levite, Hezekiah, Zedekiah, the prophet Haggai, and the prophet Zechariah the son of Ido. [In addition,] it was they who hid the vessels of the Temple and the treasures of Jerusalem (*Rav Pe'alim* 16).
- Zedekiah fattened Pashhur son of Malciah and his colleagues, whereas concerning the one true prophet – Jeremiah – it is written, *They gave him daily a loaf of bread from outside of the bakers' street* (*Jeremiah* 37:21); [that is,] black bread which was sold outside the city, for it was darker than the bran of barley flour (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:6).
- Zedekiah king of Judah performed only one good deed [that is described in Scriptures (*Tosafos*)]: he raised Jeremiah up out of the mire (*Moed Katan* 28b).
- Nebuchadnezzar used to cast lots on the high officials to determine which one he would use each day for sodomy. When that wicked one sought to do so with the righteous [Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar]

zar's] uncircumcised organ was extended [to cause him public humiliation] (*Shabbos* 149b).

KING AND REBEL

□ When Zedekiah became king, Zion said, "Woe! Now my end has come" (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 27-28:1).
 □ When Nebuchadnezzar came to exile Jeconiah, his compassion for them was aroused and he asked, "Is there one of the seed of Josiah whom I can appoint as your king?" Mattaniah [Zedekiah] son of Josiah was present. Nebuchadnezzar crowned him king of Jerusalem and said, "Swear to me that you will not rebel against me." Zedekiah replied, "I will accept only an oath on the Torah that was given on Mount Sinai." Nebuchadnezzar brought a Torah Scroll, placed it on Zedekiah's knees, and made him swear that he would not rebel. Yet before Nebuchadnezzar was back in his land, Zedekiah rebelled against him (*ibid.* 26:20-23).

□ [Nebuchadnezzar] had him swear by the corners of the inner altar (*Esther Rabbah* 3:1).

□ [Nebuchadnezzar] appointed [Zedekiah] king over the kings of Edom, Moab, Amon, Tyre, and Zidon (*Eichah Rabbasi* 2:14).

□ Zedekiah found Nebuchadnezzar eating a live rabbit. "Swear to me," said Nebuchadnezzar, "that you will not reveal the matter and bring scorn upon me." [Zedekiah] swore. Eventually [Zedekiah] regretted [his oath, so] he had [a sage] annul it, and the matter became known (*Nedarim* 65a).

□ Zedekiah went to bring up a tribute. Nebuchadnezzar said to him, "Eat with me at noon." A meal was prepared. [Now a meal in Babylon was not like a meal in the Land of Israel.] Meat which was practically raw was brought before him. [Zedekiah] saw Nebuchadnezzar eating, his spittle dripping onto his beard. Zedekiah looked at him in wonder and thought, "To this one the whole world is subjugated!" When he departed and came to the Land of Israel, he began to scorn [Nebuchadnezzar] and he ignored the oath (*Tanchuma*, ed. Buber, *Va'eira* 18).

□ He burned the House of Hashem and the king's house (*II Kings* 28:9). This refers to Zedekiah's palace (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 12).

□ When Nebuchadnezzar descended from Jerusalem with the people of Zedekiah's exile, the people of Jehoiachin's exile went out to greet him. They were covered in black garments [of mourning] underneath and dressed in white garments [in honor of Nebuchadnezzar] on top (*ibid.* 23).
 □ The Holy One, Blessed is He, was kind to the people of Israel. He sent Zedekiah and his people into exile while the people of Jehoiachin's exile [who were Torah scholars] were still alive [to teach the new exiles] (*Gittin* 88a).

THE TEMPLE

□ All the priests who served in Zedekiah's time were uncircumcised (*Eichah Rabbasi* 1:36).

□ The treasures of the House of Hashem and the treasures of the king's house (*II Chronicles* 12:9). Hezekiah took them back from Sennacherib, and they remained [in Jerusalem until the time of Zedekiah. Eventually] the Chaldeans came and took them away from Zedekiah (*Pesachim* 119a).

□ Shimur the Levite, Hezekiah, Zedekiah, Haggai, and Zechariah son of Ido hid the vessels of the Temple and the wealth of the treasures that were in Jerusalem (*Rav Pe'alim* 16).

CAPTURED

□ "I will bring upon you a sword avenging the covenant (*Leviticus* 26:32) such as the putting out of Zedekiah's eyes [for having transgressed his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar" (*Malbim*)] (*Sifra* *Bechukosai* 5).

□ Upon seeing that the Temple had been burned, Zedekiah went out to flee through a tunnel leading to Jericho, where the water duct ran. He was tired, and his sons went first. Nebuzaradan saw him, caught him and his ten sons, and sent them to Nebuchadnezzar. "For what reason did you rebel against me?" demanded [Nebuchadnezzar]. "And now,] by what law shall I judge you? If by the law of your God, you must be slain for swearing falsely in His Name. If by the laws of the kingdom, you must die [for rebelling against the king]." Zedekiah said, "Slay me first so that I will not see the blood of my sons." And his sons said, "Slay us first so that we will not see our father's blood spilt on the ground."

and so he did: he slaughtered them before [Zedekiah]. Then he gouged out [Zedekiah's] eyes, put them in the furnace, and took him to Babylon. Zedekiah cried out, "Come and see, all mankind! Jeremiah prophesied, 'You will go to Babylon and you will die in Babylon, but your eyes will not have seen Babylon.' I did not heed his words. And here I am in Babylon, and my eyes do not see it" (Pesikta Rabbasi 26:67).

□ Iron spearheads were stuck into his eyes, but they did not lose their sight until his sons were slaughtered in his view (Yalkut Shimoni, end of Kings).

□ What did that wicked one do to [Zedekiah]? He fed him hot barley bread and gave him new wine from the wine press to drink, so that his bowels would be loosened (Esther Rabbah 3:1).

צוֹפָר הַנְּעֻמָּתִי — Zophar the Naamathite

[One of Job's friends] (Job 2:11)

□ Seven prophets prophesied to the nations of the world: Balaam and his father, Job, Eliphaz the Yemenite, Bildad the Shuhite . . . Zophar the Naamathite, and Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite (Bava Basra 15b).

□ When Job's three friends went into the house of mourning, Divine Inspiration rested upon them (Kohel Rabbah 7:2).

□ "With us are both the gray-headed and the very aged man, much older than your [Job's] father (Job 15:10): Eliphaz, who is gray-headed, Bildad, who is very aged, and Zophar, who is much older than your father" (Targum Iyov).

□ Let Bildad the Shuhite, Zophar the Naamathite, and Eliphaz the Yemenite come and testify that the people of Israel have fulfilled the whole Torah (Avodah Zarah 3a).

□ Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him . . . and they made an appointment together to come . . . to him (Job 2:11). Each was separated from the other by three hundred parasangs. How did they know to come? (Bava Basra 16b).

□ Job's three friends heard . . . (Job 2:11) when they saw the trees of their orchards dry up, the meat

ing turn into . . . had come upon one of the friends. (Job 2:11).

□ People say: Either friends like Job's, or death (Bava Basra 16b).

□ They sat silently before Job. When he rose, they rose; when he sat, they sat; when he ate, they ate; when he drank, they drank. [This went on] until he asked them for permission [to speak]. They did not speak in a disorderly manner [but each spoke in turn] (Avos d'Rabbi Nosson 37).

(I Chronicles 4:7)

צוֹהַר — Zohar

□ Zohar is Miriam, whose face was [radiant] like noon (צוֹהַרִים, zohorayim) (Sotah 12a).

צִיבָא — Ziba

[Servant of Saul]

(II Samuel 9:2)

□ Ziba was a liar (Shabbos 56a).

□ He used force to avoid being a slave to Mephibosheth (Yerushalmi Yevamos 2:6).

□ When there was discord in the house of Ishbosheth son of Saul, his servant Ziba would extend his table, whereupon the strife would cease. If he saw that they were still quarreling, he would supply them with wine as well in order to make them happy. And because Ziba put an end to dissension in his master's house, he merited sons and daughters, male and female slaves, and much wealth, and he inherited his master's house (Aleph Beis d'Ben Sira, Otzar HaMidrashim 42).

צִלָּה — Zillah

[Wife of Lamech]

(Genesis 4:19)

□ Lamech took to himself two wives (ibid.) Adah [was so named] because [Lamech] luxuriated (הִתְעַדָּר) in her; Zillah [was so named] because he dwelt in the shadow (צִל) of her children (Yerushalmi Yevamos 6:5).

□ Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, surrender yourselves to me" (Genesis 4:23). They said to him, "Soon a deluge will come [as they understood that God had decreed Cain's descendants would be destroyed after seven generations]."

Shall we bear children who are doomed?" "Let us go to Adam," he said. They went to Adam, who told them, "You do your part, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, will do His." "Doctor, heal your own wounds," said [the women]. "You have separated from Eve for 130 years." Upon hearing that, he engaged in procreation (*Bereishis Rabbah* 23:4).

□ Zillah, also she bore . . . (Genesis 4:22) – against his will and not to his benefit. Even though Lamech had not married Zillah for procreation, the Holy One, Blessed is He, wished to bring forth seed from her, and Lamech's deed [of giving her a contraceptive potion] was of no avail. From her issued Tubalcain, who forged brass-cutting implements and weapons (*Lekach Tov, Bereishis* 4:22).

□ See **Lamech; Adah**

צִלְפַּחַד וּבְנוֹתָיו – Zelophehad and his daughters

(Numbers 26:33)

□ The gatherer [of sticks on the Sabbath] was Zelophehad (*Shabbos* 96b).

□ It cannot be said that the gatherer was Zelophehad (*Sifri Zuta, Bamidbar* 15:32).

□ They found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day (*Numbers* 15:32). It was Zelophehad. He received his punishment at the time and his sin was atoned for. Moses found the case of his daughters difficult, for he did not know whether [Zelophehad] had been completely forgiven, in which case his daughters would have a share in the Land. When the Holy One, Blessed is He, mentioned his name [saying], "The daughters of Zelophehad speak right" (*ibid.* 27:7) it was clear to Moses that [Zelophehad's] sin had been atoned for (*Zohar* 3:157a).

□ Zelophehad was a firstborn (*Sifri Pinchas* 133).

□ He was one of the *Mapilim*, those who presumed to go up toward the Holy Land after God had forbidden it [see *Numbers* 14:44] (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shelach* 745).

□ Our teacher Moses knew that Zelophehad's daughters were to inherit [their father], but he did not know whether they were to receive the [extra] share to which [he, as] a firstborn, was entitled. The portion [of the Torah dealing with] inheritance

would have been [told to] Moses [in any case], but Zelophehad's daughters merited to have it recorded in connection with themselves (*Bava Basra* 119a).

□ They stood before Moses and before Eleazar and before the princes . . . (*Numbers* 27:2), who had been sitting in the study hall. [Zelophehad's daughters] went and stood before everyone (*Bava Basra* 119b).

□ "Our father died in the midbar" (*Numbers* 27:3). [The expression *midbar*, the simple meaning of which is *desert*,] is cognate with *dibur*, speech. [Zelophehad,] the head of the Tribe of Joseph, was an ignoramus who did not guard his tongue. He was insolent to Moses, and for that he died. His daughters thought that perhaps because of this, our teacher Moses did not want to give them a share in the Land. They therefore wished to have their case judged in the presence of the princes and the entire congregation, rather than before Moses alone. When Moses sensed that they suspected him, *Moses brought their cause before Hashem* (*ibid.* v. 5) (*Zohar* 3:205:2, 216:2).

□ Zelophehad's daughters were clever, interpreters [of the law], and righteous. They were clever, for they spoke at an opportune moment. Moses was expounding on the topic of levirate marriage [בְּיָוִם, which applies to the widow of a man who died childless]. They said to Moses, "If we are considered like sons, give us a possession" (*Numbers* 27:4). If not, let our mother undergo levirate marriage." They were interpreters [of the law], for they said, "If [our father] had a son, we would not have spoken [requesting a share in the Land]." They were righteous, for they married only those who were worthy of them. Even the youngest of them was at least forty years old when she married, and because they were righteous, a miracle was made for them as for Jochebed [and they bore children] (*Bava Basra* 119b).

□ "The daughters of Zelophehad speak right" (*Numbers* 27:7) – give them land; give them movables; give them their father's portion" (*Yerushalmi Bava Basra* 8:2).

□ They received three portions of inheritance: the portion to which their father was entitled as one

who had gone forth from Egypt, and his [double] share [as a firstborn] in the possessions of [his father] Hefer [even though Hefer died after his son Zelophehad] (*Bava Basra* 122b).

□ Zelophehad's daughters were equal to one another [and therefore the order of their names varies from place to place in the Torah] (*ibid.* 120a).

□ Zelophehad's daughters were permitted to marry a man from any Tribe, but they were advised to marry one worthy of them (*ibid.*).

זֶלֶק הָאֲמֹנִי – Zelek the Amonite

(*II Samuel* 23:37)

□ Zelek the Amonite was so called because he dwelt in Amon (*Kiddushin* 76b).

צִפּוֹ בֶן אֵלִיפָז – Zepho son of Eliphaz

(*Genesis* 36:11)

□ The great kingdom of Rome was built by Zepho son of Eliphaz son of Esau. Tirtat king of Elishah attacked and slew him. The wicked Esau heard of the slaying of his grandchild and came to comfort [Eliphaz] (*Yelamdeinu, Batei Midrashos* 160).

צִפְנִיָּה – Zephaniah

[Prophet]

(*Zephaniah* 1:1)

□ An example of a righteous person who is the son of a righteous person is Zephaniah son of Kushi (*Megillah* 15a).

□ The *eight princes among men* (*Micah* 54) are Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah, Elijah, and the Messiah (*Sukkah* 52b).

□ He prophesied close to the destruction [of the Temple] (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 20).

□ Zephaniah prophesied in synagogues (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:20).

צִפּוֹרָה – Zipporah

[Wife of Moses]

(*Exodus* 2:21)

□ Whoever saw her would acknowledge her beauty. [She is called] Zipporah, [meaning] "Look (צפו) and see (וראו) how beautiful!" [She is called] *the Cushite* (*Numbers* 12:1) [because] just as the Cushite [woman] is distinguished from other

women by the color of her skin, so too was Zipporah distinguished from other women by her beauty. It is written, *About the Cushite woman whom he had married* (*ibid.*). Why does it [also] say, *For he had married a Cushite woman* (*ibid.*)? [The Torah is telling us that] her physical appearance was lovely and her deeds were lovely [as well] (*Sifri Beha'aloscha* 99).

□ She was lovely in her youth and lovely in her old age. Acting [haughtily] as a ruler was totally foreign to her. She acted as a Cushite [i.e., simply] in poverty and in kingship. For that reason Moses married her (*Midrash HaGadol, Bamidbar* 12:1).

□ Bithiah daughter of Pharaoh and Zipporah daughter of Jethro were twin sisters. Pharaoh and Jethro took them as foundlings from the market because of their beauty and treated them like daughters (*Midrash Talpios, Bithiah*, citing *Zohar*).

□ "Call him that he may eat bread" (*Exodus* 2:20). Zipporah ran after [Moses] like a bird (*tzippor*) and brought him [to her father's house]. . . She purified [her father's] house [for they were all converted by Moses], like a bird [which cleans and picks up every crumb, and also is used in purifying a house afflicted with *tzara'as*, leprosy] (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:32, *Eitz Yosef*).

□ When Reuel learned that Moses had fled from Pharaoh, he cast him into a pit, and [Reuel's] granddaughter Zipporah fed him for ten years (*Targum Yonasan, Shemos* 2:21).

□ After ten years she said to her father, "Let us send and see whether he is dead or alive." Her father, who did not know that she had fed him, replied, "Can a man be jailed for ten years without eating and yet live?" Zipporah replied, "Have you not heard that the God of the Hebrews is great and awesome, and makes wonders for them at all times?" [Reuel] sent to the pit, brought [Moses] out and shaved him, and [Moses] ate bread (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos* 168).

□ Love for Moses entered her heart, and she asked her father for him. [Her father then] gave her in marriage to him (*Midrash Hashkem, Shemos* 4).

□ When Moses said to Jethro, "Give me your daughter Zipporah as a wife," Jethro said, "Agree

zar's] uncircumcised organ was extended [to cause him public humiliation] (*Shabbos* 149b).

KING AND REBEL

□ When Zedekiah became king, Zion said, "Woe! Now my end has come" (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 27-28:1).

□ When Nebuchadnezzar came to exile Jeconiah, his compassion for them was aroused and he asked, "Is there one of the seed of Josiah whom I can appoint as your king?" Mattaniah [Zedekiah] son of Josiah was present. Nebuchadnezzar crowned him king of Jerusalem and said, "Swear to me that you will not rebel against me." Zedekiah replied, "I swear by my soul." Said Nebuchadnezzar, "I will accept only an oath on the Torah that was given on Mount Sinai." Nebuchadnezzar brought a Torah Scroll, placed it on Zedekiah's knees, and made him swear that he would not rebel. Yet before Nebuchadnezzar was back in his land, Zedekiah rebelled against him (*ibid.* 26:20-23).

□ [Nebuchadnezzar] had him swear by the corners of the inner altar (*Esther Rabbah* 3:1).

□ [Nebuchadnezzar] appointed [Zedekiah] king over the kings of Edom, Moab, Amon, Tyre, and Zidon (*Eichah Rabbasi* 2:14).

□ Zedekiah found Nebuchadnezzar eating a live rabbit. "Swear to me," said Nebuchadnezzar, "that you will not reveal the matter and bring scorn upon me." [Zedekiah] swore. Eventually [Zedekiah] regretted [his oath, so] he had [a sage] annul it, and the matter became known (*Nedarim* 65a).

□ Zedekiah went to bring up a tribute. Nebuchadnezzar said to him, "Eat with me at noon." A meal was prepared. [Now a meal in Babylon was not like a meal in the Land of Israel.] Meat which was practically raw was brought before him. [Zedekiah] saw Nebuchadnezzar eating, his spittle dripping onto his beard. Zedekiah looked at him in wonder and thought, "To this one the whole world is subjugated!" When he departed and came to the Land of Israel, he began to scorn [Nebuchadnezzar] and he ignored the oath (*Tanchuma*, ed. Buber, *Va'eira* 18).

□ He burned the House of Hashem and the king's house (*II Kings* 28:9). This refers to Zedekiah's palace (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 12).

□ When Nebuchadnezzar descended from Jerusalem with the people of Zedekiah's exile, the people of Jehoiachin's exile went out to greet him. They were covered in black garments [of mourning] underneath and dressed in white garments [in honor of Nebuchadnezzar] on top (*ibid.* 23).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, was kind to the people of Israel. He sent Zedekiah and his people into exile while the people of Jehoiachin's exile [who were Torah scholars] were still alive [to teach the new exiles] (*Gittin* 88a).

THE TEMPLE

□ All the priests who served in Zedekiah's time were uncircumcised (*Eichah Rabbasi* 1:36).

□ The treasures of the House of Hashem and the treasures of the king's house (*II Chronicles* 12:9). Hezekiah took them back from Sennacherib, and they remained [in Jerusalem until the time of Zedekiah. Eventually] the Chaldeans came and took them away from Zedekiah (*Pesachim* 119a).

□ Shimur the Levite, Hezekiah, Zedekiah, Haggai, and Zechariah son of Ido hid the vessels of the Temple and the wealth of the treasures that were in Jerusalem (*Rav Pe'alim* 16).

CAPTURED

□ "I will bring upon you a sword avenging the covenant (*Leviticus* 26:32) such as the putting out of Zedekiah's eyes [for having transgressed his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar]" (*Malbim*) (*Sifra Bechukosai* 5).

□ Upon seeing that the Temple had been burned, Zedekiah went out to flee through a tunnel leading to Jericho, where the water duct ran. He was tired, and his sons went first. Nebuzaradan saw him, caught him and his ten sons, and sent them to Nebuchadnezzar. "For what reason did you rebel against me?" demanded [Nebuchadnezzar]. "And now,] by what law shall I judge you? If by the law of your God, you must be slain for swearing falsely in His Name. If by the laws of the kingdom, you must die [for rebelling against the king]." Zedekiah said, "Slay me first so that I will not see the blood of my sons." And his sons said, "Slay us first so that we will not see our father's blood spilt on the ground."

And so he did: he slaughtered them before [Zedekiah]. Then he gouged out [Zedekiah's] eyes, put them in the furnace, and took him to Babylon. Zedekiah cried out, "Come and see, all mankind! Jeremiah prophesied, 'You will go to Babylon and you will die in Babylon, but your eyes will not have seen Babylon.' I did not heed his words. And here I am in Babylon, and my eyes do not see it" (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 26:67).

□ Iron spearheads were stuck into his eyes, but they did not lose their sight until his sons were slaughtered in his view (*Yalkut Shimoni*, end of *Kings*).

□ What did that wicked one do to [Zedekiah]? He fed him hot barley bread and gave him new wine from the wine press to drink, so that his bowels would be loosened (*Esther Rabbah* 3:1).

צוֹפָר הַנְּעֻמָּתִי — Zophar the Naamathite

[One of Job's friends] (*Job* 2:11)

□ Seven prophets prophesied to the nations of the world: Balaam and his father, Job, Eliphaz the Yemenite, Bildad the Shuhite . . . Zophar the Naamathite, and Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite (*Bava Basra* 15b).

□ When Job's three friends went into the house of mourning, Divine Inspiration rested upon them (*Koheles Rabbah* 7:2).

□ "With us are both the gray-headed and the very aged man, much older than your [Job's] father (*Job* 15:10): Eliphaz, who is gray-headed, Bildad, who is very aged, and Zophar, who is much older than your father" (*Targum Iyov*).

□ Let Bildad the Shuhite, Zophar the Naamathite, and Eliphaz the Yemenite come and testify that the people of Israel have fulfilled the whole Torah (*Avodah Zarah* 3a).

□ Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him . . . and they made an appointment together to come . . . to him (*Job* 2:11). Each was separated from the other by three hundred parasangs. How did they know to come? (*Bava Basra* 16b).

□ Job's three friends heard . . . (*Job* 2:11) when they saw the trees of their orchards dry up, the meat

of their meal turn raw, and the wine they were drinking turn into blood [they knew that suffering had come upon one of the friends] (*Targum Iyov* 2:11).

□ People say: Either friends like Job's, or death (*Bava Basra* 16b).

□ They sat silently before Job. When he rose, they rose; when he sat, they sat; when he ate, they ate; when he drank, they drank. [This went on] until he asked them for permission [to speak]. They did not speak in a disorderly manner [but each spoke in turn] (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 37).

צוֹהַר — Zohar (*I Chronicles* 4:7)

□ Zohar is Miriam, whose face was [radiant] like noon (*צוהרים*, *zohorayim*) (*Sotah* 12a).

צִיבָא — Ziba

[Servant of Saul] (*II Samuel* 9:2)

□ Ziba was a liar (*Shabbos* 56a).

□ He used force to avoid being a slave to Mephibosheth (*Yerushalmi Yevamos* 2:6).

□ When there was discord in the house of Ishbosheth son of Saul, his servant Ziba would extend his table, whereupon the strife would cease. If he saw that they were still quarreling, he would supply them with wine as well in order to make them happy. And because Ziba put an end to dissension in his master's house, he merited sons and daughters, male and female slaves, and much wealth, and he inherited his master's house (*Aleph Beis d'Ben Sira*, *Otzar HaMidrashim* 42).

צֵלָה — Zillah (*Genesis* 4:19)

[Wife of Lamech]

□ Lamech took to himself two wives (*ibid.*) Adah [was so named] because [Lamech] luxuriated (*התעוּדוּ*) in her; Zillah [was so named] because he dwelt in the shadow (*צל*) of her children (*Yerushalmi Yevamos* 6:5).

□ Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, surrender yourselves to me" (*Genesis* 4:23). They said to him, "Soon a deluge will come [as they understood that God had decreed Cain's descendants would be destroyed after seven generations]."

that your first son will be dedicated to [the search for] religion [i.e., to discovering the true God by intellectual investigation]" and he agreed (*Mechilta Jethro* 1:1).

□ Zipporah went in the ways of the House of Israel. She did not fall short of the righteous Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. She bore a son whom Moses named Gershom, but by order of his father-in-law Jethro, [Moses] did not circumcise [the baby] (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos* 168).

□ *She bore a son* (*Exodus* 2:22). It does not say "she conceived" because she was young and did not look pregnant (*Lekach Tov, Shemos* 2:22).

□ How did Zipporah know [why] Moses was in danger [see *Exodus* 4:25]? The angel swallowed Moses from his head until the place of circumcision. Seeing this, Zipporah realized that he was being attacked on account of circumcision (*Shemos Rabbah* 5:8).

□ *She cut off the foreskin of her son* (*Exodus* 4:25), for Divine Inspiration was enkindled within her (*Zohar* 1:93b).

□ *After she had been sent away* (*Exodus* 18:2) with a bill of divorce. R' Eleazar the Modiite said: With words [i.e., he told her, "Go to your father's house"] (*Mechilta Jethro* 1:1).

□ *Her two sons* (*Exodus* 18:3). Because she had educated them without [Moses], the Torah calls them her sons, not his (*Zohar* 2:69b).

□ How did Miriam know that Moses was abstaining from marital relations? She saw that Zipporah did not adorn herself with women's ornaments (*Sifri Beha'aloscha* 99).

□ When the elders were appointed, all of Israel lit candles and rejoiced for them. Miriam saw the candles burning and asked Zipporah, "What are these candles for?" [Zipporah] told her. "Fortunate are the wives who see their husbands rise to high position," said Miriam. "Woe is to them," said Zipporah, "for henceforth [their husbands] will separate from them" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Beha'aloscha* 738).

□ A man should always cleave to the daughter of a good family, for from Moses, who married the daughter of Jethro [who had originally been an idol-worshiper] issued Jonathan [his grandson, who served idols] (*Bava Basra* 109b).

צֶרֶת — Zereth

(*I Chronicles* 4:7)

□ Zereth is Miriam, who became an object of envy (צרה) to her friends [because of her beauty] (*Sotah* 12a; *Rashi*).



קֹהֶלֶת — Koheleth

(*Ecclesiastes* 1:1)

□ [Solomon] had three names : Jedidiah, Solomon, and Koheleth (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:10).

□ See **Solomon**

קֶהַת — Kehath

[Son of Levi]

(*Genesis* 46:11)

□ Kehath saw Phinehas [who is identified as] Elijah (*Targum Yonasan, Shemos* 6:18).

□ At first, the essential dwelling place of the

Shechinah was among men, but when Adam sinned, it ascended on High . . . Kehath merited to bring it down from the third firmament to the second . . . (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 1:22).

קֹז — Koz

(*I Chronicles* 4:8)

□ Koz is Caleb, who cut down (קצץ) the counsel of the Spies (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:17).

קֶטוּרָה — Keturah

(*Genesis* 25:1)

□ Keturah is Hagar, who was "perfumed" (מקוטרת)

with *mitzvos* and good deeds. R' Berachiah said she was chaste (קטורה – קטורה) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 61:4).

קין – Cain

[Son of Adam]

(Genesis 4:1)

BIRTH / PERSONALITY / SACRIFICE / KILLING OF ABEL /
REGRET AND PUNISHMENT / THE SIGN / END

BIRTH

On that day [the sixth day of Creation], two [Adam and Eve] went up to bed and seven came down [that is, five children were begotten]: Cain and his twin sister, and Abel and his two twin sisters (*Bereishis Rabbah* 22:2).

He did not resemble [Adam], and his descendants are not listed in the account of Adam's descendants [see *Genesis* 5:1] (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 42).

PERSONALITY

Cain was designated for exile [for spilling the blood of his brother] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 30:8).

Cain would have returned the world to [its primordial] astonishing emptiness (תהו ובהו) [by killing Abel and incurring the death penalty. If Seth had not been born, the human race would have ceased to exist (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 2:3).

Cain has no share in the World to Come (*Avos d'Rabbi Nossan* 41:14).

The Holy One, Blessed is He, knocked on the vessels of four people and found them to be containers of urine [i.e., worthless]: Adam, Cain, Balaam, and Hezekiah. [That is, God tested them by asking them questions, which would suggest that He was unaware; and they failed the test, thinking that He did not know the answers (*Eitz Yosef*). Of] Cain [it is written], *Hashem said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" and he said, "I do not know"* (*Genesis* 4:9) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 19:11).

Cain set his sight on what was not fitting for him [namely, on the additional twin born together with his brother Abel (*Rashi*) or on the movable objects in the possession of his brother Abel (*Maharsha*)]. What he sought was not given to him, and what he already possessed was taken away from him (*Sotah* 9b).

Why didn't Adam marry his daughter? So that Cain could marry [her] (*Sanhedrin* 58b).

Cain begot a hundred children and outlived his father (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:17).

Three people had a passion for agriculture but derived no benefit from it: Cain, Noah, and Uziah (*Bereishis Rabbah* 22:3).

SACRIFICE

When the night of the Passover festival arrived, Adam said to his sons, "On this night, the people of Israel are destined to offer Passover sacrifices. You, too, offer sacrifices before your Creator." Cain brought from what was left over of his food – parched grain and flax plants. Abel brought the choicest firstlings of his flock, whose wool had not been shorn. Cain's offering was rejected, but Abel's was accepted (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 21).

Cain and Abel were forty years old when they brought their offerings (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 9).

KILLING OF ABEL

Cain was anxious to take possession of the world. When he was with his brother, they said to one another, "Come, let us divide the world." Said Cain, "You take the movables, and I the land." They [thus] divided [the world] between them. Abel was walking in the world, and Cain chased him, saying, "Get off my property!" He went to the mountains, but [Cain] said, "Get out of my property!" Finally, [Cain] rose up against Abel and killed him (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:17).

[Cain] said, "The land you are standing on is mine!" In turn, [Abel] said, "What you are wearing is mine!" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 22:7).

An additional twin girl was born together with Abel. [Cain] said, "I will take her [as a wife], for I am the firstborn," while [Abel] said, "I will take her, for she was born with me" (*ibid.*).

Abel's twin sister was a rare beauty, and Cain coveted her in his heart (*Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis* 38).

Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him (*Genesis* 4:8). He rose up against [Abel's] twin

sister [whom Abel had married] and then killed her husband (*Tikkunei Zohar* 69:113a).

