

*Genesis before Avraham is a story of degeneration and loss of human relationship with the land, with other animals, and with God. It culminates in the first covenant after the flood, which substitutes for those lost relationships. The climax of the Sinai covenant echoes the Genesis stories in ways that suggest that the covenant of Sinai is meant to restore those relationships. Below, **bold phrases** relate to the human-land relationship, while mentions of animal ('chayah') or eating are underlined. [A longer version of these texts](#) includes more verses and commentary – letters correspond to paragraphs in that version. Note: in place of masculine pronouns for God, 'god's' and 'the One' are used.*

I. Eden, Gen 1:26-2:3, 2:5-17

A. And *Elohim* created the *adam* in [god's] image,...male and female [god] created them. And *Elohim* blessed them and...said to them: Bear fruit and increase and **fill the land and occupy her** *umil'u et ha'aretz v'kivshuha* and *prevail ur'du over the fish of the sea and over the bird of the skies and over every animal kol hachayah crawling on the land.*

And *Elohim* said: Here, I have given to you-all every plant seeding seed which is on the face of all the land and every tree which has in him tree-fruit seeding seed; for you he will be for eating; and for every animal of the land *chayat ha'aretz*...in which there is a living soul *nefesh chayah*, every green plant for eating. Gen 1:26-30

B. And *Elohim* saw all that [the One] made, and here: very good *v'hineh tov m'od*...And *Elohim* blessed the seventh day and made him holy, for in/on him [the One] stopped *shavat* from all [god's] work which *Elohim* created to do... Gen 1:31-2:3

C. Every growth of the field would yet be in the land and every plant of the field would yet grow, for YHVH *Elohim* had not caused rain on the land, and **an *adam* to serve *la'avod* the ground** was not... YHVH *Elohim* formed *vayyitzer* the human *ha'adam*, **dirty from the ground/earth** *'afar min ha'adamah* and blew in his nostrils a living breath *nishmat chayyim*, and the *adam* became a living soul *nefesh chayah*.

YHVH *Elohim* planted a garden *gan* in *Eden* eastward and... YHVH *Elohim* took the *adam* and placed/rested him in *gan Eden* **to serve her and watch over her** *l'avdah ul'shomrah*.

And YHVH *Elohim* commanded over the *adam*, saying: From every tree in the garden eating you will eat; and from the tree of knowing good and bad, you will not eat from him, for in the day of your eating from him dying you will die. Gen 2:5-17

D. YHVH *Elohim* said: No good is the *adam* being by himself – I will make for him a help opposite him. And YHVH *Elohim* formed every animal of the field *chayat hasadeh* and every bird of the skies and brought unto the *adam* to see what he would call to him...and the *adam* called names to every beast *b'heimah*...and every animal of the field *kol chayot hasadeh*, and for Adam no help opposite/corresponding to him was found... And YHVH *Elohim* built the side which [god] took from the *adam* into a woman Gen 2:18-22

II. The Fall, Gen 3:6-24

E. And the woman saw, that the tree was good to eat and he was desire for the eyes, and the tree was pleasurable for enlightening *nechmad l'haskil*, and she took from his fruit and ate and gave to her man with her, and he ate... And the eyes of them both were opened and they knew, that they were naked *'eirumim*...

F. They heard the voice/sound of YHVH *Elohim* [god]self walking *mit'haleikh* in the *gan* and they hid, the *adam* and his woman, from the face of YHVH *Elohim*... YHVH *Elohim* called unto the *adam* and said to him: Where are you? *Ayekah!*...

Unto the woman [the One] said: Increasing I will increase your labor-pain *itzvoneikh*... And to Adam [the One] said: Because you listened to your woman's voice and ate from the tree... **cursed is the ground/soil for your sake** *arurah ha'adamah ba'avurkha*, in pain *b'itzavon* you will eat of her all the days of your life; and **thorn and thistle will grow for you** and you will eat the grass *'esev* of the field...

until you **return to the ground**, because from her were you taken, **for you are dirt and will turn back to dirt**...

YHVH *Elohim* made for Adam and his woman garments of skin and dressed them. And YHVH *Elohim* sent/threw him (them) out of *gan Eden* **to serve *la'avod* the ground from where he had been taken** *ha'adamah asher lukach misham*.

III. Exile from the Earth, Gen 4:8-14

G. Kayin rose up to Hevel his brother and killed him...And YHVH said unto Kayin: Where is Hevel your brother? The voice of **your brother's bloods**, they **scream unto me from the ground**.

Now you are cursed (away) from the ground *arur atah min ha'adamah*, which split open her mouth to take your brother's bloods from your hand. Because you will **serve *ta'avod* the ground, she will not add giving her strength. Shaken off and thrust out *na' v'nad* you will be in the land.**

And Kayin said to YHVH: Great is my sin, beyond carrying. Here you have driven me *hen geirashta oti* today **away from the face of the ground** *mip'nei ha'adamah* and from your face I will be hid, and I will be *na' v'nad* **in the land**...

IV. The Flood and the Human-Land Connection Gen 6:3-13, Gen 8:1, 8:15-9:7

H. YHVH saw, that **the human's evil** *ra'at ha'adam in the land* was tremendous... And YHVH drew-in *vayinachem*, for [the one] made **the *adam* within the land**, and [the one] was pained unto [god's] heart.

And YHVH said: I will blot out **the *adam*** I created **from off the face of the land, from human to beast to crawler to bird of the skies**, for I am withdrawn-against *nichamti* my having made them...

