

THE HISTORY
OF
ABRAHAM, ISAAC, & JACOB,
EMBELLISHED WITH CUTS;
TO WHICH IS ADDED
AN ACCOUNT OF JONAH'S MISSION
TO THE
NINEVITES.



GLASGOW:
PRINTED FOR THE BOOKSELLERS.

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EDINBURGH
 OF SCOTLAND

Sarah promised a Son.



Hagar being returned to Abram's house, soon bore a son, who was called Ishmael. Thirteen years after, God appeared to Abraham to renew his covenant, and instituted circumcision as a token of the covenant, and promised him a son who should be the father of many kings. Abraham laughed to think that Sarah, ninety years old, should bear. A while after, as Abraham was sitting in the tent door he saw three men coming, and as his charity suffered none to pass without a refreshment, he ran to meet them. After they had eaten, they asked for Sarah, when the men, (who were angels) assured him that she would bear a son. Sarah overheard what was said, and laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure—my Lord being old also. The angels reprov'd Sarah for laughing, which she denied: they stated nothing was too hard for the Lord. They then rose up, and Abraham with them went on their way.

Lot entertains two Angels at Sodom.



After God's promise to Abraham, that Sarah would shortly bear him a son, he was warned that Sodom was to be destroyed. Lot, seeing two angels coming to Sodom, ran to meet them, and entreated them to lodge with him. The angels at first refused, but Lot earnestly pressed them to come in. The men of Sodom surrounded the house, and demanded of Lot to deliver up the men, that they might satisfy their lust with them. He resisted them with all his powers, but still they insisted. Lot, pierced with sorrow, was on the point of delivering them up, had not the angels put forth their hand, and pulled him in; and having shut the door, they smote the men that were without with blindness: yet with all this it reclaimed not their fury; for they still sought to satisfy themselves, and they laboured hard to find the door to effect their purpose.

Lot and his Two Daughters.



The angel having warned Lot of his danger of remaining among the Sodomites, hastened him to depart from the city with his wife and two daughters, that they might not be consumed. They laid hold of him by the hand, ordering him to escape, and not to look behind him. Lot requested leave of the angels to retire to Zoar; and he had no sooner entered Zoar, than the Lord rained fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah from heaven. Lot's wife, alarmed at a sudden noise, looking back, became a pillar of salt. Lot, affrighted, went up and dwelt in a mountain, his two daughters imagining that they and their father were the only remains of the inhabitants of the earth, thought it their duty not to suffer the generation of men to perish, made their father drink wine, and did not stop to commit incest in hopes of being mothers; and though we cannot think on that action without horror, yet their innocence did much lessen the guilt of it.

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Abimelech afflicted by God.



to
of Abraham being obliged, soon after the overthrow
of Sodom, to quit his former abode, came to Gerar,
where he was exposed to some danger by the king
of that city, on account of his wife, as he had been
by the king of Egypt. Abimelech, king of Gerar,
sent and took Sarah, who called herself Abraham's
sister; as she had done in Egypt. But God, who
was the protector of Sarah's chastity, threatened
that prince in the night-time, telling him he was a
dead man if he offered to touch Sarah, for she was
Abraham's wife. Abimelech was horror-struck at
having nearly committed so great a crime, and ter-
rified by the threats of God, called all his officers and
servants together, as also Abraham, and reproved
him sharply for concealing the truth, to make him
and his kingdom guilty of so great a sin. Abraham
replied, that they were both of one father but dif-
ferent mothers.

Hagar and Ishmael cast out.



God fulfilled his promise to Sarah, and she brought forth a son in her old age. Abraham called him Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day. Sarah suckled him herself, though a great princess; and when the time of weaning Isaac was come, Abraham made a great feast to express his joy. In the mean time, while Sarah had so much reason to rejoice, Hagar's son became cause of great trouble to her. This lad, disappointed in his hopes by the birth of Isaac, could not endure to see his father and mother delight so much in him, and began to behave himself abusively towards him. Sarah foresaw the fatal consequences of this hatred, and entreated Abraham to cast out the bond-woman and her son. This request greatly afflicted Abraham, but God advised him to do as Sarah had said. They were forthwith cast out; but an angel appeared and spoke comfortably to them in the wilderness, assuring her, her son would be the father of a great nation.

Abraham offereth up Isaac.