- Cain said to Abel, "I observe that the world was created with mercy, but it is not conducted with reward for good deeds. There is favoritism in [Divine] judgment. Why was your offering accepted, and mine not?" Abel replied, "There is no favoritism in [Divine] judgment. It is because my deeds are better than yours that my offering has been accepted." Cain said to Abel, "There is no justice, no Judge, no World to Come, and no reward and punishment for the righteous and the wicked." Said Abel, "There is indeed justice, a Judge, a World to Come and reward and punishment." They were arguing this matter in the field. Then Cain rose up against his brother Abel, hit him in the forehead with a rock, and killed him (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 4:8).
- They grappled. Abel overpowered Cain and threw him down. "Abel, my brother," cried Cain, "do not harm me!" [Abel] was filled with compassion and released his hold, [whereupon Cain attacked [Abel] and slew him (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 9).
- Not knowing which blow would be fatal, Cain inflicted many blows and wounds on his brother Abel, until at last he reached his neck (*Sanhedrin* 37b).
- How did he slay him? R' Shimon ben Gamliel said: With a cane. Our Sages said: With a stone (*Bereishis Rabbah* 22:8).
- Cain noted on what part of the anatomy his father cut the bullock to slaughter it, and that is where he struck Abel to kill him (*ibid.*).
- After he had killed [Abel, Cain] said, "I must flee from my father and mother, for they will exact his revenge from me since there is no one else in the world." At once, the Holy One, Blessed is He, appeared to him and said, "From your parents you can flee; from Me you cannot. Woe to [Abel] for pitying you and not killing you when you fell beneath him! Now you have killed him!" "Master of the World," said [Cain], "are there talebearers before you? My father and mother, who are on earth, do not know that I killed him; You are in

heaven – how do You know?" Said [God], "Hark, the blood of your brother cries out to Me!" (*Genesis* 4:10). "Master of the World," said Cain, "I have never seen a slain person in my life. Did I know that if I would strike him with a stone, he would die?" Thereupon [God] replied, "You are cursed more than the ground" (*ibid.* v. 11). Said Cain, "Did I kill him? It was You who created in me an evil inclination. [Furthermore,] You watch over everything; You let me kill him. [Moreover,] it is You who killed him, for had You accepted my sacrifice like his, I would not have been jealous of him" (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 9).

REGRET AND PUNISHMENT

- Three argued falsely with God: Cain, Esau, and Manasseh [king of Judah]. Cain said, "Is my iniquity too great to be borne? (*Genesis* 4:13). Is my sin greater than that of the sixty myriads [of Israel] who will sin before You [in the wilderness] and whom You will forgive?" (*Sanhedrin* 101b).
- The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "Since you have repented, exile yourself from this place." Wherever he went, the earth would quake beneath him, and the beasts and cattle would say, "Let us eat him." They would gather and come to him . . . (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 9).
- Wherever he went, the Holy One, Blessed is He, would bring evil in his wake, and he would be beaten and driven out (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:17).
- Cattle, beasts, fowl, and the primeval serpent gathered to avenge Abel's blood. The Holy One, Blessed is He, told them, "Not so (לֹא כֵן – לְכֹן) whoever slays Cain (*Genesis* 4:15). Cain did not have from whom to learn [and therefore he was not sentenced to death for slaying Abel]. Henceforth, whoever kills Cain [or any other person] will be killed" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 22:12).
- [God] said to [Cain], "Four families were to have issued from your brother Abel, but you eliminated them from the world. Likewise, the earth will open its mouth and devour four families of your [descendants]." These were Enoch, Erd, Mehujael, and Methushael (*Yelamdeinu, Batei Midrashos* 147).

THE SIGN

□ Hashem set a sign (אֹת) for Cain (Genesis 4:1), a letter (אֹת) from the great and holy Name (*Targum Yonasan*).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, took one of the twenty-two letters [of the *aleph-beis* with which] the Torah [was written] and placed it on Cain's arm so that he would not be killed (*Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis* 38).

□ [The Sages offer various interpretations of the word אֹת:] He made the sun shine upon him [as a sign of Divine benevolence]; He caused him to break out in *tzara'as* (leprosy) [as a punishment, for a leper is considered as dead]; He gave him a dog [for protection]; He caused him to grow a horn. He made [Cain] himself into a [warning] sign for murderers; He made him into a sign [of encouragement] for penitents. He suspended his punishment until [a designated time, when] the Flood came and drowned him (*Bereishis Rabbah* 22:12).

□ He [made the sun set early, thereby] hastening the arrival of the Sabbath [which is called a sign in *Exodus* 31:17] (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 10).

□ [The sign] was circumcision [which is called a sign in *Genesis* 17:11. Cain] had been jealous of his brother, who had been born circumcised (*Zohar Chadash Tikkunim* 116a).

END

□ Cain left the presence of Hashem (*Genesis* 14:16). He threw [God's] words behind him [in rejection] and went out, as if fooling Him [i.e., as if God did not know his thoughts]. Adam encountered him and asked, "How did your case go?" He replied, "I repented and was granted clemency" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 22:13).

□ Cain became an angel of death. For 130 years [Cain] was a vagrant wanderer because of the curse. Lamech, a seventh-generation descendant [of Cain], was blind. He went out hunting, with his son leading him by the hand. The child said, "I see the likes of an animal," [whereupon Lamech] drew his bow and killed Cain. [Then] the child saw him and said, "Father, it looks like a dead person with a horn on his forehead." "Woe is to me," exclaimed

Lamech, "it is my forefather!" He beat his hands in regret and [accidentally] struck the child's head, killing him (*Tanchuma Bereishis* 11).

קִמּוּאֵל בֶּן מִלְכָּה – Kemuel son of Milcah
(*Genesis* 22:21)

□ Kemuel is Balaam. Why was he called Kemuel? Because he rose up (קָם) against the people of God (אֵל) (*Yalkut Shimoni, Balak* 766).

□ Laban and Kemuel are the same person (*Bereishis Rabbah*, end of 57).

קִמּוּאֵל בֶּן שִׁפְטָן – Kemuel son of Shiptan
(*Numbers* 34:24)

□ Medad (*ibid.* 11:26) is Kemuel son of Shiptan (*Bamidbar Rabbah* (15:19)).

קִנָּז – Kenaz
(*Joshua* 15:17)

□ Caleb son of Jephuneh was the stepson of Kenaz (*Sotah* 11b).

קִצִּיָּה – Keziah
(*Job* 42:14)

□ [She was called] Keziah [lit., *cassia*, a spice] because her fragrance spread like that of *cassia* (*Bava Basra* 16b).

□ [She was called] Keziah because she was as important as *cassia* (*Targum Iyov* 42:14).

קֹרַח בֶּן עֵשָׂו – Korah son of Esau
(*Genesis* 36:5)

□ This Korah was a *mamzer*, the product of a forbidden union (*Bereishis Rabbah* 82:12).

קֹרַח – Korah
(*Exodus* 6:21)

PERSONALITY / THE DISPUTE / SWALLOWED BY THE EARTH / KORAH'S SONS / AFTERMATH

PERSONALITY

□ [The members of] Korah's company have no share in the World to Come [for their dispute with Moses and Aaron] (*Sanhedrin* 109b).

□ The shares in the land that Korah's company were to have [received] went instead to Joshua and Caleb (*Bava Basra* 118b).

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□ Korah denied aspects of [God's] creation of the world (Zohar 1:17).

□ Man, in glory he shall not repose (Psalms 49:13) refers to Korah. All the while that he was in glory – the head of all the sons of Levi – he did not keep the way of God (Shochoer Tov 49:3).

□ Korah set [his] sight on what was not fitting for [him, i.e., the priesthood]. What [he] sought was not given to [him], and what he already possessed was taken away from [him, for he was swallowed up by the earth] (Sotah 9b).

□ Korah was a great scholar, one of the bearers of the Ark (Bamidbar Rabbah 18:3).

□ The Levite with the greatest [potential] was Korah, whom the Holy One, Blessed is He, created on earth in the image of the Heavenly. He was named Korah (meaning bald) at the time he was shaven (Zohar 3:49a).

□ Korah was overseer of Pharaoh's house, and the keys to [Pharaoh's] treasures were in his hands. The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to [Korah], "What benefit do you have [from this]? You will not have control over them. They are destined for Israel, who will be sent out of Egypt. But as for Korah, he shall not be rich; nor shall his substance continue (Job 15:29). After he dies, [even his own personal wealth] will not go to his children [for it will be devoured by the earth]" (Bamidbar Rabbah 18:15).

□ Joseph hid three treasures [i.e., piles, from the wealth he had accumulated selling grain during the famine (Maharsha)] in Egypt. One was discovered by Korah . . . (Sanhedrin 110a).

□ He found two of Joseph's treasures of gold and silver. With this wealth he sought to remove Moses and Aaron from the world (Targum Yonasan, Bamidbar 16:19).

□ The keys to Korah's treasury were a load for three hundred white mules (Pesachim 119a).

□ Riches hoarded by their owner, to his misfortune (Ecclesiastes 5:12) refers to the wealth of Korah [for as a result of his great wealth he became haughty and was removed from this world (Rashbam)] (Pesachim 119a).

□ Two men of wealth arose in the world of Israel, and Haman of the nations of the world both of whom perished from the world. Because their gifts were not [granted to them as reward] from the Holy One, Blessed is He, He allowed them to grab [the wealth] for themselves [without deserving it] (Bamidbar Rabbah 22:7).

□ Which [dispute] was not for the sake of Heaven? The dispute of Korah and his entire company (Avos 5:17).

□ Why did he dispute? Because his cousin Elizaphan became the prince of his family. Said Korah, "Father was one of four brothers . . . Amram was the firstborn. Of his sons, Aaron was awarded the priesthood, Moses kingship. Who is worthy of receiving the second [honor] if not the second brother, Izhar]? I, Izhar's son, should have been the prince of my family, but he [Moses] appointed Uzziel's son [Elizaphan]. Should the youngest of Father's brothers be greater than I? I will dispute with him and undo whatever he does" (Bamidbar Rabbah 18:2).

□ Korah took (ויקח) (Numbers 16:1). He undertook a deal (לקח קקח) that was detrimental to him [by initiating the dispute with Moses (Rashi)]. [He was called] Korah because [of the] depopulation (קרח) created in Israel [when his supporters were swallowed up by the earth (Rashi)] (Sanhedrin 109b).

□ What was the reason for that foolishness? His eyes misled him. He saw [through Divine Inspiration] that a distinguished line would issue from him: Samuel, who is equal to Moses and Aaron, and twenty-four [Levite] watches, all of whom would prophesy through Divine Inspiration. He said, "Can it be that with all this greatness destined to issue from me, I will keep silent [and not claim the high priesthood]?" But he did not see well; his sons repented, and [the distinguished line] issued from them. Moses [however] saw [correctly] (Bamidbar Rabbah 18:8).

□ [After Moses had taught the people laws of tzitzis (Numbers 15:38-41)], Korah jumped up and

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agree with him against my will. It is better for me not to get involved with him." When Moses saw that nothing was to be gained, he left [Korah] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:9).

□ Throughout that night, Korah was leading Israel astray. He said to them, "Do you think I am endeavoring to acquire high position for myself? I seek distinction for all of us." He went to each Tribe and persuaded it to hear [his arguments] (*ibid.* 18:10).

SWALLOWED BY THE EARTH

□ Moses said before the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Master of the World, when they cast aspersion on my brother and me, I was silent; but when they insult the Torah, I shall not be silent" (*Midrash HaGadol, Bamidbar* 16:28).

□ Our teacher Moses asked the Holy One, Blessed is He, to deal with Korah not through the Attribute of Mercy, but through the Attribute of Strict Justice (*Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer* 5).

□ "If a creation Hashem will create (*Numbers* 16:30); [that is,] if a mouth for the earth is already in creation, very well. If not, Hashem will create it now" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:12).

□ When he had finished speaking (*Numbers* 16:31). Because it was a prayer for vengeance, [Moses] was not answered until he had completed his prayer [as opposed to *Before they call, I will answer* (*Isaiah* 65:24)] (*Midrash HaGadol, Bamidbar* 16:31).

□ The earth opened up its mouth (*Numbers* 16:32). The earth became like a funnel. Wherever one of [Korah's company] was [standing], he would roll down through it into the earth's mouth. Even their garments that were at the launderer would come rolling to be swallowed with them (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:13).

□ Even their names that were on deeds, even a needle that [another] had borrowed from them, were swallowed along with them [so that no trace was left of them or their possessions] (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:1).

□ Korah was smitten worse than the others, for he was burned and then swallowed [by the earth]. At

first the fire burned him in sight [condemned] to be burned, then the fire like a ball and rolled him to the mouth with those [condemned] to be swallowed (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:19).

□ Korah's company continued to follow him. Hannah [the mother of the prophet Samuel] and prayed for them (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:1).

KORAH'S SONS

□ In what merit were the sons of Korah? When they were sitting with their fathers and saw Moses, they hung their heads and said, "If we stand up for Moses, we will be shown respect for our father. And if we do not rise up for our father, we will be shown respect for our father. And if we do not rise up for our father, we will be shown respect for our father." (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:1). We had better rise for our father, even though we will [thereby] be shown respect for our father." At that moment, repentance stirred in their hearts (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:1).

□ When the sons of Korah saw the earth opening below on one side and fire [of Gehinnom] on the other, they were unable to open their mouths to confess. But as soon as thoughts of repentance stirred in their hearts, the Holy One, Blessed is He, accepted them. Whatever thoughts of repentance the others developed as well; all three were accepted (*Shocheh Tov* 45:4).

□ The area round about them split asunder. The spot on which each stood was not [to be swallowed] but stood separately like three pillars (*ibid.* 45:4).

□ The sons of Korah were swallowed up, but since they had some thoughts of repentance, a high place was prepared for them in the earth upon which they stayed and uttered their confession (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 110a, *Maharsha*).

□ . . . Roses, for the sons of Korah. The sons of Korah, who were roses, were burned from among the thorns so they were burned along with them. Korah and his sons said, "The Holy One, Blessed is He, will burn coal pans from you." The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to them, "Why do I need golden pans from you? The silver, mine is the gold" (*Haggadah*).

KORAH / קְרַח

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Korah (ibid. 1:6).

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רְעוּבֵן – Reuben

[Son of Jacob and Leah]

PERSONALITY / DUDAIM /
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PERSONAL

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Although [Esau] sold his birthright willingly, *Esau harbored hatred toward Jacob* (Genesis 27:41); whereas my son surrendered his birthright to Joseph against his will, yet he was not jealous of him. On the contrary, *Reuben heard, and he rescued him from their hand*" (ibid. 37:21) (*Berachos* 7b).

□ "Reuben, you are my firstborn" (Genesis 49:3). [Jacob said to him:] "To [your] credit: you are a firstborn and Esau is a firstborn. *Esau went to the field to hunt game to bring* (ibid. 27:5) — if he would find [game to hunt,] very well. If not, [he intended] *to bring* a stolen [animal]. You, however, took only that which was ownerless: *Reuben went out in the days of the wheat harvest. He found dudaim* [growing wild] *in the field and brought them* (ibid. 30:14). To [your] discredit: I, [until] the age of eighty-four [when I married], had never had a nocturnal emission. But you — *Reuben went and lay with Bilhah* (ibid. 35:22). The birthright was yours, the priesthood was yours, the kingship was yours. Now that you have sinned, the birthright is given to Joseph, the priesthood to Levi, the kingship to Judah." R' Acha said: [Jacob said,] "The birthright was [never rightfully] yours. [I] went to Laban only for Rachel. I consorted with your mother [on our wedding night, when you were conceived,] thinking she was Rachel. Now the birthright has been restored to its [rightful] owner [i.e., Rachel's firstborn, Joseph]" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 98:4).

□ Reuben, Simeon, and Levi were the leaders [of the Jewish people of Israel] in Egypt. After Reuben died, the leadership was given to Simeon . . . (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:8).

□ *Reuben returned to the pit* (Genesis 37:29). He had been [busy] with his sackcloth and fasting [repenting for his sin with Bilhah]. The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to him, "Never has a person sinned before Me and repented [unless faced with punishment]. You were the first to repent; your descendant shall be the first to speak of [the greatness of] repentance." This refers to [his descendant] Hosea, [who said,] "Return, O Israel, unto Hashem your God" (Hosea 14:2) [i.e., repentance reaches unto the very Throne of Glory] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 84:19).

□ [An example of] one who asks with an illogical argument is Reuben, as it is written, *Reuben said to his father . . . "You may slay my two sons if I fail to bring him back to you. Put him in my care"* (Genesis 42:37) (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 37:13).

□ And [Jacob] said, "My son shall not go down with you. My firstborn [Reuben] is an idiot, for [he speaks of] his sons [as if I would] not [consider them also like] my sons" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 91:13).

□ "You may slay my two sons" (Genesis 42:37), i.e., place them under ban (*Targum Yonasan*).

□ Reuben was buried across the Jordan in Rumia, which Moses gave [Reuben's] descendants as an inheritance (*Sefer HaYashar*, end of *Yehoshua*).

DUDAIM

□ *Reuben went out in the days of the wheat harvest* (Genesis 30:14). This occurred during the fifth year of Leah's marriage. Reuben was four years old at the time (*Lekach Tov*, *Bereishis* 30:14).

□ *Dudaim in the field* (Genesis 30:14). He took only that which was ownerless, and did not taste [the fruits] before bringing them to his mother (*Bereishis Rabbah* 72:2).

□ He found *dudaim* but, not knowing what they were, tied his donkey to the [plant] and went off. The donkey tried to free himself, and [in doing so] uprooted the *dudaim*. They let out a mighty cry, and the donkey died, for such is the [magical] way of *dudaim*. When Reuben came and found his donkey dead, he realized that they were *dudaim*, and he gave them to his mother Leah. [The end result was that] Issachar was born. Thus the donkey that uprooted the *dudaim* caused Issachar to be born. Therefore [Jacob] said, *As for Issachar, a donkey was instrumental* (Genesis 49:14) (*Midrash Aggadah*, *Bereishis* 49:14).

THE INCIDENT OF BILHAH

□ The episode of Reuben [and Bilhah] is read [in public] but not translated [to avoid causing embarrassment to Reuben] (*Megillah* 25a).

□ Whoever says that Reuben sinned [in the manner it appears from Scripture (*Maharsha*)] is mistaken. He tampered with his father's bed, and Scripture

considers it as if he lay with [Bilhah] (*Shabbos* 55b).

□ As long as Rachel was alive, her bed was set beside Jacob's. After Rachel died, Jacob took Bilhah's bed and placed it beside his own (*Bereishis Rabbah* 98:4).

□ [Reuben] was redressing the insult to his mother [Leah]. He said, "If my mother's sister was a rival to my mother, must the handmaid of my mother's sister [also] become a rival to my mother?" He rose and tampered with her bed (*Shabbos* 55b).

□ Throughout the lifetimes of Rachel and Leah, the Divine Presence rested upon them. When they died, the Divine Presence did not leave the house but rested on the dwelling of Bilhah. Reuben came and tampered with the bed — that is, he slept on it — and he did not fear the Divine Presence (*Zohar* 1:175b).

□ [Reuben's] tampering with the bed consisted of preventing his father from using [the bed] for a *mitzvah* [procreation]. Whoever prevents [procreation] causes the Divine Presence to depart from the world (*ibid.* 1:176a).

□ Reuben said, "Father was to have produced twelve tribal ancestors, not more. Now he wishes to beget more children. Perhaps it is because we are unfit." That is why [Reuben] tampered with the bed (*ibid.*).

□ Reuben was not ashamed to confess [his sin]. What was his end? He acquired the life of the World to Come (*Sotah* 7b).

□ Who caused Reuben to confess? Judah [by setting an example (*Rashi*)] (*Sotah* 7b).

THE SALE OF JOSEPH

□ Reuben . . . rescued [Joseph] from their hands (*Genesis* 37:21). Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "You were the first to rescue a life. By your life, the first city of refuge will be designated in your boundaries: *Bezer in the desert . . . of the Reubenites*" (*Deuteronomy* 4:43) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 84:15).

□ Reuben returned to the pit (*Genesis* 37:29). Where had he been? Each one of [the tribal ancestors] would serve his father one day, and that day it was Reuben's [turn]. Reuben [returned to

rescue Joseph because he] said, "Since I am the firstborn, the sin will be blamed on me." Our Sages said: Reuben said, "I thought I would be distanced because of the matter [of Bilhah], yet [Joseph] counted me along with my brothers [when he said], 'Eleven stars were bowing down to me' (*ibid.* v. 9). Should I not save him?" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 84:15).

□ Reuben did not join [the brothers] in their meal [and was therefore not present] when they sold [Joseph], for he was fasting [in penitence] for having tampered with his father's bed. [Instead,] he had gone and sat between the hills. He thought to return and bring [Joseph] up from the pit and return him to his father [in the hope that his father] would then forgive him and show him favor (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 37:29).

□ All the cares of the house were cast upon [Reuben]. When he was free, he went and looked into the pit (*Bereishis Rabbah* 84:19).

□ They told Reuben that they had proclaimed a solemn ban (*חרם*) [forbidding anyone to divulge to Jacob that Joseph had been sold]. After hearing the ban, [Reuben] kept silent (*Yalkut Shimoni, Vayei-shev* 142).

□ Had Reuben known that the Holy One, Blessed is He, would write of him, *Reuben heard, and he rescued him from their hand* (*Genesis* 37:21), he would have carried [Joseph] on his shoulders back to his father (*Ruth Rabbah* 5:6).

רְאִיָּה — Reaiah (I Chronicles 4:2)

□ Bezalel is [the name] by which his people called him. But the Holy One, Blessed is He, called him by five names of endearment connected with the Tabernacle: [Reaiah, Shobal, Jahath, Ahumai, and Lahad;] Reaiah, for God showed (*הראה*) him to Moses and all Israel and said to them, "From the beginning of Creation I have set him aside to build the Tabernacle]" (*Shemos Rabbah* 40:4).

ראש בן בנימין — Rosh son of Benjamin (*Genesis* 46:21)

□ All of [Benjamin's sons] were named for [Joseph]: Rosh, for [Benjamin said,] "He [Joseph] was my superior (*ראש*)" (*Sotah* 36b).

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רבקה — Rebecca

(Genesis 22:23)

PERSONALITY / MARRIAGE / PREGNANCY / JACOB'S
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PERSONALITY

- Only four women are called Matriarchs [Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah] (*Berachos* 16b).
- Who are the women in the tent? (*Judges* 5:24)? Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah (*Horios* 10b).
- Before the Holy One, Blessed is He, caused Sarah's sun to set, he caused Rebecca's sun to rise (*Bereishis Rabbah* 58:2).
- Rebecca was the image of Sarah (*Zohar* 1:133a).
- Isaac wrote in her marriage contract that he would provide her with two goat kids daily (*Bereishis Rabbah* 64:14).
- When Esau emerged from his mother's womb, he cut it so that she would not give birth to the Twelve Tribes (*Tanchuma*, ed. *Buber*, *Ki Seitzei* 4).
- Rebecca, being the daughter of idolatrous priests, was not irritated [as much as Isaac] by the filth of idolatry (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65:4).
- Rebecca loved Jacob (*Genesis* 25:28). Whenever she heard his voice, her love for him would increase (*Bereishis Rabbah* 63:10).
- She innocently said, "Remain . . . a short while until your brother's wrath subsides" (*Genesis* 27:44). [Esau,] however, did not [relinquish his wrath]; he kept his wrath forever (*Amos* 1:11) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:10).

MARRIAGE

- This daughter of kings [Rebecca], who had never in her life gone out to draw water, went out at that moment [that Eliezer came] to draw water (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 16).
- All the women went down to fill [their pitchers with water] from the well. But as for [Rebecca] — as soon as the water saw her, it rose up (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:5).
- The first woman to marry a man who had been circumcised at the age of eight days was Rebecca (*ibid.*).

Whom no man had known (*Genesis* 24:16). No one even asked for her [because the righteous are protected from the wicked] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:5).

She said, "I will go (*Genesis* 24:58) [even if it is] against your will" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:12).

[She was] a virgin (*Genesis* 24:16), having maintained her virginity. Whom no man had known (*ibid.*), even through unnatural relations (*Yerushalmi Kesubos* 1:3).

They blessed Rebecca (*Genesis* 24:60). [Yet, they were] sickened and depressed [for her going to Isaac was against their will (*Eitz Yosef*)]. The dowry they gave her consisted only of words (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:13).

Rebecca . . . proceeded after the man (*Genesis* 24:61) and not in front of him (*Berachos* 61a).

When Isaac was about to say the afternoon prayer (*מנחה*), the servant reached Rebecca. And when Isaac was about to say the afternoon prayer [the following day], Rebecca reached [Isaac] (*Zohar* 1:132a).

Rebecca was coming with Eliezer when she saw [Isaac]. Exceedingly distinguished, wrapped in a *tallis*, he resembled an angel of God (*Shocher Tov* 90:18).

Rebecca saw his hand spread in prayer and thought, "He is surely a great man." That is why she asked, "Who is this man?" (*Genesis* 24:64) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:15).

She fell from the camel (*Genesis* 24:64). Foreseeing through Divine Inspiration that the wicked Esau was to issue from her, she trembled with horror [and fell from the camel], thereby causing herself injury (*Yalkut Shimoni*, *Chayei Sarah* 109).

As long as Sarah was alive, a cloud [signifying the Divine Presence] was tied to the entrance of her tent, the doors were open wide, her dough was blessed, and a lamp burned [in the tent] from one Sabbath eve to the next. When she died, all these ceased, but when Rebecca came, they all returned. When [Isaac] saw [Rebecca] separate dough in purity, she became his wife (*Genesis* 24:67) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:16).

- Rebecca was three years old when she left her father's house (*Sofrim* 21:9).
- Isaac married Rebecca when she was fourteen (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 1, *Gra*).

PREGNANCY

- Isaac entreated Hashem opposite his wife (*Genesis* 25:21). It does not say *for his wife* but *opposite*. This teaches us that both were sterile (*Yevamos* 64a).
- Isaac was prostrated in prayer on one side [of the house], she on the other. "Master of the World," he said, "let all the children You grant me be from this woman." She, too, said, "Let all the children You grant me be from this righteous man" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 63:5).
- Why was Rebecca not granted children until Isaac prayed for her? So that the idolaters would not say, "Our prayer [*They blessed Rebecca* (*Genesis* 24:60)] has borne fruit" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:13).
- She had no womb, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, formed one for her (*ibid.* 63:5).
- *The children agitated within her* (*Genesis* 25:22). Each one agitated to kill the other. When she stood by synagogues and study halls, Jacob would struggle to emerge, and when she passed by temples of idolatry, Esau struggled to emerge. The Matriarch Rebecca went around to the women and asked them, "Have you experienced such suffering? If such is the suffering [for me to carry] children, would that I had not conceived" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 63:6).
- Rebecca was worthy of bearing the twelve tribal ancestors (*ibid.*).
- *She went to inquire of Hashem* (*Genesis* 25:22) [in] the academy of Shem and Eber (*Bereishis Rabbah* 63:6).
- *Hashem said to her* (*Genesis* 25:23). Never did the Holy One, Blessed is He, speak with any woman except for this righteous one, and even [then only] out of necessity, and only through Shem son of Noah (*Shochoer Tov* 9:7).
- *Hashem said to her: "Two nations . . .* (*Genesis*

25:23). From Noah and his sons I brought forth seventy nations, and from you 'two nations are in your womb,' and from one of them I will bring forth seventy souls [who will go down to Egypt]" (*Shochoer Tov* 9:7).

- Two [women] – Rebecca and Tamar – covered [their faces] with a veil and bore twins (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:14).

JACOB'S BLESSING

- *Rebecca was told of the words of Esau* (*Genesis* 27:42). Who told her? Divine Inspiration (*Shochoer Tov* 105:4).
- "Go now to the flock and fetch me from there two choice young kids of the goats (*Genesis* 27:9). [Go to the market.] If you find [goats to buy], fine. If not, bring me [the two goats that I am entitled to receive daily] according to my marriage contract" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65:14; *Eitz Yosef*).
- "Two young goats" (*Genesis* 27:9) – one for the Passover offering and one for the *chagigah* sacrifice [for it was Passover eve] (*Targum Yonasan*).
- "Your curse be on me, my son (*Genesis* 27:13). It will be incumbent upon me to [remove your curse by] entering and telling your father, 'Jacob is righteous and Esau is wicked' " (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65:15; *Eitz Yosef*).
- *With the skins of the goat-kids she covered his arms* (*Genesis* 27:16). She cut them and sewed them about his arms and the smooth place on his neck. Without a miracle, the skins would not have sufficed for even half [his] arms (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 27:16).
- She escorted him as far as [Isaac's] door and said, "I have done all that I can for you. Henceforth your Creator will stand by you" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 65:17).
- "I am disgusted with my life on account of the daughters of Heth" (*Genesis* 27:46). She expressed herself with violent gestures of abhorrence (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:11).
- "Of the daughters of Heth like these" (*ibid.*). [While saying this], she banged the heads of [Esau's wives] against each other (*ibid.*).

DEATH

□ Jacob was informed in Beth-el of the death of Rebecca, his mother (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 35:8).

□ *Mamrei, Kiriath Arba* [lit., *City of Four*] (*Genesis* 35:27) [was named for the] four couples [who are buried there]: Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Leah (*Eiruvin* 53a).

□ [When Rebecca was about to die], she said, "My righteous son Jacob is not here; my righteous husband Isaac sits at home because his eyes have dimmed. If they take me out by day and this wicked [Esau] goes before my bier, people will say, 'Woe to the one who nursed him!' " Therefore, she commanded that [her bier] be taken out [for burial] at night, and so her death is not recorded [in the Torah] as Sarah's is (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 12:22).

□ The burial arrangement in the Cave of Machpelah is as follows: women [are buried] beside women, and men beside men. Adam is at the head, with Eve beside him; Sarah is next to Eve, with Abraham beside her; Isaac is next to Abraham, with Rebecca beside him; and Leah is beside Rebecca, with Jacob beside her (*Zohar* 3:164a).

רַב־שָׁקֵה – Rabshakeh

[Sennacherib's emissary to Hezekiah]

(*II Kings* 18:17)

□ Rabshakeh was a Jewish apostate (*Sanhedrin* 60a).

□ Isaiah gave his daughter [in marriage] to Hezekiah, and from [them] issued Manasseh and Rabshakeh. [This was apparently a different Rabshakeh; the other one had died as a child] (*Ein Yaakov Berachos* 10a).

□ Said Solomon, "It has been prophetically revealed to me that Manasseh son of Hezekiah will be wicked and will bow down to images of stone. His brother Rabshakeh will bow down to images of wood and forsake the Torah, which was placed in a wooden Ark, and he will therefore be burned in fire by an angel of God" (*Targum Koheles* 10:9).

□ Rabshakeh trapped himself in his own words. [He said on behalf of Sennacherib,] "*I will take you away to a land like your own land*" (*II Kings* 18:32). They [retorted], "If our land is not beautiful to you, leave us in our place" (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson*, ed. Shechter 20).

□ Rabshakeh peered over the wall and heard [the Jews] reciting *Hallel* [for it was the *Seder* night]. He told Sennacherib, "Turn back, for miracles are wrought for them on this night." But Sennacherib took the matter lightly (*Yalkut Shimoni, Melachim* 241).

□ See **Hezekiah**

רוּת – Ruth

(*Ruth* 1:4)

PERSONALITY / CONVERTS / IN BOAZ'S FIELD /
MARRIES BOAZ

PERSONALITY

□ In reward for the forty-two sacrifices that Balak offered [only out of fear], he became the ancestor of Ruth, [who was] the granddaughter of Eglon, Balak's grandson. [Yet, Ruth's descendants David and Solomon offered sacrifices with perfect intentions (*Maharsha, Horios 10b*)] (*Sanhedrin* 105b).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, told Abraham, "I have two good shoots to engraft in you: Ruth the Moabitess and Naamah the Amonitess" (*Yevamos* 63a).

□ Why was [the book in Scriptures] called *Ruth*? Because from her issued David, who saturated (רוה) the Holy One, Blessed is He, [as it were] with songs and praises (*Bava Basra* 14b, *Maharsha*).

