

## The Chiastic Narrative Structure of the Creation of the Chosen Nation

A1	God creates the world, for man. By way of “ <i>melakha</i> ” (and stopping on Shabbat) (2:2-4). It is created over seven days.
B1	God endows newly created man with a Divine soul.
C1	Man encounters and struggles with evil personified (the <i>naḥash</i> ), resulting in an eternal war between their progenies (3:15).
D1	Man, having been told of “divine” food and a strict rule thereof—it must not be consumed at all—promptly violates that rule.
E1	Man (Adam) begins long exile from his idyllic, divine land. He (Kayin) soon receives mankind’s first generalized instruction about sin, virtue, and their consequences (4:7).
F1	Evil oppressive society is drowned, with the chosen good miraculously saved.
G1	The saved party brings—as he has been instructed to prepare for before his salvation—a special <i>korban</i> (8:20).
H1	God disrupts a nation to foil its evil plan (which includes mass building of a city [11:4] with חמר ולבנים [11:3]).
I1	Avraham is chosen by God and charged with a mission: to go to Israel and become a nation.
J1	Avraham leaves his homeland and journeys to a foreign land.
K1	Avraham is told about the future slavery in Egypt (15:13-14).
L1	Sarah oppresses (ותענה) her Egyptian slave (16:6). She subsequently drives the slave out of her home and into the desert.
M1	Avraham has a son, Yitzchak, and he is promised to become a nation of multitudes (17:2-6). This is soon followed by a decree to kill his son.
N1	Yaakov and his brother—and rival-to-be—are born. The story of Yaakov’s family begins.
O1	Yaakov begins his life peacefully as a shepherd (Ibn Ezra’s <i>pshat</i> definition of ישב אהלים (25:27).
P1	After the family head dies (Avraham, midrash), Yaakov’s brother agrees to be subordinate to him (25:31-34).
Q1	Yitzḥak makes a deathbed request (27:2).
R1	Yaakov receives the prophetic <i>berakhah</i> from his father, as the chosen son (27:27-29).
S1	Yaakov, as a result of brotherly strife, leaves his family and begins a very difficult phase of his life (28:10).
T1	Yaakov, on his journey from Beer-Sheba to <i>ḥutz la-aretz</i> , is reassured by God that He will be with him in <i>ḥutz la-aretz</i> , will make him into a great nation, and will return him to Israel (28:13-15).
U1	Yaakov asks that God provide for him and give him bread (28:20).
V	Yaakov sees Rachel, who will become his favored wife, and breaks out crying (29:11).
W1	Seven Inauspicious Years (working in vain for the wrong wife—whose features are described as רכות [29:17]).
X1	Seven Auspicious Years (working for favored wife, whose features are described as יפת תאר (יפת מראה). During these years, Yaakov has his children. In the following years, Yaakov will arrange a clever transaction whereby he manages to collect a huge portion of his host’s flock.
Y1	End of story of confrontation between former enemy siblings, which results in Yaakov bowing before his sibling (33:3).
<i>Va-yeshev</i>	
Z1	Yosef’s age is specified (one of only two times) (37:2).
AA1	Yosef is chosen as the favorite of his father and given a fancy garment (37:3).
AB1	The brothers, the subject of the immediately upcoming dream, hate Yosef (37:4).
AC1	Two prophetic and parallel dreams (37:5-9).
AD1	Yosef is sent to the people who are the subjects of the immediately preceding dreams (37:13-14).
AE1	Yosef is thrown into a בור (37:24).
AF1	Yosef is victimized unfairly (37:28).
AG1	Yosef’s forcibly removed garment is used to trick his master into thinking something horrible about him, causing his master intense aggravation (37:31-35).
AH1	Yosef is brought down to Egypt and sold to Potiphar (37:36).
AI1	Yehuda has two sons (via a Canaanite) who die (38:3-10).
AJ1	Yehuda promises Shelah to Tamar (38:11).
AK1	Tamar presents as a <i>zonah</i> (by putting on a garment) (38: 14-15).
AL1	Yehuda gives a pledge to Tamar (38:17-18).
AM	<b>ENCOUNTER OF YEHUDA AND TAMAR: TAMAR CONCEIVES THE FUTURE LEADERSHIP (38:18).</b>
AL2	Yehuda leaves pledge with Tamar (38:22-23).