Isaac being now arrived at the age of twenty-seven, God, to try Abraham, commands him to take his son, whom he loved, and offer him up upon a mountain. He remembered he had received his son from God, and his great faith stifled all the thoughts which did arise in him about the divine promises so often repeated to him, that from the very Isaac whom he was now about to offer, his posterity should be multiplied as the stars of heaven. Accordingly he rises early in the morning, and takes Isaac his son, and two servants, cloaves the wood for the burnt-offering, and binding Isaac his son, laid him on the alter, and stretching forth his hand, took the knife to slay him. God, seeing constancy in the father, stops his hand by an angel from heaven. Hereupon Abraham, seeing a ram caught in a thicket by the horns, offered him up to God instead of his son, and returned to his house.

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The Death and Burial of Sarah.



Isaac being the parents by the command of him who first bestowed him, he was the comfort of his mother in her old age, who, being arrived at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven years, died. Abraham having wept over her some time, considers of providing a burying place for her. He addresses the children of Heth, stating he was a stranger, and that he wished a burying place to bury the dead, out of his sight, which was kindly granted, requesting him to take choice of all their sepulchres. Abraham, who would not be beholden to any man, entreated them to sell him a field which had a double cave, but they wanted him to accept of it as a free gift, but Abraham was immovable, and forced Eph on to tell him that the field was worth four hundred shekels of silver, which Abraham paid down, and there he buried Sarah.

Isaac's Marriage with Rebekah.



Abraham being old, and thinking to take a wife for his son Isaac, resolves not to allow him to marry any of the daughters of the Canaanites; but despatches Eliezer his steward to Mesopotamia to take a wife for his son. Being come near the city of Nahor, he prayed that God would direct him to the person he had allotted to be his master's son's wife, by this token, that the damsel he should ask to draw water for himself and his camels, should do it frankly. Rebekah came, and Eliezer ran to meet her, and desired water to drink, which she readily gave him, and hasted to draw for his camels. This faithful servant, satisfied that she was the person, presents her with many presents, when she ran home to her brother, who instantly ran to meet Abraham's servant, brought him home, and set down meat before him but would eat none till he got an answer to his business. A favourable answer being given, he prepared to return home.

Esau sells his Birthright to Jacob.



After the happy consummating of Isaac's marriage with Rebekah, Abraham lived many years, till at length transported to that better and heavenly country; having spent one hundred and seventy-five years in the exercise of holy virtues and graces. God, after his death, multiplied his blessings on Isaac his son. But they had been twenty years married without having any children, when Isaac prayed the Lord for his wife's sake for children, and he was heard, and Rebekah was delivered of male twins. The Divine oracle stated that the elder should serve the younger. When these two children were grown up, Jacob, the youngest, on a time sold lentil pottage, and Esau, returning from hunting, extremely hungry, with greediness desired this pottage; which Jacob perceiving, would not part with it till he had promised to sell him his birthright in consideration thereof, to which Esa

Isaac blesseth Jacob instead of Esau.



Esau having sold Jacob his birthright, Rebekah, who had a tender love for Jacob, ratified the right by a holy piece of craft. Isaac being sensible of his great age, and willing to bless his children ere he died, called Esau his oldest, whom he loved, to him, to hunt some venison, and make savoury meat that he might bless him. Rebekah told Jacob to fetch two kids, that she might make savoury meat to Isaac. She then dressed Jacob in Esau's dross and put the skins of the kids upon his hands and smooth of his neck, that his father might suppose him to be Esau, which had the desired effect; for he received his father's blessing by this deception. Scarcely had he made an end of blessing Jacob, when Esau came in from hunting, prepares his savoury meat, brings it to his father, and desires him to eat that he might bless him. The holy patriarch, perceiving the deception, trembled, and Esau cryed bitterly. Isaac, moved with his cries, blesseth him also, but subjects him to Jacob.

and which of these is the true one

Jacob's Mystical Ladder.



The anger of Esau against Jacob was too visible to be hid from Rebekah; and the tender love she had for Jacob caused her to send him away for a time, though grieved to let him out of her sight. To reconcile her husband Isaac to it, she spoke of his marriage—how grieving it would be if her son Jacob would marry any of the daughters of the land of Canaan, as Esau had done against their wish. Jacob was sent away, more like a fugitive than the son of a rich person. Being overtaken by night, he was obliged to take up his lodgings upon the earth, with no softer pillow than stone. Here he dreamed that he saw a ladder, the top of which reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. He was the Lord above it, who encouraged him to proceed on his journey, and promised that his seed should be as the dew of the earth, as in him should all nations of the earth be blessed.