□ [She was called] Ruth for the dove (תור) [רוּת spelled backwards] which is permitted to be offered on the altar. Similarly, Ruth was permitted to enter the congregation [of God] (*Zohar Chadash, Ruth* 78a).

□ Her name had originally been Gilith. When she married Mahlon, he called her Ruth (*ibid.* 79a).

□ God forbid that Mahlon married her while she was still a gentile. Rather, when he married her she converted, and she remained under the presumption of [acting out of] fear of her husband. When

her husband died, she cleaved to the Torah of her own free will (*Zohar Chadash, Ruth 79a*).

□ *Yashuvi Lechem* (יִשְׁבִי לֶחֶם) (*I Chronicles 4:22*) refers to Ruth the Moabite, who returned (שבה) and cleaved [to the Torah] in Beth-lehem (בֵּית לֶחֶם) of Judah (*Bava Basra 91b*).

□ She was forty years old and exceedingly beautiful (*Ruth Rabbah 4:4*).

□ There were two women — Tamar and Ruth — from whom the line of Judah was built, and from whom issued King David, King Solomon, and the Messiah. These two women were similar: [after] their first husbands died, they made efforts [to win] their second husbands. [In doing so] both of them acted properly for the sake of kindness for the dead [by bearing children who would perpetuate their memory] (*Zohar 1:188b*).

□ *She ate and was satisfied, and had some left over* (*Ruth 2:14*) for there was a blessing in the mouth of that righteous woman [enabling her to eat little and be satisfied] (*Bamidbar Rabbah 21:20*).

□ [Boaz] saw wisdom in her: she would glean two ears [of grain that fell from the harvesters' hand] but she would not glean three [in accordance with the laws of *leket*]. And he saw modesty in her: she would stand while gathering standing ears and sit while gathering fallen ones (*Shabbos 113b; Rashi*).

□ When she sat down to glean with the reapers, she turned her face aside, and not even a finger or a toe of hers showed (*Midrash Ruth, ed. Buber, 50*).

□ Each day she sought [only] the food she needed for the day [as it is written, *Blessed is my Lord, day by day* (*Psalms 68:20*)] (*Midrash Zuta, Ruth 51*).

CONVERTS

□ Because of two good doves [Ruth the Moabite and the Naamah the Amonite,] the Holy One, Blessed is He, had mercy on two great nations [Moab and Amon] and did not destroy them (*Bava Kamma 38b*).

□ [An Amonite and a Moabite shall not enter the congregation of Hashem (*Deuteronomy 23:4*)] — this refers to an Amonite but not an Amonite, and a Moabite but not a Moabite. David said before

the Holy One, Blessed is He, "You have released my bonds (*Psalms 116:16*). You have removed the two prohibitions that restricted me [because of two women in my family]: Ruth the Moabite and Naamah the Amonite" (*Yevamos 77a*).

□ *The two of them went on until they came to Beth-lehem* (*Ruth 1:19*) [where the whole city was gathered together and thus quickly learned of their arrival]. That was [because it was] the day of reaping the *omer* [the measure of barley which was offered on the second day of Passover] (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Tehillim 89:18*).

□ Whenever her mother-in-law told her, "Go, my daughter," [Ruth] would weep. She said, "I cannot return to my family and to the idolatrous corruption of Father's house" (*Midrash Ruth, ed. Buber, 49*).

□ *Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "May Hashem deal kindly with you as you have dealt kindly with the dead* (*Ruth 1:8*) by preparing the shrouds [of your husbands], and with me (*ibid.*) by forgoing your marriage settlements" (*Ruth Rabbah 2:14*).

□ *Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her* (*Ruth 1:14*). Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Let [Goliath and his brothers,] the descendants of the one who kissed, fall at the hands of [David], the descendant of the one who clung" (*Sotah 42b*).

□ "Your people are my people, and your God is my God" (*Ruth 1:16*). The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to [Ruth], "You have lost nothing [by renouncing your birthright]. Behold, the kingship is yours in This World and in the World to Come" (*Sifri Beha'aloscha 78*).

□ *Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave* (*Ruth 1:16*). In any case I intend to convert, but it is better that my conversion be at your hand than at another's." When Naomi heard this, she began to teach her the laws of proselytes. "My daughter," she said, "daughters of Israel do not go to theaters and circuses." [Ruth] replied, "Wherever you go, I will go" (*ibid.*). "The people of Israel do not dwell in a house that has no *mezuzah*." [Ruth] replied, "Where you lodge, I will lodge" (*ibid.*) (*Ruth Rabbah 2:22*).

□ [Naomi] said to [Ruth], "On the Sabbath we are forbidden [to walk further than the] Sabbath limit [תַּחֲמוֹם שַׁבָּת, 2,000 cubits from one's town or resting place]." [Ruth replied,] "Wherever you go, I will go" (Ruth 1:16). "We are forbidden to seclude ourselves with a strange man (יָחִיד)." Ruth responded, "Where you lodge, I will lodge" (ibid.). "We are commanded [to fulfill] 613 precepts." "Your people are my people" (ibid.). "Idolatry is forbidden to us." "Your God is my God" (ibid.) (Yevamos 47b).

□ When Ruth was converted [by the *Beth Din* after her husband's death], she was not given a new name, for Ruth was the name she had been given when she was converted by Mahlon upon marrying him (Zohar Chadash, Ruth 79a).

□ All the conduct of a Jewish home she learned [in Mahlon's house]. She converted afterward, when she went with Naomi (Zohar 8:3).

□ *Who returned from the fields of Moab* (Ruth 1:22). [Boaz] said to her, "Had you come a few days earlier, we would not have accepted you [for the ruling 'Moabite, not Moabitess' was just publicized now]" (Yerushalmi Yevamos 3:190a).

□ The very day that Ruth the Moabitess came to the Land of Israel, Boaz's wife died (Bava Basra 91a).

IN BOAZ'S FIELD

□ *So she went. She came and gleaned in the field* (Ruth 2:3). She went and came repeatedly until she found decent people to accompany her (Shabbos 113b).

□ "To whom does that young woman belong?" (Ruth 2:5). Did [Boaz] not recognize [Ruth]? [He did], but when he noticed that she was pleasant and her deeds were beautiful, he began to inquire about her. The other women jested with the harvesters, while she remained reserved; the other women gathered [gleanings from] between the sheaves, while she gathered only from that which was definitely abandoned (Ruth Rabbah 4:9).

□ Boaz, the judge of Israel, saw the modesty of this righteous woman, who did not raise her eyes to look anywhere but straight ahead. [He saw that] she looked upon everything with a benevolent eye,

that there was no brazenness in her, and that blessing accrued wherever she gleaned in the field. He saw that Divine Inspiration rested upon her, and that kings would come forth from her. Therefore, he said to her, "Keep your eyes on the field . . ." (Ruth 2:9) (Zohar 2:217b).

□ "And follow them (Ruth 2:9) – follow your eyes. The whole world does not have permission to follow their eyes, but you do, for your eyes cause a multitude of blessings" (Zohar 2:218a).

□ *She bowed down to the earth* (Ruth 2:10). She prophesied that he would know her in the way of all the earth (Ruth Rabbah 5:2).

□ "Come over here" (Ruth 2:14). He hinted to her that the kingdom of the House of David would come forth from her. "Dip your morsel in the vinegar" (ibid.). He hinted that from her would issue a descendant – Manasseh – whose deeds would be sour as vinegar. *She sat beside the harvesters* (ibid.) [so that all the harvesters separated him from her. By seating her there,] he hinted that the kingdom of the House of David [which was to issue from him and her]) would eventually be split (Shabbos 113b; Rashi).

□ *The righteous eats to the satisfying of his desire* (Proverbs 13:25). This refers to Ruth the Moabitess, of whom it is written, *She ate and was satisfied, and had some left over* (Ruth 2:14) indicating that even a little food satisfied her, for in her stomach there was a blessing (Pesikta Rabbasi 16:30).

□ *She ate* (Ruth 2:14) in the days of David; *was satisfied* (ibid.) in the days of Solomon; *and had some left over* (ibid.) in the days of Hezekiah [i.e., she would be sated with kingship and wealth] (Shabbos 113b).

□ Naomi told her, "Bathe and anoint yourself, don your finery, and afterward go down to the threshing floor" (Ruth 3:13). What did Ruth do? [Only] after she had gone down to the threshing floor did she do everything [Naomi] had told her. Said Ruth, "This generation is morally lax. Perhaps if they saw me adorned they would say, 'She is a harlot'" (Tanchuma Behar 3).

□ "Don your finery" (Ruth 3:3), i.e., Sabbath garments (Shabbos 113b).

□ [Considering] the fright that Ruth gave Boaz, as it is written, *The man was startled and turned about* (Ruth 3:8), he would have been right to curse her. But *he who trusts in Hashem* [like Ruth] *will be set up on high* (Proverbs 29:25); [God] inspired him to bless her (*Bereishis Rabbah* 67:1; *Eitz Yosef*).

□ *The man was startled and turned about* (Ruth 3:8). He touched her hair and said, "Spirits have no hair. *Who are you?*" he asked (ibid. v. 9). "A spirit or a woman?" "A woman," she replied. "Unmarried or married?" "Unmarried," she replied. "Unclean or clean?" "Clean," she replied (*Ruth Rabbah* 6:1).

□ He asked her, "For what purpose have you come here?" She replied, "To fulfill the [verse in] the Torah: *If your brother becomes poor and sells some of his possessions, his closest kinsman shall come and redeem that which his brother has sold*" (Leviticus 25:25). He told her, "Lie down until the morning" (Ruth 3:13). "Will you send me away with [mere] words?" she said. "As Hashem lives" (ibid.), he [swore], "I am not sending you away with mere words!" (*Tanchuma Behar* 3).

□ The evil inclination distressed him all night saying, "You are single and seeking a wife; she is single and seeking a husband. Consort with her and she will become your wife." He swore to his evil inclination, "As Hashem lives (Ruth 3:13), I shall not touch her [for there is a closer redeemer who has the right to marry her]!" And to the woman he said, "Lie down until morning" (ibid.) (*Sifri Beha'aloscha* 88).

□ "He gave me these six grains of barley" (Ruth 3:17). He was hinting to her that from her would issue six descendants, each of whom would be blessed with six outstanding virtues: David, the Messiah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (*Sanhedrin* 93a).

□ *He went into the city* (Ruth 3:16). It should have said *she went*. This teaches that he accompanied her so that she would not be molested (*Ruth Rabbah* 7:3).

MARRIES BOAZ

□ Ruth was forty years old, and she had never conceived while married to Mahlon. [Yet] as soon

as the righteous [Boaz] prayed for her, she immediately conceived (ibid. 6:2).

□ She had no womb, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, formed one for her (ibid. 7:14).

□ "A son is born to Naomi" (Ruth 4:17). Ruth bore him and Naomi raised him; hence, he was called [Naomi's son] (*Sanhedrin* 19b).

□ Ruth the Moabitess beheld the kingdom of Solomon, her great-great grandson (*Bava Basra* 91b).

□ See also **Boaz**

רַהַב – Rahab

[Harlot who hid Caleb] (Joshua 2:1)

□ There were four exceedingly beautiful women in the world: Sarah, Rahab, Abigail, and Esther (*Megillah* 15a).

□ There was not one prince or ruler who had not visited Rahab the harlot (*Zevachim* 116b).

□ She offered her services to citizens within [the city] and robbers without, *for her house was in a wall of the fortification* (Joshua 2:15) (*Sifri Zuta, Bamidbar* 10:29).

□ *The woman had taken the two men and had hidden him* (Joshua 2:4). She had hidden only Caleb [but not his partner Phinehas, for he did not have to be hidden – see **Phinehas**] (*Yalkut Shimoni, Yehoshua* 8).

□ *Linen workers belonging to the house of Ashbea* (I Chronicles 4:21). [Ashbea, from נשבע, to swear,] refers to Rahab the harlot, who hid the Spies among the flax and to whom the Spies swore [that she would not be harmed] (*Sifri Beha'aloscha* 78).

□ Rahab the harlot saved two souls. [Her reward was that] even if there were two hundred people in her family and they married into two hundred families, all were saved in her merit (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 4:4).

□ Three uttered a lie [out of fear of God] and inherited life in This World and in the Next: Rahab the harlot [for she told the messengers of the king of Jericho that Joshua's two spies had fled, when

really she had hidden them] . . . (*Pirka d'Rabbeinu HaKadosh* 46).

□ She was ten years old when Israel left Egypt, and she was a harlot throughout the forty years that the people of Israel were in the wilderness. At the age of fifty she converted and said, "Let me be forgiven in the merit of the rope, the window, and the flax" [with which she saved the Spies] (*Zevachim* 116b).

□ When the people of Israel fulfill the will of the Omnipresent, the Holy One, Blessed is He, chooses a righteous person among the nations of the world, and He brings him and joins him to Israel. Examples are Jethro and Rahab (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 2:8).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, drew Rahab close [i.e., helped her grow spiritually] but did not choose her [she was not originally put into a chosen position; she first had to make an attempt to draw herself near to God and was later assisted by Him] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 3:2; *Eitz Yosef*).

□ Rahab the innkeeper converted, and Joshua married her (*Megillah* 14b).

□ Eight prophets, who were also priests, were descended from Rahab the harlot: Neriah, Baruch, Seraiah, Mahseiah, Jeremiah, Hilkiah, Hanamel, and Shalum (*ibid.*).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to the people of Israel, "I told you, *You shall destroy them* [i.e., the Canaanites] *utterly*" (*Deuteronomy* 20:17). You did not do so; rather, *Rahab the harlot . . . Joshua allowed to live* (*Joshua* 6:25). [Therefore,] Rahab's descendant Jeremiah will come and *be as thorns in your eyes and pricks in your sides*" (*Numbers* 33:55) (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 13:34).

□ Whatever is written [in Scripture] to Israel's discredit is written to Rahab's credit [i.e., Israel sinned in matters in which Rahab was righteous] (*ibid.* 13:26).

רַחֲבֵעָם – Rehoboam

[Son of Solomon, king of Judah]

(*I Kings* 11:43)

□ Rehoboam became king on the eve of Shavuoth (*Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer* 5).

□ He and his nation kept the Torah for three years, and in the fourth they rebelled against God (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 16).

□ All the curses with which David cursed Joab were fulfilled in David's own seed: "Let there not fail from the house of Joab one that has an issue . . ." (*II Samuel* 3:29) was fulfilled in Rehoboam (*Sanhedrin* 48b).

□ When David said to Mephibosheth, "You and Ziba [his servant] divide the field" (*II Samuel* 19:30) [as a punishment] a Heavenly Voice rang out and told him, "Rehoboam and Jeroboam will divide the kingdom" (*Shabbos* 56b).

□ *Your wonders and Your thoughts are for us* (*Psalms* 40:6). While [David's grandson] Rehoboam was sitting in his lap, David said to him, "These two verses [permitting females of Amon and Moab] are said for the benefit of both of us" (*Yevamos* 77a).

□ Joseph collected all the world's gold and silver and brought it to Egypt [by selling grain to foreign countries during the famine]. When the people of Israel went up from Egypt, they took it with them. Eventually Shishak king of Egypt came and took it away from Rehoboam (*Pesachim* 119a).

רַחֵל – Rachel

(*Genesis* 29:6)

PERSONALITY / MEETS JACOB / BEARS CHILDREN /
TERAPHIM / DEATH

PERSONALITY

□ Only four are called the Matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah (*Berachos* 16b).

□ Who are the *women in the tent* (*Judges* 5:24)? Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. [They were so called for they conducted themselves with modesty even in the privacy of their tents (*Maharsha*)] (*Horios* 10b).

□ The Matriarch Rachel was one of the first prophetesses (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 9:3).

□ Rachel was known for her beauty (*Bereishis Rabbah* 70:16).

□ Joseph's beauty resembled Rachel's (*Zohar* 1:116b).

□ In reward for her modesty [in giving Leah her signal and not revealing to anyone that she had done so (*Rashi*) (see below)] she merited that Saul descend from her (*Megillah* 13b).

□ *Rachel remained* (עקרה) (*Genesis* 29:31). Rachel was the mainstay (עיקר) of the home (*Bereishis Rabbah* 71:2).

□ How much did the Patriarch Jacob cherish Rachel? Even when he was blessing her son, he made him secondary to her, saying, "Blessed be the bosom that suckled you, and the womb from which you emerged" (*Genesis* 49:25) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 98:20).

□ Rachel and Leah, who were twins, were twenty-two [when they married Jacob] (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 74:4).

□ Why did Rachel die first? Because she spoke before her [older] sister, as it is written, *Rachel replied and [then] Leah* (*Genesis* 31:14) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 74:4).

□ She died at the age of thirty-six (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 2, *Gra*).

MEETS JACOB

□ A plague of God struck Laban's sheep, leaving only a few [alive]. He discharged his shepherd and entrusted the remnants [of his flock] to his daughter Rachel (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 29:9).

□ How different one community is from the next! Jethro had seven [daughters tending his flock], and the shepherds attacked them; here there was one [girl tending her father's flock] and no one touched her (*Bereishis Rabbah* 70:11).

□ *Jacob told Rachel* (*Genesis* 29:12) that he had come to draw close to her father and marry one of his daughters. Rachel replied, "You will not be able to reside with him, for he is deceitful." Said Jacob, "I am more clever than he; moreover, God will not allow him to harm me" (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 29:12).

□ *She ran and told her father* (*Genesis* 29:12), for since her mother had died, she had no one to tell but her father (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:7).

□ It had been agreed that Jacob would marry Leah, and Esau [would marry] Rachel. What saved Rachel from him? Jacob and Leah prayed for her (*Shocheh Tov* 55:4). [However, see *Rashi on Genesis* 29:17].

□ Jacob asked her, "Will you marry me?" "Yes," she replied, "but my father, who is deceitful, will not marry me off before my older sister." "I am his brother in deceit," said [Jacob]. And he gave her a signal by which he would identify her [in the dark]. When [Laban] went to bring Leah in her place, Rachel thought, "Now my sister will be put to shame!" So she told [Leah] the signal (*Bava Basra* 123a).

□ Jacob sent betrothal gifts for Rachel, and Laban gave them to Leah. Rachel kept silent, [for] she said, "If I inform Jacob that Father is giving my sister [the gifts] he sends me, he will not marry me and Father will not marry me to him, and I will be distanced from this righteous person" (*Tanchuma Vayeitzei* 6).

□ [Rachel] said, "If I am not worthy enough to have the world [i.e., the Jewish nation] descend from me, let it descend from my sister [Leah]" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 71:2).

BEARS CHILDREN

□ *Rachel became envious of her sister* (*Genesis* 30:1). She was envious of [Leah's] good deeds, [for] she said, "If [Leah] were not righteous, she would not be bearing [children]" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 52).

□ *Jacob . . . said, "Am I instead of God who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"* (*Genesis* 30:2). He has withheld from you, but not from me." She said to him, "Is that how your father treated your mother? Did he not gird his loins [in prayer] on her behalf?" He replied, "My father did not have children, but I do." "Did your grandfather have children? Yet he girded his loins [in prayer] on behalf of Sarah." "You can do what my grandmother did [in giving a handmaiden to her husband]," he replied. "If that is the only obstacle," she replied, "here is my maid Bilhah, consort with her" (*ibid.* v. 3) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 71:7).

□ The birthright should have come from Rachel, but Leah preceded her by dint of prayer. Because of Rachel's modesty [in giving her signal to Leah (see above)] the Holy One, Blessed is He, restored it to her [by removing the birthright from Leah's son Reuben and giving it to Rachel's son Joseph] (*Bava Basra* 123a).

□ On Rosh Hashanah, Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah were granted conception (*Berachos* 29a).

□ Lest you think that the *dudaim* opened Rachel's womb, it is written, *God hearkened to her and He opened her womb* (*Genesis* 30:22) – the Holy One, Blessed is He, and nothing else opened her womb (*Zohar* 1:156b).

□ The episode of the *dudaim* took place in the fifth year of Leah's marriage, and Rachel conceived sixteen months later (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 30:21).

□ *God remembered Rachel* (*Genesis* 30:22). He remembered her silence for her sister's sake when Leah was given [in marriage] to [Jacob] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 73:4).

□ All the Matriarchs assembled and [prayed], "We have enough males. Remember [Rachel] by changing the fetus of Leah from male to female!" (*ibid.* 72:6).

□ The fetus of Dinah was initially male. After Rachel prayed, it became female (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 9:3).

□ The fetuses were switched; Joseph was moved to Rachel's womb, Dinah to Leah's (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 30:21).

□ "May Hashem add on for me another (אֶחָד) son" (*Genesis* 30:24). [Rachel] said, "Jacob is destined to produce one more [son]. Would that it be by me!" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 72:6).

□ "May Hashem add on for me a different (אֶחָד) son" (*Genesis* 30:24). Because of Rachel's prayer [for a son who would be different from Joseph], the Tribe of Benjamin [Rachel's *different son*] did not break away from [the kingdom of] Judah to join the [kingdom of the] Ten Tribes [ruled by Jeroboam, a descendant of Rachel's other son, Joseph] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 73:6).

□ *Rachel and Leah replied* (*Genesis* 31:14). Rachel replied with the consent of [her older sister] Leah (*Targum Yonasan*).

TERAPHIM

□ *Rachel stole the teraphim that belonged to her father* (*Genesis* 31:19). Her sole intention was for the sake of Heaven. She said, "How can I go and leave this old man [Laban] in his corruption?" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 74:5).

□ *Laban . . . came into Rachel's tent* (*Genesis* 31:33) twice [he rechecked], for he knew her to be one who touches things (*Bereishis Rabbah* 74:9).

□ *He did not find the teraphim* (*Genesis* 31:35), but he did find flasks. The teraphim were turned into flasks in order to spare Rachel shame (*Bereishis Rabbah* 74:9).

□ *Rachel . . . put them into the camels' packsaddle* [lit., *pillow*] (*Genesis* 31:34). [When Laban] returned and searched in the camel's packsaddle, a miracle was wrought for Rachel: the teraphim became like a feather pillow (*Midrash Aggadah, Bereishis* 31:33).

DEATH

□ Why did Rachel die first? Because of the curse of the Sage [Jacob] who said, "With whomever you find your gods, he shall not live" (*Genesis* 31:22), which was an error proceeding from the ruler (*Ecclesiastes* 10:5) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 74:4).

□ Because Jacob had delayed in fulfilling the vow he had made before the Holy One, Blessed is He [in *Genesis* 28:20-22), the power of Jacob's accuser was strengthened. Therefore, *Rachel went into labor and had difficulty in her childbirth . . .* (*ibid.* 35:16) (*Zohar* 1:175a).

□ [Rachel] died between Passover and Pentecost, when the earth is riddled like a sieve [by the plow] (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 3:67).

□ Benjamin was born [and Rachel died] on the eleventh of Marcheshvan (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos* 162).

□ *Rachel died and was buried* (*Genesis* 35:19). The

burial took place immediately after death [out of respect for her] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 82:9).

□ Rachel said, "Therefore, he shall be with you tonight" (*Genesis* 30:15). Because she had made light of [being together with] the righteous [Jacob], she was not buried with him (*Bereishis Rabbah* 72:3).

□ [As a girl,] Leah would go out every day to the crossroads and weep [and pray that she should merit to marry] Jacob, whom she had heard was righteous, [whereas] Rachel never went out on the road. Therefore, Leah merited to be buried with Jacob, whereas Rachel's tomb stands at the crossroads (*Zohar* 1:223a).

□ Jacob set up a monument over her grave (*Genesis* 35:20). Each of the sons placed a stone [on Rachel's grave, so that] twelve stones were [piled] one atop the other; and Jacob's stone was [set] on top of them all (*Lekach Tov, Bereishis* 35:20).

□ The place of her burial will not disappear until the day the Holy One, Blessed is He, resurrects the dead (*Zohar* 1:175a).

□ Foreseeing that the exiles would pass by the site, the Patriarch Jacob buried her [on the road on the way to Ephrath and not within the city] so that she would [sense their anguish and] pray for them (*Bereishis Rabbah* 82:10).

□ "I buried her there on the road" (*Genesis* 48:7). [Jacob] told Joseph, "By your life, just as you wish that your mother had been buried [in the Cave of Machpelah], so did I wish it." "If so," said Joseph, "give the order now, and I will rebury her [there]." "You cannot, my son," said [Jacob], "for I buried her [on the road] by Divine command. In the future my children will go into exile. When they pass Rachel's tomb, they will embrace it. She will stand and pray for mercy on their behalf, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, will accept her prayer" (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 3:69).

□ The Matriarch Rachel jumped before the Holy One, Blessed is He, and said, "Master of the Universe, it is revealed and known before You that Your servant Jacob loved me exceedingly and worked for Father seven years for my sake, and

when the seven years had been completed and the time of my marriage came, my father schemed to switch me with my sister. I learned of the scheme, and was sorely distressed. I informed my husband and gave him a signal by which he could distinguish between my sister and me [in the dark] so that my father would not be able to switch us. Thereafter I regretted it and contained my desire. I took pity on my sister, [who] would be put to shame [if the scheme were uncovered]. In the evening, my sister was substituted for me [and married] to my husband. I gave my sister all the signals that I had given my husband so that he would think she was [I]. Moreover, I [hid] beneath the bed where he lay with my sister. [When] he spoke with her, she kept silent, and I replied so that he would not recognize my sister's voice. [Thus] I performed an act of kindness for her, was not jealous of her, and did not expose her to shame. I, who am flesh and blood, dust and ashes, was not jealous of my rival and did not expose her to shame. You, O Eternal, Merciful King – why were You jealous of idolatry, which has no substance? [Why did] You exile my children and [let] the enemies slaughter them and do with them as they pleased?" At once the compassion of the Holy One, Blessed is He, was aroused and He said, "For Rachel I will return the people of Israel to their place" (*Pesikta Eichah Rabbasi* 24).

□ See Jacob

רַכָּב וּבַעֲנָה – Rechab and Baanah
(*II Samuel* 4:2)

□ See Baanah and Rechab

רְעוּאֵל – Reuel
(*Exodus* 2:18)

□ See Jethro

רִצְפָה בַת אִיָּה – Rizpah daughter of Aiah
(*II Samuel* 3:7)

□ David married Saul's widow, Rizpah (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:3).

□ [After her two sons, Armoni and Mephibosheth, were killed and hanged by the Gibeonites along with the five sons of Michal,] Rizpah daughter of

Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself upon the rock, from the beginning of the harvest until water was poured upon [the hanged men] from heaven; and she did not permit the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts in the field by night (II Samuel 21:10). Is it not written, You shall not allow his body to hang on the gallows into the night (Deuteronomy 21:23)? [Yes,] but it is well that one word of the Torah be uprooted [so] that the Name of Heaven be sanctified publicly. Passersby would say [to each other], "Who are they? They are the sons of a king. And what did they do? They stretched forth their hands towards

proselytes who had not been admitted." [Then the passersby] would say, "There is no nation as worthy of being cleaved to as this. If such is the case with the sons of kings, how much more so with the sons of commoners! If such is the case with proselytes who have not been admitted, how much more so with Israel" (Yevamos 79a).

□ She spread it for herself upon the rock (II Samuel 21:10); that is, she said, "The rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice" (Deuteronomy 32:4) (Yerushalmi Kiddushin 4:1).



שְׂאוּל – Saul

[King of Israel]

(I Samuel 9:2)

PERSONALITY / RIGHTEOUSNESS / SHORTCOMINGS / KINGSHIP / SAUL AND DAVID / DEATH

PERSONALITY

□ Cush son of Yemini [lit., the black man of Benjamin] (Psalms 7:1). Just as the black man stands out clearly because of his skin, so did Saul [a Benjaminite] stand out because of his [good] deeds (Moed Katan 16b).

□ The eight princes among men (Micah 5:4) are Jesse, Saul, and Samuel, Amos and Zephaniah, Zedekiah, Elijah, and the Messiah (Sukkah 52b).

□ Five [people] were created with [one feature] of heavenly perfection, and all were stricken in [that feature]: Samson in his strength, Saul in his neck, Absalom in his hair, Zedekiah in his eyes, and Asa in his legs (Sotah 10a).

□ The famine was to have come not in David's time, but in Saul's. But because Saul was [weak as] a sycamore shoot as a result of his sinning, the Holy One, Blessed is He, brought it in the days of David, who was able to bear it (Bereishis Rabbah 25:3).

□ There was no man among the Children of Israel better than he (I Samuel 9:2). In every respect? Therefore, it is written, From his shoulders and upward he was better than any of the people (ibid.) [i.e., only in that respect] (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:8).

□ [The girls] answered them and said, "There he is; behold, he is before you; make haste now, for he has come today into the city; for the people have a sacrifice today in the high place. As soon as you have come into the city, you shall find him . . ." (I Samuel 9:12,13). Why [did they speak] at such length? Because women talk a lot [see Kiddushin 49b]. Shmuel said: In order to gaze upon the beauty of Saul (Berachos 48b).

□ When the sons of Benjamin [by prior arrangement; see Judges 21:19-23] snatched the daughters of Shiloh who had gone out to the vineyards, Saul was embarrassed to snatch [himself a wife], until she came brazenly and chased after him (I Samuel 20:30, Rashi).

RIGHTEOUSNESS

□ Saul was a year old when he reigned (I Samuel 13:1). [When he became king, he was] like a one-year-old [who] has never tasted sin (Yoma 22b).

- A man of Benjamin ran out of the camp and came to Shiloh the same day (*I Samuel* 4:12). [It] was Saul, who covered sixty *mils* that day. While in the camp, he heard that the Tablets of the Law had been captured. He went and snatched them from Goliath; then he came [to Shiloh] (*Midrash Shmuel* 11:1).
- Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, to David, "Had Saul's destiny been yours and your destiny his, how many a David I would have destroyed before him!" (*Shocher Tov* 7:3).
- He supplied all the poor daughters of Israel with dowries (*Mishnas R' Eliezer* 10).
- [His virtues were that] he was humble, and that he ate even *chulin* [ordinary unhallowed food] only when it was *tahor* [ritually pure]. He spent his own money freely, but protected the money of Israel. And he set his servant's honor equal to his own (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 11:3).
- He spent his own money freely on Israel's war. [Moreover,] he went to war and took his sons along, [although] he knew that the Attribute of Strict Justice would strike him (*Shocher Tov* 7:2).
- Neither sword nor spear was found in the hand of any of the people [for there was no craftsmen available to make the weapons (*Metzudos Dovid*) . . . but with Saul [and with Jonathan] . . . such was found (*I Samuel* 13:22). Who provided him with it? The Holy One, Blessed is He (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 10:1).
- In reward for his modesty, Saul merited to become the ancestor of [the modest] Esther. What was [his] modesty? *The matter of the kingdom of which Samuel spoke he told him not* (*I Samuel* 10:16) [i.e., he did not reveal to his uncle that he had been anointed king] (*Megillah* 13b).
- A cave was there, and Saul went in to cover his feet [i.e., to relieve himself] (*I Samuel* 24:3). Saul went through a fence within a fence and a cave within a cave; and he covered himself [with his garments (*Rashi*)] (*Berachos* 62b).
- It was said of the [members of] the house of Saul that [even] their heels and toes were never seen (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:4).
- Whenever he heard the reasoning behind a halachic ruling issue from the mouth of a Torah scholar, he would stand and kiss him on the mouth (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shmuel* 141).
- Children in the days of Saul and Samuel would expound the Torah and give forty-nine reasons for ruling something *tahor* [ritually clean] and forty-nine for ruling it *tamei* [ritually unclean] (*Shocher Tov* 7:7).
- Saul told Abner, "If a *halachah* escapes you, go ask Samuel and his court of law" (*Ruth Rabbah* 4:9).
- "Slaughter [your oxen and sheep] with this" (*I Samuel* 14:34). He showed them a knife of fourteen finger-lengths and said, "This is the procedure by which you shall slaughter and eat" (*Vayikra Rabbah* 25:8).
- He began to build an altar to Hashem (*I Samuel* 14:35). Men of earlier times had already built altars, but because [Saul] dedicated himself to ritual slaughter, which is a requisite of the altar, Scripture considers it as if he began (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 10:1).

