

ABRAHAM / ISSAC'S WELL

Abraham and Isaac dug wells in Beersheba where they made a treaty with Abimelech, a Philistine king, who gave him Abraham seven ewes to commemorate the treaty after having given Abraham back his wife Sarah whom Abimelech had taken as his own.

Take what is yours and leave what's only mine,
one sheep per spring, well-wishers to the oath.
On plump figs and succulent dates we dine
as you break your bonds with my wife you troth.
Tending to holy convictions, both
you and I can live side by side—coexist
in this arid desert we will subsist.

Under divine providence's gabled roof
diplomacy bathes in the oasis.
Should we fail it, we will bear the reproof,
the present shan't be the catastasis.
Calling from her parents' house, Prophasis,
to break our treaty our holy accords,
would be a most grievous insult to our lords.

JUBB YUSSEF (JOSEPH'S WELL)

Per Islamic tradition, this pit (or well) located in the Galilee is where Joseph's brothers, jealous of his dreams and being Jacob's favorite son, cast him before he was sold into slavery in Egypt.

Drag the rainbow coat through the blood
as you kill the kid with hardened hearts
leaving me to rot in this pit.
I should have known when I related dreams with a sneer.
I should have known when I cut my brothers at their knees
they would bow to my altar for only as long
as father's gaze shielded their designs.
I was a prince of dreams, a mover of stars.
I made the grain bow,
I cooked their envy on a spit
above a fire of hate
bringing boiling tears to the battlements
of age-old sibling rivalry.
Now Israel will cry as he draws the sackcloth near,
pining for his favorite son.
My rude awakening puts my pride to shame
keeping company with a guilty conscious.
I marry the two on the barren plain
with camels for bridesmaids and an oasis for witness
as my brothers cast me out of my house into Pharaoh's.

MARY'S WELL

Located in modern-day Nazareth, Roman Catholics believe that this well is the site where Gabriel appeared to The Virgin Mary and announced that she would be the mother to the Son of God.

Gabriel: You come here the huntress
Setting your trap for three atoms

Mary: Hydrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen again
A flock of sheep on a rustic plain I've come to corral

Gabriel: Hydrogen and Hydrogen a mother and father
Oxygen the son the binder of the covenant

Mary: Subdued elements silence the lions' thirsty roar
Out of the small hole I coax the spring, the lamb

Gabriel: Proud parents' hydrogen embraces oxygen
The holy trinity—a family for all to revere

Mary: Now I understand my bucket—
A manger from which parched mouths drink

Gabriel: Rejoice and spill your water
The font of love is bottomless

MIRIAM'S WELL

According to Jewish Tradition, Miriam's well was a rock in the shape of a sieve that travelled with Israelites through the desert for most of their forty years (until Miriam's death). Whenever the Israelites stopped to rest, the rock would dig into the sand for the Israelites and provide a makeshift well.

Across the arid plain I roll catering to your tempo.
You smack your lips, loll your tongue beseeching the lord
under a Nubian sky, vultures circle, throwing dice—who will die first?
We've been down this road, rehearsed for this day,
yet you doubt, your thirst taking over your mind,
your thoughts of faith turning to chance—do you still believe?
You sing while I dig a hole buzzards mistake for your grave,
flapping their wings, yearning to take you before the ground.
Unable to fathom what lies below the depths I dig,
your chanting grows louder as the stakes rise higher,
the Valkyries of the desert performing perfunctory dives
strafing the little sanity summoned in your chants.
I hit the table like a marathon runner delivering the victory,
procuring three atoms, all that is needed to beat back death.
You drink, you dance, you send the scavengers packing.

ZAMZAM'S WELL

Known as Hagar's well, it is located In Mecca. Per the Islamic Tradition, it is where Hagar, along with her son Ismael, was granted water after Sarah kicked Hagar and her son Ismael out of Abraham's (Ibrahim's) house.

The crowded tent in which political discourse is drawn
houses the very ugliness of man.

Rejected, cast out, left to languish with my legacy
the boy you wanted, the line you wanted, is now cut.

Swept up by an errant wind,
the desert grit beats against my face.

Under her guilty parasol, Sarah his wife remains cool
while I've a sun of shame under which to bake.

Sweat pours out of every orifice,
a watery dowry for Death which beckons.

Shows us mirages, as he jests and plays
on nimble nerves that snap for want of water.

Unmoved by the primal scream of a desperate mother,
the bleating of innocence brings the reckoning.

The reaper withdraws his tender
leaving it for another angel

Who comes down from heaven and leaves
a liquid font to dry my wet tears.