Jacob serveth for Rachel and Leah.



Jacob assured by the vision of the Divine protection, went cheerfully on his way to Haran, and meeting some shepherds near a well, which had a great stone at the mouth thereof, asked them whither they knew one Laban, a grandchild of Nabor. They answered, yes; and that Rachel his daughter was coming thither with his sheep. Jacob no sooner saw her, then he went and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well; watered his sheep, kissed her, and made himself known to her. She ran with the tidings to her father, who came forth, kissed him, and brought him to his house. Jacob told him of his brother's fury, stating that he wished to serve him; to which Laban agreed, that Jacob should serve him seven years for Rachel, which term he finished; but Leah was falsely put into Jacob's bed, which displeased Jacob; but Laban appeased him by promising him Rachel at the end of other seven, which he also completed.

Jacob's return to his birth-place.



The blessings that God so plentifully showered down upon Jacob excited Laban's envy, so that he perceived it prudent to leave Mesopotamia. For this purpose he calls his two wives, and tells them of his design, which they approving of, he went off privately, taking family and possessions. Laban, informed of their sudden departure, and missing some of his idols, pursues them seven days. As soon as he overtook them, he reproached Jacob for stealing his daughters; and however right it might be to return to his country; it was very unjust to steal the idols. Jacob declared his ignorance of any such thing, whereupon Laban examined his whole effects, and at last enters Rachel's tent; but before his coming she hid them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them; and desired her father not to take it ill that she did not rise, as she was unwell. Laban, forced to return without them, made a covenant with Jacob, after which they lovingly took leave of each other.

Jacob wrestleth with an Angel.



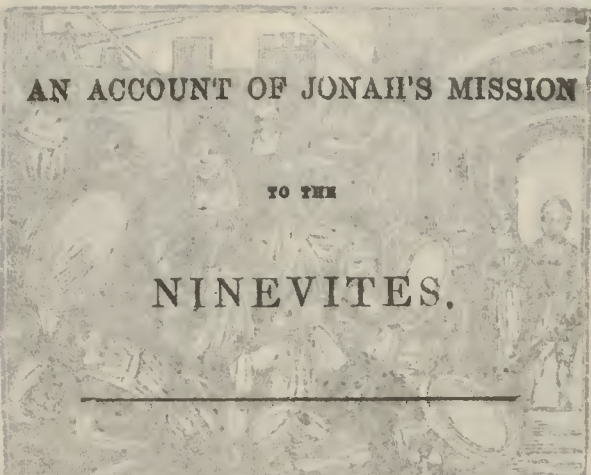
Jacob having thus escaped the hands of Laban, began to think how he might escape those of Esau, whereupon he sent messengers before him that he might find grace in his sight. Upon their return they declared that he was at the head of four hundred men coming to meet Jacob, which filled him with extreme fear. Jacob, to soften his brother's heart, prepared great presents to him, left orders for his wives and children to pass over the brook Jabbok by night, while he remained on the other side. He betakes himself to prayer for a happy meeting with his brother, when an angel appeared unto him, and wrestled with him until day, when the angel touched the hollow of his thigh, and caused him to halt, and gave him the new name of Israel, with the assurance that he had nothing to fear from men, and in particular from his brother Esau.

Jacob's sons kill all the people of Shechem.



When Jacob was returned from Mesopotamia, a city of the Shechemites, an accident happened which caused him a great deal of sorrow. Dinah being gone abroad to see the daughters of the land, their king took her by force, and ravished her; but desired to get her to wife. Jacob was grieved at his daughter's defilement; and his sons, dissembling their rage, requested the Shechemites to be circumcised, that the mutual intercourse they proposed should take place. They consented; and on the third day, when their pain was most sensible, Simeon and Levi took their swords, and came upon them, and slew all the males, without sparing the king himself or his son, whose unlawful lust caused this bloodshed. The rest of Jacob's sons pillaged the city, and carried all the spoil along with them, taking all their little ones and their wives captives. Jacob was extremely troubled at this, their revenge.

Jacob's sons kill all the people of Shechem.



AN ACCOUNT OF JONAH'S MISSION

TO THE

NINEVITES.

JONAH was the son of Amittai, a prophet of Gath-hepher in Galilee. Some Jews would have him to be the son of the widow of Sarepta, raised to life by Elijah, but the distance of time renders it almost impossible; nor is it a whit more certain that he was the son of the Shunamite restored to life by Elisha, or the young prophet who anointed Jehu.