SHORTCOMINGS

- Five men resembled Adam [in one feature] and were stricken [in that feature]; Samson in his strength, Saul in his neck . . . (*Otzar HaMidrashim* 174).
- Of Saul, who was not precise in his learning, it is written, *Wherever he turned, he caused confusion* (*I Samuel* 14:47) [for he did not deduce the law from his learning (*Maharsha*)] (*Eiruvim* 53a).
- Why was he punished? Because he had forgiven [an insult to] his honor, as it is written, *Base fellows said* [of Saul], "How shall this one save us?" . . . *But he acted as one who does not hear* (*I Samuel* 10:27). [The honor of the king cannot be waived since it represents the honor of God (*Maharsha*)] (*Yoma* 22b).
- Saul made an improper request. "The man who kills [Goliath], the king . . . will give him his daughter [in marriage]" (*I Samuel* 17:25). [What if this man were to be] a slave or a *mamzer* [the product of a forbidden union, who is forbidden to

marry into the Jewish people]? But the Holy One, Blessed is He, answered him in a favorable manner and brought him David (*Ta'anis* 4a).

□ When the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Saul, "Go smite Amalek" (*I Samuel* 15:3), [Saul] said, "If for a single person [found slain] the Torah says to bring an *eglah arufah* [a heifer whose neck is to be broken (see *Deuteronomy* 21:9) for atonement], how much more so [for] all those people! [Furthermore,] if men sinned, how have the animals sinned? And if the adults sinned, how have the children sinned?" [Therefore, he did not kill the livestock and children of Amalek.] A Heavenly Voice rang out and told him, "Do not be overly righteous" (*Ecclesiastes* 7:16) (*Yoma* 22b).

□ Saul failed in [only] one [matter], and it was held against him [so that he lost the kingship: he did not slay] Agag (*ibid.*).

□ *He who covers his sins will not succeed* (*Proverbs* 28:13). This refers to Saul, [of whom] it is written, *Saul said: . . . "I have fulfilled God's command."* Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the [Amalekite] sheep [which you were commanded to kill] in my ears?" (*I Samuel* 15:13-14) (*Shocheh Tov* 100:2).

□ From Saul's company came Doeg the Edomite (*Berachos* 17b).

□ In Saul's time, four were killed [by the sin of evil speech]: Doeg, who uttered it; Saul, who accepted it; Ahimelech; and Abner (*Yerushalmi Pe'ah* 1:1).

□ When Saul told Doeg, "Turn and strike the priests" (*I Samuel* 22:18), a Heavenly Voice rang out, saying, "Do not be overly wicked" (*Ecclesiastes* 7:17) (*Yoma* 22b).

□ Had Jonathan lent David two loaves of bread, the priestly city of Nob would not have been destroyed [for David would not have needed to request food from the priests of Nob (*Rashi*)]. Doeg the Edomite would not have been banished, and Saul and his three sons would not have been slain [for the sin of killing the priests] (*Sanhedrin* 104a).

□ *Saul sought to slay* [the Gibeonites] (*II Samuel* 21:2). Because he slew [the inhabitants of] the

priestly city of Nob, who provided [the Gibeonites] with water and food, Scripture considers it as if he had killed [the Gibeonites themselves] (*Yevamos* 78b, *Rashi*).

□ *Saul sought to slay them* (*II Samuel* 21:2). Although he did not [in fact] slay [the Gibeonites], they were cruel to him, so it was not without cause that David distanced them from the Jewish people. And although Saul was angry at them only because of his jealousy of the Children of Israel and Judah (*ibid.*), who would not reveal David's whereabouts, rather than because of any hatred for [the Gibeonites], they had no mercy on his sons [see *ibid.* v. 16] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 8:4).

□ Saul king of Israel was killed and the kingdom taken away from him because of his arrogance [at insisting that he had fulfilled God's command to destroy Amalek, when in fact he had not]. Moreover, Saul harbored [feelings of] envy and revenge against all Israel on account of David. He did not do what he had been commanded [but let the Amalekite king Agag live]; he took [the prohibition against] adultery lightly by giving his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti son of Laish [through faulty reasoning]; and he consulted one who divined by spirits (אוב וידיעני) (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* 31).

□ *Samuel said* [to Saul], ". . . Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me — in my camp [in the World to Come]" (*Eiruvin* 53b).

□ Saul did not kill Agag, and [as a result] Haman descended [from him] and persecuted Israel (*Megillah* 13a).

KINGSHIP

□ [God] incited against them a murderous nation because they crowned Saul of Gibeah and did not accept the words of Samuel [see *I Samuel* 8] (*Targum Hosea* 5:8).

□ Saul merited the kingship because his grandfather lit lamps for the public (*Yerushalmi Shevi'is* 3:7).

□ Saul reigned immediately after he was anointed in the merit of his good deeds (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 5:41).

□ "Behold, he has hidden among the baggage" (*I Samuel* 10:23). When they came to anoint him, he said, "Go ask the *Urim VeTumim* whether I am worthy, and if [I am] not, leave me in my place" (*Midrash Aggadah, Vayikra* 1:1).

□ When they wished to appoint him king, he refused. [But] upon hearing that a sage, a bridegroom, and a king are forgiven [for all their previous sins], he accepted (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shmuel* 117).

□ Saul was a year old when he reigned (*I Samuel* 13:1). [When he became king], all his sins were forgiven, as if he were a one-year-old child (*Yerushalmi Bikkurim* 3:3).

□ When Saul became king, prophesy was removed from him; but Divine Inspiration remained with him so that he could judge [the cases brought before him] correctly (*Zohar* 2:154a).

□ Saul and Jehu were anointed from a flask [rather than a horn] because their kingships were temporary (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 6:1).

□ When Samuel went to anoint David, the ministering angels accused him before the Holy One, Blessed is He. "Master of the Universe," they said, "why have You taken the kingship away from Saul and given it to David?" [God] replied, "What is the difference between Saul and David? When Saul was consulting the *Urim VeTumim* and the Philistines attacked, he told the priest, 'Draw in your hands' and did not wait for [the priest] to finish. But when David was attacked by the Philistines in the Valley of Rephaim, he immediately began to consult the *Urim VeTumim*" (*Shocher Tov* 27:2).

□ One year Samuel and Saul reigned [together], and two years Saul reigned alone (*Temurah* 15a).

□ Why didn't Saul's kingship endure? Because he had no flaw [in his ancestry, and thus his descendants would have become arrogant (*Rashi*)]. No leader is appointed over the public unless a "box of vermin" hangs behind him, so that if he becomes overbearing, he will be told, "Look behind you" (*Yoma* 22b).

□ Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the tamarisk in Ramah (*I Samuel* 22:6). What is the connection

between Gibeah and Ramah? Saul sat [on the throne] in Gibeah for two and a half years [that is, until the time had come for David to become king,] because of the prayer of Samuel the Ramathite (*Ta'anis* 5b).

SAUL AND DAVID

□ [Saul] took hold of the edge of [Samuel's] robe, and it tore. Then Samuel said to him, "Hashem has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours who is better than you" (*II Samuel* 15:28). Saul asked, "And who is this neighbor who is better than me who will reign in my place?" "I will give you a hint," [Samuel] replied. "He who will tear your robe will take away your kingdom." When Saul entered the cave and David cut off the edge of his robe, Saul recalled what Samuel had told him, and he said, "I know that you will surely be king" (*I Samuel* 24:21) (*Shocher Tov* 57:3).

□ [Doeg] said, "Behold, I saw a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor . . . and Hashem is with him" (*I Samuel* 16:18). To all these [points Saul] replied, "My son Jonathan is like him," until [Doeg] said, "Hashem is with him," [i.e., that the law is always according to his understanding (*Rashi*), a quality that Jonathan and even Saul himself] did not possess. Thereupon [Saul] became jealous of [David] (*Sanhedrin* 93b).

□ Saul was equivalent to all David's enemies put together (*Shocher Tov* 7:13).

□ About the words of Cush the Benjaminite (*Psalms* 7:1). [This refers to Saul.] Just as the Cushite wife of Joseph's master tried to seduce [Joseph] and then said, "The Hebrew slave came to me . . ." (*Genesis* 39:17), so did Saul the Benjaminite say, "My son has stirred up my servant against me to lie in wait" (*I Samuel* 22:8) (*Shocher Tov* 7:3).

□ [When David went to fight Goliath,] Saul clad David in his apparel (*I Samuel* 17:38). [Miraculously,] they became his size, [although] it is written, From his shoulders up, [Saul] was higher than all people (*ibid.* 9:2) (*Yevamos* 76b).

- When Saul saw that [his clothing] fit [David], he cast an evil eye upon him. Upon seeing that he had caused Saul's face to turn white [from anguish], David removed them (*I Samuel* 17:39) (*Vayikra Rabbah* 26:9).
- [Saul asked], "Whose son is this youth, Abner?" (*I Samuel* 17:55). Did [Saul] not recognize [David]? [He did] but he was inquiring about [David's lineage]. "If he is descended from Perez," [thought Saul,] "he will be a king; if from Zerah, he will be a judge" (*Ruth Rabbah* 4:9).
- Just as David prayed that he not fall by Saul's hand, so did he pray that Saul not fall by his hand (*Shochoer Tov* 7:13).
- David was shut up inside the cave, while Saul stood outside by the entrance. David prayed, "Master of the Universe, I beg you, release my soul from confinement" (*Psalms* 142:8) (*Shochoer Tov* 142:6).
- When [David] was hiding from Saul in a cave, the Holy One, Blessed is He, sent a spider to spin a web across the entrance. Saul came, saw [the web], and thought, "Surely no man has entered here" (*Aleph Beis d'Ben Sira, Otzar HaMidrashim* 47).
- Saul came [into the cave] to cover his feet [i.e., to relieve himself] (*I Samuel* 24:3). David saw him let down his upper garment [to cover himself completely before] removing his lower garment. Said David [upon seeing this extreme modesty], "How can one strike the body of so righteous a man?" (*Yerushalmi Sukkah* 5:4).
- David . . . cut off the corner of Saul's robe (*I Samuel* 24:5,6), [thereby] temporarily stopping [Saul] from fulfilling the precept of *tzitzis* [since he cut off a corner with the *tzitzis*]. Saul did not notice that [a corner] was cut off [his robe until afterwards]. "Where is the corner of my robe?" he asked Abner, [who replied to him,] "It was cut off by thorns" (*Shochoer Tov* 7:4).
- Saul was fickle. He had just told David, "You are more righteous than I" (*I Samuel* 24:18), for I pursued you, and had I caught you [I] would have killed you; but I fell into your hands and you did not kill me." [Afterwards] his warriors said to him, "Is David righteous just because he did not kill you? He knows that had he harmed you in any way, we would have gone into [the cave], dragged him out, and cut him to pieces" (*Shochoer Tov* 58:1).
- A messenger (מלאך) came to Saul and said . . . "The Philistines have raided the land" (*I Samuel* 23:27). [The messenger] was an angel (מלאך) from heaven (*Shochoer Tov* 9:6).
- . . . they called the place the Rock of Disagreement (*I Samuel* 23:28), because great men of Israel argued there. Some said, "We must capture David," while others said, "We must first fight" [i.e., the Philistines] . . . (*Shochoer Tov* 18:7).
- And David said [to Abishai], "As God lives [you shall not kill Saul]" (*I Samuel* 26:10). [David] swore to Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, "If you spill any of the blood of this righteous one [Saul], I will mix your blood with his" (*Shochoer Tov* 7:2).
- Had slanderers not come and defamed [David, Saul] would not have pursued him (*Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer* 10).
- Why was Abner slain? Because he did not let Saul become reconciled with David (*Yerushalmi Peah* 1:1).
- See **David**

DEATH

- Saul disguised himself (וַיִּתְחַפֵּשׂ) (*I Samuel* 28:8). He freed himself of the kingship. And he donned other clothes (*ibid.*) — the clothes of a commoner (*Vayikra Rabbah* 26:7).
- Samuel said to Saul, "Why did you anger me (הֲרִיגִיתִנִי)? (*I Samuel* 28:15). Did you have to anger your Creator through me by treating me [as] your deity? Furthermore, I thought it was the Day of Judgment, and I was frightened" (*Yerushalmi Chagigah* 2:1).
- "Hashem has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor David" (*I Samuel* 28:17). Saul said to Samuel, "When you were with us [i.e., in This World], you told me, 'He has given it to a neighbor of yours who is better than you' (*ibid.* 15:28). Now you say, to your neighbor David." Samuel replied, "When I was with you, I

was in the world of falsehood and I told you false words [and I did not specify David (*Anaf Yosef*)] because I feared you would kill me. But I am here in the world of truth, and you will hear only truth from me" (*Tanchuma Emor 2*).

□ [The] two men with [Saul] (*I Samuel 28:8*) were Abner and Amassa. They neither saw nor heard Samuel. [Afterwards], Abner and Amassa asked [Saul], "What did Samuel tell you?" [Saul] replied, "He told me, 'Tomorrow you will go to war and win'" (*Vayikra Rabbah 26:7*).

□ David said three things about Saul, all of which were fulfilled: "Hashem will smite him" (*I Samuel 26:10*), and so it befell him; "Or his day will come to die" (*ibid.*), and so it befell him; "Or he will go down into battle and die" (*ibid.*), and so it befell him (*Shochoer Tov 7:2*).

□ When Saul went to war, David prayed about the words he had uttered [see above] and said, "Master of the Universe, judge me not as an intentional sinner [for having prayed for Saul's demise], but as an unintentional sinner" (*ibid.* 7:18).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, showed Moses Saul and his sons falling by the sword. [Moses protested,] "Will the first king to rule over Your children be pierced by the sword?" Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Why are you telling Me? Speak to the priests (*Leviticus 21:1*) whom he killed [at Nob], for they are accusing him" (*Vayikra Rabbah 26:7*).

□ Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, to David, "How long will you keep this sin [of the killing of the priests of Nob] in your hand? Because of you, Saul and his three sons were slain" (*Sanhedrin 95a*).

□ Why did the Holy One, Blessed is He, not dethrone Saul without taking his life? Actually, the Holy One, Blessed is He, was kind to him. [Saul] died a king; he did not see his servant ruling over him and taking what had once been his (*Zohar 3:284a*).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, called the ministering angels and said to them, "Come see [this man] whom I created. Knowing that he will be killed, he

goes to war and takes his sons with him, and rejoices over the Attribute of Strict Justice that is striking him" (*Vayikra Rabbah 26:7*).

□ David; who spoke the words of this song to Hashem, on the day that Hashem delivered him . . . from the hand of Saul (*Psalms 18:1*). "David," said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "are you singing songs over the death of Saul? Had you been Saul and he David [i.e., if Saul had repented with all his heart and accepted heavenly punishment as David had, and David had not done so (*Maharsha*)], I would have destroyed many a David for his sake [for Saul's righteousness is greater than yours" (*Rashi*)] (*Moed Katan 16b*).

□ When Saul and his sons were slain, the men of Jabesh-gilead said, "Are we not required to perform an act of kindness for Saul, the man who saved us from the torturous embarrassment perpetuated against us by the nation of Amon?" [As a result,] all the mighty men [of Jabesh-gilead] went and did perform an act of kindness for Saul and his sons [by removing their bodies] from the wall of Beth-shan.

A year after Saul and his sons were killed, three years of famine [began]. David stood before the Holy One, Blessed is He, and prayed. [God] replied, "It is for Saul (*II Samuel 21:1*). You are in the [Land of Israel] but he is outside the Land." At once, David arose and took all the sages and great men of Israel across the Jordan to Jabesh-gilead. They found the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan [intact], untouched by decay. [David] placed their bones in a coffin, which he ordered taken throughout the borders of Israel. [Wherever] Saul's coffin came, [the people] and their sons and daughters would go out and perform an act of kindness [by accompanying the coffin] until it came to the territory of Benjamin (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer 17*).

□ "It is for Saul [that you have not eulogized him properly]" (*II Samuel 21:1*) . . . Said David, "More than twelve months have passed since Saul's death, and it is not customary to eulogize [a person so long after his death]" (*Yevamos 78b, 79a*).

□ David married Saul's widow [concubine] Rizpah (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 2:3*).

□ Wherever [Scripture] says וַיָּהִי אַחֲרָי, *It came to pass after*, the world regressed. *It came to pass after the death of Saul (II Samuel 1:1); The Philistines attacked Israel (I Samuel 31:1); and the men of Israel . . . forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them (ibid. v. 7) (Bereishis Rabbah 62:4).*

שְׁאֵלְתִיאל – Shealtiel

[Father of Zerubabel, governor of Judah]
(Haggai 1:1)

□ *The sons of Jeconiah – Assir, his son Shealtiel (I Chronicles 3:17).* [Jeconiah's son] was called Assir [lit., prisoner] because his mother conceived him in prison; Shealtiel, for God (אל) planted (שתל) him in an unusual way – i.e., she conceived while standing upright (because of the narrowness of the prison cell). A different interpretation is [that he was called] Shealtiel because God (אל) annulled (שאל) His vow [not to grant Jeconiah offspring] (Sanhedrin 37b).

שֶׁבָא – Sheba

[Great-grandson of Ham] (Genesis 10:7)

□ See Queen of Sheba

שֶׁבַעַל – Shebuel

(I Chronicles 26:24)

□ *An old prophet dwelt in Beth-el (I Kings 13:11).* He was Shebuel son of Gershom son of Moses (Beraisa MiPirkei Merkavah 1).

□ Seeing that money was very dear to [Shebuel], David set him in charge of the treasuries. Thus it is written, *Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, the official in charge of the treasuries (I Chronicles 26:24).* Was his name not Jonathan rather than Shebuel? R' Yochanan said: [Yes, but he was called Shebuel] because he returned to God (לאל) with all his heart (Bava Basra 110a).

שְׁבִי בֶן נַחֲשׁ – Shobi son of Nahash

[Descendant of Amon] (II Samuel 17:27)

□ Shobi son of Nahash is Hanun son of Nahash. Why was he called Shobi? [One opinion] said: He quieted (שב) his evil inclination for a time. [Others] said: He repented (שב) sincerely (Shochoer Tov 3:3).

שְׁבִנָּא – Shebna

[An officer in the household of Hezekiah]

(Isaiah 22:15)

□ Shebna expounded before 130,000 people, Hezekiah before 110,000 (Sanhedrin 26a).

□ Shebna was devoted to worldly pleasures (ibid. 26b).

□ He made use of sacred property and robbed from the public (Vayikra Rabbah 17:3).

□ *If the anointed priest shall sin (Leviticus 4:3).* This refers to Shebna, of whom it is written, *Go . . . to this steward (סֹכֵן), to Shebna, who is over the house (Isaiah 22:15).* R' Eleazar said: He was a high priest. R' Yehudah said: He was an official (אַמְרָקָל). R' Chiya said: He was bitter to all (כִּיר לְכָל, a play on אַמְרָקָל). R' Berachiah said: He came from the city of Sichnin [hence סֹכֵן] and he rose to become the official in charge of the Temple (Vayikra Rabbah 5:5).

□ עָטָה עָטָה [Isaiah 22:17] means that he broke out in leprosy. Because he sought the shame of his master's house, his own honor was turned to shame (Sanhedrin 26a).

□ When Sennacherib came and besieged Jerusalem, Shebna wrote a note, which he [tied to] an arrow [and shot into Sennacherib's camp. It read,] "Shebna and his company are willing to make peace, Hezekiah and his company are not." The prophet [Isaiah] came and said [that God had said to him]: "Do not call a conspiracy whatever this people calls a conspiracy" (Isaiah 8:12). When [Shebna] went out [of the gates of Jerusalem], Gabriel came and shut the gate before his company. [Sennacherib's camp] asked him, "Where is your company?" "They turned back," he replied. "If so," they said, "you are mocking us." They pierced his heels, hung him from the tails of their horses, and dragged him over thorns and thistles (Sanhedrin 26a).

□ He went to hew himself a sepulcher among the sepulchers of the House of David. The prophet came and said to him: "What have you here and whom have you here, that you have hewn yourself a sepulcher here?" (Isaiah 22:16) (Sanhedrin 26a).

□ *He who hews himself a sepulcher on high* (Isaiah 22:16). And from on high it was decreed that he not be buried in the Land of Israel (*Vayikra Rabbah* 5:5).

שֶׁבַע בֶּן בִּכְרִי – Sheba son of Bichri

[Benjaminite who rebelled against David]
(*II Samuel* 20:1)

□ Nebat, Micah, and Sheba son of Bichri are the same person. [He was called] Nebat (נִבְט) because he looked (נִבְט) but did not see [see **Nebat**]; Micah (מִיכָה) because he had been crushed (נִתְמַכָּמֵד) in a building [see **Micah**]. His [real] name was Sheba son of Bichri (*Sanhedrin* 101b).

□ He worshipped idols (*Tanchuma*, ed. *Buber*, *Vayeira* 12).

שֶׁגֻב – Segub

[Son of Hezron, descendant of Judah]
(*I Chronicles* 2:21)

□ *Segub fathered Jair* (ibid. v. 22). He married a woman from the Tribe of Manasseh and she died (*Sifri Pinchas* 134).

□ Segub married a woman who died during the lifetime of those whose heiress she was. When they died, [her son] Jair inherited her (*Bava Basra* 113a).

שָׁדְרָךְ – Shadrach

[Commander of the Aramean armies]
(*Daniel* 1:7)

□ See **Hananiah**

שׁוֹבַח – Shobach

[Also known as **Shophach**] (*II Samuel* 10:18)

שׁוֹבַל – Shobal

[Son of Judah] (*I Chronicles* 4:2)

□ Bezalel is the name by which his people called him, [while] the Holy One, Blessed is He, called him by five names of endearment for [his role in building] the Tabernacle: Reaiah; Shobal, because he made a dovecote (שׁוֹבָל) for God; Jahath; Ahumai; and Lahad (*Shemos Rabbah* 40:4).

שׁוֹנְמִית – the Shunamite Woman

(*II Kings* 4:25)

□ *And there was a prominent woman* (ibid. v. 8); she was the sister of Abishag the Shunamite woman and the wife of Ido the prophet (*Pirkei d'R' Eliezer* 33).

□ *And there was a prominent woman* (*II Kings* 4:8), [meaning a woman] of great deeds. All the members of her household praised her [for being] the mainstay of the home. She was greater than other women, for they were stingy, whereas she rejoiced over Elisha and spent money on him. She made his bed in the evening and in the morning, and when she removed the sheet from his bed, the fragrance of the Garden of Eden wafted from it; hence she knew that he was a holy man of God (*Zohar* 2:44a).

□ Because her husband was not at home, only she is mentioned (ibid.).

□ [The Shunamite woman said to her husband,] “*Let us make a little chamber on the roof* [for Elisha to live in]” (*II Kings* 4:10). One [Sage] said: It was a roofless upper story, and they built a roof for it. Another said: It was a large covered balcony, and they divided it into two (*Berachos* 10b).

□ Hezekiah prayed, “*You resurrected the son of the Shunamite woman, who made just one little chamber. How much more should You do for the descendant of [Solomon], who covered the entire Temple with gold and silver!*” (ibid. 10b).

□ Hezekiah was answered only for her sake, as it is written, *He turned his face to the chamber and prayed* (Isaiah 32:2) – concerning the chamber [built by the Shunamite woman for Elisha] (*Berachos* 10b; *Midrash HaGadol*, *Bereishis* 23:1).

□ *She stood in the doorway* (*II Kings* 4:15), for she was unable to look at his face (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 33).

□ *The day came* (*II Kings* 4:11). It was the festival of Rosh Hashanah, when the Holy One, Blessed is He, judges the world and is called King. Elisha therefore asked her, “*Can we speak on your behalf to the King?*” (ibid. v. 13); that is, to the Holy One, Blessed is He. She answered, “*I dwell among my*

people (ibid.). I do not want [God's] attention drawn to me [as an individual. I prefer to be judged] among my people" (*Zohar* 1:69b).

□ Why was Habakkuk so named? Because he was the son of the Shunamite woman [who was told], "At this time next year you will embrace (חִבְּקֶתָ) a son" (*II Kings* 4:16). He received two embraces: one from his mother and one from Elisha, as it is written, *He put his mouth upon [the child's] mouth* (ibid. v. 34) (*Zohar* 1:7b).

□ As soon as the [dead] man touched Elisha's bones, he revived (*II Kings* 13:21). He lived for a short time; then he died and was buried elsewhere. He was the son of the Shunamite woman (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Tehillim* 26:6).

שׁוֹפָח – Shophach (*I Chronicles* 19:16)

□ He was called Shobach because he was high as a dovecote (שׁוֹבָחָה); Shophach, because he shed (שָׁפַח) blood (*Shocheh Tov* 3:4).

□ [He was called] Shophach because whoever saw him was poured out before him like a ladle [i.e., lost his courage] (*Sotah* 42b).

שְׁהַרַיִם – Shaharaim (*I Chronicles* 8:8)

□ Shaharaim is Boaz, who was free (קַטְוֹהָרָר) of sin (*Yerushalmi Yevamos* 8:3).

□ See **Boaz**

שִׁשַׁק – Shishak

[King of Egypt] (*I Kings* 11:40)

□ Why was he called Shishak? Because he awaited Solomon's death [שִׁשַׁק means kiss, a form of demise] (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 20).

□ After Solomon's death, Shishak king of Egypt went up to Jerusalem and took [Solomon's] throne as his daughter's marriage settlement (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Yeshayahu* 14:22).

□ They emptied out Egypt (*Exodus* 12:36). [All the treasures that Israel took] remained [in their possession] until Shishak king of Egypt came and took them away from Rehoboam (*Pesachim* 119a).

□ In the fifteenth year of Asa's [reign], Zerah the Cushite came and restored to Asa all the spoils that

Shishak king of Egypt had taken from Jerusalem (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 16).

שֶׁכֶם – Shechem

[Prince of the Hivites] (*Genesis* 34:2)

□ Hamor [lit., "donkey"] was lightheaded and foolish as a donkey; he was like his name. But his son Shechem was knowledgeable and sharp, and Hamor therefore appointed him administrator of his house (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 33:19).

□ He appealed to the maiden's emotions (*Genesis* 34:3). [Shechem] said to [Dinah], "See how much money your father spent for [just] one field! I can give you many orchards and many fields!" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 80:7).

□ Jacob sent two of his servants to fetch Dinah from Shechem's house. When they came, Shechem went out with his men and chased them away from his house (*Sefer HaYashar, Vayishlach*).

□ "Get me this girl for a wife" (*Genesis* 34:4). He regretted having consorted with her promiscuously; henceforth, he intended to consort with her only after marriage (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 34:4).

□ See **Dinah**

שֶׁלָה – Shelah

[Son of Judah] (*Genesis* 38:5)

□ Judah's son was born at the time [the tribal ancestors] were occupied with the sale of Joseph. [The chapter dealing with Judah's wife and children] was recorded [in the Torah] after the sale of Joseph to teach that [Judah] buried his wife and sons on account of it (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 38:2).

□ "Until my son Shelah grows up" (*Genesis* 38:11). He was twelve years old at the time. *Many days passed* . . . (ibid. v. 12); Shelah turned thirteen (*Sechel Tov, Bereishis* 38:11).

□ Shelah and Zerah did not beget children in the land of Canaan (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 46:12).

□ Shelah produced ten families, as it is written, *The sons of Shelah* . . . (*I Chronicles* 4:21) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 61:14).

שלם אבי הנמאל – Shalum, father of Hanamel

[Great-uncle of Jeremiah] (*Jeremiah 32:7*)

□ Eight prophets who were priests descended from Rahab the innkeeper: Neriah, Baruch, Seraiah, Mahseiah, Jeremiah, Hilkiyah, Hanamel, and Shalum (*Megillah 14b*).

שלם בן יאשיהו – Shalum son of Josiah

(*Jeremiah 22:11*)

□ Shalum, Zedekiah, Johanan, and Jehoahaz are the same person. Why was he called Shalum? Because he was perfect (שלם) in his deeds. Some say: Because the kingdom of the House of David ended (שלמה) in his days. What was his [real] name? Mattaniah (*Horios 11b*).

שלם בן יבש – Shalum son of Jabesh

[King of Israel for one month] (*II Kings 15:10*)

□ Until Shalum son of Jabesh, the kings of Israel were equal in sovereignty to the kings of the House of David. Thereafter they were usurpers, and Divine communication did not come to them (*Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer 12*).

שלם בן תקוה – Shalum son of Tikvah

[Husband of Huldah the prophetess]

(*II Kings 22:14*)

□ Shalum son of Tikvah was one of the great men of his generation. He performed acts of charity every day. He would fill a skin with water and sit at the entrance to the city. If anyone came from the road, he would give him a drink to refresh him. In the merit of the charity that he did, Divine Inspiration rested on his wife [Huldah]. When he died, the charitable acts of her husband were missed, and all of Israel went out to perform an act of kindness for Shalum son of Tikvah [by escorting his bier. Suddenly] they spied [enemy] troops approaching, so they threw the [body] on the sepulcher of Elisha. [Shalum] revived, and he subsequently begot Hanamel (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer 33*).

שלמה – Salma

[Son of Caleb ben Hur] (*I Chronicles 2:51*)

□ What is the incident connected with the family of

Salma the Netophathite (*ibid.* v. 54)? [*Salma* is derived from *sulam*, ladder.] Once, the [Greek] government [which had power over Israel during the time of the Second Temple] decreed that the people of Israel not bring wood for the altar, and posted sentries on the roads [to enforce the decree]. The sin-fearing people of that generation formed their wood into ladders and placed them on their shoulders. When they reached the sentries, they were asked, "Where are you going?" They replied, "To bring pigeons from the dovecote ahead with the [aid of the] ladders on our shoulders." When they had passed [the sentries], they dismantled [the ladders] and brought [the wood] to Jerusalem (*Ta'anis 28a*).

□ Because they dedicated themselves selflessly to Torah and *mitzvos*, [they left behind] a good name (*Tosefta Ta'anis 3:8*; see *Mitzpeh Shmuel*).

שלמה – Salma

[Son of Nahshon] (*I Chronicles 2:11*)

□ Nahshon begot Salma of Beth-lehem, Netophah. The deeds of the father and his sons were beautiful as [the spice] *netopha* (*Targum Ruth 4:20*).

