

# Noah

## & other poems

Jeremy James

**“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”**

**- Proverbs 25:11**

### **1. Noah**

I came to talk with you, Methuselah,

I came to talk.

Those far distant years have disappeared,

and all that remain

– yes, I can see it now –

are your son (but one),

his magnificent ship,

and the pouring rain.

### **2. Manna**

For six days

in seven

the hand of heaven

peppered the parched land

with unspeakable sweetness.

### **3. Jerusalem**

*This invincible city*, we said,

but the Chaldeans ate it like a piece of bread.

We thought we were untouchable

but the weight of our sins

came crashing in upon us.

Now the jangling of our chains

is a daily reminder

of all that remains.

#### **4. Zacchaeus**

There are days when it pays  
to scramble up a tree  
just to see  
what they were talking about,  
to hear him shout,  
'Come down!'  
and take him home to tea.

#### **5. Samaritan**

How the woman at the well could tell  
is hard to understand,  
when all the rest were blessed  
with the resounding bounty  
of His holy hand,  
His staff and rod,  
*and*  
– if they cared to listen –  
the oracles of God.

#### **6. Elijah's Ravens**

Together they dispense  
their tenderness,  
collecting where they can  
the scraps  
on which you snack.

## **7. Joshua**

When he called it stalled  
and stood in the sky  
as though observing  
the unnerving scenes below,  
as nation after nation  
was excised.

## **8. Naomi**

Tell me what went through your mind  
when she walked away.  
Did you think to say,  
'Dear girl, those gods of yours  
are fraught with peril!'  
or something similar,  
enough to show  
that the path she took would lead below?

## **9. Wall**

Who would have thought!  
Just fifty-two days,  
and now the outline of His footstool  
is plainly displayed,  
the place where His Son will one day rule  
and every idle design  
will come to naught.

### **10. Shiloh**

She came here every year,  
with his little coat,  
a mantle that only  
a mother could sew  
– her eyes aglow –  
and all to clothe  
the loan she had made.

### **11. Balaam**

That ass of yours  
was in a class of his own,  
for what other animal  
had the knack  
of answering back!

### **12. Zacharias**

This tongue-tied Levite  
fathered a boy,  
a Nazarite,  
kicking with delight,  
and wrote a name  
unknown to his seed,  
as the angel decreed.

### **13. Eve**

The fruit of this particular tree  
was the property  
– legally –  
of their generous Benefactor,  
but they wanted  
everything for themselves  
and chose to ignore  
– like so many thieves –  
the pain in store.

### **14. Cana**

Few of their guests  
had guessed  
what occurred,  
how their host  
had secured  
the most wonderful  
wine in the world.

### **15. Moses**

When you withdrew  
that hoary hand  
you clearly knew  
how few would understand  
the scenes that would ensue.

## **16. Job**

We can see here  
the complete  
reconstruction  
of a man  
in a manner  
too unmanly  
to expand.

## **17. Sparrows**

One by one,  
beneath the sun,  
such folk are noted  
– their numbers done! –  
yet none can tell their sum,  
not one.

## **18. Adam**

We are each  
a reflection  
of his original  
perfection,  
but why exactly  
he acted  
as he did  
is the question.

### **19. Arimathean**

The tomb you had hewn  
for your own funeral  
became the most precious  
piece of real estate  
on earth.

### **20. Tetelestai**

Neither technical nor dull,  
but wonderful!  
Who would believe  
a single word  
could say so much  
– and to such effect! –  
*Paid in full.*

### **21. Babel**

Not even a thesis  
in linguistics  
could repeat the expletives  
that leaped  
into existence  
that remarkable day!

## **22. Plagues**

With each affliction  
a cryptic dart  
was directed  
at the demon heart  
of Egypt.

## **23. Alabaster Box**

It made the cynics rage,  
but when opened  
it betokened  
an age of  
breathtaking grace.

## **24. Galilee**

From an open boat  
he spoke.  
A place from which to teach.  
They came to hear  
his words,  
to patiently partake  
of him,  
like pebbles on a beach.

## **25. Pentecost**

A room in Jerusalem  
is consumed  
by a sound  
and all therein are filled  
to the brim  
with Him.

## **26. Bartimaeus**

Loud hailing vagrant  
proclaiming  
your ailment  
with such insistence  
that even the crowd  
is cowed!

## **27. Robe**

Just a touch  
was enough  
to stem the flow  
and mend the breach,  
to bring a healing  
within reach.

### **28. Samson**

No man could handle  
a mandible  
in anger  
quite like this  
philanderer.

### **29. Damascus**

Not a moment too soon!  
Everything you believed  
disintegrated  
and all your fallenness  
decayed  
in your rendezvous at noon.

### **30. Gadarene**

After he had seen  
his demons  
screaming into swine  
and careening  
into the sea,  
how relieved he must have been!

### **31. Nebuchadnezzar**

Exemplary men  
who would not bend  
he sent to be  
incinerated!

(That should have been the end.)

### **32. Naaman**

All the way from Syria  
for a dip!  
Oh dear, no bling  
or ding-a-ling.  
*The hour is now,*  
*don't let it slip,*  
they said.  
And in he went.

### **33. Jeremiah**

What a shock you must have got  
when your Father called.  
What thoughts  
you must have thought!  
Brought in for the long haul.

### **34. Luke**

How daring you were to embark  
with that remarkable man,  
to share the unforgiving sea,  
toting a load which only  
the most noble  
could shoulder.

### **35. Daniel**

Few bother to read  
the clock he gave  
– to watch those hands! –  
yet Jesus said  
*Whoso readeth,*  
*let him understand.*

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