It is certain, that he predicted that God would restore to the Hebrews, the cities which the Syrians had taken from them during the reigns of Ahab, Jehoram, Jehu, and Jehoahaz, 2 Kings, xiv. 25. He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai the prophet which was of Gath-hepher. We have also the book of Jonah, where God ordered him to go to Nineveh and warn the inhabitants of their approaching destruction.

Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, and built by Asshur the son of Shem; Genesis, x. 11, "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh." It was one of the largest cities in the world. In Jonah's time it was a city of three day's journey, or would require him three days to go through it, proclaiming its overthrow. It then had about one hundred and twenty thousand infants in it, whom we cannot suppose above the eighth or tenth part of its inhabitants: one learned writer says it was sixty miles in circumference; and another writer says it was larger than Babylon. It was surrounded by a wall about two hundred feet high, and so thick, that three chariots abreast might have been driven along the top; on the wall were built one thousand five hundred towers, each two hundred feet higher than the wall; this city was very early noted for wealth, idolatry, and whoredom.

Fearing that the Lord might forbear punishing them if they repented, and so seemingly tarnish his honour, Jonah shipped himself at Joppa for Tarshish, when a storm quickly pursued the ship wherein he was. The heathen mariners awaked him, and required him to call on his God for deliverance. Lots being cast to discern for whose sake the storm arose, the lot fell on Jonah, who with shame confessed his guilt to the mariners, and desired them to cast him into the sea, that the storm might be stayed, which with reluctance, they were at last obliged to do; whereon the storm immediately ceased. A large fish swallowed up Jonah, and retained him safe in her belly for three days. There he earnestly prayed to the Lord, at whose command the fish vomited him alive on dry land. His orders to warn the Ninevites of their approaching destruction were immediately renewed, and all obedient, he hastened to that vast city, it above a day's jour-
ney denounc'd did not repent with-

in forty days. When the inhabitants heard this, they were greatly afflicted; a fast of three days both for man and beast was appointed, and they cried mightily to God for the preventing of this stroke; he heard their prayers, and long delayed their ruin. Displeased with the divine mercy, Jonah angrily wished to die, rather than live and see his prediction unfulfilled. While he sat without the city, waiting for his desired view of Nineveh's ruin, God caused a gourd quickly to spring up to overshadow him from the scorching heat of the sun, but next day, a worm having bitten its root, it suddenly withered. The scorching sun and blasting wind vehemently beating on Jonah, he fainted and angrily wished to die, and averred to God himself that he was right in doing so. The Lord bid him think, if he had pity on the short-lived gourd, was there not far more reason for his and their maker to pity the penitent inhabitants of Nineveh?

Nineveh at last was destroyed about one hundred years after Jonah. The Medes and Persians had several times laid siege to it, but were diverted by various accidents; but after the massacre of the Tartars in Media, they repeated the siege, Cyaxares and Nebuchadnezzar being the commanders: after they had lain before it three years, the river Tigris or Sycus, being exceedingly swollen, washed away two and a half miles of the wall; when the waters assuaging the besiegers rushed into the city, and murdered the inhabitants, who lay buried in their drunkenness, occasioned by an advantage which they had just before gained over the enemy. When the king, whose name we suppose was Sardanapalus, heard the city was taken, it is said, he shut up himself, family, and wealth to the value of about twenty-five thousand millions sterling, in the palace, and then set fire to it, and destroyed all that was in it, and it was fifteen days before the flames were quenched.

— It is hard to say what was the gourd that covered Jonah's head at Nineveh: Jeromo says, it was a small shrub, which, in the sandy places of Canaan, grows up in a few days to a considerable height, and with its large leaves forms an agreeable shade. It is now generally thought to be the *Palma Christi*, which is somewhat like a lily, with large smooth and black spotted leaves; one kind of it grows to the height of a fig-tree, and whose branches and trunk are hollow as a reed; there is also the wild gourd, which creeps along the surface of the earth, as those of cucumbers; its fruit is of the size and form of an orange, containing a light substance, but so excessively bitter that it has been called the gall of the earth.