שלמה בן דוד – Solomon son of David

(*II Samuel 12:24*)

CHRONOLOGY / PERSONALITY / KING / JUDGE / WISDOM / WEALTH / TORAH STUDY / THE TEMPLE / THE THRONE / WRITINGS / WIVES / SHORTCOMINGS / BANISHED / ANECDOTES

CHRONOLOGY

□ Samuel lived fifty-two years, and so did Solomon (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 3:26*).

□ Solomon was twelve years old when he became king (*Seder Olam Rabbah 14*).

□ *Solomon loved Hashem* (*I Kings 3:3*) for four years, until he began to build the Temple. But [this applied only until] the time he began to build and *he took Pharaoh's daughter* (*ibid.* v. 1) [as an ally through marriage] (*Seder Olam Rabbah 15*).

□ Solomon was married to Pharaoh's daughter for thirty-six years (*ibid.*).

PERSONALITY

□ In reward for the forty-two sacrifices that Balak king of Moab offered [out of his fear of Israel (*Maharsha* to *Horios* 10a)], he merited to become the ancestor of Ruth, the forebear of Solomon, of whom it is written, *Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings* (*I Kings* 3:4) (*Sotah* 47a).

□ "Master of the Universe," said David, "I overheard people saying, 'When will that old man die so that his son Solomon may build the Temple and enable us to [come to Jerusalem for] festival pilgrimages!' And I was glad." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "For better a day in your courtyards than a thousand [elsewhere] (*Psalms* 84:1). One day of your Torah study means more to me than a thousand burnt offerings that your son Solomon is destined to sacrifice before me" (*Shocheh Tov* 122:1).

□ All of [Solomon's] deeds were threefold. He had three ascents [in which the scope of his rulership increased until he ruled the whole world] and three declines [in which the scope of his rulership decreased until he ruled just over his household]; he saw three worlds [having viewed life as a king, a commoner, and then again a king]; he committed three sins [having accumulated many horses, many wives, and much wealth]; composed three sets of proverbs [*Proverbs* 1, *Proverbs* 10, and *Proverbs* 25] and wrote three Books [*Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and *The Song of Songs*] (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:10).

□ He was called by three names: Jedidiah (*II Samuel* 12:25), Solomon, and Koheleth (*Ecclesiastes* 1:1). R' Yehoshua son of Levi said: Those three and Agur, Jakeh, Lemuel, and Ithiel (*Proverbs* 30:1; 31:1) — seven in all. [He was called] Agur (אגור), for he gathered (אגר) words of Torah; son of Jakeh (יָקָה), a son who vomited (הקיא) [i.e., forgot] it for a while; Lemuel (לְמוּאֵל), for he spoke to God (נָס לאל) and said, "I can take many [wives, horses, and money despite the prohibitions in *Deuteronomy* 17:16,17] without going astray"; Ithiel (אִיתִיֵּאל), "For God is with me (אתי אל) and I will be able [to do so]" (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:10).

□ Four were named before birth: Isaac, Ishmael, Josiah, and Solomon (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 1:6).

□ *The words of Lemuel king of Massa, a prophecy with which his mother rebuked him* (*Proverbs* 31:1). His mother bent him over a post [to beat him], and said, "What, my son?" (*ibid.* v. 2). Everyone knows that your father was God-fearing. Now they will say that your mother caused you [to be wicked]. *And what, O son of my womb?* (*ibid.*). None of your father's wives saw the king's face once they conceived; but I pushed my way in so that I would have a son who is zealous and with white appearance. *And what, O son of my vows?* (*ibid.*). All your father's wives would vow, 'If I had a son who is fit for kingship,' but I vowed, 'If I have a son who is zealous, full of Torah, and worthy of prophecy . . .' Why do you, to whom all the world's secrets are revealed, act like the [gentile] kings who drink wine to intoxication?" Solomon later acknowledged that his mother was right (*Sanhedrin* 70b).

□ Who were the first prophets? R' Huna said: David, Samuel, and Solomon (*Sotah* 48b).

□ Whatever is written of David is written [also] of Solomon. David reigned forty years and [Solomon] reigned forty years . . . David wrote [Scriptural] books and Solomon wrote books . . . David built an altar and Solomon built an altar . . . (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:6).

□ Solomon called himself a servant [of God], as it is written, "Give Your servant an understanding heart" (*I Kings* 3:9). The Holy One, Blessed is He, however, did not call him a servant, but said [to him], "For the sake of David my servant" (*ibid.* 1:13) (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 27).

□ Koheleth [Solomon] wished to be like Moses. A Heavenly Voice rang out and told him, "No prophet like Moses has ever arisen" (*Deuteronomy* 34:10) (*Rosh Hashanah* 21b).

□ When Solomon saw the power of kindness, he built for Israel two gates: one for bridegrooms and one for mourners. On the Sabbath, the inhabitants of Jerusalem would gather and go up to the Temple Mount and sit between those two gates in order to perform acts of kindness [gladdening the bridegrooms and consoling the mourners] (*Sofrim* 19:12).

□ [In his youth,] Solomon would sit at the entrance of King [David's] gate, and when anyone came to be judged by the king, [Solomon] would ask what he wanted (*Otzar HaMidrashim* 348).

□ A hundred and fifty thousand proselytes were converted by him (*Mishnas R' Eliezer* 8).

KING

□ David and Solomon were anointed from [oil poured from] a horn because their kingdom is eternal (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 6:1).

□ Why did they anoint Solomon [since the rule is that kings who inherit their position are not anointed]? Because of the contention of Adonijah [and the other children of David who were older than him] (*Horios* 11b).

□ Solomon was twelve years old when he became king (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 14).

□ Ruth lived to see her great-grandson [Solomon] become king (*Bava Basra* 91b).

□ When [Solomon] became king, his father David placed one of [Solomon's] hands in the hand of Benaiah son of Jehoiada [the head of the Sanhedrin] and the other in the hand of the prophet Nathan. Then his mother [Bath-sheba] stood and kissed him on the head (*Greenhut 1, Midrash Al Yishallel* 21).

□ At first [before marrying foreign wives (*Rashi*)] Solomon [even] ruled over heavenly beings, as it is written, *Solomon occupied the throne of Hashem as king* (*I Chronicles* 29:23), and later Solomon [only] ruled over earthly beings (*Sanhedrin* 20b).

□ After David died, Solomon replaced the [government] officials (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 9:2).

□ When he became king, he did not possess even a single horse; he rode a mule (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Tehillim* 71:9).

□ There are 252 provinces in the world. Solomon ruled over them all (*Esther Rabbah* 1:5).

□ *Hashem said to Moses and Aaron . . . "This month is to you* (*Exodus* 12:1,2). [Just as] the month lasts for thirty days, so does your kingdom last for thirty generations. The moon begins to illuminate on the first of the month, and its disk grows until

the fifteenth. From the fifteenth until the thirtieth, its light diminishes [until] the thirtieth, [when] it is not seen. Israel is the same. There were fifteen generations from Abraham to Solomon. Then the 'moon' was full. Thenceforth the kings diminished until Zedekiah, [of whom] it is written, *He put out Zedekiah's eyes* (*Jeremiah* 39:7). Then the light of the 'moon' is gone" (*Shemos Rabbah* 15:26).

□ *Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen* (*I Kings* 5:6). They were idle [i.e., not for war] (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:6).

□ Solomon became a king and then a commoner. One [Sage] said: A king, a commoner, and then [again a] king (*Megillah* 11b).

□ *Dwellers in Netaim* (*I Chronicles* 4:23). This refers to Solomon, who resembled a young plant (*netiah*) in the kingship [in that his greatness continually grew (*Rashbam*)], especially since he became king at the age of twelve (*Maharsha*) (*Bava Basra* 91b).

□ Solomon did not complete his reign [see BANISHED] (*Megillah* 11b).

□ Two Cushites [i.e., extremely handsome men] – Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha – were Solomon's scribes. One time Solomon noticed that the Angel of Death looked sad. "Why are you sad?" asked [Solomon. The Angel] replied, "These Cushites have been demanded of me." Solomon sent them in the care of the demons to Luz [a city which the Angel of Death cannot enter (*Rashi*)]. When they reached [the gates of] Luz, they died. The following day [Solomon] noticed that the Angel of Death looked happy. "What are you happy about?" asked [Solomon. The Angel] replied, "You sent them to the very place where I sought them" [for they had been destined to die at the gates of Luz (*Rashi*)]. Thereupon Solomon said, "A man's feet are his guarantors; they bring him to the place where he is sought" (*Sukkah* 53a).

□ Abishag was permitted to Solomon, for [he] was a king, and a king may use the scepter of another king [i.e., she was not prohibited as his father's

wife, for David had not married her or had relations with her] (*Sanhedrin* 22a).

□ Joab said, "It is better for me to be killed [for having killed Abner and Amassa] by the court, [in which case] my sons will inherit my possessions, than to be killed by the king [in which case he will inherit them]." Hearing this, Solomon said, "Do I need his money?" Forthwith *Benaiah son of Jehoiada* [representing the court] went up and struck him and killed him (*I Kings* 2:34) (*Yerushalmi Makkos* 2:6).

□ Hashem said to [Rebecca], "Two nations are in your womb" (*Genesis* 25:23). [The word for nations, גוֹיִם] is spelled [here] גַּיִים, exalted ones. [This alludes to two great personages who would descend from the twin embryos.] Each one is proud of his world: Adrian of the nations of the world, and Solomon of Israel (*Shocher Tov* 9:7).

JUDGE

□ Divine Inspiration appeared in three courts of law: those of Shem, Samuel of Ramah, and Solomon (*Makkos* 23b).

□ Occupied the throne of Hashem (*I Chronicles* 29:23). [Solomon] judged like his Creator: without witnesses and without having warned [the criminal as he was about to commit the crime]. Such was the case of the harlots (*I Kings* 3:16) (*Shocher Tov* 72:2).

□ Koheleth sought to judge through wisdom alone, without witnesses and without a warning [to the guilty party]. A Heavenly Voice rang out and told him, "By the word of two witnesses . . ." (*Deuteronomy* 17:6) (*Rosh Hashanah* 21b).

□ By means of the throne, Solomon knew [the truth], for Divine Inspiration rested upon [Solomon via the throne]; for whoever approached the throne was filled with fear. [Thus] he was [able] to judge without witnesses. There was a form in the throne, and if anyone approached to lie, the form would rattle, whereupon Solomon would know that he was a liar (*Zohar* 2:78a).

□ When he judged the case of the harlots without witnesses, people marveled: "Who can judge without witnesses!" They [immediately] guarded

themselves from [the sin of] robbery (*Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer* 4).

□ Two women who were harlots (*I Kings* 3:16). Rav said: They were spirits in the guise of women. Shmuel said: They were real harlots. [Solomon] thought, "The Holy One, Blessed is He, foresaw that this case would come before me; therefore He created man with two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, two arms, and two legs." He said, "Cut the living child in two" (*ibid.* v. 25). Said R' Yehudah bar Ilai: Had I been there, I would have tied a rope around his neck. Is it not enough that one died? Yet he decreed that the second was to be severed! When he said, "Give her the living child; do not slay him" (*ibid.* v. 27), a Heavenly Voice rang out and said, "She is his mother" (*ibid.*). Seeing this, they said, "Happy are you, O land, whose king is a man of dignity" (*Ecclesiastes* 10:17) (*Shocher Tov* 72:2).

□ Proselytes were not accepted in the days of David and Solomon [for it was assumed that they were motivated only as a result of the exalted status enjoyed by Israel (*Rashi*)] (*Avodah Zarah* 3b).

WISDOM

□ Solomon fasted for forty days so that the Holy One, Blessed is He, would give him wisdom and understanding (*Mishlei Rabbasi* 1).

□ Wisdom, where is it found? (*Job* 28:12). This teaches that Solomon searched for the seat of wisdom: [he wanted to know if it] is in the head or in the heart (*Yalkut HaMechiri, Tehillim* 51:15).

□ In Solomon's time, the "moon" was full [see above, KING]. Solomon became wiser than all people, and then he saw and knew everything (*Zohar* 3:46a).

□ Solomon investigated not only Torah matters but all that takes place under the sun, such as how mustard and lupine are sweetened (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:7).

□ Solomon's wisdom is apparent in his treatment of Shimi. [Shimi had said to David,] "Go out, go out, you man of blood and base fellow" (*II Samuel* 16:7); that is, go out of Jerusalem and go out of your home. Solomon told him, "I am not that way. Rather, Build yourself a house in Jerusalem, and

dwell there, and do not go out of [Jerusalem]. On the day that you go out . . . you will die'' (I Kings 2:36,37) (Zohar Chadash 88).

Solomon planted even pepper plants [though they do not grow naturally in the Land of Israel. But since Israel is the foundation of the world, there must be places in it which are capable of producing anything.] The wise Solomon understood the foundation of the earth and knew which vein [of land] went to Cush [where pepper grows best], and on it he planted pepper plants (*Tanchuma*, ed. *Buber, Kedoshim* 10).

Solomon dispatched spirits to fetch him water from India. [With it] he watered [land in Israel], and it bore [exotic] fruit (*Koheles Rabbah* 2:5).

Solomon's heart was full of wisdom, but no one knew it. When Divine Inspiration rested upon him and he composed three Books, all knew his wisdom (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:7).

One group of people would leave and another would enter to hear the wisdom of Solomon (*Koheles Rabbah* 1:2).

When he sought to do something improper, his wisdom would stand up against his [evil] inclination (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 14:49).

Solomon called the evil inclination an enemy (*Sukkah* 52a).

He who sees Solomon in a dream can look forward to wisdom (*Berachos* 57b).

Solomon said before the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Master of the Universe, when is a king praiseworthy? When he hires lazy workers and [nevertheless] gives them their full wages. We are lazy workers; give us a good reward, [for] that is a great kindness" (*Shocheh Tov* 26:3).

Hiram king of Tyre set himself up as a deity. Solomon tried to convince him to abandon this idea, and Hiram agreed. Therefore *there was peace between Hiram and Solomon (I Kings 5:26) (Zohar 3:61a).*

Koheleth wished to know when the End would be. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, to him, "I have recorded in Scripture, *The day of vengeance is*

in My heart [and unknown to man], and My year of redemption shall come'' (Isaiah 63:4) (Koheles Rabbah 12:10).

With the crown that his mother crowned him (Song of Songs 3:11). Said R' Yitzchak: We have reviewed all of Scripture, and we did not find that Bath-sheba fashioned a crown for her son Solomon. Rather, [the crown] refers to the Tabernacle, which was decorated and embroidered [serving as a sign of honor for the Holy One, Blessed is He] . . . (*Shemos Rabbah* 52:5).

I returned and contemplated . . . (Ecclesiastes 4:1). From where did Solomon return? Solomon would rise early in the morning and look to all parts of the world and obtain understanding. This time a great eagle came on pillars of fire and cloud and bowed down before [Solomon]. Solomon put on his belt, took his ring on which the Holy Name was engraved, and mounted the eagle. He [flew] four hundred parasangs and arrived in Tadmor in the wilderness, in the hills of darkness. There he alighted and learned all the secular realms of knowledge that he wished to know. When he had finished, he mounted the eagle and returned to his home. At that time he said, "*I returned and contemplated'' (Zohar 2:112b).*

The Holy One, Blessed is He, made him king over the beasts of the earth, the birds of the sky, the crawling things of the ground, and the demons and spirits. He understood the language of them all, and they understood his language, as it is written, *He spoke of the trees . . . (I Kings 5:13).* And when the king pleased, his scribes would call them by name, and they would all gather and come before him without chains or guards and dance before him in order to demonstrate his greatness [to the representatives of foreign] nations who stood before him (*Targum Sheini, Esther* 1:3).

Solomon awakened, and behold, it was a dream (I Kings 3:15) — the dream was true. A donkey brayed, and he understood the braying; a bird chirped, and he understood the chirping [he realized that he was now the master of all worldly wisdom] (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:9).

□ A woodcock came before Solomon and said, "Your majesty the king, I have flown throughout the world to see whether there is a nation in the world that is not subjugated to you. In the lands of the east, I found the city of Kitor, [whose inhabitants are] wealthy and drink the waters of the Garden of Eden. They have many armies, but do not know military strategy. They are ruled by a woman named the Queen of Sheba. The king wrote a letter and gave it to the woodcock which flew to the city of Kitor . . . When the Queen of Sheba read the letter, she summoned her sages and ministers, who told her, "We do not know of King Solomon and his kingdom." She called the sailors and gave them cypresses and precious stones and pearls and six thousand one-year-old boys and girls to [bring] to Solomon along with a letter informing him that she [herself] would come at the end of three years. When the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon, the king sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada to meet her. He resembled the morning star. The Queen of Sheba [taking him for the king] alighted from her carriage. "I am not the king," said Benaiah, "merely one of his servants." Benaiah brought her before the king. She said, "I will pose to you three riddles. If you solve them, I will know that you are a wise man; if not, you are like other people." [After Solomon had answered her riddles,] she said, "I did not believe it until I saw it with my own eyes" (*Targum Sheini, Esther 1:3*).

□ See also **Queen of Sheba**

WEALTH

□ [Ruth] ate and was satisfied, and had some left over (*Ruth 2:14*). [This alludes to the wealth and glory of Ruth's descendants.] She ate in the days of David, was satisfied in the days of Solomon, and had left over in the days of Hezekiah (*Shabbos 113b*).

□ Had anyone else said, "All is futile!" (*Ecclesiastes 1:2*), people would have said, "He hasn't a penny to eat, [so] he [makes light of material wealth and] declares, 'All is futile.'" For [the wealthy] Solomon, who made silver to be in Jerusalem like stones (*I Kings 10:27*), it was suitable to say, "All is futile" (*Devarim Rabbah 1:5*).

□ These officers provided food for . . . King Solomon's table . . . they let nothing be lacking (*I Kings 5:7*). They brought him beets in the sunny season and cucumbers in the rainy season (*Devarim Rabbah 1:5*).

□ Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour and sixty measures of meal; ten fat oxen, twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, beside harts, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl (*I Kings 5:2,3*). [These amounts of flour and meal were used] for the cooks' dough (placed over the pot to absorb the froth); it did not include the flour and meal [used] for the dish [itself] (*Bava Metzia 86b; Rashi*).

□ And fatted fowl (*I Kings 5:2*). A large, beautiful bird was [served] at Solomon's table each day (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 6:35*).

□ Fish, fowl, cattle, and beasts would come together to the slaughter house to be slaughtered for Solomon's meal (*Targum Sheini, Esther 1:1*).

□ Silver was not counted for ought in Solomon's days (*I Kings 10:21*) [and therefore not used for any vessels in Solomon's house]. But it is written, *The king made silver to be in Jerusalem like stones* (*ibid. v. 27*) [and thus used. The former describes the situation] before he married Pharaoh's daughter; [the latter,] afterwards (*Sanhedrin 21b*).

□ The king made silver to be in Jerusalem like stones (*I Kings 10:27*). Was it then not stolen? R' Yose son of Chanina said: [The silver was like] stones of eight or ten cubits [which is too massive to be stolen easily] (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 2:6*).

□ Even the weights in Solomon's times were made not of silver but of gold (*ibid.*).

□ One verse says, *Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses* (*I Kings 5:6*); another verse says, *Solomon had four thousand stalls of horses* (*II Chronicles 9:25*). How could both [verses] be true? [He had] four thousand rows of forty thousand [stalls] (*Sifri Naso 42; Sanhedrin 21b*).

□ Proselytes were not accepted in the times of David and Solomon [since their motivation would be suspect because of the power and glory of the kingdom of Israel] (*Avodah Zarah 3b; Yevamos 24b*).

TORAH STUDY

- Solomon fasted for forty days so that the wisdom of the Torah would be given to him (*Yalkut Shimoni, Mishlei 929*).
- He learned Torah at one time [when he was complete in his service to God] and forgot it at [another] time [when his service was no longer complete as a result of the influence of his wives (*Maharzu*)] (*Koheles Rabbah 1:2*).
- By expounding words of Torah to the public, he merited to have Divine Inspiration rest on him (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:1:8*).
- The Torah was like a basket without handles until Solomon came and made "handles" for it. [Handles make it easier to carry an object. Solomon instituted ordinances to help people avoid transgression; thus he made the Torah easier to "carry"] (*Eiruvim 21b, Rashi*).
- Until Solomon arose, people could not understand the words of the Torah. But when Solomon arose [and exerted effort to make the Torah comprehensible to all], everyone understood the Torah. Through his parables, Solomon fathomed the Torah's secrets (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:1:8*).
- On every topic of the Torah, Solomon said 3,000 parables; for every rabbinic enactment, he offered 1,005 explanations (*Eiruvim 21b*).
- He imparted knowledge to the people* (*Ecclesiastes 12:9*). [First] he taught them the plain reading; then he explained by means of parable (*Eiruvim 21b, Eitz Yosef*).
- He endeared the Torah to Israel (*Shocheh Tov 45:6*).
- Solomon said, "I permitted myself [to amass wives, wealth, and horses]; for I thought I understood the Torah's reasons [for forbidding a king to do so, and I could therefore avoid the pitfalls]. This understanding and knowledge [of mine] was madness and folly" (*Shemos Rabbah 6:1*).
- No one found answers to the four hundred questions that Doeg and Ahithophel raised concerning "a tower open to the air" (*Sanhedrin 106b*) until King Solomon came and answered each one (*Zohar 2:102a*).
- When Solomon wished to intercalate the year, he would gather seven elders before him. [With] Solomon [himself, and] Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer [who were always with him,] they were ten in all . . . [Solomon] would close his mouth and not talk before one who was greater than he [in wisdom. Therefore, the humble king did not speak before the elders (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Shemos Rabbah 15:20*).
- Solomon ordained [that one must lave one's] hands [before partaking of] hallowed food (*Shabbos 15a*).
- When Solomon ordained *eiruvim* [i.e., forbade carrying articles on the Sabbath from one private domain to another (*Rashi*)] and the laving of the hands, a Heavenly Voice rang out and said, "My son, if your heart is wise, My heart, too, will be glad" (*Proverbs 23:15*) (*Shabbos 14b*).
- David and Solomon composed [the blessing] for Jerusalem (בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [in Grace after Meals]: David [made reference to] "Israel, Your people, and Jerusalem, Your city"; Solomon [added] "the great and holy House" (*Berachos 48b*).
- Koheleth sought to find words of delight* (*Ecclesiastes 12:10*). Solomon sought to fathom the [reasons behind the laws] of the Red Heifer . . . he sought to discern the reward for Torah [study], the reward of the righteous, the reward for performance of precepts. Solomon sought to fathom [when] the End [would be] . . . (*Shocheh Tov 9:2*).
- After all the wisdom that was ascribed to Solomon, he sat and wondered about the four species [*lulav, esrog, hadas, and aravah*], as it is written, *There are four about which I do not know* (*Proverbs 30:18*). [Solomon could not, through his own wisdom, derive from the Torah's description (*Leviticus 23:40*) which four species to take on Sukkos. This can be known only through the Oral Law handed to Moses at Sinai (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Vayikra Rabbah 30:15*).
- You, Solomon, where is your wisdom and understanding? It is not enough that your words

contradict the words of your father David; [they even] contradict themselves! Your father David said, *The dead shall not praise You (Psalms 115:17)*. You said, *I consider more fortunate the dead who have already died than the living who are still alive (Ecclesiastes 4:2)*; then you contradicted yourself and said, *A live dog is better than a dead lion (ibid. 9:4)*. [The Talmud goes on to explain that the living have the advantage of being able to perform the precepts; the dead receive their reward in the World to Come but can no longer perform the precepts. In *Ecclesiastes 4:2*, however, Solomon praised the righteous who have died but whose merit still has an effect on the world] (*Shabbos 30a*).

□ Solomon was asked, "Who is destined for the World to Come?" He replied, "*Before His sages is glory (Isaiah 24:23)* [i.e., those who are honored in This World for their wisdom but not for their wealth are destined for the World to Come (*Rashi, Rabbeinu Gershom*)] (*Bava Basra 10b*).

□ Solomon son of David was asked, "How great is the power of charity?" He replied, "Go see what father stated clearly: *He who scattered and gave to the needy, his righteousness endures forever (Psalms 112:9)*" (*Bava Basra 10b*).

□ [David died on the Sabbath.] Solomon sent [a message] to the house of study: "Father is dead and lying in the sun." They sent back: "Place a loaf of bread or a child on top of [the body]; you are then permitted to move it" (*Shabbos 30b*).

THE TEMPLE

□ Let a *beloved* (King Solomon; *II Samuel 12:24,25*) the descendant of a *beloved* (Abraham; *Jeremiah 11:15*) come and build a *beloved* [edifice] (the Temple; *Psalms 84:2*) for a *Beloved One* (the Holy One, Blessed is He; *Isaiah 5:1*) in the territory of a *beloved one* (Benjamin; *Deuteronomy 33:12*) in which *beloved ones* (the people of Israel; *Jeremiah 12:7*) will be atoned for (*Menachos 53b*).

□ Solomon should have been listed with the three kings and four commoners who have no share in the World to Come [for having been influenced by his wives at the time of his old age (see *I Kings 11:4*); but because he hurried [to build] the Temple, he

was listed not with them, but with the righteous kings (*Pesikta Rabbasi 6:19*).

□ Do you see a man diligent in his business? (*Proverbs 22:29*). This refers to Solomon. It took him thirteen years to build his own house, but [only] seven years to build the Temple. He was lax with his own house, and gave the honor of the Holy One, Blessed is He, precedence over his own honor (*Pesikta Rabbasi 6:16*).

□ Solomon sent to Pharaoh-necoh: "Send me craftsmen, for I wish to build the Temple." [Pharaoh-necoh] gathered his astrologers and told them, "Divine which men are destined to die this year, and I will send them to him" [so that he could later accuse Solomon of killing them]. When they came to Solomon, he foresaw that they were destined to die that year. He gave them shrouds and sent them [back with] a letter saying, "Did you not have shrouds in which to bury your dead? Here they are with shrouds" (*Bamidbar Rabbah 19:3*).

□ Everyone assisted him in the construction of the Temple, even spirits, demons, and ministering angels (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:5*).

□ Why did he need demons? It is written, *And the House, when it was being built, was built of stone made ready at the quarry; neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron was heard in the House while it was being built (I Kings 6:7)*. Solomon asked the Sages, "How will I [hew the stones]?" They replied, "There is a *shamir* [a creature that cuts through stone] which Moses brought to [cut] the stones of the *ephod*." "Where is it?" he asked. [Upon being told that] Ashmedai king of the demons [knew the answer, Solomon] sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada [with] a chain on which the [Divine] Name was engraved . . . He went and captured [Ashmedai] and brought him [before Solomon]. Ashmedai took a cane, measured four cubits, and said, "When [you] die, you will have nothing in this world but [a grave of] four cubits. Now [you] have conquered the world, but you were not satisfied until you captured me as well!" "I want nothing of you," said Solomon. "I wish to build the Temple, and I need the *shamir*." Ashmedai indicated how it could be procured, and Solomon procured it. He detained

Ashmedai until the Temple was completed (*Gittin* 68a,b).

□ The *shamir*, [a creature the size of] a grain of barley, dates from the Six Days of Creation [created on the Sabbath eve immediately preceding the onset of the Sabbath]. Nothing hard can withstand it. [The stones for the *ephod* were split by writing on] rocks with ink and showing them to the *shamir*, causing them to split on their own. With [the *shamir*] Solomon built the Temple (*Sotah* 48b).

□ When he built the Temple, he built two gates, one for bridegrooms, the other for mourners and the excommunicated (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 17).

□ When Solomon had finished building the House of Hashem and the king's house (*I Kings* 9:1). The House of Hashem refers to the Temple; the king's house refers to the Holy of Holies (*Zohar* 2:4a).

□ Solomon built [the Temple] from the beginning with the condition that anyone in distress would come there and pray (*Semachos* 6).

□ Solomon sat on the throne of his father David (*I Kings* 2:12). What is [the purpose of] this sitting? Rather, he fixed the Foundation Stone and placed the Holy of Holies upon it (*Zohar* 1:72b).

□ King Solomon made ten candelabra. For each he brought a thousand talents of gold, which were placed in a smelting furnace a thousand times [until] one talent [of gold] was extracted (*Menachos* 29a).

□ Solomon made ten tables (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 6:3).

□ Although Solomon made ten tables and ten candelabra, only the vessels that Moses had made were used in the Temple service (*Yalkut Shimoni, Koheles* 989).

□ The water tank that Solomon had made held [enough water] for 150 ritual baths (*Eiruvim* 14a).

□ When Solomon built the Temple, he planted in it various fruit trees of gold. They bore fruit in season, and when the wind blew, [the fruit] would fall. [The fruits themselves were made of gold and were used to support the priests (*Maharsha Yoma* 39b)] (*Yoma* 21b).

□ When Solomon brought the Ark into the Temple, all the trees and cedars that were there thrived and bore fruit, which provided ample livelihoods for the young priests (*Tanchuma Terumah* 11).

□ When Solomon built the Temple, he sought to bring the Ark into the Holy of Holies, but the gates stuck together. Solomon offered twenty-four prayers, but he was not answered. [Then] he said, "Raise your heads, O gates . . . so that the King of Glory may enter" (*Psalms* 24:7). [The gates, however, asked him:] "Who is the King of Glory?" (*ibid.* v. 8) [for they thought Solomon was referring to himself]. He replied, "Hashem, the mighty and strong" (*ibid.*). Again he said, "Raise up your heads, O gates . . . so that the King of Glory may enter" (*ibid.* v. 9), but he was not answered. [Finally] he said, "O God, turn not away the face of Your anointed; remember the pious deeds of David Your servant" (*II Chronicles* 6:42). He was answered immediately [thus showing to all that God had forgiven David for his transgression] (*Shabbos* 30a).

□ Solomon made an Ark ten cubits [high]. The entrance of the Temple was [also] ten cubits [high]; furthermore, [the Ark] was being carried [and thus required additional entrance space. It could not fit through the entrance.] Solomon stood there, embarrassed. He began to pray before the Holy One, Blessed is He. Then he brought David's bier and said, "For the sake of David, Your servant, turn not away the face of Your anointed" (*Psalms* 132:10). At that time David came back to life . . . [When] Solomon said, "Master of the Universe, do it in [David's] merit," he was immediately answered. [All this occurred by the design of God, in order that it should be revealed that David had been forgiven for his sin concerning Bath-sheba; see *Shabbos* 30a] (*Shemos Rabbah* 8:1).

□ Why was Solomon subjected to this? Because he was proud and said, "I have now built You a stately House" (*I Kings* 8:13) (*Shocher Tov* 24:10).

□ Throughout the seven years that Solomon was building the Temple, he did not drink wine. When he [completed the Temple] and married Bithiah daughter of Pharaoh, he drank wine that night. There were two celebrations: the rejoicing over the

[completion] of the Temple, and the rejoicing over the daughter of Pharaoh (*Vayikra Rabbah* 12:5).

□ The sound of the rejoicing over Pharaoh's daughter exceeded the sounds of rejoicing over the Temple (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 10:4).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said, "Whose [rejoicing] shall I accept? Theirs [that of the Temple dedication] or the others'?" At that moment He considered destroying Jerusalem (*Vayikra Rabbah* 12:5).

□ Pharaoh's daughter performed eighty different dances that night (*ibid.*).

