

The purpose of the Book of Genesis

1. Nachmanides to Genesis 1:1

Rabbi Yitzchak explained that the Torah began with "In the beginning, G-d created," and the story of Creation until the creation of Man. G-d gave him control of His creations and put everything under his feet. The Garden of Eden, the choicest of places created in this world, was the place where Man would rest until his sin chased him out. The generation of the Flood was chased out of the world entirely due to their sins, and the righteous one among them escaped with his children. The sins of their descendants caused G-d to scatter them, and they settled places for their families and nations as occurred for them.

Based on this, it is appropriate that a nation which continues to sin should lose its place, and another nation should come to take its land, for this has been the law of G-d in the land, forever...

Careers: A Change in Divine Plans

2. Genesis 3:5

For G-d knows that on the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.

Rashi: "Like gods" – creators of worlds.

The Farmer: Cain, Noah, Isaac, Egypt

3. Genesis 4:2-4

And Abel was a shepherd, and Cain was a worker of the land (עובד אדמה). And it was at the end of days, and Cain brought a gift for G-d from the fruit of the land. And Abel also brought from the first of his sheep and from their fat. And G-d turned to Abel and to his offering.

4. Genesis 9:20

And Noah, man of the earth (איש האדמה), started out, and he planted a vineyard.

5. Genesis 26:12

And Isaac planted in that land, and he found one hundred-fold that year, and G-d blessed him.

6. Ecclesiastes 5:8

The benefit of a land, anywhere, is in a king who is enslaved to the field.

7. Genesis 26:22

And they moved from there and dug another well, and did not fight over it. And he called it Rechovot (רחובות), saying, "For now G-d has broadened (הרחיב) the space for us, and we have multiplied in the land."

The Shepherd: Abel, Yaval, Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Philistines, Jacob, Laban, Joseph's brothers

8. Genesis 13:5-7, 10-12

Lot, who travelled with Abram, also possessed sheep, cattle and tents. And the land could not support them to live together, for they had much property and they could not dwell together. And there was a fight between the shepherds of Abram's cattle and the shepherds of Lot's cattle...

And Lot raised his eyes and saw the plain of the Jordan, entirely irrigated, before G-d destroyed Sodom and Amora – like the garden of G-d, like the land of Egypt, as you come to Tzoar. And Lot selected the entire plain of the Jordan... and he moved his tent to Sodom.

9. Genesis 26:15, 20

And all of the wells dug by the servants of his father Abraham – the Philistines blocked them, filling them with dirt... And the shepherds of Garar fought with the shepherds of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!"...

10. Genesis 31:1-2

And Jacob heard the words of the sons of Laban, saying, "Jacob has taken all that our father possessed; from our father's property he created all of this wealth!" And Jacob saw Laban's face, that he was not with him as he had been previously.

11. Genesis 31:38-40

I have been with you for twenty years, and your lambs and goats never lost young, and I never ate the rams of your sheep. I never brought a torn animal to you; I made up the loss, from my own hand you sought it, whether stolen by day or night. I was eaten by heat in the day and ice at night, and sleep flew from my eyes...

12. Rashi to Genesis 13:7

Lot's shepherds were wicked, grazing their animals in the fields of others. Abram's shepherds rebuked them for theft, and they said, "The land has been given to Abram, and he has no heir. Lot is his heir, and so this is not theft."

13. Genesis 46:34

Tell them, "Your servants have been shepherds from our youth until now, us and our ancestors," so that you will live in Goshen, for Egypt abhors shepherds.

14. Genesis 47:6

"Egypt is before you; place your father and brothers in the best of the land. Let them dwell in Goshen. If you know that there are men of strength among them, place them as officers over my cattle."

15. Mishnah Bava Kama 7:7

One may not raise light animals in Israel.

Rashi: For the sake of settling Israel; they destroy the fields.

Maimonides: For they extend into the fields.

16. Genesis 48:15

The G-d who has herded me, from my birth to this very day.

The Hunter: Nimrod and Esav

17. Genesis 10:8-10

And Cush fathered Nimrod, who became mighty in the land. He was a mighty trapper before G-d; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty trapper before G-d." And the first of his empire was Babylon, and...

18. Genesis 25:27-28

And the youths matured, and Esav was a trapper and a man of the field, and Jacob was simple, a dweller of tents. And Isaac loved Esav for the trapping in his mouth, and Rebecca loved Jacob.

19. Rashi's comments to Genesis 10:9 and 25:28

"A mighty trapper" – Trapping the minds of people with his mouth, misleading them to rebel against G-d.

"In his mouth" – A midrash explains: In *Esav's* mouth; he trapped Isaac, fooling him with his words.

Summary

Farmer	Serving the earth	Gratitude to G-d
Shepherd	Greed for resources	Self-denying kindness
Hunter	Deception	?