I have now given you a short account of the History of Jonah, which could be greatly enlarged if space would permit—also the command given by God to preach at Nineveh—Jonah's disobedience to that command—the pursuit and arrest of him for that disobedience by a storm, in which he was asleep—the discovery of him and his disobedience to be the cause of the storm—the casting of him into the sea, for the stilling of the storm—the miraculous preservation of his life there in the belly of a fish, which was his preservation for further services. We have also Jonah's praying unto God: in his prayer we have the great distress and danger he was in—the despair he was thereby almost reduced to—the encouragement he took to himself in this deplorable condition—the assurance he had of God's favour to him—the warning and instruction he gives to others—the praise and glory of all given to God—his deliverance out of the belly of the fish—and his coming safe and sound upon dry land again—his mission renewed—and the command a second time given him to go preach at Nineveh—his message to Nineveh faithfully delivered, by which its speedy overthrow was threatened—the repentance, humble

tion, and reformation of the Ninevites hereupon—
 God's gracious revocation of the sentence passed
 upon them, and the preventing of the ruin threatened.
 We have also Jonah's repining at God's mercy to
 Nineveh, and the fret he was in about it—the gentle
 reproof God gave him for it, Jonah's discontent
 at the withering of the gourd, and justifying of
 himself in that discontent—God's improving of it
 for his conviction; that he ought not to be angry at
 the sparing of Nineveh. Man's badness and God's
 goodness serve here for a foil to each other, that the
 former may appear the more exceeding sinful, and
 the latter the more exceeding gracious.

From all this we may learn, *First*, that though
 God may suffer his people to fall into sin, yet he
 will not suffer them to lie still in it, but will take a
 course effectually to show them their error, and to
 bring them to themselves, and to their right mind
 again. We have reason to hope that Jonah, after
 this, was well reconciled to the sparing of Nineveh,
 and was as well pleased with it, as ever he had been
 displeas'd.

Second, that God will justify himself in the
 methods of his grace toward repenting returning
 sinners, as well as in the course his justice takes with
 them that persist in there rebellion, though there are
 those that murmur at the mercy of God, because
 they do not understand it; (for his thoughts and
 ways therein are as far above ours as heaven is above
 the earth) yet he will make it evident that therein
 he acts like himself; and will be justified when he
 speaks. See what pains he takes with Jonah, to
 convince him that it was very fit that Nineveh
 should be spared. Jonah had said, I do well to be
 angry, but he could not prove it; God says, I do
 well to be merciful, and proves it; and it is a
 great encouragement to poor sinners to hope that
 they shall find mercy with him; that he is so ready

to justify himself in showing mercy, and to triumph
 in those whom he makes the monuments of it, against
 those who is evil because he is good; such mur-
 derers shall be made to understand this doctrine,
 that how narrow soever their souls, and their prin-
 ciples are, and how willing soever they are to en-
 cross divine grace to themselves, and those of their
 own way, their is one Lord over all, that is rich in
 mercy to all that call on him, and in every nation,
 in evēh as well as in Israel, he that fears God, and
 works righteousness, is accepted of him, and he that
 repents and turns from his evil way shall find mercy
 with him.

Did not the fate of this prophet typify our Savi-
 or's being cast into the raging sea of divine wrath;
 his lying a part of three days in the grave; his glori-
 ous resurrection from the dead; and the publication of
 his gospel to multitudes of perishing sinners that
 followed.

We cannot close more fitly, perhaps than by ex-
 acting a few lines from the powerful summing up
 by the poet Young

What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know,
 but what I am: and since I am, conclude
 something eternal: had there e'er been nought,
 nought still had been: eternal there must be.
 But what eternal?—Why not human race?
 And Adam's ancestors without an end?
 That's hard to be conceiv'd. Yet grant it true,
 whence earth and these bright orbs?—Eternal too?
 If grant matter was eternal, still these orbs
 could want some other father;—much design
 is seen in all their motions, all their makes:
 Design implies intelligence, and art;
 That can't be from themselves, or man; that art
 man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow?
 Who motion, foreign to the smallest grain,
 can push through vast masses of enormous weight?

Who bade brute matter's restive lump assume
 Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
 Has matter innate motion? then each atom,
 Asserting its indisputable right
 To dance, would form an universe of dust:
 Has matter none? Then whence these glorious forms
 And boundless flights, from shapeless, and repos'd
 Has matter more than motion?—has it thought,
 Judgment, and genius?—is it deeply learn'd
 In mathematics? Has it fram'd such laws,
 Which but to guess a Newton made immortal?—
 If so, how each sago atom laughs at me,
 Who thinks a clod inferior to a man!
 If art to form, and counsel to conduct,
 And that with greater far than human skill,
 Resides not in each block—a Godhead reigns—
 And if a God there is, that God how great!"

THE END