□ Pharaoh's daughter brought a thousand kinds of musical instruments, which she ordered played before [Solomon] that night. And she told him, "Thus do they make music before this idol, and thus do they make music before that idol." She spread a canopy above his bed, in which were set gems and pearls that shone like stars. When Solomon sought to arise, he saw the "stars" and [thinking it was still night] went back to sleep until four hours [into the day] had passed. The people of Israel were distressed, for it was the day of the dedication of the Temple, and they could not offer the daily sacrifice because the keys to the Temple were under his head, and they were afraid to wake the king. They informed his mother, Bath-sheba, who woke him and rebuked him. Therefore he is called Lemuel (למה אל), for he threw off the yoke of the kingdom of heaven (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 10:4).

□ Jeroboam son of Nebat gathered a thousand [men] of his tribe, entered, and rebuked [Solomon] (*Vayikra Rabbah* 12:5).

□ When Solomon built the Temple, he asked that fire descend from heaven, but it did not descend. He offered eight prayers, but it did not descend. As soon as he said, "Remember the good deeds of David Your servant" (*II Chronicles* 6:42), it immediately descended (*Shocheh Tov* 7:6).

□ Upon seeing that he was not answered until he mentioned his father David, he said, "I praised the dead who have already died [i.e., David] more than the living who are still alive [i.e., Solomon himself]" (*Ecclesiastes* 4:2) (*Shemos Rabbah* 44:2).

□ Three were answered immediately: Abraham's servant Eliezer, Moses, and Solomon. [Of Solomon] it is written, *When Solomon had finished praying, the fire descended from heaven* (*II Chronicles* 7:1) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:4).

□ The fire that descended from heaven in the days of Solomon did not leave until Manasseh removed it (*Zevachim* 61b).

□ The princes brought the wagons and the cattle [to the Tabernacle in the desert and they were used to transport the parts of the Tabernacle in the desert. As a result, the cattle] lived until the Temple [in Jerusalem] was built and Solomon sacrificed them (*Shocheh Tov* 101:4).

□ When Solomon built the Temple, he prayed, "Master of the Universe, if a person prays to You for money and You know that it is bad for him, do not give it to him; but if You see a person for whom wealth is good, give it to him" (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:5).

□ [After the completion of the Sukkos holiday which had followed the consecration of the Temple,] *They went to their tents joyful and glad of heart* (*I Kings* 8:66). They found their wives ritually clean, and the wife of each one conceived and bore a son (*Shabbos* 30a).

THE THRONE

□ Solomon's throne was made with Divine Inspiration, as it is written, *Solomon sat on the throne of Hashem* (*I Chronicles* 29:23) (*Midrash Esther, Otzar HaMidrashim* 52).

□ It was made in the likeness of the chariot of the Holy One, Blessed is He. *There were six steps to the throne* (*II Chronicles* 9:18) corresponding to the six firmaments (*Esther Rabbah* 1:12).

□ King Solomon made a royal throne, the likes of which no king had. It was set with precious stones. Twelve gold lions stood on it facing twelve gold eagles . . . There were six steps to the throne: On the first a gold lion crouched facing a gold ox . . . Above [the throne] stood a gold candelabrum . . . on which was a pitcher of olive oil for lighting [the candelabrum] in the Temple . . . The throne included seats of gold for the high priest and his

assistant, and seventy gold seats on which sat the Sanhedrin that would rule in the presence of King Solomon. When the king wished to go somewhere, the throne would bring him by means of a mechanism . . . To go up to the throne, he would put his foot on the first step, and the gold ox would take him up . . . When he reached the sixth, gold eagles descended, grasped the king, and placed him on the throne. When he was seated, a great eagle came and placed the royal crown on the king's head . . . A gold dove would open the Ark, take out the Torah Scroll, and place it in King Solomon's hand . . . If false witnesses appeared before the king, the animals would roar, frightening the witnesses into telling the truth (*Targum Sheini* 1:2).

□ A crier stood before Solomon's throne. When [the king] stood on the first step, [the crier] proclaimed, "You shall not twist judgment" (*Deuteronomy* 16:19); on the second, "You shall not recognize faces" [i.e., give preferential consideration to one person over another] (*ibid.*); on the third, "You shall not take a bribe" (*ibid.*); on the fourth, "You shall not plant . . . an Asherah, any tree, beside the altar of Hashem" (*ibid.* v. 21); on the fifth, "You shall not erect a memorial stone (מִצְבָּה)" (*ibid.* v. 22); on the sixth, "You shall not sacrifice unto Hashem . . . an ox or a sheep on which there is a blemish" (*ibid.* 17:1). [All these prohibitions are related to false judgment; see Sanhedrin 7b and Maharik 117] (*Devarim Rabbah* 5:6).

□ When [the king] stood on the first step, the crier proclaimed, "[The king] shall not acquire a multitude of horses" (*Deuteronomy* 17:16); on the second, "He shall not have a multitude of wives" (*ibid.* v. 17); on the third, "He shall not multiply silver and gold to himself profusely" (*ibid.*); on the fourth, "You shall not twist judgment" (*ibid.* 16:19); on the fifth, "You shall not recognize faces" (*ibid.*); on the sixth, "You shall not take a bribe" (*ibid.*). When he was about to sit down, [the crier] told him, "Know before Whom you sit: before He Who spoke and the world came into being." Behind the seat was a gold scepter on which perched a dove holding a gold crown in its mouth so that it barely touched [the king's head] (*Esther Rabbah* 1:12).

□ Solomon made himself a throne on earth in the

image of the Throne of Glory in heaven, [with] *chayos, galgalim, and cherubim*. The Holy One, Blessed is He, engraved in Solomon's throne animals and birds, the unclean facing the clean, and a man facing a demon to foreshadow times to come, when *the wolf shall dwell with the lamb* (*Isaiah* 11:6) . . . Solomon ascended to the throne three ways, each of which had six steps . . . A chair stood at his right for his mother Bath-sheba. Two armchairs faced [the throne], one for Nathan the prophet and one for Gad the Seer. When the king was about to decide a case, he would look at Gad and Nathan. They would decide the case by prophecy, and the king would agree with them by wisdom (*Beis Hamidrash* 5:34).

□ When Solomon died, Shishak king of Egypt came and took away [the throne]. Shishak is Pharaoh [whose daughter Solomon had married]. He said, "I am taking it as my daughter's marriage settlement" (*Esther Rabbah* 1:12).

□ Pharaoh-necoh [lit., "crippled"] sought to sit on Solomon's throne, but he was not familiar with its workings. A lion struck him and maimed him (*Vayikra Rabbah* 20:1).

□ Zerah the Cushite waged war against Pharaoh-necoh and took [Solomon's throne] from him. Asa waged war against Zerah the Cushite and took it from him. Asa and all the kings of Judah sat upon it. [Then] Nebuchadnezzar exiled it to Babylon. From Babylon [it was taken] to Media, from Media to Greece, and from Greece to Edom [i.e., Rome]. R' Eleazar said: I saw its remains in Rome (*Esther Rabbah* 1:12).

WRITINGS

□ When a poet composes an alphabetical acrostic, sometimes he finishes to *tav* [the last letter] and sometimes he does not; but Solomon [completed] the alphabet and added five extra letters (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:1:7).

□ The whole world was never more worthy than on the day that *Song of Songs* was given. Why? All the writings are holy, but [*Song of Songs*] is the holiest, the best, most exalted, and loftiest of songs [because it contains reciprocal praises between God and Israel. God] praises [Israel]: "You are

lovely in deed and lovely in resolve" (*Song of Songs* 1:15), and [Israel] praises Him: "It is You Who are lovely, my Beloved, so pleasant" (ibid. v. 16) (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:1:10).

□ He spoke three thousand proverbs (*I Kings* 5:12). This refers to the *Book of Proverbs*. His songs were a thousand and five (ibid.). This refers to *Song of Songs*. Divine Inspiration rested upon him and he composed three books: *Song of Songs* first, thereafter *Proverbs*, and finally *Ecclesiastes*. It is the way of the world that when a person is a youth he sings, when he grows up he says proverbs, and when he becomes old he says [that the material world is] futility (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:11; *Eitz Yosef*).

□ He composed [these three books,] corresponding to the three days during which the world used the light of the *Shechinah*, [for] the luminaries had not yet been created. Corresponding to these three books, he merited three things that no one else merited: *Silver was not considered for anything in Solomon's days* (*I Kings* 10:21); second, *Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the east* (ibid. 5:10); third, *Solomon sat on the throne of Hashem* (*I Chronicles* 29:23) (*Lekach Tov, Shir HaShirim*, ed. Wagschal, p. 6).

□ He composed these three books close to his death (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 15).

□ Every *Shlomo* (שְׁלֹמֹה) mentioned in *Song of Songs* is holy — [i.e., refers to God and means] *He to Whom Peace belongs* (שְׁהַשְׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹ) — except for one: *The thousand are yours, Shlomo* (*Song of Songs* 8:12) (*Shevuos* 35b).

□ Solomon was inspired to compose *Song of Songs* when he built the Temple and all the upper and lower worlds were complete (*Zohar* 2:143a).

□ He composed three songs corresponding to the three declines that he suffered. At first he had reigned from one end of the world to the other. His kingdom was reduced [until] he reigned only over Israel. [Then it was further reduced until] he reigned only over Jerusalem. [Finally] the Jerusalemites rebelled against him, so that he reigned only over his own bed [i.e., household] (*Midrash Shir HaShirim* 2:5).

□ He spoke three thousand proverbs (*I Kings* 5:12). We find that Solomon prophesied only about eight hundred verses. [The above verse] teaches that each verse [he prophesied] had two or three meanings (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 4:77).

□ We find that only 915 verses were said by [Solomon in the *Book of Proverbs*] (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:11).

□ The prophecies of three prophets were ascribed to [the prophets] themselves [rather than to God], because they were words of rebuke: *The words of Koheleth* (*Ecclesiastes* 1:1), *The words of Amos* (*Amos* 1:1), *The words of Jeremiah* (*Jeremiah* 1:1) (*Koheleth Rabbah* 1:2).

□ Why was Solomon called Koheleth? Because his words were spoken in public assembly (*b'hikahel*) (*Koheleth Rabbah* 1:2).

□ All of [Solomon's] deeds were in groups of three: he enjoyed three ascents and suffered three declines, saw three worlds [as king, commoner, and again as king], committed three transgressions and was attacked by three enemies, spoke of three futilities and composed three songs, was called by three names and wrote three books (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:1:10).

□ *The proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied* (*Proverbs* 25:1). They did not copy, הֶעֱתִיקוּ, but waited, הִקְטִינוּ. At first they said: *Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes* must be hidden, for they speak in parables and should not be included in the Writings. So they arose and hid them. [They remained hidden] until the Men of the Great Assembly came and explained them (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 1:4).

□ The Sages sought to hide the *Book of Ecclesiastes*, for they found in it words that [seemingly] tend toward blasphemy: *Rejoice, young man, in your childhood . . . follow the path of your heart and the sight of your eyes* (*Ecclesiastes* 11:9). As soon as he said, *But beware that for all these things God will call you to account*, they said, "Solomon spoke well" (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 8:5).

□ Solomon mentioned *futility* seven times to correspond to the Seven Days of Creation. Said Solomon,

"What was created on the first day? Heaven and earth. And what is their end? *The heavens shall vanish like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment*" (Isaiah 51:6). [So] he said, "Futility!" [And so it went with all six days.] "[What was created on the sixth day?] Man. [And what is his end?] *For you are dust and to dust you will return*" (Genesis 3:19). "And what was created on the seventh? The Sabbath." He investigated and could not find a flaw. Then he went back and saw that if a person transgressed it, he would lose his life. [So] he said, "This, too, is futile" (*Shocher Tov* 92:2).

□ Solomon said twenty-four prayers [consisting of song, supplication, and prayer] when he brought the Ark into the Holy of Holies (*Berachos* 29a, *Rashi*).

□ Ten people composed the *Book of Psalms*: . . . David, Asaph, Solomon . . . (*Shocher Tov* 1:6).

WIVES

□ The *Book of Deuteronomy* ascended and prostrated itself before the Holy One, Blessed is He, and said, "Solomon wishes to uproot *yud* from me [i.e., he is transgressing the prohibition of acquiring many wives, which begins with the letter *yud*: לא יִרְבֶּה" (*Deuteronomy* 17:17)]. The Holy One, Blessed is He, replied, "Solomon and a thousand like him will cease, but not a word from you will cease" (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:6).

□ Why did Solomon take a thousand wives? So that he would beget a thousand sons a year, [making] twenty thousand in twenty years. Then no one would be able to overpower him (*Batei Midrashos* 2:451).

□ *Solomon's provision for one day* . . . (*I Kings* 5:2). Solomon had a thousand wives, each of whom prepared this for him in her house, for she thought, "Perhaps he will dine with me today" (*Bava Metzia* 86b).

□ As long as [his teacher] Shimi son of Gera was alive, Solomon did not wed Pharaoh's daughter (*Berachos* 8a).

□ Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh-necoh (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:6:4).

□ When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, Gabriel descended and stuck a reed in the sea. It gathered a bank around it, on which the great city of Rome was built [which became a source of distress to Israel] (*Shabbos* 56b, *Rashi*).

□ *Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh king of Egypt* (*I Kings* 3:1) [after] he had converted her (*Yevamos* 76a).

□ Solomon did not [actually] marry her [she was merely a concubine]; but because he loved her exceedingly, the Scripture considers it as if he had married her (*Yevamos* 76b).

□ He loved her more than all the others (*Sifri Eikev* 52).

□ *King Solomon loved many foreign women* (*I Kings* 11:1). R' Shimon ben Yochai said: He took them as concubines [without converting them] but not as wives. R' Yosi said: He made them beloved [by God]; he drew them to the Torah and brought them under the wings of the *Shechinah* [i.e., he converted them and then married them] (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:6).

SHORTCOMINGS

□ The reasons for two [precepts recorded in the] Torah were revealed, and [as a result] a great man stumbled over them. It is written, *He shall not have a multitude of wives so that his heart not turn aside* (*Deuteronomy* 17:17). Solomon said, "I will have a multitude but I will not turn aside." And it is written, *His wives turned his heart away* (*I Kings* 11:4). It is written, *He shall not acquire a multitude of horses so that he cause not the people to return to Egypt for the purpose of acquiring [them]* (*Deuteronomy* 17:16). Said Solomon, "I will acquire a multitude but I will not cause [the people] to return [to Egypt, for I will find a different source of horses]." And it is written, *The horses that Solomon had were brought out of Egypt* (*I Kings* 10:28) (*Sanhedrin* 21b; *Maharsha*).

□ *It came to pass when Solomon was old that his wives turned away his heart* (*I Kings* 11:4). It would have been better for Solomon to clean sewers than to have this verse written about him (*Shemos Rabbah* 6:1).

□ Whoever thinks that Solomon sinned [concerning idol worship (*Maharsha*)] is mistaken. Is it not written, *Solomon did what was evil in the sight of Hashem* (*I Kings* 11:6)? Since he failed to protest to his wives [who sinned with regard to idol worship], Scripture considers it as if he sinned (*Shabbos* 56b).

□ It would have been better for that righteous man [Solomon] to be a servant [paid to draw water and chop wood] for idols than to have written of him, *Solomon did what was evil in the sight of Hashem* (*I Kings* 11:6) [which appears to ascribe to Solomon the actual performance of idol worship (*Maharsha*)] (*Shabbos* 56b).

□ *Fear Hashem, O my son, and the king; and meddle not with שוֹנִיִּים* (*Proverbs* 24:21) — with those who say there is a second (שני) god. The Holy One, Blessed is He, was angry at Solomon when he wrote this verse, [for He] said, "Is it proper to write a matter of sanctification [of the Name] in hints? [The foundation of faith should have been stated explicitly, not with the word שוֹנִיִּים, which cannot be understood without explanation." Solomon] immediately explicated: *There is One; there is no other; He has neither son nor brother* (*Ecclesiastes* 4:7) (*Devarim Rabbah* 2:33).

□ *Hashem appeared to Solomon in a dream* (*I Kings* 3:5) because [at that time] Solomon had not achieved perfection. As soon as he did [achieve perfection], *Hashem gave Solomon wisdom* (*ibid.* 5:9). Then Solomon [was given] wisdom directly and had no need for dreams. After he sinned, he needed dreams once again. Therefore, it is written, *Hashem . . . who appeared to him twice* (*ibid.* 11:9). Was it not more than twice? Rather, it was through a dream twice, because his involvement with foreign wives was a breach of the sacred covenant (*Zohar* 1:150a).

□ Before Solomon sinned, he ruled over the demons. After he sinned, he appointed sixty warriors to guard his bed for fear of spirits (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 3,6:5).

□ When [the Sages] enumerated three kings and four commoners who have no share in the World to Come, they wished to include Solomon [in the list]. David came and prostrated himself before them.

Some say: A fire went forth from the Holy of Holies and burned their surroundings (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:2).

□ David said before the Holy One, Blessed is He, "I accept suffering upon myself, but as for Solomon, Give . . . Your righteousness to the prince" (*Psalms* 72:1) (*Shocheh Tov* 72:3).

BANISHED

□ Solomon suffered three declines. He had ruled from one end of the world to the other. Then his kingdom was diminished so that he ruled only over Israel. The second decline was that his kingdom was diminished until he ruled only over Jerusalem. The third decline was that his kingship diminished so that he ruled only over his house (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:10).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Solomon, "What is this crown on your head? Descend from My throne!" At that moment an angel in the guise of Solomon descended, ousted him from his throne, and sat down in his place (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:6).

□ Solomon was dethroned for thirty-six days (*Mishnas R' Eliezer* 5).

□ Once, Solomon and Ashmedai [king of the demons] were alone. Said [Solomon], "It is written, *He has toaphos re'em* (*Numbers* 23:22) [to do His bidding and to mete out punishments (*Rashi*). Our Sages] said: *Toaphos* are ministering angels; *re'em* are demons. [The angels are obviously greater than us in many respects, but] in what way are you greater than us?" [Ashmedai] replied, "Remove my chains and give me your ring and I will show you my strength." Ashmedai swallowed him, placed one arm on heaven and one on earth, and vomited him a distance of four hundred parasangs. Of that time Solomon said, "*This* [alone] was my reward for all my endeavors" (*Ecclesiastes* 2:10). What is meant by *this*? Rav and Shmuel [disagreed]. One said his staff; and the other said his clothes. He went begging from door to door, and wherever he came he would say, "I, *Koheleth*, was king over Israel" (*ibid.* 1:12) (*Gittin* 68b; *Maharsha*).

□ An angel in the guise of Solomon descended and sat on his throne. Solomon went begging from door to door. A woman would set before him a plate of barley, hit him over the head with a cane, and say, "Is Solomon not sitting on his throne? Yet you say, 'I am Solomon king of Israel' " (*Ruth Rabbah* 5:6).

□ Two people who recognized [Solomon] encountered him. One of them prostrated himself before him and said, "My lord the king, will you dine with me today?" [Solomon] went with him. [The host] slaughtered an ox and served him many delicacies. [Then] he began to speak of his kingdom. "Do you recall," he said, "that you did thus and so when you were a king?" [Solomon] wept throughout the meal until he arose, sated by his weeping. The next day [the other] prostrated himself before [Solomon] and said, "My lord the king, will you dine with me today?" When they arrived, [the host] washed [Solomon's] hands and feet and served him a bit of vegetables. Then the man began to comfort him, saying, "My lord the king, the Holy One, Blessed is He, swore to your father that the kingship would never cease from his seed. The Holy One, Blessed is He, will return you to the throne." Upon hearing this, Solomon was calmed, and he was happy with the meal. When he returned to his throne, he wrote, *Better is a dinner of herbs where there is love than a fatted ox in which there is hatred* (*Proverbs* 15:17) (*Midrash Mishlei* 15).

□ Solomon went begging from door to door, and wherever he came he would say, "I, *Koheleth*, was king" (*Ecclesiastes* 1:12). When Solomon came to the Sanhedrin, the Sages said, "A madman does not speak consistently of one matter. What is this?" [They decided to investigate whether the one sitting on the throne was Solomon or a demon.] They asked Benaiah, "Does the king summon you?" "No," he replied. They sent to the queens, "Does the king come to you?" "Yes," they replied. [The Sages] sent back, "Check his feet" [for demons have feet like a chicken]. They sent back, "He comes in socks. [Furthermore,] he comes when we are unclean, and even makes advances to his mother Bath-sheba." [Thereupon] they brought Solomon and returned to him his ring and his chain, on which the Ineffable Name was engraved. When

he entered, Ashmedai saw him and flew off. Nevertheless, Solomon remained in fear of him. Thus it is written, *Behold the couch of Solomon, with sixty of Israel's mighty encircling it . . . because of fear in the nights* (*Song of Songs* 3:7,8) (*Gittin* 68b).

ANECDOTES

□ It once happened that the king of Persia took ill. His physicians told him that he had but one recourse — if he would drink the milk of a lioness, he would be cured. He sent emissaries [among them a doctor] to King Solomon with a large sum of money [asking that Solomon find a way to supply him with lioness milk]. King Solomon sent Benaiah ben Jehoiada with a retinue of servants and ten goats. They approached the lion's den, in which there was a nursing lioness. On the first day, Benaiah stood from afar and tossed her a goat, which she consumed. On the second day, he drew a bit closer and then threw her another goat. Each day he came nearer and nearer before throwing her a goat, until he was able to pet her and milk her. He brought the milk to King Solomon, who gave it to the emissaries of the Persian king and sent them on their way.

On the return trip the doctor emissary had a dream. He saw the organs of his body debating with one another, each claiming credit for delivering the lioness milk. Finally the tongue said, "I am better than any of you, for if not for speech [as a means of communication], what would you have accomplished?" The others all retorted, "How fearless you are, to compare yourself to us. Why, you do nothing at all!" But the tongue replied, "Today, you shall see!"

When the doctor awoke and reached the king, he said, "Here is dog's milk (חֶלֶב כְּלָבָה) for you!" The king was enraged and ordered that the doctor be hanged.

[While awaiting his sentence to be carried out, the doctor had another dream.] The tongue said to the other organs, "If I save you, will you admit that I am your sovereign?" They replied, "Yes!"

[He awoke and] his tongue began speaking to his jailers: "Return us to the king's presence!" They returned him to the king and he said, "Why have

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you ordered that I be hanged? In my native language a lioness and a female dog are both called *כלבה*! Drink and you will be cured." The king drank and was cured, and he freed the doctor. This is the meaning of the verse *Death and life are in the power of the tongue* (Proverbs 18:21) (*Midrash Shocheh Tov* 39:2).

□ Two men were once eating together. One of them asked his companion to lend him an egg. The other replied, "If you promise to return the egg to me — along with all the fruits I would have derived from this egg — at the time I decide to ask you to return it, then I will lend you the egg." And the borrower consented to these terms.

After a long period, the lender came and demanded the return of his egg along with all the generations of chickens that would have hatched from the eggs laid by the chicken that would have come from this egg had it not been eaten; a large fortune, indeed.

When the borrower refused to pay, for he could not possibly pay such an exorbitant amount, the two of them went before the tribunal of King David. When the king heard the testimony of those who had witnessed the original agreement, he decided in favor of the lender.

When young Solomon heard this decision, he wondered aloud, "Who in the world has ever seen a baby chick hatch from a cooked egg? For it was a boiled egg that he borrowed!" Upon hearing his son's wisdom, King David said to the borrower, "Go and return only one egg to him!"

Regarding this did David write, *For Solomon: O God, give Your judgments to the king, but Your righteousness to the king's son* (Psalms 72:1) (*Otzar HaMidrashim* 340).

□ Three men were traveling together. As the Sabbath approached and they were not near any inn, they decided to take all their possessions and hide them in a safe place until after the Sabbath. That night at around midnight, one of them arose, gathered all their possessions, and moved them to another hiding place. At the conclusion of the Sabbath when the three men went together to reclaim their property, accusations began flying. This one said, "You stole it!" The other said, "You stole it!" This

continued until they agreed to bring the case before King Solomon.

The king heard their claims and ordered them to appear before him the next day for his decision. When they returned in the morning, he cleverly said, "You are all wise merchants and I therefore would like to present you with a puzzle that has been sent to me by a distant king. This is what the king asked me:

"A boy and a girl [unrelated to each other] were raised together. As they grew older, they became very attached to one another until they each swore that neither would marry without the other's consent. [Time passed and they became separated.] Eventually, the girl became engaged, but before her marriage date, she remembered her promise. What did she do? She took silver and gold, went to her friend of old, and said, 'Take all of this and permit me to marry my betrothed.' And he answered, 'Since you have stood by your oath, I hereby grant you permission to marry him — and I shall not accept any payment for doing so.' And the bride and her party left in peace."

King Solomon continued his story. "As they were returning home, an aged highwayman robbed their money and kidnapped the girl for his purposes. He tried to force her to become his wife, but she resisted. She pleaded with him and told him of her promise and how she was absolved of it. Then she added, 'Now if this young man to whom I had sworn was able to control his passion and release me of my vow, then you, who are so much older and should be fearful of the Day of Judgment, should certainly control your passion and release me to return in peace to my betrothed.' Upon hearing these words the old robber lifted his eyes to heaven, returned all that he had taken from her, and sent her on her way.

"Now," asked King Solomon of the three travelers, "the king of the distant land has asked me, 'Which of the characters in the story was the most noble?' Will you gentlemen please help me figure out the proper answer?"

One of the travelers began, "I would praise the lass who kept her promise." The second said, "I would praise the lad who released her from her vow." And the third one said, "I would praise the

old bandit who not only released the girl, but even returned the money to her."

Then King Solomon said to the third man, "If, even when it was not lying before you, the money in the story was foremost in your thoughts, then certainly the money which you had within your grasp was foremost in your thoughts. I accuse you of stealing your traveling companions' possessions." And the crooked one was forced to confess and admit his guilt (*Midrash Aseres HaDibros* 8).

□ See also **Benaiah son of Jehoiada**

שלמון – Salmon

[Great-grandfather of David] (*Ruth* 4:21)

□ Salmon, Tov, and Elimelech were brothers (*Ruth Rabbah* 6:3).

□ Salmon was among those who entered the Land [of Israel]. He died after Joshua (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 12).

□ Elimelech, Salmon, Ploni Almoni, and Naomi's father were all sons of Nahshon son of Aminadab (*Bava Basra* 91a).

שלמיאל בן צורישדי – Shelumiel son of Zurishadai

[Prince of the tribe of Simeon] (*Numbers* 1:6)

□ He had five names: Zimri (*ibid.* 25:14); son of Salu (*ibid.*); Saul (*Genesis* 46:10); son of the Canaanite woman (*ibid.*); and Shelumiel son of Zurishadai (*Sanhedrin* 82b).

□ It is a discredit to Saul and his mother [Dinah, who is called] "the Canaanite woman" (*Genesis* 46:10), that from her issued Shelumiel son of Zurishadai who committed the [heinous] act [of brazen immorality with the Midianite woman] in Shittim [see *Numbers* 25] (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 46:10).

שלמית בת דברי – Shelomith daughter of Dibri (*Leviticus* 24:11)

□ Because of four merits, the people of Israel were redeemed from Egypt. [One merit was that] they did not behave immorally. Only one did, and Scripture made her identity known, as it is written, *The name of his mother was Shelomith daughter of Dibri*

of the Tribe of Dan (*ibid.*). [The word] Shelomith [indicates that] she was a chatterbox [who] said "Shalom" [in greeting] to everyone [and this led to an immoral act (*Eitz Yosef*)]; daughter of Dibri, that she brought pestilence [*dever*] upon her son; of the Tribe of Dan, that [by her son's improper behavior, he brought] disgrace to himself, his mother, his family, and his Tribe (*Vayikra Rabbah* 32:5).

□ Egyptian taskmasters were in charge of Israelite overseers. One taskmaster entered an overseer's house and said, "Go assemble your people." When the overseer had left, the taskmaster entered and sinned with Shelomith, the overseer's wife (*Tanchuma, end of Emor*).

□ When her husband returned home, he sensed what had transpired and separated from his wife. He took another wife and [from this marriage, the son of the Israelite woman (*Leviticus* 24:11)] was born (*Zohar* 3:106a).

שם בן נח – Shem son of Noah

(*Genesis* 5:32)

CHRONOLOGY / PERSONALITY / SERVES GOD / THE ARK

CHRONOLOGY

□ There were seven men whose lives spanned the entire history of mankind: Methuselah saw Adam; Shem saw Methuselah, Jacob saw Shem; Amram saw Jacob; Ahijah the Shilonite saw Amram; Elijah saw Ahijah; and Elijah is still alive (*Bava Basra* 121b).

□ Shem served Methuselah for ninety-eight years (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 1).

□ Shem lived until 110 years of Isaac's life had passed (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 11:11).

□ Shem, Ham, and Japheth are mentioned [in the Torah] in the order of their wisdom rather than age (*Sanhedrin* 69b)

□ Shem was born circumcised (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 2:5).

PERSONALITY

□ Four pious men lived in the generation of the Dispersion (הפלגה): Shem, Eber, Noah, and Abraham. Shem, Eber, and Abraham hid themselves [in

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order not to be influenced by the wicked]. Ashur [son of Shem, however,] separated from [the wicked] and went to another city (*Yelamdeinu, Batei Midrashos* 149).

□ Shem son of Noah prophesied for four hundred years to all the idolaters, but they did not heed [his words] (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* 24).

□ Shem protested to his children and grandchildren. He said, "Whom do you wish to oppose? He Who created [all] heavenly and earthly beings?" No one heeded his words except for Ashur [his son] who arose and left (*Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer* 8).

□ [Said Abraham,] "When the nations of the world sought to stray from the ways of the Holy One, Blessed is He, He gave them two great men of Father's family, Shem and Eber, to rebuke them" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 52:11, *Eitz Yoseph*).

□ Abraham strengthened Shem in precepts and good deeds (*Bereishis Rabbah* 44:7).

□ Abraham and Shem were outstanding in the world. *They feared* (*Isaiah* 41:5) one another. Abraham feared that Shem resented him for slaying his descendants, while Shem feared that Abraham resented *him* for begetting wicked offspring. *They drew near and came* (*ibid.*). They approached one another [and became beloved friends] . . . [Shem] helped [Abraham by giving him] blessings, and [Abraham] helped [Shem by giving him] gifts (*Bereishis Rabbah* 44:7).

□ Abraham sent for Shem son of Noah, who [came and] circumcised him and his son Ishmael (*Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis* 80).

□ Shem and Eber were walking before [Abraham's] bier. Upon seeing an empty place [beside Sarah's grave], they buried him in [that] spot, [which] had been destined for him (*Bereishis Rabbah* 62:3).

□ *Shem and Japheth took a garment* (*Genesis* 9:23). Shem initiated the good deed, and Japheth [joined] him . . . *They saw not their father's nakedness* (*ibid.*). They placed their hands over their faces, [thereby] treating [Noah] with the respect and awe of sons for their father (*Bereishis Rabbah* 36:6).

□ *They walked backwards* (*Genesis* 9:23) twice – while entering and while turning [to cover him] (*Lekach Tov, Bereishis* 9:23).

□ *Under his glory there shall be kindled a burning like the burning of fire* (*Isaiah* 10:16). A person's glory is his garment. [The angel] burned the bodies [of Sennacherib's host] from within while leaving their garments intact. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "I owe it to their forebear, Shem, for he and Japheth took their garments and covered their father's nakedness." Therefore the Holy One, Blessed is He, told Michael, "Leave their garments intact; burn [only] their souls" (*Shemos Rabbah* 18:5).