And **the land was ruined** before the *Elohim* and **the land was filled with violence**. And *Elohim* saw **the land and here, her ruin**, for all flesh ruined his way on the land. And *Elohim* said to Noah: The end of all flesh comes before me, for **the land is filled with violence** from before them. Here am I going to **ruin them with the land**.

I. *Elohim* remembered Noah and all the animals *kol hachayah* and beasts that were with him in the ark... And *Elohim* spoke to Noah saying: Go out from the ark..., every animal *kol hachayah* which is with you from all flesh, bring out with you, and they will swarm in the land and bear fruit and **increase in the land**...

YHVH said unto [god's] heart: **I will not add to cursing anymore the ground for the**

sake of humanity *ba'avur ha'adam...*, and I will not add anymore to striking down all life as I did. Throughout all the land's days, sowing and reaping and cold and hot and summer and winter and day and night **will not stop/rest** *lo yishbotu*.

Elohim...said to them: Bear fruit and increase and **fill the land**. And a fearing of you and terror of you will be over every animal of the land *chayat ha'aretz...* into your hands they are given. All that crawls which lives, for you it will be for eating, like green plants I have given to you all. Just the flesh with his soul *nafsho*, his blood, you will not eat...

And you, bear fruit and increase, **swarm through the land and increase in her**.

V. The Rainbow Covenant, Gen 9:8-17

J. *Elohim* said unto Noah and unto his sons saying: And I, here I am erecting my covenant with you and your seed after you and with the soul of every animal/soul living kol nefesh chayah with you...among every animal of the land kol chayot ha'aretz with you...

And I will erect my covenant with you-all and all flesh will not be cut-off anymore from the flood waters, and there will be **no more flood to destroy the land**.

And *Elohim* said: This is the covenant-sign which I am placing between me and between you-all and between every living/animal's soul kol nefesh chayah which is with you, for generations, for all-time: my bow I have set in the cloud, and she will be **a covenant sign between me and the land**...

And I will remember my covenant...and I will look at her to remember the covenant for all-time between *Elohim* and between all nefesh chayah with all flesh on the land. This is the covenant...between Me and between all flesh on the land.

VI. First Step toward the Sinai Covenant

L. And YHVH said to Avram: Go for/to yourself...**to a land** that I will show you...and be a blessing... Through you **all the families of the earth kol mish'p'chot ha'adamah will be blessed**. Gen 12:1-3

VII. The Shmitah Covenant, Ex. 23:10-11

M. Six years you will **sow your land and gather your produce**. And the seventh you will release *tish'm'tenah* and forswear, and the poor of your people will eat and their remainder the animal of the field chayot hasadeh will eat...

Six days you will do your works and in the seventh day you will stop, for the sake of your ox and your donkey resting l'm'an yanuach and your female servant's child and the stranger re-souling *vayinafeish*.

VIII. Shmitah, Sinai and Jubilee, Lev 25:1-24

N. YHVH spoke to Moshe in Mount Sinai saying: Speak to Yisrael's children and say unto them: For you will come to the land which I give you and **the land will rest/stop shavtah**, YHVH's *shabbat*...In the seventh year **a Sabbath's sabbath shabbat shabbaton will it be for the land**, a Sabbath for YHVH. Don't sow your field and don't prune your vineyard...

And the **shabbat of the land will be for you** for eating: for you and for your male servant and for your female servant and for your hired-worker and for your settler living-as-a-stranger with you; and for your beast and for the animal which is in your land chayah asher b'artzekha, all of her produce will be to eat...

You will count for yourself seven Sabbaths of years, seven years seven times...and **call out liberty/release d'ror in the land**, to all those inhabiting her. It will be a Jubilee Yovel for you, you will **return each man/person to his (their) tribe-possession**.

You will do my statutes...and **settle on the land securely lavetach**. And **the land will give her fruit** and you will eat to be satisfied and you will **settle securely on her**...

The land you may not sell permanently latz'mitut, for the land is mine *ki li ha'aretz*, for you are strangers and settlers by/with me *ki gerim v'toshavim atem imadi*. So in all the land of your tribe-possession, **redemption g'ulah you will give to the land**.

IX. Covenant of Peace, Lev 26:3-13

O (1). If you will walk in my statutes and watch over my commandments and do them, then I will give your rains in their season and **the land will give her produce y'vulah** and the tree of the field his fruit...and you will **dwelt securely lavetach in your land**...

And I will set **peace in the land** and I will uphold my covenant with you...and I myself will walk *hit'halakhti* in the midst of you and I will become *Elohim* for you and you will become my people...

X. Eating and Exile, Lev 26:14-43

O (2). And if you will not listen...and if you will despise my statutes...to undo my covenant, even so will I do this to you...I will set my face at you...and you will use up your strength for emptiness, and **your land will not give her produce** and the tree of the land will not give his fruit...

I will send against you the animal of the field chayot hasadeh and she will make you childless... And if with this you will not listen to me...I will walk with you in a fury of opposition...and you will eat the flesh of your sons and your daughter's flesh you will eat...

I will desolate the land... and you-all will I scatter in the nations...then **the land will enjoy/desire tirtzeh her Sabbaths...All the days of her desolation she will rest** what she didn't rest in your Sabbaths when you were dwelling on her...

and you will be lost in the nations and **the land of your enemies will eat you**...

And those of you who are left...their uncircumcised hearts will be bent-to-shape...and I will remember my covenant with Yaakov, and even my covenant with Yitzchak and my covenant with Avraham will I remember, and **I will remember the land**...

XI. Sinai = Shmitah (reprise), Lev 26:46

O (3). These are the statutes and judgments and *Torot* which YHVH set between [god] and between Yisrael's children in Mount Sinai by Moshe's hand.