AK2	Tamar is found pregnant via <i>zenut</i> (38:24) (having removed her garment).
AJ2	Yehuda acknowledges that he broke his promise to Tamar to wed her to Shelah (38:26).
AI2	Yehuda has two sons (via a Canaanite) who not only live but begin his dynasty (38:27-30).
AH2	Yosef is brought down to Egypt and sold to Potiphar (39:1).
AG2	Yosef’s garment is forcibly removed (to trick his master into thinking something horrible about him, causing his master intense aggravation) (39:7-12).
AF2	Yosef is victimized unfairly (39:14-18).
AE2	Yosef is thrown into a בור (39:20), described as such in 40:15.
AD2	The people who are the subjects of the immediately forthcoming dreams are sent to Yosef (40:3).
AC2	Two prophetic and parallel dreams (40:5).
AB2	The butler, the subject of the immediately prior dream, forgets Yosef (40:23).
AA2	Yosef is chosen as the favorite of the king and given a fancy garment (41:41-42).
Z2	Yosef’s age is specified (one of only two times) (41:46).
Y2	Beginning of story of confrontation between former enemy siblings, which will ultimately result in Yosef’s siblings bowing before him.
X2	Seven Auspicious Years (whose symbols are described [41:2,18] as יפת מראה & יפת תאר). During these years, Yosef has his children (41:50). In the following years, Yosef will arrange a clever transaction whereby he manages to collect a huge portion of his host’s flock.
W2	Seven Inauspicious Years (whose symbols are described as רקות [41:19]).
V2	Yosef sees Binyamin, his favored brother (and only brother from Rachel, as noted by the verse), and breaks out crying (43:29-30).
U2	Yaakov is sent a message (from Yosef) that God has provided for him and is sent bread (45:9,23).
T2	Yaakov, on his journey from Beer-Sheba to <i>ḥutz la-aretz</i> , is reassured by God that He will be with him in <i>ḥutz la-aretz</i> , will make him into a great nation, and will return him to Israel (46:1-4).
S2	Yaakov, after the resolution of brotherly strife, is reunited with his family, ending the difficult phase of his life (47:27).
R2	Yaakov gives the prophetic <i>berakhah</i> to his children (49:1-27). All are chosen.
Q2	Yaakov makes a deathbed request (49:29).
P2	After Yaakov, the family head, dies, Yosef’s brothers offer to be subordinate to him. They are refused (50:18-21).
O2	Yaakov’s sons live out their lives peacefully as shepherds (50:22-23).
N2	Yaakov’s sons—the former brotherly rivals—die, and the story of his family ends (50:26; <i>Shemot</i> 1:6).
M2	The brothers become a nation of multitudes ( <i>Shemot</i> 1:7). This is soon followed by a decree to kill all the sons.
L2	Egypt oppresses (יענו) their Jewish slaves (1:11-12). They subsequently drive the slaves out of the country and into the desert.
K2	Slavery in Egypt (1:13-14).
J2	Moshe leaves his homeland and journeys to a foreign land (2:15).
I2	Moshe is chosen by God and charged with a mission: to take the nation to Israel.
H2	God disrupts a nation to foil its evil plan (which includes mass building of cities [1:11], with [1:14] חמר ולבנים).
G2	The saved nation brings—as they had been instructed to prepare for before their salvation—a special <i>korban</i> (ch. 12).
F2	Evil oppressive society is drowned, with the chosen good miraculously saved (14:21-29).
E2	B’nai Yisrael begin long journey to their idyllic, divine land. They soon receive their first generalized instruction about sin, virtue, and their consequences (15:26).
D2	B’nai Yisrael, having been told of “divine” food and a strict rule thereof—it must be fully consumed—promptly violates that rule (16:19-20).
C2	B’nai Yisrael encounter and struggle with evil personified (Amalek), resulting in an eternal war between their progenies (17:16).
B2	God endows the new nation of Israel with the Divine Torah.
A2	Man creates the mishkan, for God. By way of “ <i>melakha</i> ” (36:3-7) (and stopping on Shabbat) (35:2). It is inaugurated over seven days.