□ *In all the land . . . two parts shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left in it* (*Zechariah* 13:8) – the third [son] of Shem [i.e., Arpachshad, from whom Israel descended] (*Sanhedrin* 111a).

SERVES GOD

□ When Noah emerged from the Ark, a lion struck and maimed him so that he was not fit to sacrifice. His son Shem sacrificed in his place (*Vayikra Rabbah* 20:1).

□ Adam was the world's firstborn. When he offered his sacrifice, he wore the garments of the high priesthood, and [thereafter] the firstborn used them [in the service of God]. When Adam died, they passed to Seth. From Seth they passed to Methuselah, and from Methuselah to Noah. From Noah they passed to Shem (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 4:8).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, sought to bring forth the priesthood from Shem. But since [Shem] blessed Abraham before blessing the Omnipresent, He brought it forth from Abraham [instead] (*Nedarim* 32b).

□ Shem was a high priest, and he had the advantage of honor and blessing over his brothers (*Zohar* 1:117a).

□ His brother Japheth learned Torah from him in his academy until Abraham came. How did Shem know Torah? Adam knew the Torah, and he passed [this knowledge] down to his son Seth. Then it came to Enoch, and finally to Shem (*Zohar Chadash, Noach* 22b).

□ Divine Inspiration appeared in three places: in the law courts of Shem, Samuel of Ramah, and Solomon (*Makkos* 23b).

□ [The prohibition against] promiscuity was instituted in Shem's court of law. [Thus, when] Judah was told, "[Tamar] has committed harlotry," Judah said, "Take her out and let her be burned" (*Genesis* 38:24) (*Avodah Zarah* 36b).

□ Angels from heaven took Isaac [after the *Akeidah*] and brought him to the academy of the great Shem, where he remained for three years (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 22:19).

□ [Rebecca] went to inquire of Hashem (*Bereishis* 25:22). She went to the academy of the great Shem to beseech God for mercy (*Targum Yonasan*).

□ Hashem said to [Rebecca] (*Genesis* 25:23) [the prophecy concerning the two children in her womb] through Shem son of Noah (*Bereishis Rabbah* 63:7).

THE ARK

□ Eliezer asked the great Shem, "How did you manage in the Ark?" [Shem] replied, "We had much distress; creatures that eat by day we fed by day; those that eat by night we fed by night . . ." The great Shem asked Eliezer, "And how did you manage when the kings of the east and west attacked you?" (*Sanhedrin* 108b).

□ See also **Noah**

שִׁמְגַר בֶּן עֲנַת — Shamgar son of Anath

[Fourth judge of Israel] (*Judges* 3:31)

□ [Shamgar judged Israel] in the end of the days of Ehud, when the episode with Eglon took place (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 12).

שְׁמוּאֵל — Samuel

(*I Samuel* 1:20)

PERSONALITY / WITH ELI / PROPHET / TEACHER AND JUDGE / SAMUEL AND SAUL / OLD AGE AND DEATH

PERSONALITY

□ [Hannah prayed,] "Give to your handmaid a manchild" (זָרַע אֲנָשִׁים — lit., seed of men) (*I Samuel* 1:11): a man [distinguished] among men. Shmuel said: A son who will anoint two men, Saul

and David. R' Yochanan said: [A son] who is equivalent to two men: Moses and Aaron. Our Sages said: [A son] who will be average among men, neither tall nor short [so as not to attract an evil eye (*Rashi*)] (*Berachos* 31b).

□ Before Eli's sun set, the sun of Samuel of Ramah had risen (*Kiddushin* 72b).

□ A Heavenly Voice rang throughout the world, saying, "A righteous man named Samuel is about to rise." [Thereafter,] every woman who gave birth to a son called him Samuel, but when the people saw his deeds, they would say, "This is not Samuel." After this [Samuel] was born and they saw his deeds, they said, "It seems he is the one" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shmuel* 78).

□ Samuel was born circumcised (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 2:5).

□ Why was Pethuel so called? Because he curled (*מתפתה*) his hair like a maiden [as a Nazirite, he was forbidden to cut it]. Another one said: Because he persuaded God (*פתה לאל*) with his prayer. He was Samuel of Ramah (*Shocheh Tov* 80:1).

□ The eight princes among men (*Micah* 5:4) are Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah, Elijah, and the Messiah (*Sukkah* 52b).

□ Samuel was a Nazirite (*Nazir* 66a).

□ The righteous Samuel feared the judgment [of the World to Come] (*Chagigah* 4b).

□ Give to a wise person, and he will be yet wiser (*Proverbs* 9:9). This refers to Ruth the Moabitess and Samuel of Ramah. Eli said to Samuel, "Lie down, and if [the unidentified voice] calls you, say, 'Speak, Hashem, for Your servant hears'" (*I Samuel* 3:9). But [when] Hashem . . . called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Samuel said, "Speak, for Your servant hears" (*ibid.* v. 10). [He was yet wiser for] he did not say, "Speak, Hashem" [in case the unidentified voice did not come from God (*Rashi*)] (*Shabbos* 113b).

□ Samuel called himself a servant [of God], but the Holy One, Blessed is He, did not call him [by that title] (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 27).

□ Samuel was very wealthy (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shmuel* 111).

□ What is written of Samuel is greater than what is written of Moses. Of our teacher Moses it is written, *I did not take the donkey of any of them* (Numbers 16:5) [against the owner's will (Rashi)], even with payment. Samuel, however, did not hire it even with the [owner's] consent, as it is written, *You have neither oppressed us nor taken from us with our consent* (I Samuel 12:4) [i.e., you did not hire our animals by force or with our consent (Rashi)] (Nedarim 38a).

□ Moses and Samuel are equal. What is the difference between them? Moses came to the Holy One, Blessed is He, to hear the Divine communication; whereas the Holy One, Blessed is He, came to Samuel. Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Let Moses, who sits in one place to judge Israel, come to Me. But [as for] Samuel, who goes to the people of Israel in their towns to judge them, I will go and speak with him" (Shemos Rabbah 16:4).

□ In every generation there is someone like Samuel (Bereishis Rabbah 56:7).

□ One who does not wish to accept assistance [from others] need not do so [and this is not considered to be arrogant behavior (Rashi)], like Samuel of Ramah, of whom it is written, *His house was there* (I Samuel 7:17) [there refers to all the places he visited (Rashi)]. Wherever he went, he took along his house [i.e., a tent and all his housewares (ibid.)] (Berachos 10b).

□ Samuel took nothing from the community. He did not even drink from the public reservoir (Midrash HaGadol, Bamidbar 16:15)

□ Samuel said to all of Israel, "... whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken? (I Samuel 12:1-3). When I sacrificed an ox on [your] behalf and I was praying for [you] or anointing a king for [you], it was mine; I did not take [yours]. And when I made the rounds to judge [your] cases and tend to [your] needs, I took my own donkey" (Bamidbar Rabbah 18:10).

WITH ELI

□ Hannah did not go up (I Samuel 1:22). She saw that Samuel was exceedingly delicate, and she was

afraid to subject him to a tiring journey [to the Tabernacle at Shiloh] (Chagigah 6a).

□ *The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel had lain down to sleep in the Temple of Hashem* (I Samuel 3:3). How could that be, when no one but kings of the House of David were permitted to sit in the Temple courtyard? Rather, [the verse is to be understood as follows]: *The lamp of God had not yet gone out* in the Temple of Hashem, and Samuel had lain down to sleep in his place (Kiddushin 78b).

□ Samuel had lain down to sleep in the Temple (I Samuel 3:3). Samuel had lain down in the Levite courtyard; and the voice was heard emanating from the Temple of Hashem (Targum, I Samuel 3:3).

□ *They slaughtered the bullock, and they brought the child to Eli* (I Samuel 1:25). Eli had told them to call a priest to slaughter [the bullock]. When Samuel saw them looking for a priest, he said to them, "The slaughter [of a sacrifice] may be performed by a commoner." They brought him to Eli. "What you have said is correct," said Eli, "but he who renders a halachic ruling in the presence of his teacher incurs the death penalty." Hannah came and pleaded with [Eli]. "Let me punish him," said [Eli]. "Then I will pray [for you], and you will be given a [son] who is greater than he." She replied, "For this child I prayed [i.e., this child is especially precious to me, having been born as a result of my prayers]" (Maharsha) (I Samuel 1:27). (Berachos 31b).

PROPHET

□ After the first prophets died, the *Urim VeTumim* ceased functioning ... who were the first prophets? David, Samuel, and Solomon (Sotah 48a,b).

□ All the prophets were wealthy, as we know from [the case of] Samuel (Nedarim 38a).

□ Even Samuel, the head of all the prophets, did not know what he was prophesying when he prophesied (Yalkut HaMechiri, Yeshayahu 8:18).

□ [Saul and his servant asked,] "Is the seer [Samuel] here?" They said, "He is (וְ); behold, he is

SAMUEL / שמואל

before you" (I Samuel 9:11,12). They were saying, "Do you not see a cloud hovering over his courtyard?" [The expression *שָׁמַיִם* refers to a cloud [representing God's Presence], as it is written, *Sometimes (שָׁמַיִם) the cloud was on the Tabernacle a few days (Numbers 9:20) (Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 4:154).*

□ All the [other] prophets prophesied [only] during their lifetimes. Samuel prophesied in his lifetime and after his death [see I Samuel 28:19] (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer 33*).

□ When the people of Israel saw the cloud suspended between heaven and earth, they knew that [God] was speaking with Moses. So it was also with Samuel (*Sifri Zuta, Bamidbar 12:5*).

□ Although Samuel was a prophet, he did not know [anything concerning the future] until the Holy One, Blessed is He, revealed it to him (*Shochoer Tov 119:9*).

TEACHER AND JUDGE

□ [The people of Israel] asked for a king in the tenth year of [the leadership of] Samuel of Ramah (*Nazir 5a*).

□ He bore the burden of Israel only ten years (*Bamidbar Rabbah 3:8*).

□ Samuel wrote his Book [i.e., *Samuel*], and in addition *Judges* and *Ruth*. [The *Book of Samuel*] was completed by Gad the Seer and Nathan the prophet (*Bava Basra 14b, 15a*).

□ [The verse of *Hallel*] "This is the day Hashem has made" (*Psalms 118:24*) was said by Samuel [concerning the day he anointed David as king of Israel (*Maharsha*)] (*Pesachim 119a*).

□ [The verse of *Hallel*] "Bind the festival offering with cords" (*Psalms 118:27*) was said by Samuel (*Pesachim 119a*).

□ Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to Hashem (I Samuel 7:9). Three prohibitions were permitted concerning Samuel's lamb: it was not skinned; it was very young; and he was [a Levite and] not a priest (*Yerushalmi Megillah 1:12*).

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□ Samuel donned the garment of all Israel [i.e., he pleaded their case as if he were "in their shoes"]. He said, "Master of the Universe, You punish men only for saying before You, 'I did not sin.' But these [people] are saying before You, 'We have sinned'" (I Samuel 7:6) (*Yerushalmi Ta'anis 2:7*).

□ Samuel hewed Agag [king of the Amalekites] in pieces (I Samuel 15:33). What did he do to him? He cut his flesh into olive-sized pieces, which he then fed to ostriches. Our Sages said: He set up four poles and stretched [Agag] over them (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 3:90*).

□ Samuel hewed Agag (I Samuel 15:33). He castrated him. "Is this how princes are executed?" asked Agag. Samuel replied, "As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless" (*ibid.*) (*Pesikta Rabbasi 12:87*).

□ Hashem said [to Samuel], "Arise, anoint [David], for he is the one" (I Samuel 16:12). Rebukingly, [God] said to [Samuel], "Rise before [David]! My anointed one is standing, and you sit!" (*Midrash HaGadol, Devarim 1:17*).

□ [David] was ruddy, with beautiful eyes (I Samuel 16:12). When Samuel saw that David was ruddy, he was frightened, for he thought, "[David] is a killer like Esau!" [But] the Holy One, Blessed is He, said, "With beautiful eyes. Esau kills on his own volition, but [David] kills [his foes only] upon the advice of the Sanhedrin [the eyes of the congregation]" (*Numbers 15:24*) (*Bereishis Rabbah 63:8*).

□ Samuel gave David a scroll [containing the plans for the construction of the Temple] (*Yerushalmi Megillah 1:1*).

□ Children in the days of Saul and Samuel expounded the Torah and gave forty-nine reasons for declaring something to be pure, and forty-nine for declaring it to be impure (*Shochoer Tov 7:7*).

□ The righteous Samuel went throughout all the Israelite towns to judge [the people] in their [respective] towns (*Shabbos 56a*).

□ Three thousand laws were forgotten during the period of mourning for Moses. [The people of Israel] said to Joshua, "Ask [God to teach them to you]." He replied, "It is not in the heavens"

(Deuteronomy 30:12). They said to Samuel, "Ask." He replied, "It is written, *These are the precepts* (Numbers 36:13) — henceforth [i.e., since the giving of the Torah], a prophet is not allowed to introduce anything new" (Temurah 16a).

□ Divine Inspiration appeared in three places: in the law courts of Shem, Samuel of Ramah, and Solomon (Makkos 23b).

□ Amassa fastened his sword like an Ishmaelite and said, "Whoever does not accept this *halachah* will be pierced by the sword. Thus have I received a tradition from the court of Samuel of Ramah: An Amonite but not an Amonitess, a Moabite but not a Moabitess [are forbidden to enter the congregation of God." Hence David, a descendant of Ruth the Moabitess, was permitted] (Yevamos 77a).

□ Saul told Abner, "Go ask Samuel and his court about the law that has escaped you [regarding the status of a Moabitess." Abner] came before Samuel and his court . . . (Ruth Rabbah 4:9).

□ [David did not ask God whether fighting the Philistines] was permitted or forbidden [on the Sabbath (Rashi)], for the court of Samuel of Ramah existed [to clarify such questions], but rather [he asked] whether or not he would win (Eiruvim 45a).

□ Samuel protested to the army. They worshiped idols, went to battle, and fell; then they came and asked, "Why were we defeated today?" He replied, "You do evil deeds, and then you complain against the Holy One, Blessed is He!" (Mishnas Rabbi Eliezer 8).

□ Moses established for Israel eight [priestly] watches [in the Temple]: four from Eleazar and four from Ithamar. Samuel came and instituted sixteen (Ta'anis 27a).

□ Who made [the instruments] for [the Levites]? Samuel and David. They divided the instruments among the Levites (Bamidbar Rabbah 15:11).

SAMUEL AND SAUL

□ Samuel ruled for ten years alone, and one year together with Saul (Temurah 15a).

□ What caused Saul to reside in Gibeah for two and a half years [as king and not die immediately

(Maharsha)]? The prayer of Samuel of Ramah (Ta'anis 5b).

□ [David] and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth (נַיֹּוֹת) in Ramah (I Samuel 19:18). What is the connection between Naioth and Ramah? Rather, they dwelt in Ramah and occupied themselves with the beauty (נוי) of the world [i.e., to determine from the Torah the most appropriate place for the Temple (Rashi)] (Zevachim 54b).

□ [Saul] took hold of the edge of [Samuel's] robe, and it tore. Then Samuel said to him, "Hashem has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours who is better than you" (I Samuel 15:28). Saul asked, "And who is this neighbor who is better than I who will reign in my place?" "I will give you a hint," replied [Samuel]. "He who tears your robe will take away your kingdom" [i.e., David; see *ibid.* 24:5] (Shocheh Tov 57:3).

□ The woman necromancer (בעלת אוֹב) conjured up Samuel through sorcery within twelve months of his death (Shabbos 152b).

□ He is covered with a robe (I Samuel 28:14). In this robe he grew up, in it he was buried, and in it he rose from his grave [when he spoke to Saul] (Yalkut Shimoni, Shmuel 139).

□ "I saw godlike beings coming up" (I Samuel 28:13). Samuel brought Moses along. He said to Moses, "If, heaven forbid, they are summoning me to judgment, come up with me, for there is nothing you wrote in the Torah that I did not fulfill" (Chagigah 4b).

□ Samuel said to Saul, "Why did you disturb me (הֲרַגְנִי)? (I Samuel 28:15). Did you have to anger your Creator through me, by making me your deity? Furthermore, I thought it was the Day of Judgment, and I was frightened" (Yerushalmi Chagigah 2:1).

□ "Hashem has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David" (I Samuel 28:17). [Saul said to Samuel,] "When you were with us [in This World] you told me, 'And [He] has given it to a neighbor who is better than you [and you refrained from mentioning him by name]' (*ibid.* 15:28). Now you say, 'To your neighbor David!'"

SAMUEL / שמואל

Samuel replied, "When I was with you in the world of falsehood, I told you false words, [and I did not specify David] because I feared you would kill me. But now that I am here in the world of truth, you will hear only the truth from me" (*Tanchuma Emor 2*).

OLD AGE AND DEATH

□ [Death between the ages of] fifty and sixty is death by excision (כרת). Why, then, does the *Gemara* not recognize it [in its discussion of death]? Out of respect for Samuel [who died at the age of fifty-two] (*Moed Katan 28a*).

□ *It came to pass, when Samuel was old* (*I Samuel 8:1*) He was only fifty-two but had aged prematurely (*Ta'anis 5b*).

□ "Master of the Universe," [Samuel] said, "you have set me equal to Moses and Aaron. Just as the work of Moses and Aaron [i.e., their disciple Joshua (*Rashi*)] was not undone during their lifetimes, so let the work of my hands [Saul, whom I anointed,] not be undone during my lifetime." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Shall Saul die? Samuel does not allow it. Shall Samuel die? Because he is young, people will murmur about him [thinking that he died early as punishment for his sins]." Said the Holy One, Blessed is He, "I will cause him to age prematurely" (*Ta'anis 5b*).

□ *He made his sons judges over Israel* (*I Samuel 8:1*). They were righteous at first, but after he appointed them judges, they changed for the worse (*Midrash Shir HaShirim*, ed. Buber, 13).

□ Samuel's sons asked for their [Levite] portions outright (*Chullin 133a*).

□ Samuel aged [prematurely] because of the trouble with his sons (*Aggadas Bereishis 41*).

□ Samuel did not rebuke the people of Israel until he was near death (*Sifri Devarim 2*).

□ Samuel died on the twenty-eighth of Iyar (end of *Megillas Ta'anis*).

□ Samuel died four months before Saul (*Seder Olam Rabbah 13*).

□ When Samuel of Ramah died, Nob was de-

SIMEON / שמעון

stroyed [by Saul] and [the Tabernacle was] moved to Gibeon (*Zevachim 118b*).

□ *Ten days later Hashem smote Nabal, and he died* (*I Samuel 25:38*). The Holy One, Blessed is He, suspended his punishment during the seven days of mourning for Samuel, so that the mourning for [Nabal] would not be mixed with the mourning for the righteous [Samuel]. He lived an additional three days, and then he died of a plague (*Yerushalmi Bikkurim 2:1*).

שָׁמִיר בֶּן מִיכָה – Shamir son of Micah

(*I Chronicles 24:24*)

□ These Mishnahs [not found in our Mishnah] were written by five very righteous men: Shamir the Levite, Hezekiah, Zedekiah, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah son of Ido the prophet. [In addition,] they hid the vessels of the Temple and the treasures of Jerusalem (*Rav Pe'alim 16*).

□ [A list of] these sacred vessels, and the vessels of the Temple that were in Jerusalem and elsewhere, were inscribed by Shamir the Levite and his colleagues on a bronze tablet (*Mishnayos, Rav Pe'alim 16*).

□ One hundred thirty Levites were slain, and a hundred escaped with Shamir the Levite and his colleagues, and they hid the five hundred thousand bowls of pure gold . . . All these they hid in a tower in the land of Babylon in the city of Baghdad . . . and in Segul Habar (*Mishnayos, Rav Pe'alim 17*).

שְׁמֵעוֹן – Simeon

[Son of Jacob and Leah] (*Genesis 29:33*)

□ He was born on the twenty-eighth of Teves. He died at the age of 120 (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shemos 162*).

□ Simeon and Levi were buried in the city of Mazada. The city was given to the children of Simeon as an inheritance, and the open space surrounding the city [was given] to the children of Levi (*Sefer HaYashar*, end of *Yehoshua*).

□ *Simeon and Levi . . . each took his sword* (*Genesis 34:25*). They were thirteen years old at the time (*Bereishis Rabbah 80:10*).

□ "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?" (*Genesis 34:31*). Simeon and Levi said, "Let it not be

said that uncircumcised idolaters violated Jacob's daughter, but rather that uncircumcised idolaters were slain over Jacob's daughter. And let Shechem not sneer at us" (*Targum Yonasan* 34:31).

□ Simeon and Levi slew all the men of Tappuah (*Sefer HaYashar, Vayishlach*).

□ And they said one man to his brother (*Genesis* 42:21). [This refers to] Simeon and Levi, who were "brothers" in conspiracy (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 37:19).

□ They cast [Joseph] into the pit (*Genesis* 37:24). That was [done by] Simeon. And when was he punished for it? [Joseph] took Simeon . . . and imprisoned him (*ibid.* 42:24) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 84:16).

□ After Joseph was placed in the pit, Simeon gave orders, and they threw big rocks [on Joseph] in order to kill him (*Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Vayeishev* 13).

□ [Joseph] took Simeon from them and imprisoned him before their eyes (*Genesis* 42:24), because it was he who had pushed [Joseph] into the pit. [Moreover, by so doing, Joseph] was separating [Simeon] from Levi so that [the two of them] would not conspire against him. Simeon said to his brothers [who were about to return home without him], "This is what you did to Joseph, and this is what you wish to do to me!" "What can we do?" they replied. "Shall members of our households die of starvation?" "Do as you wish," he said. "Now I shall see who will put me in jail." When the warriors approached him, he shouted at them, [whereupon] they fell on their faces and their teeth broke. Then [Joseph] ordered Manasseh, who was sitting before him, "Arise!" Manasseh immediately rose, and with a single blow put [Simeon] in prison and chained him (*Bereishis Rabbah* 91:6).

□ As soon as [the brothers] had left, [Joseph] fed, bathed and anointed [Simeon] (*ibid.* 91:8).

□ Said Jacob, "If Simeon and Levi camp together, no king or ruler will be able to withstand them. I will separate them within Jacob" (*Genesis* 49:7) (*Targum Yonasan*).

□ Reuben, Simeon, and Levi ruled the Israelites in Egypt. After Reuben died, the leadership was given to Simeon; after Simeon died, it was given to Levi. After Levi died, they sought to give the leadership to Judah, [but] a Heavenly Voice said, "Put aside [Judah's sovereignty] until its time comes" (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:8).

□ [The Tribe of] Simeon produced neither judge nor king because of [Zimri's] sin of immorality (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shoftim* 42).

שמעי אחי דוד – Shimi brother of David

(*II Samuel* 21:21)

□ R' Chiya descended from Shimi the brother of David (*Kesubos* 62b).

שמעי בן גרא – Shimi son of Gera

[Teacher of Solomon, supporter of Absalom]

(*II Samuel* 16:5)

□ As long as [his teacher] Shimi son of Gera was alive, Solomon did not marry Pharaoh's daughter (*Berachos* 8a).

□ Shimi's wife saved two righteous men, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, from death when Absalom's servants pursued them (*Midrash Shmuel, ed. Buber, 32:4*).

□ Shimi came to David and said, "Just as Joseph's brothers treated him badly, yet he treated them well, so too, though I treated you badly, [please] treat me well" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shmuel* 151).

□ Shimi told David, "All [the people] of Israel treated you badly, and I outdid them all. Now all the people of Israel are waiting to see whether you will treat me kindly. If you accept me, all the people of Israel will come and be reconciliated with you" (*Shocheh Tov* 3:3).

□ "Behold, with you is Shimi son of Gera" (*I Kings* 2:8). What is meant by *with you*? He is with you constantly, for [Shimi] was [Solomon's] teacher. [Solomon] told [Shimi], "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem" (*ibid.* v. 38), so that Torah would go forth from [Shimi] through the land, [and, being in charge of Torah education,] he would not go out of Jerusalem (*Zohar* 2:107b).

□ "He cursed me [David] with a grievous curse" (*I Kings* 2:8). The word נִמְרָצָת [here translated

SHIMI SON OF GERA / שמעי בן גרא

grievous] is an acronym of *adulterer* (נואף), *Moabite* (מואבי), *murderer* (רוצח), *oppressor* (צורר), *abomination* (תועבה) (*Shabbos* 105a).

□ David did not execute Shimi [who had incurred the death penalty (*Rashi*)], and [Shimi] lived to beget the ancestor of Mordecai, who provoked Haman (*Megillah* 13a).

□ See **Solomon** — WISDOM

שְׁמַעִיָּהּ — Shemaiah (I Chronicles 24:6)

□ [Moses was called] Shemaiah, for God heard (שמע) his prayers (*Vayikra Rabbah* 1:3).

□ See **Moses**

שְׁמַעִיָּהּ בֶן דֵּלְיָהּ — Shemaiah son of Delaiah (Nehemiah 6:10)

□ Shemaiah son of Delaiah advised Nehemiah to sleep in the Temple. His name was therefore changed to Noadiah, as in *Who congregate (noadim) against Hashem* (*Numbers* 16:11) (*Batei Midrashos* 2:66).

שְׁמַעִיָּהּ הַנְּבִיא — Shemaiah the prophet (I Kings 12:22)

□ Hur and Baasa slew the prophet Shemaiah (*Midrash Aggadah, Bamidbar* 30:15).

שָׁמְשׁוֹן — Samson (Judges 13:24)

PERSONALITY / STRENGTH / FIGHTS THE PHILISTINES

PERSONALITY

□ *Sun and shield is Hashem* (*Psalms* 84:12) Samson's name was a semblance of the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He, [for it is derived from שָׁמֶשׁ, *sun*]. Just as the Holy One, Blessed is He, protects the world, so did Samson in his generation protect Israel (*Sotah* 10a).

□ Samson's mother was named Zleponith; his sister, Neshiin (*Bava Basra* 91a).

□ His father and mother showed him the vineyards of Timnah which were sown with forbidden mixtures (*kilayim*) and told him, "My son, just as their vineyards are sown with forbidden mixtures, so are their daughters" (*Yerushalmi Sotah* 1:8).

SAMSON / שמשון

□ *Bedan* (*I Samuel* 12:11) is Samson, who is so called because he stemmed from the Tribe of Dan (*Rosh Hashanah* 25a).

□ Manoah [Samson's father] was from Dan and his wife was from Judah (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 10:5).

□ The law courts of Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson are to be considered [in their generations] as equal to Moses, Aaron, and Samuel [in their generations] (*Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah* 2:8).

□ Samson called himself a servant of [God], but the Holy One, Blessed is He, did not call him such (*Sifri Va'eschanan* 27).

□ *The spirit of Hashem began* (ותחל) *to move him* (לפעמו) *in Mahaneh Dan* (*Judges* 13:25). At that point, the prophecy of Jacob was fulfilled (חל), as it says, *Dan shall be a serpent in the way* (*Genesis* 49:17). This teaches that the Divine Presence rang before him like a bell (פעמון) (*Sotah* 9b).

□ Samson judged the people of Israel [with perfect justice (*Rashi*)] like their Father in Heaven (*Sotah* 10a).

□ That righteous man did not utter God's name in vain (*ibid.* 9b).

□ Samson was not a [complete] Nazirite [for his status as a Nazirite was neither self-imposed nor imposed by his father but only decreed by the angel of God. Therefore] he made himself ritually unclean by exposure to corpses [which a complete Nazirite is forbidden to do] (*Nazir* 4b).

□ It is written, *Samson went down to Timnah* (*Judges* 14:1); and it is written, [Judah] *is coming up to Timnah* (*Genesis* 38:13). [In the case of] Samson, who suffered disgrace there [by marrying a Philistine woman], Scripture speaks of "going down." [In the case of] Judah, who was elevated there [by begetting the ancestor of David through Tamar] Scripture speaks of "coming up" (*Sotah* 10a).

□ The Patriarch Jacob saw him [prophetically] and thought he would be the Messiah in whose days the redemption would come. Upon seeing that he would die, [Jacob] said, "Shall he, too, die? For your salvation do I long, Hashem!" (*Genesis* 49:19) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 98:14).

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STRENGTH

□ Five were created with one feature of supernatural perfection, and all were stricken in [that feature]: [One was] Samson in his strength . . . as it is written, *His strength went from him* (Judges 16:19) (*Sotah* 10a).

□ *Dan will avenge his people like the One of the Tribes of Israel* (Genesis 49:16) – like the Unique One of the universe. Just as the Unique One does not need help, so too Samson did not need help [in battle, neither from others nor from armament (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 98:13).

□ Two strong men arose in the world: Samson of Israel, and Goliath of the nations of the world. Both perished. Why? Because their gift was not from the Holy One, Blessed is He [they did not use it in accordance with the purpose for which God gave it to them]; they snatched it for themselves [i.e., by sinning, their strength was no longer considered a gift from God but rather a physical attribute no longer guaranteed to protect them] (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 22:7).

□ Samson was lame in both legs [but nevertheless was able to act mightily against the Philistines (*Maharsha* to *Sanhedrin* 105a)] (*ibid.*; *Sotah* 10a).

□ There were sixty cubits between Samson's shoulders. It is written, *He grasped the doors of the gate of the city . . . and placed them on his shoulders* (Judges 16:3). The doors of Gaza were not less than sixty cubits (*Sotah* 10a).

□ When the Spirit of Holiness rested upon him, his stride spanned [the distance] between Zorah and Eshtaol. Another Sage said: His hair resounded like a bell [as a result of the Spirit of Holiness that rested upon him], and the sound was heard from Zorah to Eshtaol (*Yerushalmi Sotah* 1:8).

□ Zorah and Eshtaol were two high mountains which Samson uprooted and pulverized, one against the other (*Sotah* 9b).

FIGHTS THE PHILISTINES

□ He hid in the clefts of rocks in order to strike at Philistines passing on the roads (*Sechel Tov*, *Bereishis* 49:17).

□ *He found a new jawbone of a donkey* (Judges 15:15) – of a thirty-day-old donkey [which he used as his weapon in fighting the Philistines] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 98:13).

□ *He was very thirsty* (Judges 15:18). Excessive talking caused his thirst and put him in danger of dying, for he became so weak as to be unable to lift a jug of water to his lips. "Master of the Universe," he said, "even if there is no difference between [the Philistines] and me except for the sign of circumcision, that alone warrants saving me from their hands." Thereupon, *God cleaved the hollow place that is in the jawbone, and water came out of it* (*ibid.* v. 19). The Holy One, Blessed is He, produced a fountain for him from between [Samson's] teeth (*Bereishis Rabbah* 98:13).

□ He desired something impure [marriage to a heathen woman]; therefore his life became dependent on something impure [the donkey's jawbone, which miraculously provided him with water] (*Sotah* 9b; *Rashi*).

□ Samson followed his eyes; therefore, the Philistines gouged out his eyes. His first sin was in Gaza; therefore, he was punished in Gaza (*Sotah* 9b).

□ *He caught three hundred foxes . . .* (Judges 15:4). "Master of the Universe," he said, "let the fox, which goes back [it retreats in the face of danger], come and punish the Philistines, who went back on their oath [not to harm Abraham's descendants]" (*Genesis* 21:22-32)] (*Sotah* 10a; *Rashi*).

DOWNFALL

□ "Remember me, I pray You, and strengthen me" (Judges 16:28). Samson said before the Holy One, Blessed is He, "Remember to my credit that for twenty-two years I judged the people of Israel and never asked one of them to [do so much as] move a stick for me" (*Sotah* 10a).

□ "That I may exact the vengeance of one of my two eyes" (Judges 16:28). "Master of the Universe," he said, "give me the reward for one of my eyes in This World, [by letting me take revenge against the Philistines (*Korban Ha'eidah*)] and let the reward for the other one be prepared for me in the World to Come" (*Yerushalmi Sotah* 1:8).

□ The Philistines feared him for twenty years after his death [for they thought he was still alive (*Korban Ha'eidah*)] just as they had feared him for twenty years during his life (*Yerushalmi Sotah* 1:8).

שִׁמְשַׁי סֹפֵר – Shimshai the Scribe

(*Ezra* 4:8)

□ When the Jews came to build the Temple, the wicked Haman, [also known as] Shimshai the Scribe, rose up against them to halt its construction (*Aggadas Esther* 1).

שִׁנָּב – Shinab

[King of Admah]

(*Genesis* 14:2)

□ [He was called] Shinab because he hated even his father (שָׂנֵא אָב) (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 14:2).

שַׁעֲשֻׁגַז – Shaashgaz

[Chamberlain to King Ahasuerus] (*Esther* 2:14)

□ Because he was *the king's eunuch* (*ibid.*), and as such impotent, he was placed in charge of the harem (*Esther Rabbah* 5:3).

שֵׁפְתִיָּה בֶן אֲבִיטָל – Shephatiah son of Abital

[Son of David]

(*II Samuel* 3:4)

□ R' Yehudah the prince traced his lineage to Shephatiah son of Abital (*Kesubos* 62b).

שִׁפְרָה – Shiphrah

[Jewish midwife in Egypt]

(*Exodus* 1:15)

□ Shiphrah is Jochebed [mother of Moses]; Puah is Miriam (*Sotah* 11b).

□ Shiphrah and Puah were proselytes (*Midrash Tadshe, Beis HaMidrash* 3:191).

□ *They did not do as the king of Egypt said to them* (*Exodus* 1:17). He proposed to them a sinful act, which they refused (*Sotah* 11b).

□ [She was called] Shiphrah because she cleansed (מְשַׁפֶּרֶת) the child when he was born covered with blood; the people of Israel multiplied (פָּרַו) at her hand; her deeds were pleasant (שִׁפְרָה) before God; and she appeased (מְשַׁפֶּרֶת) [Pharaoh for] her daughter's words, for [Miriam had] stuck her nose up at Pharaoh and [Shiphrah] appeased him, saying,

“Why do you pay attention to her? She is [only] a child; she has no understanding” (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:13).

□ [They] *saved the male children alive* (*Exodus* 1:18). They [Shiphrah and Puah] collected water and food from the houses of the rich women and gave it to the poor women, who [thus] sustained their children. [In addition,] they prayed before the Holy One, Blessed is He, that the babies be born unblemished (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:15).

□ *And He made of them houses* (*Exodus* 1:21). Pharaoh attempted to kill them, but the Holy One, Blessed is He [concealed them by] covering them like two beams of a house (*Midrash HaGadol, Shemos* 1:21).

□ See **Jochebed**

שָׂרַי/שָׂרָה – Sarai/Sarah

(*Genesis* 11:29)

PERSONALITY / BEAUTY / RIGHTEOUSNESS / IN PHARAOH'S PALACE / WITH HAGAR / BIRTH OF ISAAC / DEATH

PERSONALITY

□ Only four women are called Matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah (*Berachos* 16b).

□ At first she was a princess [שָׂרַי, lit., *my princess*] to her people; then she became a princess [שָׂרָה, *princess*, without the restrictive *my*] to the whole world (*Berachos* 13a).

□ Abraham and Sarah were proselytes (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 8:9).

□ All the proselytes and the God-fearing people in the world descended from those who suckled Sarah's milk (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 42:23).

□ The [letter] *yud* of Sarai (שָׂרַי) [which was removed from her name] stood and cried for many years until Joshua came and [God] added it to his name (*Sanhedrin* 107a).

□ The [letter] *yud* flew before the throne of the Holy One, Blessed is He, and said, “Master of the Universe, have You taken me out of [the name of] the righteous Sarah because I am the smallest of the letters?” The Holy One, Blessed is He, replied, “In the past you were at the end of a woman's name;

now I shall place you at the beginning of a man's name: יהושע, Joshua" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 47:1).

□ The *yud* [whose numerical value is *ten*] that the Holy One, Blessed is He, took from [the name of] the Matriarch Sarah [was divided]. Half [i.e., one ה, whose value is five,] was given to Sarah [when her name was changed from שרי to שרה], and half [the other ה] to Abraham [when his name was changed from אברם to אברהם] (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 2:6).

□ All [Sarah's] years passed in gladness and joy (*Lekach Tov, Bereishis* 23:1).

□ Thirty-seven years – from the day Isaac was born until the moment he was bound [on the altar] – were years of "life" for Sarah. [Thirty-seven is] the numerical value of [ויחיו, in] *ויחיו תני שרה*, *The life of Sarah was* (*Genesis* 23:1) (*Zohar* 1:123a).

□ Abimelech cursed Sarah, and [the curse] was fulfilled in her descendant. It is written, "Let it be for you an eye-covering" (*Genesis* 20:16). He said to her, "Since you covered the fact that Abraham was your husband and thereby you caused me all this grief, may you have sons whose eyes are covered." This was fulfilled in her son; as it is written, *When Isaac become old, his eyesight dimmed* (*ibid.* 27:1) (*Bava Kamma* 93a).

□ Abimelech gave her a royal garment and made her a noblewoman, so that no man would ever approach her. All would hear that she was a queen and would fear her (*Tanchuma*, ed. *Buber, Vayeira* 27).

□ [Abram] said . . . "See, now I know that you are a woman of beautiful appearance" (*Genesis* 12:11). From here you learn that until then he had not known of his wife's beauty, as is common for other husbands (*Eitz Yosef*) (*Tanchuma Lech Lecha* 5).

BEAUTY

□ There were four beautiful women in the world: Sarah, Rahab, Abigail, and Esther (*Megillah* 15a).

□ Iscah (*Genesis* 11:29) is Sarah. Why then was she called Iscah [from סוכה, gaze]? Because all gazed at her beauty (*Megillah* 14a).

□ *The girl* [Abishag] *was very beautiful* (*I Kings* 1:4). Even so, she did not reach half of Sarah's beauty (*Sanhedrin* 39b).

□ At the age of twenty, she had the beauty of a seven-year-old (*Bereishis Rabbah* 58:1).

□ All were comparable to Sarah as a monkey is to a man; and Sarah was to Eve as a monkey is to a man (*Bava Basra* 58a).

□ [Abram] said, "See, now I know that you are a woman of beautiful appearance" (*Genesis* 12:11). A journey causes a person to become uncomely, but she had remained beautiful. [According to another opinion,] Abraham said, "In all of Aram Naharaim and Aram Nahor, where we traveled, there was no one as beautiful as you" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 40:4).

□ "Now I know" (*Genesis* 12:11). They rolled up their garments in order to cross a stream. Abraham said to Sarai, "Until now I did not look, but now I see that you are a beautiful woman" (*Targum Yonasan, Genesis* 12:11).

□ The entire land of Egypt was irradiated with her beauty. R' Yitzchak said: The beautiful image of Eve was transmitted to the heads of the generations [some very righteous and prominent women are blessed with beauty that resembles that of Eve], but [Sarah] was very beautiful (*Genesis* 12:14), more than the image of Eve (*Bereishis Rabbah* 40:5).

RIGHTEOUSNESS

□ Who are the seven prophetesses? Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah, and Esther (*Megillah* 14a).

□ Iscah (*Genesis* 11:29) is Sarah. Why then was she called Iscah [from סוכה, gaze]? Because she could see things through Divine Inspiration (*Megillah* 14a).

□ Who were the women in the tent (*Judges* 5:24)? Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah (*Horios* 10b).

□ We do not find that the Omnipresent spoke [directly] with any woman except for Sarah (*Yerushalmi Sotah* 7:1).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, spoke to all [other] righteous women through an angel, but to Sarah [He spoke] through Divine communication (*Lekach Tov, Bereishis* 23:1).

□ At the age of one hundred, she was like a twenty-year-old [i.e., without any sins deserving of heavenly punishment, for at the age of twenty, one first

becomes subject to heavenly punishment] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 58:1).

□ The hymn *Eishes Chayil*, "An Accomplished Woman" (*Proverbs* 31), was said about the Matriarch Sarah, from *aleph* to *tav* (*Shocheh Tov* 112:1).

□ The Matriarch Sarah was [exceedingly] modest (*Bava Metzia* 87a).

□ The Patriarch Abraham confounded [the views of] people and brought them under the wings of the Divine Presence [i.e., he converted them]. Sarah did the same (*Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 12:8).

□ Abraham and Sarah prepared a place of immersion for all, he for men and she for women (*Zohar* 1:102b).

IN PHARAOH'S PALACE

□ Abraham was confident [that nothing would happen to Sarah in Pharaoh's palace] because he saw the Divine Presence with her. Therefore, he [attempted to protect only himself by saying,] "She is my sister" (*Zohar* 1:181b).

□ An angel went before her and told Abraham, "Fear not on her account." Therefore, perceiving no such protection [for himself], Abraham feared only for himself (*ibid.* 3:52a).

□ He locked Sarah in a chest. When they came to customs, [the officers] said, "Pay the duty because you have gold here." "I will pay," replied Abraham. "Perhaps you have pearls inside?" they said. "I will pay [the duty] on pearls," he replied. "That is impossible," they said [suspiciously]. "Open it and let us see what is inside." As soon as the chest was open, *the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful . . .* (*Genesis* 12:15) (*Bereishis Rabbah* 40:5).

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, protected Sarah from Pharaoh, and the Divine Presence was with her. The Holy One, Blessed is He, even invested her garments and her jewels with special powers, so that when Pharaoh would touch her ornament, it would hit him. Eventually, that impure one left her and returned her to her husband (*Zohar* 3:276a).

□ Pharaoh wrote her a contract giving her the land of Goshen as a possession. The Children of Israel

later dwelt in the land of Goshen, which belonged to the Matriarch Sarah. And he gave her Hagar, his daughter by a concubine, as a handmaid (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* 26).

□ Sarah was taken [to Pharaoh] on the night of Passover (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 12:17).

□ Just as the Holy One, Blessed is He, [would later] perform miracles and mighty feats for Israel on that night, so did He do for Sarah that night (*Zohar* 1:82a).

□ Throughout that night Sarah prostrated herself and said, "Master of the Universe, Abraham went forth [from his land] on Your assurance, while I went forth with blind faith. [Now] Abraham is outside this prison, and I am within!" The Holy One, Blessed is He, answered her, "Whatever I will do is for your sake." Rav Levi said: Throughout the night, an angel stood, whip in hand, and said to her, "If you tell me to strike, I will strike; and if you tell me to desist, I will desist." Why [was Pharaoh thus punished]? Because she told him she was a married woman, yet he would not leave her (*Bereishis Rabbah* 41:2).

WITH HAGAR

□ *Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her maidservant* (*Genesis* 16:3). [She persuaded] her, saying, "Fortunate are you to be united with this holy man!" *And gave her to Abram her husband, to him as a wife* (*ibid.*), not as a concubine (*Bereishis Rabbah* 45:3).

□ When noblewomen came to visit Sarah, she would tell them, "Go visit the humble [Hagar]." And Hagar would say to them, "My mistress Sarai is not the same inwardly as she appears to be outwardly. She cannot be as righteous as she seems, for so many years have passed and she has not had children, whereas I conceived after one night." Then Sarah said, "Shall I get involved with her? I will argue the matter with her master!" *So Sarai said to Abram, "The outrage against me is due to you!"* (*Genesis* 16:5). Why do you keep silent when you hear [this] insult [against me]?" Others explain that Sarah said to Abram, "I have a claim against you. You prayed [for a child] and said, 'To me You have

Abraham was worthy of living as many years as
said, "To us, I, too, would
between me and you!" (Genesis 16:5), forty-eight
years were withheld from her life (Bereishis Rabbah
45:5).

□ "Let Hashem judge between me and you!" (Gen-
esis 16:5). May He spread His peace between you
and me, and fill the earth through us, so that we
will not need Hagar's children" (Targum Yonasan
Genesis 16:5).

□ "Between me and you" (Genesis 16:5). She was
speaking only about Hagar. Some say: About those
who were instigating quarrels between her and him
(Sifri Beha'aloscha 69).

□ Sarah cast an evil eye upon Hagar, thereby
causing her to miscarry; however, Hagar merited
to be visited by an angel, who forecast that she
would conceive again (Bereishis Rabbah 45:5).

□ The Matriarch Sarah saw Ishmael building altars,
hunting grasshoppers, and sacrificing them to
idols. She said, "Perhaps my son Isaac will learn
from him to do the same, and the Name of Heaven
will be desecrated." Abraham said to her, "Having
side [Hagar] a [great] lady, shall we banish her
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BIBLICAL PERSONAL

□ He placed the
boy (Genesis 21:14)
Ishmael so that a fever
ill [and could not walk]
Rabbah 53:13).

BIRTH OF

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He,
Sarah [by withholding children
twenty-five years from the time she
Land of Israel (Pesikta Rabbasi 43:38).
□ She did not have a womb, and the
Blessed is He, formed one for her (Bereishis
53:5).

□ Abraham and Sarah had undeveloped repro-
ductive systems (Yebamoth 64a).
□ [The angel] Michael came to bring the tidings to
Sarah (Bava Metzia 86b).
□ "Hurry! Three se'ahs of meal, fine flour! Knead
and make cakes!" (Genesis 18:6). She baked nine
se'ahs: three [of meal] for bread, three [of fine
flour] to be used for a cooked dish, and three for
cakes (Bereishis Rabbah 48:12; Eitz Yosef).

□ He took cream and milk (Genesis 18:8) but he
did not bring bread. The Patriarch Abraham ate
[even] nonsacred food in purity, and at that time
the Matriarch Sarah became menstruous [so that
the dough she was kneading became ritually
unclean] (Bava Metzia 87a).

□ He [looked] behind him (Genesis 18:10). This
refers to the angel, who turned around because he
sensed light in back of him [emanating from the
door of the tent due to Sarah's presence in the tent
(Eitz Yosef)] (Bereishis Rabbah 48:16).
□ "At this time next year" (Genesis 18:10). [The
angel] made a mark on the wall and told [Abra-
ham], "When the sun reaches this point, she will
conceive, and when it reaches that point, she will
give birth" (Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 18:10).

□ Sarah's [hair] turned black, her youth was
restored, and she became like a girl (Tanna d'Bei
Eliyahu Rabbah v'נא 6).
□ Sarah conceived on Rosh Hashanah (Berachos
25a).

□ He w
is punishe
Abram, "...
you" (Genes
Abraham came
is, she died first)
□ Sarah was worth
span, but because sh
between me and you"
years of her life were with
Rabbah 45:5).

SARAH / שרה

on her shoulder along with the
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SARAH / שרה

□ Milcah, too, gave birth in the men
Sarah (Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 22:20)

□ When the Matriarch Sarah was granted
ception, many barren women conceived
her, many deaf became capable of sight, and
many blind became sane [for a great blessing was
madmen became sane (for a great blessing was
granted the world at that time] (Bereishis Rabbah
53:8).

□ The day Abraham weaned his son Isaac, he
made a great feast [to publicize the miracle of the
birth of Isaac to a ninety-year-old Sarah and a
one-hundred-year old Abraham (Maharsha)]. The
nations of the world said, "Look at this old man and
old woman who brought a foundling from the
market and claim he is their son! They are even
making a feast to support their words." The
Patriarch Abraham invited all the leaders of the
generation, and each one brought along her child
without a nurse. A miracle was made for the
Matriarch Sarah and she nursed them all (Bava
Metzia 87a).

□ [Upon seeing this miracle,] the noblewomen
said, "We are not worthy of having our children
suckle the milk of that righteous woman."
ever came for the sake of Heaven woman" [Others] said, "I
child through Sarah's milk" [Others] said, "I
suckle the milk of that righteous woman" [Others] said, "I
child through Sarah's milk" [Others] said, "I

□ She e... This refer... had planned... (Tanchuma, etc.)

□ While Sarah w... were successful in... After she died, [every... of the loss to such an... mourning and distress, u... arose and spoke soothing... HaGadol, Bereishis 23:3).

□ Mamrei; Kiriath Arba [lit., City... 35:27] is where four couples are b... Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and...

given no offspring' (ibid. 15:3), and God gave you [a son]. Had you said, 'To us,' I, too, would have been granted offspring'' (*Bereishis Rabbah* 45:4,5).

□ Sarah was worthy of living as many years as Abraham, but because she said, "Let Hashem judge between me and you!" (*Genesis* 16:5), forty-eight years were withheld from her life (*Bereishis Rabbah* 45:5).

□ "Let Hashem judge between me and you! (*Genesis* 16:5). May He spread His peace between you and me, and fill the earth through us, so that we will not need Hagar's children" (*Targum Yonasan Genesis* 16:5).

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□ The Matriarch Sarah saw Ishmael building altars, hunting grasshoppers, and sacrificing them to idols. She said, "Perhaps my son Isaac will learn from him to do the same, and the Name of Heaven will be desecrated." Abraham said to her, "Having made [Hagar] a [great] lady, shall we banish her from our house? What will people say about us? Will the Name of Heaven not [in that case] be desecrated thereby?" She replied, "Since you say there is a desecration of the Name in this matter, let the Holy One, Blessed is He, decide between your words and mine." The Omnipresent decided in favor of Sarah (*Tosefta Sotah* 5:7).

□ Sarah saw the son of Hagar (*Genesis* 21:9). [It does not say] the son of Abraham, for [Sarah] perceived that he had returned to the ways of his mother, who had taught him the customs of idolatry. It is to Sarah's credit that she did not banish him out of jealousy; otherwise, the Holy One, Blessed is He, would not have agreed with her. Abraham, however, did not perceive this, and therefore the matter greatly distressed Abraham regarding his son (ibid. 11:11) (*Zohar* 1:118b).

□ He placed them on her shoulder along with the boy (*Genesis* 21:14). Sarah had cast an evil eye upon Ishmael so that a fever seized him and he became ill [and could not walk on his own] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 53:13).

BIRTH OF ISAAC

□ The Holy One, Blessed is He, tried and refined Sarah [by withholding children from her] for twenty-five years from the time she came to the Land of Israel (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 43:38).

□ She did not have a womb, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, formed one for her (*Bereishis Rabbah* 53:5).

□ Abraham and Sarah had undeveloped reproductive systems (*Yebamoth* 64a).

□ [The angel] Michael came to bring the tidings to Sarah (*Bava Metzia* 86b).

□ "Hurry! Three se'ahs of meal, fine flour! Knead and make cakes!" (*Genesis* 18:6). She baked nine se'ahs: three [of meal] for bread, three [of fine flour] to be used for a cooked dish, and three for cakes (*Bereishis Rabbah* 48:12; *Eitz Yosef*).

□ He took cream and milk (*Genesis* 18:8) but he did not bring bread. The Patriarch Abraham ate [even] nonsacred food in purity, and at that time the Matriarch Sarah became menstruous [so that the dough she was kneading became ritually unclean] (*Bava Metzia* 87a).

□ He [looked] behind him (*Genesis* 18:10). This refers to the angel, who turned around because he sensed light in back of him [emanating from the door of the tent due to Sarah's presence in the tent (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 48:16).

□ "At this time next year" (*Genesis* 18:10). [The angel] made a mark on the wall and told [Abraham], "When the sun reaches this point, she will conceive, and when it reaches that point, she will give birth" (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis* 18:10).

□ Sarah's [hair] turned black, her youth was restored, and she became like a girl (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* ט"ז 6).

□ Sarah conceived on Rosh Hashanah (*Berachos* 29a).

□ Milcah, too, gave birth in the merit of her sister Sarah (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 22:20*).

□ When the Matriarch Sarah was granted conception, many barren women conceived with her, many deaf became capable of hearing, many blind became capable of sight, and many madmen became sane [for a great blessing was granted the world at that time] (*Bereishis Rabbah 53:8*).

□ The day Abraham weaned his son Isaac, he made a great feast [to publicize the miracle of the birth of Isaac to a ninety-year-old Sarah and a one-hundred-year old Abraham (*Maharsha*)]. The nations of the world said, "Look at this old man and old woman who brought a foundling from the market and claim he is their son! They are even making a feast to support their words." The Patriarch Abraham invited all the leaders of the generation, and the Matriarch Sarah invited their wives, and each one brought along her child without a nurse. A miracle was made for the Matriarch Sarah and she nursed them all (*Bava Metzia 87a*).

□ [Upon seeing this miracle,] the noblewomen said, "We are not worthy of having our children suckle the milk of that righteous woman." Whoever came for the sake of Heaven [to sanctify her child through Sarah's milk] became God-fearing. [Others] say: Even those who did not come for the sake of heaven [but only to see the miracles] were granted dominion in this world (*Bereishis Rabbah 53:9, Eitz Yosef*).

DEATH

□ He who invokes Divine Justice against his fellow is punished first. Thus it is written, *Sarai said to Abram, "... Let Hashem judge between me and you"* (*Genesis 16:5*) and [further] it is written, *Abraham came to eulogize Sarah* (*ibid. 23:2*) [that is, she died first] (*Bava Kamma 93a*).

□ Sarah was worthy of attaining Abraham's life span, but because she said, "Let Hashem judge between me and you" (*Genesis 16:5*), forty-eight years of her life were withheld [from her] (*Bereishis Rabbah 45:5*).

□ After Abraham bound his son Isaac [on the altar], the Satan came and told Sarah that Abraham had slaughtered his son Isaac. She cried out in grief and died (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis 22:20*).

□ The Matriarch Sarah died in [the month of] Marcheshvan (*Esther Rabbah 7:11*).

□ *Abraham came to eulogize Sarah* (*Genesis 23:2*). Because of Abraham's greatness, they delayed her burial until he came, for it could be assumed that that was what Sarah would have wished (*Sanhedrin 46b*).

□ *She envisions a field and buys it* (*Proverbs 31:7*). This refers to Sarah. While she was still alive, she had planned to purchase the Cave of Machpelah (*Tanchuma, ed. Buber, Chayei Sarah 3*).

□ While Sarah was alive, the people of the country were successful in all their ventures [in her merit]. After she died, [everyone perceived the magnitude of the loss to such an extent that] they wept in mourning and distress, until Abraham the Patriarch arose and spoke soothingly to them (*Midrash HaGadol, Bereishis 23:3*).

□ *Mamrei; Kiriath Arba* [lit., *City of Four*] (*Genesis 35:27*) is where four couples are buried: Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Leah (*Eiruvin 53a*).

□ Terah's burial preceded Sarah's by two years (*Bereishis Rabbah 58:5*).

□ The burial arrangement in the Cave of Machpelah is as follows: women are buried beside women, men beside men. Adam is at the head, with Eve beside him; Sarah is next to Eve, with Abraham beside her . . . (*Zohar 3:164a*).

□ R' Benaah [was marking off the precise location of the burial places in the Cave of Machpelah] when he encountered Abraham's servant Eliezer, who was standing before the entrance of the cave, and asked him, "What is Abraham doing now?" [Eliezer] replied, "He is lying in Sarah's arms, and she is examining his head" [as she might be doing when both were still alive, to show that Sarah was the mainstay of Abraham's house (*Maharsha*)] (*Bava Basra 58a*).

□ Before the Holy One, Blessed is He, caused

Sarah's sun to set, he caused Rebecca's sun to rise (*Bereishis Rabbah* 58:2).

□ Although Sarah had died, her likeness did not leave her house. No one saw it except for her son Isaac when he entered, for Abraham did not enter that room. Thus it is written, *Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac* (*Genesis* 25:5) (*Zohar* 1:133a,b).

□ Throughout the years that Sarah was alive, a cloud [signifying the Divine Presence] hovered at the entrance of her tent, the doors [of the house] were open wide, her dough was blessed, and a lamp burned [in her tent] from one Sabbath eve to the next. When she died, all these ceased, but when Rebecca came, they all returned (*Bereishis Rabbah* 60:16).

שֵׁרָח בַּת אֲשֵׁר – Serah daughter of Asher

[Granddaughter of Jacob] (*Genesis* 46:17)

□ Nine entered the Garden of Eden while yet alive [and thus are considered to have remained alive forever:] . . . Serah daughter of Asher . . . (*Derech Eretz Zuta* 1).

□ She was taken into the Garden of Eden while yet alive because she brought Jacob the news, "Joseph is still alive" (*Genesis* 45:26). It was she who saved the inhabitants of Abel-beth-maacah from death in the days of Joab (*Targum Yonasan, Bereishis* 46:17).

□ Jacob transmitted the secret [of the redemption from Egypt] to Joseph, who [transmitted it] to his brothers. Asher son of Jacob [in turn] transmitted the secret to his daughter Serah, who was still alive [at the time of the Exodus]. Thus did he tell her: "Any redeemer who will come and tell my sons [in God's Name], 'פִּקֹּד פְּקֹדֵתַי, I have indeed remembered' (*Exodus* 3:16) is the true redeemer" (*Shemos Rabbah* 5:13).

□ They said, "If we tell [Jacob] from the start, 'Joseph is alive,' perhaps he will die [from the shock]" . . . They told Serah . . . She waited until he was praying. Then she [hinted the news by asking], "Is Joseph in Egypt?" (*Midrash HaGadol, Vayigash* 45:26).

□ Serah daughter of Asher remained of [Joseph's] generation, and she showed Moses where Joseph

was buried. "The Egyptians made him a metal coffin," she said, "which they sank in the Nile in this spot" (*Mechilta Beshalach Pesikta*).

□ R' Yochanan was sitting and expounding how the water [of the split sea] was like a wall. [He said it was] like latticework. Serah objected. "I was there," she said, "and it was like glass" (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 10:117).

□ All the persons of Jacob's household who came to Egypt [totaled] seventy (*Genesis* 46:27). Serah the daughter of Asher completed the count [even though she is among those explicitly listed in the Torah; because of her extreme righteousness and wisdom, she had the value of two (*Eitz Yosef*)] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 94:9).

□ A wise woman called out of the city . . . (*II Samuel* 20:16). That was Serah daughter of Asher. She said "Your name is Joab to indicate that you should be a father (av) to Israel, but in fact you are a killer. You [Joab] and David are not Torah Scholars. Is it not written, *When you approach a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace to it* (*Deuteronomy* 20:10)?" "Who are you?" he asked her. She replied, "I am שְׁלֹמֵי אֲמוּנֵי of Israel. (*II Samuel* 20:19). I am the one who completed the count (הַשְּׁלֵמֵתִי מִנֵּיךְ) of the [seventy] people of Israel [who went down] to Egypt; I am the one who handed over a faithful one (הַשְּׁלֵמֵתִי הַנֶּאֱמָן) to a faithful one — [i.e., I showed Moses where Joseph was buried]." [Serah continued and said,] "Do you seek to kill a city, and [me,] a mother in Israel (ibid.)?" . . . Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom (ibid. v. 22). She said to them, "Do you not know about David? What nation and what kingdom has withstood him?" "And what does he want?" they asked. "A thousand men," she replied; "and is it not better to hand over a thousand to him than to destroy the entire city?" They said, "Each one will give according to the number of people in his family." She told them, "Perhaps with some appeasement, he will give in a little." She pretended to go to appease him, and returned saying that he had lowered the number to five hundred, then to a hundred, then to ten, until she told them, "He seeks only one man, who is not an inhabitant of the town, but a visitor." Thereupon, they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bichri (ibid.). [She thus

showed her wisdom by originally making it appear as if David wanted many more men delivered to him] (*Bereishis Rabbah* 94:9).

שְׂרַיָה בֶן נֵרְיָה בֶן מַחֲסֵיָה – Seraiah son of Neriah son of Mahseiah (*Jeremiah* 51:59)

□ Seven prophets who were priests descended from Rahab the innkeeper: Neriah, Baruch, Seraiah, Mahseiah . . . (*Megillah* 14b).

□ Baruch son of Neriah and Seraiah [grand]son of Mahseiah . . . prophesied in the second year of Darius' [reign] (*ibid.* 15a).

□ In the fourth year of his reign, Zedekiah went down to Babylon with Seraiah to pay his respects to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (*Seder Olam Rabbah* 28).

□ *In His fierce anger He spurned king and priest* (Lamentations 2:6). King refers to Zedekiah, priest to Seraiah [grand]son of Mahseiah (*Eichah Rabbasi* 2:10).

שָׂרָף – Saraph (*I Chronicles* 4:22)

□ Joash and Saraph are Mahlon and Chilion [sons of Elimelech and Naomi]. They were called Joash (יֹאָשׁ) because they despaired (נִתְיָאָשׁוּ) of the redemption [from the famine they were experiencing in Israel], and Saraph (שָׂרָף) because God sentenced them to death by burning [for leaving Israel] (*Bava Basra* 91b).

שֶׁשְׁבַצָר – Sheshbazzar (*Ezra* 1:8)

□ Why was [Daniel] called Sheshbazzar? Because six calamities (שֵׁשׁ צָרוֹת) struck in his days (*Pesikta Rabbasi* 6:12).

שֶׁשַׁי – Sheshai (*Numbers* 13:22)
[Son of Anak]

□ [He was called] Sheshai because he made the ground [on which he stepped] full of pits (שְׁחִיתוֹת). Sheshai built Alush (*Yoma* 10a).

□ [He was called] Sheshai because he was solid like marble (שֵׁשֶׁי) (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 16:11).

□ When the Spies reached Hebron, Sheshai screamed at them once, whereupon they fell on their faces. Then [the giants] breathed into their nostrils until they revived (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* 29).

שֵׁת – Seth

[Son of Adam and Eve] (*Genesis* 4:25)

□ The seven shepherds (*Micah* 5:4) are as follows: David in the center, with Adam, Seth, and Methuselah at his right, and Abraham, Isaac, and Moses at his left (*Sukkah* 52b).

□ Seth was born circumcised (*Shochoh Tov* 9:7).

□ Adam was the world's firstborn. When he offered his sacrifice, he wore the garments of the high priesthood . . . When he died, they passed to Seth, and from Seth they passed to Methuselah (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 4:8).

□ Adam knew the Torah, and he transmitted it to his son Seth. It was further transmitted to Enoch . . . (*Zohar Chadash* 22b).

□ Who is the strength of Adam? Seth, who was the exact image of Adam (*Zohar* 2:111a).

□ [The verse] *Everything he does will succeed* (*Psalms* 1:3) refers to Seth (*Shochoh Tov* 1:10).

שֶׁתָר – Shethar

[Advisor to King Ahasuerus] (*Esther* 1:14)

□ Shethar came from Indiki [which some say is India] (*Midrash Abba Gurion* 1).